



Response Date: 11/04/2025

2025/397 - Animal Thefts

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

I understand that the Pet Abduction Act 2024 came into force on 24 August 2024. For data from this date onwards, please include offences recorded under the specific categories of "dog abduction" and "cat abduction." For data prior to this date, please include all relevant offences where the stolen item was recorded as one of the listed animals, regardless of the overarching crime category (e.g., theft, burglary, robbery).

1. Number of reported thefts of animals (from the list below):

Please provide the number of reported thefts involving animals for each of the following calendar years: 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Please break this down, where available, by:

- Postcode district for each year (e.g., LS1, M20)
- Month (i.e., monthly totals) for each year

2. Species-specific theft data (if held):

If possible, I would also like the number of thefts involving the following species, again split by calendar year (2019–2024):

Animals:

- Bird
- Cat
- Cow

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- Dog
- Fish
- Gecko
- Gerbil
- Goat
- Guinea Pig
- Hamster
- Horse
- Lamb
- Lizard
- Mouse
- Pig
- Pony
- Rabbit
- Sheep
- Snake
- Spider

3. Dog and cat breed-specific theft data (if held):

If possible, I would also like the number of thefts involving the following dog and cat breeds, again split by calendar year (2019–2024):

Dog breeds:

- Akita
- Beagle
- Bichon Frise
- Border Collie
- Chihuahua
- Dachshund
- Dalmatian
- Doberman
- French Bulldog
- German Shepherd
- Great Dane
- Husky
- Jack Russell
- Labrador
- Maltese

- Mastiff
- Pitbull
- Pomeranian
- Poodle
- Pug
- Retriever
- Rottweiler
- Samoyed
- Shiba Inu
- Shih Tzu
- Spaniel
- Springer
- Staffordshire Bull Terrier
- Terrier
- Whippet

Cat breeds:

- Bengal
- British Shorthair
- Burmese
- Long Haired
- Maine Coon
- Persian
- Ragdoll
- Russian Blue
- Scottish Fold
- Siamese
- Sphynx
- Domestic Shorthair (including Tuxedo, Ginger, Tabby, and Tortoiseshell)

The new criminal offence of "pet abduction" only came into force in August in England and Northern Ireland

[Cat and dog theft will be a criminal offence from August - BBC News](#)

Unfortunately, 'Animal Theft' is not a specific offence on our Crime recording system, therefore it would require the key word search for a term like 'pet', 'cat', 'dog' (or the terms listed) etc. However, this does not return reliable data e.g. you could have someone reporting their 'pedigree Shih Tzu' without using the term dog/pet, therefore the incident would not be returned. Additionally, there could be an incident involving the theft of 'pet', 'cat/dog' food, or horse trailer etc, or an occurrence where the pet was reported stolen and was actually just temporarily missing. Therefore, we would have to carry out manual search of every theft recorded on our system to try and retrieve data that fell into the remit of your request,

and to ensure we have captured everything. The cost of providing you with the information is above the amount to which we are legally required to respond i.e. the cost of retrieving the information exceeds the 'appropriate level' as stated in the Freedom of Information (FOI) Fees and Appropriate Limit regulations 2004.

Therefore, in accordance with the FOI Act 2000 the information you have requested is exempt under Section 12 (1), and this letter acts as a Refusal Notice under section 17 (5) of the legislation.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 11/04/2025