

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 0232/09

In reply to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, received 23/04/09

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (The Act) requires us to handle all requests in a manner that is blind to the identity of the requestor. Any information released in response to a request is regarded as being published, and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Request

I am writing to request information on action taken by Cambridgeshire police against employees of punting companies and independent punt tour operators in Cambridge over the last 3 years.

I would like to know the number of complaints made to police since January 2006 regarding touts selling punt tours/punt company employees. I would like to know the date and nature of each complaint (e.g. aggressive behaviour, threats...etc.) and if possible a copy of each complaint with relevant personal details removed.

Secondly I would like to know the action taken as a result of each complaint.

Finally I would like to know if any police action has been taken against punt touts or punt company employees since January 2006 regarding punting related activities. For example how many (if any) arrests have been made, cautions issued, ASBO's issued...etc.

We have completed all searches within Cambridgeshire Constabulary and hereby enclose your response.

Response

Offences involving punt touts/companies 01/01/2006 to 19/05/2009

Date occurred	Offence	Location	MO Text	Outcome	Result	Charge Status
Jul-07	COMMON ASSAULT	Quayside Quayside Cambridge	One punt tout pushed another from rival punt company.	No further action as aggrieved stated he did not want to pursue and suspect claimed aggrieved was main protagonist of incident.	No further action	UNDETECTED
Aug-07	HARASSMENT	Magdalene Street Magdalene Street Cambridge	Male harassing punt touts on quayside and threatening them with a knife. Related to a dispute between local restaurant and punt touts.	Suspect arrested but shown to have mental health issues. No further action on offence and suspect sectioned under mental health act.	Suspected arrested. No further action on offence however sectioned under mental health act.	UNDETECTED
Aug-07	COMMON ASSAULT	Quayside Quayside Cambridge	One punt tout threw tea over another from rival punt company.	No crime raised as complainant withdrew complaint and suspect claimed it was just part of 'normal banter'.	No crime	UNDETECTED
Jan-08	COMMON ASSAULT	Riverside Public Area Walkway Bridge St Cambridge	Following an argument one punt tout has grabbed another from a rival punt company by the throat.	Suspect arrested and was given caution.	Suspect arrested and cautioned.	DETECTED
May-08	OTHER THEFT	Quayside Quayside Cambridge	Punt touts thought to have cut through chain to council pontoon near La Mimosa and removed steps from pontoon.	Crime filed as steps found in river and no suspects found.	Crime filed.	UNDETECTED
Aug-08	OTHER CRIMINAL DAMAGE	Quayside Cambridge	Punt tout used bolt cropper to cut through chain of rival punt companies boat attached to pontoon due to ongoing dispute of use of pontoon.	Currently trying to locate suspect for arrest. Suspect circulated as wanted.	Suspect circulated as wanted.	UNDETECTED
Aug-08	OTHER CRIMINAL DAMAGE	Quayside Cambridge	Punt tout used bolt cropper to cut through chain of rival punt companies boat attached to pontoon due to ongoing dispute of use of pontoon.	Susepct arrested and cautioned for offence.	Suspect arrested and cautioned.	DETECTED
Aug-08	OTHER CRIMINAL DAMAGE	Bridge Street Cambridge	Punt tout used bolt cropper to cut through chain of rival punt companies boat attached to pontoon due to ongoing dispute of use of pontoon.	Suspect arrested and given Penalty Notice for Disorder for criminal damage.	Suspect arrested and issued PND.	DETECTED

Sep-08	COMMON ASSAULT	Magdalene Bridge Magdalene Street Cambridge	Two punt touts from rival companies who have an ongoing dispute had physical altercation in which one lifted the other up over the railings towards the river. A female member of the public was accidentally knocked over and injured during the offence (see connected offence below).	Suspect arrested and charged with battery.	Suspect arrested and charged.	DETECTED
Sep-08	OR INFLECTING GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM WITHOUT	Quayside Quayside Cambridge	Female member of the public knocked over during altercation between rival punt touts (see above offence) causing broken hip and other injuries.	Suspect arrested and charged with greivous bodily harm.	Suspect arrested and charged.	DETECTED

Incidents* involving punt touts/companies 01/01/2006 to 19/05/2009

*Only including those incidents that did not result in crimes being raised to avoid duplication with offence spreadsheet.

Date reported	Location	Incident details	Outcome
11/06/2007	BRIDGE ST , BRIDGE ST CAMBRIDGE	Punt touts touting at area near the Round Church where they are not supposed to be touting.	No action
17/06/2007	BRIDGE ST , BRIDGE ST CAMBRIDGE	Punt touts being nuisance on corner of Bridge Street.	Attendance by officers and all in order. CCTV to monitor tout behaviour.
03/07/2007	BRIDGE ST , BRIDGE ST CAMBRIDGE	Punt touts blocking street on Bridge Street near quayside.	Attendance by officers and words of advice given.
04/07/2007	MAGDALENE ST , MAGDALENE ST CAMBRIDGE	Verbal altercation between punt tout and ice cream vendor due to ongoing dispute between ice cream vendors and punt touts.	Attendance by officers and words of advice given.
07/07/2007	TRINITY ST , TRINITY ST CAMBRIDGE	Punt touts annoying members of public outside All Saints craft market.	No officers available to attend. Advised to contact council re: ongoing problems.
13/07/2007	TRINITY ST , TRINITY ST CAMBRIDGE	Punt touts annoying members of public outside All Saints craft market.	Local PCSOs to give area attendance on Saturdays due to ongoing problem. Council advised of issue.
15/03/2008	RIVER CAM , . CAMBRIDGE	Punt tout has chained rival punt to his punts so rival cannot get to his punt.	Advised to see solicitor to give advice ref criminal damage if he bolt cropped the padlock as it does not belong to him.
19/03/2008	QUAYSIDE , QUAYSIDE CAMBRIDGE	Punt tout has thrown rival punt touts pole under pontoon and pole is now out of sight.	Attendance by officers and words of advice given.
11/05/2008	TRINITY COLLEGE , TRINITY ST CAMBRIDGE	Punt tout harassing members of public and being aggressive trying to sell punt tours.	Details passed to City Council.
15/06/2008	BRIDGE ST , BRIDGE ST CAMBRIDGE	Ice cream vendor reporting punt tout touting directly outside stall and causing customers to avoid van.	Attendance by officers and words of advice given.

12/07/2008	QUAYSIDE , QUAYSIDE CAMBRIDGE	4 touts boards from punt company have been taken by rival punt company.	Boards found at rival punt company hut.
19/07/2008	KINGS PDE , KINGS PDE CAMBRIDGE	Member of public approached by 2-4 different punt touts who were rude when he declined to punt.	No attendance.
02/08/2008	C B RIVER CRUISES , CHESTERTON RD CAMBRIDGE	Dispute between punting companies about licence to offload at Jesus Green.	Asked to contact City Council re: clarification on punting licenses.
30/08/2008	QUAYSIDE , QUAYSIDE CAMBRIDGE	Punt tout has submerged rival punt companies punt.	No offences revealed.
10/09/2008	QUAYSIDE , QUAYSIDE CAMBRIDGE	Punt tout seen causing damage to quayside where rival punt company moor their punts.	Informant to call council to examine damage and raise a crime if required.
21/09/2008	BRIDGE ST , BRIDGE ST CAMBRIDGE	Altercation between two rival punt touts in which one slammed the other against a wall.	Attendance by officers and words of advice given.
17/10/2008	RIVER CAM , . CAMBRIDGE	Punt company has heard rumours that other punt company are going to damage their punts.	Advised to report if direct threat is made or any more information gathered.
18/10/2008	JESUS GREEN , CHESTERTON RD CAMBRIDGE	Punts picking up passengers near to Jesus Green lock where they are not allowed to.	Advised to notify river authority.
20/10/2008	QUAYSIDE , QUAYSIDE CAMBRIDGE	Punt tout reporting two illegal punters operating on the river who have been verbally abusive.	Information passed to City Council and River Cam Conservators.
25/10/2008	TRINITY HALL , TRINITY LN CAMBRIDGE	Independent punt tout claiming that rival company are preventing him from loading/unloading passengers by putting chains across the river.	No offences revealed. Matter is civil dispute and referred to council.
02/11/2008	TRINITY LN , TRINITY LN CAMBRIDGE	Punt company chaining punts in a row to block other punt companies using pontoon.	Attendance by officers, obstruction has been removed.
28/02/2009	RICHMOND TER , RICHMOND TER CAMBRIDGE	Dispute between rival punt touts over ownership of poles, rugs etc.	Issue resolved without police attendance.

