

**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: 18th October 2021

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2021 / 846

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 15th October 2021 concerning Missing & Trafficked Children.

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 release the following information relating to I children reported to your police force for the periods:

- 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018
- 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019
- 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

1. The total number of children reported to your police force that have:
 - a. Identified as having been trafficked or a victim of modern slavery – including, but not limited to those identified through the National Referral Mechanism.
 - b. Suspected of having been a victim of trafficking or modern slavery¹, if not included in a.
 - c. Identified as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC) or a separated child
 - d. Identified as being a victim of exploitation
2. The total number of children reported to your police force:
 - a. Identified or suspected as having been trafficked/victim of modern slavery and that have gone missing or absent.
 - b. Identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent.
 - c. Identified as being a victim of exploitation and that have gone missing or absent



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

3. The total number of individual incidents (which could involve the same child on more than one occasion) of children reported to your police force:
 - a. Identified or suspected as having been trafficked/victim of modern slavery and that have gone missing or absent.
 - b. Identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent.
 - c. Identified as being a victim of exploitation and that have gone missing or absent
4. The total number of children reported to your police force that are still missing or absent (including those that subsequently turned 18 without being found) that were identified or suspected as having been trafficked or identified as an UASC or separated child.
5. For all of the above please provide a breakdown of these numbers by year and nationality of the child (e.g. British, Vietnamese, etc.) If identification is a concern due to small numbers involved, please give the total figures and specify whether the child is British / an EU national / non EU national.

Note :-

For Q3 & Q4, please add the length of time the child was missing during each incident.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting for the majority of your request is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.

I have liaised with both our Human Trafficking and Missing Teams and – although our crime recording systems are sophisticated – we do not hold the key information that you are looking for in easily searchable fields on our database(s).

In order to ascertain the information you require, we would have to undertake lengthy searches of all the records on our system(s) in order to locate, record and make a note of data that meets the specific criteria of your request.

Under the circumstances 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.

I do also need to add that there is no obligation on an Authority to create data where none already exists today simply in order to answer an FOI request.

Although excess cost removes the forces' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. What I am able to provide you is documented below :-

- Wiltshire Police do not hold any information in relation to unaccompanied children. You ought to be able to get this information directly from the Local Authorities concerned (Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council).

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