

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

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

XXXXXX – by email

Date: 2nd February 2022

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2022 / 103

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 1st February 2022 concerning Thefts from Royal Mail.

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:

Please provide figures for thefts in which the item stolen was a post box, pillar box or mailbox belonging to Royal Mail for each of the last five years, year to date.

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 quite sophisticated, we do not record in any searchable field the type of item that is reported stolen.

In addition, whilst we do record details of the victim of a crime, we would not be able to guarantee that a search of the victim name of Royal Mail would necessarily produce all thefts that meet your criteria where Royal Mail are the true end victim. It may be that the person reporting a crime is recorded on the crime log as being the victim (if, for instance, the post box is in an outside wall of their property) instead of Royal Mail.

Indeed, if Royal Mail was shown as the victim but the items stolen were something other than post boxes per-se, then those search results would contain a lot of anomalous records that were not applicable to your search and would need deletion.

As a consequence, we cannot use that methodology to locate the information you require –



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

indeed Wiltshire Police would certainly not release any information into the public domain if there were any doubts about the integrity of the data.

All crimes are reported under a strict system of Home Office Crime Reporting Codes and thefts of this nature would be recorded under Other Thefts (as opposed to specifically Shoplifting, Bicycle Thefts or Thefts from a Person).

The only way to ascertain the information you require would be to physically read every crime log recorded under Other Thefts to determine whether it met your criteria or not.

Given that since 1st February 2016, Wiltshire Police have recorded nearly 23,000 individual crimes in the category of Other Thefts, 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.

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.

It may be worthwhile you submitting a similar FOI request directly to Royal Mail on the off-chance that they record information of this nature in a more easily obtainable way.

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 FoI 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