

Written evidence from Dr Daniel Allen (PEE0001) 12 October 2020 (HC 546)

Government Petition 300071: [‘Make pet theft crime a specific offence with custodial sentences.’](#)

FOI Research: Data Requests to Police Forces by Dr Daniel Allen.

Table 1: Number of dog theft crimes and charges for police forces in England and Wales, 2015-2020

	Police force area	No of dog theft crimes, 2015	Charges, 2015	No of dog theft crimes 2016	Charges, 2016	No of dog theft crimes, 2017	Charges, 2017	No of dog theft crimes, 2018	Charges, 2018	No of dog theft crimes, 2019	Charges, 2019	No of dog theft crimes, Jan-July 2020*	Charges, Jan-July 2020*
1	Avon and Somerset	48	0	21	0	21	0	9	0	9	0	10	0
2	Bedfordshire	15	2	16	2	20	4	18	0	17	0	17	0
3	British Transport	2	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	3	2	-	-
4	Cambridgeshire	16	0	25	0	41	2	27	0	27	0	21	0
5	Cheshire	6	0	19	0	4	1	2	No Data	3	No Data	No Data	No Data
6	City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Cleveland	16	0	22	2	25	2	33	0	36	0	20	0
8	Cumbria	15	1	12	2	24	0	22	0	22	0	No Data	No Data
9	Derbyshire	Rejected	Rejected	4	1	11	0	12	0	8	0	No Data	No Data
10	Devon and Cornwall	36	0	62	1	78	1	65	1	46	0	53	1 community resolution
11	Dorset	7	1	12	0	16	0	30	0	24	0	5	0
12	Durham	13	1	23	1	37	1	34	1	40	1	16	No Data
13	Dyfed-Powys	18	0	14	1	31	1	23	0	23	0	No Data	No Data
14	Essex	74	3	67	5	52	0	61	0	59	0	No Data	No Data
15	Gloucestershire	18	3	13	1	10	0	14	0	16	1	No Data	No Data
16	Greater Manchester	120	6	132	3	146	3	145	1	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected
17	Gwent	30	1	31	2	31	1	21	0	35	0	No Data	No Data
18	Hampshire	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected
19	Hertfordshire	23	4	18	0	17	0	18	0	22	0	8	No Data
20	Humberside	33	1	31	1	44	1	51	1	29	1	28	No Data
21	Kent	102	5	107	3	130	4	108	1	102	1 (caution youth)	No Data	No Data

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22	Lancashire	59	0	100	0	93	0	99	1	89	1	52	No Data
23	Leicestershire	24	1	29	0	23	0	33	3	48	0	16	No Data
24	Lincolnshire	14	1	21	1	24	1	19	0	20	0	2	0
25	Merseyside	53	2	65	1	68	1	117	0	74	0	No Data	No Data
26	Metropolitan Police	167	3	137	2	169	3	256	5	299	2	142	No Data
27	Norfolk	32	3	15	2	29	2	7	0	19	0	17	0
28	North Wales	16	0	21	0	40	0	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected
29	North Yorkshire	21	0	23	0	15	0	20	0	12	0	13	0
30	Northamptonshire	25	0	11	0	15	0	16	1	8	0	10	No Data
31	Northumbria	44	6	61	7	74	2	55	0	49	2	No Data	No Data
32	Nottinghamshire	15	1	16	0	43	0	32	0	22	2	20	No Data
33	South Wales	62	6	27	2	17	0	15	0	12	2	No Data	No Data
34	South Yorkshire	58	1	65	4	82	1	90	2	48	2	44	1 com. res.
35	Staffordshire	55	3	68	3	70	2	69	1	49	0	No Data	No Data
36	Suffolk	18	1	12	0	13	0	1	0	11	0	21	0
37	Surrey	12	1	10	1	8	1	7	0	0	0	No Data	No Data
38	Sussex	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	45	1	83	1	35	0
39	Thames Valley	47	1	47	1	72	2	85	1	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected
40	Warwickshire	13	0	13	0	13	0	4	0	9	0	7	No Data
41	West Mercia	43	1	61	3	35	2	42	1	37	0	16	No Data
42	West Midlands	25	2	25	1	29	0	30	0	19	0	8	No Data
43	West Yorkshire	166	3	197	0	172	2	167	0	146	2	64	0
44	Wiltshire	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected
	Overall	1,561	64	1,654	53	1,844	40	1,906	21	1,575	19	645	2

**January-July 2020: data requests made by Ben Parker, BBC Suffolk (included in dataset with permission).*

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Table 2: Number of dog theft crimes for police forces in England and Wales with full five-year dataset (2015-2019)

	Police force area	No of dog theft crimes, 2015	No of dog theft crimes, 2016	No of dog theft crimes, 2017	No of dog theft crimes, 2018	No of dog theft crimes, 2019	Total dog theft crimes for police forces with full five-year dataset (2015-2019)
1	Avon and Somerset	48	21	21	9	9	108
2	Bedfordshire	15	16	20	18	17	86
3	British Transport	2	1	2	4	3	12
4	Cambridgeshire	16	25	41	27	27	136
5	Cheshire	6	19	4	2	3	34
6	City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Cleveland	16	22	25	33	36	132
8	Cumbria	15	12	24	22	22	95
10	Devon and Cornwall	36	62	78	65	46	287
11	Dorset	7	12	16	30	24	89
12	Durham	13	23	37	34	40	147
13	Dyfed-Powys	18	14	31	23	23	109
14	Essex	74	67	52	61	59	313
15	Gloucestershire	18	13	10	14	16	71
17	Gwent	30	31	31	21	35	148
19	Hertfordshire	23	18	17	18	22	98
20	Humberside	33	31	44	51	29	188
21	Kent	102	107	130	108	102	549

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22	Lancashire	59	100	93	99	89	440
23	Leicestershire	24	29	23	33	48	157
24	Lincolnshire	14	21	24	19	20	98
25	Merseyside	53	65	68	117	74	377
26	Metropolitan Police	167	137	169	256	299	1028
27	Norfolk	32	15	29	7	19	102
29	North Yorkshire	21	23	15	20	12	91
30	Northamptonshire	25	11	15	16	8	75
31	Northumbria	44	61	74	55	49	283
32	Nottinghamshire	15	16	43	32	22	128
33	South Wales	62	27	17	15	12	133
34	South Yorkshire	58	65	82	90	48	343
35	Staffordshire	55	68	70	69	49	311
36	Suffolk	18	12	13	1	11	55
37	Surrey	12	10	8	7	0	37
40	Warwickshire	13	13	13	4	9	52
41	West Mercia	43	61	35	42	37	218
42	West Midlands	25	25	29	30	19	128
43	West Yorkshire	166	197	172	167	146	848
37 of 44	Overall	1378	1450	1575	1619	1484	7506

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Table 3: Number of dog theft crimes and charges for police forces in England and Wales with full five-year dataset (2015-2019)

	Police force area	No of dog theft crimes, 2015	Charges, 2015	No of dog theft crimes 2016	Charges, 2016	No of dog theft crimes, 2017	Charges, 2017	No of dog theft crimes, 2018	Charges, 2018	No of dog theft crimes, 2019	Charges, 2019
1	Avon and Somerset	48	0	21	0	21	0	9	0	9	0
2	Bedfordshire	15	2	16	2	20	4	18	0	17	0
3	British Transport	2	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	3	2
4	Cambridgeshire	16	0	25	0	41	2	27	0	27	0
6	City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Cleveland	16	0	22	2	25	2	33	0	36	0
8	Cumbria	15	1	12	2	24	0	22	0	22	0
10	Devon and Cornwall	36	0	62	1	78	1	65	1	46	0
11	Dorset	7	1	12	0	16	0	30	0	24	0
12	Durham	13	1	23	1	37	1	34	1	40	1
13	Dyfed-Powys	18	0	14	1	31	1	23	0	23	0
14	Essex	74	3	67	5	52	0	61	0	59	0
15	Gloucestershire	18	3	13	1	10	0	14	0	16	1
17	Gwent	30	1	31	2	31	1	21	0	35	0

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19	Hertfordshire	23	4	18	0	17	0	18	0	22	0
20	Humberside	33	1	31	1	44	1	51	1	29	1
21	Kent	102	5	107	3	130	4	108	1	102	1 (caution youth)
22	Lancashire	59	0	100	0	93	0	99	1	89	1
23	Leicestershire	24	1	29	0	23	0	33	3	48	0
24	Lincolnshire	14	1	21	1	24	1	19	0	20	0
25	Merseyside	53	2	65	1	68	1	117	0	74	0
26	Metropolitan Police	167	3	137	2	169	3	256	5	299	2
27	Norfolk	32	3	15	2	29	2	7	0	19	0
29	North Yorkshire	21	0	23	0	15	0	20	0	12	0
30	Northamptonshire	25	0	11	0	15	0	16	1	8	0
31	Northumbria	44	6	61	7	74	2	55	0	49	2
32	Nottinghamshire	15	1	16	0	43	0	32	0	22	2
33	South Wales	62	6	27	2	17	0	15	0	12	2
34	South Yorkshire	58	1	65	4	82	1	90	2	48	2
35	Staffordshire	55	3	68	3	70	2	69	1	49	0
36	Suffolk	18	1	12	0	13	0	1	0	11	0
37	Surrey	12	1	10	1	8	1	7	0	0	0

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40	Warwickshire	13	0	13	0	13	0	4	0	9	0
41	West Mercia	43	1	61	3	35	2	42	1	37	0
42	West Midlands	25	2	25	1	29	0	30	0	19	0
43	West Yorkshire	166	3	197	0	172	2	167	0	146	2
36 of 44	Overall	1,372	57 (4.15%)	1,431	48 (3.35%)	1,571	34 (2.16%)	1,617	18 (1.11%)	1,481	18 (1.21%)

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Table 4: Number of dog theft crimes recorded by police forces in England and Wales for 2019 and January-July 2020

	Police force area	No of dog theft crimes, 2019	No of dog theft crimes, Jan-July 2020*
1	Avon and Somerset	9	10
2	Bedfordshire	17	17
4	Cambridgeshire	27	21
7	Cleveland	36	20
10	Devon and Cornwall	46	53
11	Dorset	24	5
12	Durham	40	16
19	Hertfordshire	22	8
20	Humberside	29	28
22	Lancashire	89	52
23	Leicestershire	48	16
24	Lincolnshire	20	2
26	Metropolitan Police	299	142
27	Norfolk	19	17
29	North Yorkshire	12	13
30	Northamptonshire	8	10
32	Nottinghamshire	22	20
34	South Yorkshire	48	44
36	Suffolk	11	21
38	Sussex	83	35
40	Warwickshire	9	7
41	West Mercia	37	16
42	West Midlands	19	8
43	West Yorkshire	146	64

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Table 5: Number of stolen dogs listed on DogLost between January and June in 2019 and 2020

2019 - WHOLE YEAR	STOLEN	172
	STILL MISSING (STOLEN)	164
	REUNITED	8

2019 - 23rd March - 1st June	STOLEN	29
	STILL MISSING (STOLEN)	27
	REUNITED	2

2019 - same period	STOLEN	60
	STILL MISSING (STOLEN)	57
	REUNITED	3

LOCKDOWN		
2020 - 23rd March - 1st June	STOLEN	48
	STILL MISSING (STOLEN)	45
	REUNITED	3

2020 - Jan-Jun 01	STOLEN	111
	STILL MISSING (STOLEN)	105
	REUNITED	6

Data prepared from DogLost website; 2nd June 2020 - all figures approx. (owners do not always update)

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Table 1: Overall annual totals should not be compared

- This data is only available through Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to individual police forces.
- This is not a complete dataset for England and Wales.
- Some police forces rejected requests due to costs.
- Others did not, or could not, provide requested data.

Table 2: 37 of 44 police forces in England and Wales provided a full five-year dataset (2015-2019) for dog theft crime.

- The annual total of these 37 forces shows a year-on-year increase of reported dog theft crimes from 2015 to 2018.
- The annual total of these 37 forces in 2019 shows a fall in reported dog theft crimes.
- These figures are indicative as data for seven forces is missing.

Table 3: 36 of 44 police forces in England and Wales provided a full five-year dataset (2015-2019) for dog theft crime and charges.

- The annual total of these 36 forces shows a year-on-year decrease in the number of charges for dog theft crimes from 2015 to 2018.
- The annual total of these 36 forces in 2019 shows 18 charges for dog theft crime – the same number as 2018.
- Percentage of dog theft crimes which led to charges: 2015 (4.15%); 2016 (3.35%); 2017 (2.16%); 2018 (1.11%); 2019 (1.21%)

Table 4: 24 of 44 police forces in England and Wales provided data on recorded dog theft crimes for 2019 and January-July 2020 (seven months)

- 5 of 24 (red) police forces have had more dog theft crimes in the seven months of January-July 2020 than the whole of 2019.
- 1 of 24 (orange) police forces has had the same number of dog theft crimes in the seven months of January-July 2020 as the whole of 2019.
- The number of dog theft crimes for 5 of 24 (grey) police forces are approaching the 2019 totals during January-July 2020.

Table 5: Number of stolen dogs listed on DogLost between January and June in 2019 and 2020

- 65.5% increase in the number of dogs stolen between 23 March-1 June (lockdown) compared to same period in 2019.

Researcher: Dr Daniel Allen is an Animal Geographer at Keele University, creator of the Pet Theft Reform campaign, and patron of the Stolen and Missing Pets Alliance (Sampa). The three government pet theft petitions created in his name passed 100,000 signatures in three consecutive years: 'Reclassify the theft of a pet to a specific crime in its own right' (2018); 'Pet Theft Reform: Amend animal welfare law to make pet theft a specific offence' (2019); and 'Make pet theft crime a specific offence with custodial sentences' (2020). In 2019, his joint paper, 'Spatialities of Dog Theft: A Critical Perspective', was published by *Animals* journal. Email: d.allen@keele.ac.uk Twitter: @Dr_Dan_1