

**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 E Mail

Date: 12th October 2023

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2023 / 957

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 3rd October 2023 concerning Dog Attacks.

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 – having consulted our Business Performance Team - I am not able to reply in full.

You wrote:

I would like to make the following request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Based on reported dog attacks (on pets and people) recorded monthly from January 2018 to 2023 (today). I would like as much data that is available please. Here are some of the specific questions:

1. How many reported dogs attacks were on people (adult/child/infant)?
2. How many reported dog attacks were on pets (dog breed/cat/other)?
3. Which breed (or type) of dog was involved in the reported attacks?
4. Where did the attack take place (at home, on lead during a walk, off lead during walk, escaped from home etc)?
5. What injury did the attack lead to?
6. How many, if any, attacks led to police seizures of the dog?

Three broader questions (if they can be answered) are:



- a) How is a dog attack defined?
- b) Would these reports include multiple reports?
- c) Could the same dog be reported over a number of months?

Our response:

The information that you require for Q3 of your request is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.

Whilst our crime recording systems are fairly sophisticated and we have a number of specific fields in which we can record particular information about a crime or incident, we do not have a designated field in which we record the breed of dog involved in a dog attack.

This information would only be held within the narrative of the occurrence log of a crime or possibly within a statement provided, if at all – indeed in some instances the breed may not have been reported or recorded.

The ascertaining of this information would only be possible by physically reading every crime occurrence log and making a new separate record of the specific information you require.

Given that for the time period you require there have been in excess of 2,000 crimes and non-crime incidents recorded on our systems – and allowing a very conservative 3 minutes per record to undertake this task - 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 :-

Question 1

Victim	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Adult	211	194	205	273	294	249	1426
Infant	5	18	23	23	20	13	102
Juvenile	52	89	81	82	122	82	508
Total	268	301	309	378	436	344	2036

This data includes crimes and non-crime incidents.

Designated as either of the following :-

- a) In charge of dog out of control in ANY place injuring any person or assistance dog
- b) Owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in any place in England & Wales (whether or not in public place) injuring any person or assistance dog

Data for 2023 is up to and including 10th October 2023.

Question 2

Whilst a dog may have been attacked, it is only a reported crime or incident if a human is injured in the attack.

Question 4

Location a Public space	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
No	92	114	131	129	180	119	765
blank		1		1			2
Yes	176	186	178	248	256	225	1269
Total	268	301	309	378	436	344	2036

Question 5

Victim Injury	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
None	11	9	9	18	20	9	76
Serious	10	4	7	8	11	8	48
Slight	247	288	293	352	405	327	1912
Total	268	301	309	378	436	344	2036

Question 6

Year	Dogs seized under Sec 3 Dangerously out of control
2018	6
2019	4
2020	9
2021	15
2022	12
2023	14
Total	60

This would be for any reason a dog is out of control - not necessarily just an attack on human.

Broader Questions

- a) In charge of dog out of control in ANY place injuring any person or assistance dog
Or
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in any place in England & Wales (whether or not in public place) injuring any person or assistance dog
- b) Each offence would have its' own unique report.
- c) Yes

Please Note

The information provided for Questions 4 and 5 is as it is held on our systems.

The "Public Place" and "Injury" fields on our systems are not mandatory and are populated at the time a crime is recorded. The population of these fields are therefore potentially prone to human error.

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request in respect of question 3 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 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