



**SUFFOLK
CONSTABULARY**
Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 004594-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 20 December 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *“Please could you provide data for all incidents of knife crime that occurred in Suffolk over a 10-year period. I understand that there is not one dataset for knife crime, but it is instead recorded per Home Office guidelines as “homicide; attempted murder; threats to kill; assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm; robbery; rape; and sexual assault” in which a knife or sharp instrument/object was used/present. I am happy to receive data for the past 10 years in accordance with those categories. If you classify your data in a different or any additional way, then please provide in the format/categories you use.*
2. *Please could you ensure this data is also broken down by age. I am specifically interested in knowing which incidents involved a victim aged 1 to 24. If it reduces time and cost, please feel free to provide the data split into incidents involving victims under 24 and over 24. If you are able to provide more detailed age breakdowns within the cost allowance e.g. 1-8, 9-16, 17-24, then please do that.*
3. *Please can you also confirm whether motive is listed for these knife-related incidents. If the cost allowance allows, please also provide the motives with each incident. If this is too expensive, please could you only detail which incidents were between family members and/or partners and so domestic abuse.*
4. *Please can you also confirm whether knife-related incidents are flagged as gang-related and/or gang-motivated and, if the cost allowance allows, please indicate which incidents were considered gang-related gang-related and/or gang-motivated.”*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 7 January 2020

Suffolk Constabulary has considered your request for information and the response is below.

The Constabulary changed crime recording system during October 2015 and information concerning knife crime contained within the legacy system is not recorded in a format that will allow us to extract accurate and reliable information, which will be comparable to the information we can now obtain from Athena.



There is no specific knife crime marker and the only information we can obtain easily is either by completing key word searches of associated words, which will be wholly unreliable, or by focussing just on Violence Against the Person offences. However, this will not include a variety of other offences that will be relevant to the request.

Considering a review would be required of many thousands of offences, the Constabulary considers it would take well in excess of 18 hours to extract knife crime data from the legacy crime system.

In relation to your request for information and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), this response serves as a formal notification of refusal for your request. Suffolk Constabulary does not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, the information you require in a retrievable format.

It is estimated that to attempt to retrieve all of the information you require would take a considerable amount of retrieval time, which would exceed 18 hours. This would exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with Freedom of Information requests, in terms of costs and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a Public Authority is not obliged to: *"...comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit."* The Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations, defines the 'appropriate limit' for the Suffolk Constabulary as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter serves as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

By requesting *all* information your request is too broad to be complied with within the £450 limit imposed on Freedom of Information requests.

Although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

The following information relates to the time frame 19 October 2015 – 24 December 2019. The Constabulary is unable to confirm whether the offence is gang related or otherwise as this would require a manual review of each offence and in many cases an element of interpretation. Likewise, we cannot confirm the family relationship between victim and suspect, however we have confirmed the numbers that are marked as domestic related to assist.



The total number of knife related offences is provided below.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Knife	45	216	369	383	431
Knife - Carpet/Model/Stanley	1	8	28	43	30
Sharp Instrument	19	83	200	120	118
Grand Total	65	307	597	546	579

The age of the victims, is provided below:

Age	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
8 years old and under	6	9	13	6	12
9-16	6	22	32	30	40
17-24	21	40	88	83	69
25-32	8	48	86	73	70
33-40	5	33	55	49	71
41-48	5	38	59	49	49
48-56	5	24	47	33	34
56-64	3	12	32	17	17
65-72	1	8	18	8	8
73-80	1	3	5	6	6
81 and above	1	2	0	1	1
Not Recorded	3	68	162	191	202
Grand Total	65	307	597	546	579

Whether the offence is marked as domestic related or not is provided in the table below:

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
No	47	190	369	299	317
Not recorded	3	68	162	191	202
Yes	15	49	66	56	60
Grand Total	65	307	597	546	579

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Clair Pack, FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.



A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the 'Office of Public Sector Information' web-site;
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>

Suffolk Constabulary is not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.



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Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the
Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Suffolk Constabulary to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Suffolk Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 40 working days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker
Information Management Department
Suffolk Constabulary
Police Headquarters
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP5 3QS
OR
Email: information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk*

In all possible circumstances Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at www.ico.org.uk or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700