

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.ukdisclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

XXXX – by email

Date: 10th March 2021

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2021 / 211

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 10th March 2021 concerning crimes against men related to the Grindr or Grinder App.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

I am currently undertaking a PhD research project with Swansea University, and would like to request information relating to specific past crimes.

I would like to request information that your force holds, in relation to any crimes committed specifically against men of any age, race or sexuality, relating to the LGBT+ dating app Grindr (commonly mis-spelt Grinder) or crimes relating to any other forms of dating apps or online dating sites in the last four years.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.

Whilst our crime recording system(s) are sophisticated, we do not physically record in specific searchable fields whether a crime has been related in some way to a Dating App or Website.

The only way of identifying the records that meet your criteria would be to access and read each and every crime report for the time period you require in order to identify whether Grindr or any other Dating App / Website had a contributing part to play in a particular crime.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Given that Wiltshire Police record c40,000 individual crimes in any given calendar year and - even allowing a very generous 1 minute per record - I am absolutely confident that to locate, retrieve and extract the information you seek would by far exceed the time obligations upon this authority to comply, and in so doing would exceed the fees limits. This is set at £450 calculated at a flat rate of £25 per hour for those work activities comprising of confirming the information is held, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it.

Please Note

Whilst we can run “wildcard” or “free-text” searches for specific words that feature within the abbreviated summary description of crimes and offences on our systems, these are notoriously unreliable and we cannot publish results in the public domain using these searches because of that.

In this instance, it is simply not practical to use that method to try and identify instances where Dating Apps of any sort are even mentioned in crime reports for a number of reasons :-

- a) There are simply too many to draw up a definitive list (Match.com, Plenty of Fish, E-Harmony, Grindr, Tindr, and so on)
- b) The name of the platform may not even be mentioned in the summary description and might only feature in the longer crime log (which we are unable to search)
- c) If a platform name is spelt incorrectly it will not be returned in any wildcard or free text search
- d) etc

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request to a more manageable level. However, due to the difficulties outlined above, I cannot see how this can be achieved in this particular case.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Wiltshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemption applicable to the information requested is:

Section 12: Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

- (1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

In accordance with section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for this particular request.

I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed to me and been considered in the light of your request within the time constraints applicable under the legislation.

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Penny
Disclosure Decision Maker

Wiltshire Police offers a re-examination of your case under its review procedure.



Force Disclosure Unit

Wiltshire Police HQ, London Road, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2DN
Telephone 101 ext 62005

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Wiltshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing to the:

Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police Headquarters,
London Road, Devizes,
Wiltshire,
SN10 2DN

Email at disclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk.

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Force Disclosure Unit within 20 working days of the Force's response to the original Fol request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing to include confirmation of the reasons for the review. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker, who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Force Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The Independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision Maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk