

Request:

1. I'd like to know the number of criminal incidents reported involving a knife between 1 Jan 2016 and 31 Dec 2019, shared in a table split into each calendar year.
In relation to those incidents, for each year could you also detail:
2. how many arrests were made
3. how many people from the below age groups were arrested, questioned or cautioned
 - i) 18+
 - ii) u18
 - iii) u15
 - iv) u10
4. the age of the youngest individual arrested, questioned or cautioned, and details of the offence(s)

Response:

Your request for information has now been considered. Northamptonshire Police cannot supply the information you requested for the reasons set out below.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Northamptonshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt within the provisions of the Act) to provide you, the applicant, with a notice which:

- a) states the fact,
- b) specifies the exemption in question and
- c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies

In relation to your particular request, the following exemption applies:

Section 12 - Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit;

Section 12(1) of the FOIA provides an exemption from a public authority's obligation to comply with a request for information where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed the appropriate limit.

The information you are requesting in relation to the age range of suspects questioned is not held by Northamptonshire Police in any reasonably retrievable form. The only means of establishing information of the nature you are requesting would be by way of manual examination of all crime reports involving a knife or bladed article.

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For non emergencies call **101**



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It is my assessment that the cost of providing you with the information requested would exceed the 'appropriate level' as set out in the Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 which is currently £450 for 'prescribed costs'. It would cost 5078 (number of records) x 5 minutes each (minimum) = over 423 hours at £25 per hour to respond to your request.

By way of explanation, whether a suspect has been interviewed or not is not recorded in a mandatory field. To ascertain if a suspect has been interviewed would require a manual examination of each crime report.

In view of the above, and in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please take this letter as a Refusal Notice.

You may wish to refine and resubmit your request so that it reduces the costs shown above and is then within the 'appropriate limit' shown above. (I cannot think of a means to refine the request in order to provide the information you are seeking) but if you would like some further information about how to proceed with your request then please contact FreedomofInformation@northants.pnn.police.uk

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 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 the request.

Please note the following in relation to the data provided:

- Data is for the period 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2019
- a 'Sharp' Instrument was indicated as a weapon used or
- a 'Bladed' Instrument was indicated as a weapon used, or
- Where a variety of weapon terms are mentioned in the MO, and
- Where the Home Office Classification is 10D Possession of article with blade or point.
- Please note, with regards to the suspect/offender age breakdown, this number differs from the number of crimes due to more than one person (suspect/offender) being on one crime and duplications in the system.

Please also note:

- Not all suspects are arrested
- Suspects can be questioned under caution without being arrested
- Cautions can be given to someone who has not been arrested, and
- Cautions are not the only positive final outcome for a crime.

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- Total number of crimes recorded by Northamptonshire Police:
2016 - 967
2017 - 1182
2018 - 1396
2019 - 1533
- The number of crimes where an arrest/arrests has been recorded: 2150
The total number of arrests made: 3917
Please note that crimes may have multiple arrests associated with them, therefore these figures will differ.
- Age breakdown of suspects arrested :

YEAR AND AGE GROUP	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
10 years and under	7	11	9	24	51
11-14 years	32	91	85	113	321
15-17 years	102	142	143	131	518
18+ years	571	699	874	844	2988
Unknown/Not Stated	6	5	7	21	39
TOTAL	718	948	1118	1133	3917

Age breakdown of suspects cautioned:

YEAR AND AGE GROUP	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
11-14 years	4	17	16	10	47
15-17 years	10	2	13	6	31
18+ years	10	15	21	17	63
TOTAL	24	34	50	33	141

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4. The youngest suspect arrested was 12 years of age for the offence of 'Common Assault'.

The youngest suspect to receive a caution was 11 years of age for the offence of 'Possession of Articles With Blade or Point'.

Please note that these data should be interpreted with caution. Comparing numbers of incidents/crimes can be misleading and does not necessarily indicate the likelihood of someone being a victim of crime. In addition, the number of incidents/crimes recorded in an area over a period of time can be influenced by a number of factors.

Consequently statistics on incidents/crimes for one period may not necessarily be a good indicator of future incidents in that area.

The numerical data presented in this response is an un-audited snapshot of unpublished data sourced from "live" systems and is subject to the interpretation of the original request by the individual extracting the data. The figures provided therefore are our best interpretation of relevance of data to your request, but you should be aware that the collation of figures for ad hoc requests may have limitations and this should be taken into account when the data is used.

If you decide to write an article / use the enclosed data we would ask you to take into consideration the factors highlighted in this document so as to not mislead members of the public or official bodies, or misrepresent the relevance of the whole or any part of this disclosed material.

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