



Force Disclosure Unit

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.uk

disclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

Date: 19/04/2022

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2022/256

I write in connection with your request for information dated 19/03/2022 concerning strip searches.

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 writing under the Freedom of Information Act to request the below information regarding the use of strip searching by your police force - that is, involving the removal of more than just the suspect's outer clothing. **For each of the years 2021, 2020, 2019**, please provide the below information:

1. How many people have been strip searched in your police force area in each of the above years? Please include:
 - a. the individual's age (If you are unable to give exact ages, please use the following brackets: 1-10; 11-14; 15-17; 18+);
 - b. the sex of each of those searched; and
 - c. their ethnicity.
2. Please indicate the outcome/result of that search (in terms of whether anything was found, whether action was taken, etc)
3. Please indicate whether an appropriate adult was present during the search, and please indicate cases where an individual declined to have an appropriate adult present



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Our response:

The information that you are requesting for questions 1a and 1c is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. Our end of month and yearly summaries only differentiate between adult and juvenile searches. To provide the 4 age brackets requested would necessitate opening every juvenile custody record and manually extracting the individual ages. We only collect end of year data in respect of ethnicity as either 'white' or 'BAME', to provide a further breakdown would incur manual extraction of individual ethnicity for each custody record.

Some of the information requested for question 2 is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval, to provide action taken on individual cases would require opening every single relevant custody record to establish if any offences were committed and how this was disposed of i.e. charge, caution or no further action (NFA).

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.

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 are the answers documented below :-

Please note this data only relates to strip searches of persons both in custody and under arrest whereby a custody record is created. This data has been extracted only from custody records. Any strip searches completed outside of custody or any strip searches of persons inside of custody but not under arrest are not included, this information is not recorded in a centrally located place.

Year	Adult	Juvenile	AA Present	AA Declined	Male	Female	White	BAME	Items Found
2019	519	82	80	0	482	119	455	156	89
2020	405	85	77	1	376	114	365	125	54
2021	330	30	28	0	307	83	320	70	48

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request, 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

Disclosure Decision Maker

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



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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