

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.ukdisclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.ukDate: 5th May 2022

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2022 / 330

Dear ****,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 8th April 2022 concerning Strip searches in people under 18.

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:

This is a Freedom of Information request for the following data relating to searches of people aged under 18, where the search involved the removal of some or all of the individual's clothing.

Please provide the answers to all the questions within a spreadsheet (either Excel or csv).

1. Please state how many such searches were recorded in each of the following years:

a) 2017, b) 2018, c) 2019, d) 2020, e) 2021, f) 2022 to date

2. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 1, according to whether the searches were:

a) more thorough searches, b) more thorough searches where intimate parts are exposed (MTIP), c) intimate searches

3. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 2, according to whether the person searched was:

a) already in custody, b) not in custody

4. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 3, according to the ethnicity of the person searched

5. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 4, according to the gender of the person searched



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

6. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 5, according to the age of the person searched

7. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 6, according to the outcome code recorded

8. Please also provide the following in the form of a spreadsheet (either Excel or csv):

A list of searches conducted since 1 Jan 2017 on people aged under 18, where the search involved the removal of some or all of the individual's clothing, to include for each search only the data from the following fields (where available):

- a) date of search
- b) nature of search (eg MTIP)
- c) whether the person was in custody
- d) ethnicity of person searched
- e) gender of person searched
- f) age of person searched
- g) outcome code

(In other words, in the spreadsheet there will be one row of data for each search, and that row will consist of 7 cells, namely the information for each of the fields listed in (a)-(g), where available).

Clarification sought from applicant regarding question 7:

In question 7 I am referring to the outcome of the search, for example (but not limited to): arrests, cautions, summons, penalty notices for disorder, cannabis or khat warnings, community resolutions, no further action.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting namely for questions 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. We currently do not have the capability within our systems to flag for the information requested within these questions which can then be analysed quickly and easily.

For questions 4, 5, 6 and 7, the ascertaining of this information would only be possible by conducting a manual trawl through every single record to determine the ethnicity, the gender, and the age of the individual. Furthermore, this would also be required to determine the outcome, this task would be significantly time consuming and would exceed 18 hours. Please note we can only differentiate between adult and juvenile (under 18) searches.

As for question 8, we do not specifically record when some clothing is removed, we only record standard searches (which may or may not involve removing some outer clothing but not to the point where intimate body parts are exposed) and strip searches where all clothing is removed. To obtain this data you are requesting we would be required to manually trawl through each Custody record and extract key information and possibly view CCTV to see what, if any clothing was removed.

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 :-

1. Please state how many such searches were recorded in each of the following years:
a) 2017, b) 2018, c) 2019, d) 2020, e) 2021, f) 2022 to date

Year	Juvenile (Under 18yrs)
2016	42
2017	No data available
2018	51
2019	82
2020	85
2021	30
2022 (Jan – March)	5

2. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 1, according to whether the searches were:
a) more thorough searches, b) more thorough searches where intimate parts are exposed (MTIP),
c) intimate searches

Wiltshire Police only record data of strip searches within custody or persons under arrest. This will require the removal of all clothing and intimate parts will be exposed. Wiltshire do not use the term MTIP which appears to be a MetPol term. We do not hold data of searches which differentiate between (a), (b) and (c) as requested.

3. Please provide a breakdown for each of the answers to question 2, according to whether the person searched was:
a) already in custody, b) not in custody

The data sheet above only captures strip searches conducted within a custody environment, whereby the person is detained having been arrested. Additional searches will have been conducted outside of custody and within custody where the person is not under arrest. We do not collate data on these searches.

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request in respect of questions 4,5, 6, 7 and 8 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,

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