

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Your request for information has now been considered and the Council's response to your questions is shown below.

You asked:

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act for information regarding doorstep criminals defrauding the elderly or vulnerable. Could you please supply me with information relating to the following questions:

1 – What are your annual figures for the number of these crimes reported from 2009 to 2012?

2- What is the average age of the victim?

3- What is the average amount of money defrauded per victim?

4- Anecdotal evidence from some Trading Standards teams suggest a large number of offenders of this crime are from the travelling community. Can you provide any figures relating to the background of offenders?

5- If you do not have any information relating to the above questions please could you provide any other relevant statistics on doorstep criminals defrauding elderly or vulnerable people.

ANSWER

The Council does not hold data on 'doorstep crime' in Leicester in the form set out in the FOI request. Therefore this part of the letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council.

The term 'doorstep crime' is a generic one and is understood differently by different agencies. In Leicester City we have in the past used it primarily as the label for consumer frauds involving 'home maintenance/builder work' and we have planned our responses accordingly. Recently we have expanded it to include the sale of security alarms and mobility/disability aids in the home using high pressure sales techniques and misrepresentation and we are currently looking to include other frauds that are impacting heavily on vulnerable consumers, e.g. traditional/spiritual healers, lotteries, equity release schemes.

In December 2011 we provided the following data to the LCC Neighbourhood Scrutiny Commission that looking at the issue of protecting vulnerable adults in Leicester.

	Driveways	Paving	Roofing	Garden	Gutters	Fascia
2006	3	2	1	2	3	3
2007	1	4	3	4	2	4
2008	0	1	7	1	3	2
2009	1	5	4	3	1	2
2010	1	1	4	1	2	1
2011	1	0	6	1	3	2

When investigating a reported incident of rogue trading officers have sometimes uncovered up to 10 related incidents in the immediate area. The ratio of reported to unreported incidents is estimated by Trading Standards as being about 1:4.

We are unable to provide any data on the ethnicity of the offenders as we do not hold this information. Therefore this part of the letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council. It is the case that some members of the travelling community have been involved in doorstep crime in Leicester.

We are about to embark on analysis work of our data and work records in preparation for a local inter-agency meeting in mid-April 2013 and we invite a FOI request at that time.

The legislation allows you to use the information supplied for your own personal use. Please be aware that any commercial or other use, for example publication, sale, or redistribution may be a breach of copyright under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 as amended unless you obtain the copyright holder's prior permission.

Not all the information that is supplied which is covered by copyright will be the Council's copyright, for example it may be the copyright of a government department or another Council. You should seek either the Council's consent or their consent as appropriate. The Council is willing to advise you of any such potential issues on request. In order to make a request to re-use the information please contact the Information Governance Manager using the details below.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:

Information Governance Manager
Information and Customer Access
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG

e-mail: info.requests@leicester.gov.uk

Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such

request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 700

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please be aware that the Information Commissioner does not normally consider appeals or complaints until the internal appeals and complaints processes of the public authority which is answering the request have been exhausted. You are therefore advised to complain or appeal to the Information Governance Manager before contacting the Commissioner.