

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXX
By email

**Force Disclosure Unit
Police Headquarters**
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date 9th November 2023

Our Ref FOI 2023-993

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 13th October 2023, concerning.

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.

Following receipt of your request, research was conducted by the Business Intelligence department at Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

Please can you provide me with data on incidents of "honour-based" abuse (HBA) or "honour-based" violence (HBV) from 2010 onwards?

Please could you provide me with a breakdown of the incidents in categories on the types of offences, such as FGM, breast flattening etc?

Clarification received 08.11.2023

Could I have a yearly breakdown, eg: 120 offences in 2012 ect?

Within that total annual figure could you please specify the category of my incidents eg: breast tightening ect?

Our response:

I have considered your request for information and I can respond as follows. Some of the information relevant to this request is exempt by virtue of Section 31(1)(a)(b) - Law Enforcement.

Section 31 is a qualified prejudice-based exemption and therefore requires Wiltshire Police to establish the harm in disclosure, along with the public interest favouring and against disclosure.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

Please can you provide me with data on incidents of "honour-based" abuse (HBA) or "honour-based" violence (HBV) from 2010 onwards?

Please note:

- ❖ The data has been provided using the 'honour based abuse' / 'honour based violence' flags. These are not mandatory flags and therefore may be liable to error (applying when not needed / not applying when need).
- ❖ The specific numbers where the figure is below 5 have been replaced with '<5', as to disclose the actual figure would undermine our effective delivery of law enforcement.

Please see harm and public interest tests at the end of the request.

Reported Year	Total
2010	<5
2012	<5
2013	<5
2016	<5
2017	5
2018	13
2019	<5
2020	<5
2021	<5
2022	10
2023	6
Grand Total	52

Please could you provide me with a breakdown of the incidents in categories on the types of offences, such as FGM, breast flattening etc?

Please note:

- ❖ We do not record data as specifically as breast flattening / tightening etc, therefore the recorded offence type has been provided.
- ❖ Some occurrences listed '-' as the recorded offence type.
- ❖ There may be 1 or more of each offence type for each year.

Reported Year	Offence Description					
2010	-					
2012	-					
2013	-					
2016	-					
2017	-	Assault occasioning actual bodily harm (Section 47)	Common assault (S39) and assault without injury (Class 105A)			

2018	-	Assault occasioning actual bodily harm (Section 47)	Engage in controlling / coercive behaviour in an intimate family relationship	Genital mutilation of female	Rape of a Female aged 16 or over (Sec 1 SOA 2003)	Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety
2019	-	Kidnapping / Hijacking / False Imprisonment				
2020	-	Assault occasioning actual bodily harm (Section 47)				
2021	-					
2022	-	Assault occasioning actual bodily harm (Sec 47)	Engage in controlling / coercive behaviour in an intimate family relationship	Rape of a female aged 16 or over	Stalking involving fear of violence	
2023	-	Non-fatal strangulation and suffocation	NRM referral - Positive reasonable Grounds / Police referral - Outside England and Wales	Putting people in fear of violence (harassment)	Reported Incident of Rape offence committed in another police force area/outside the UK	

Harm test

Wiltshire Police will not disclose information would undermine the core principles of policing, namely to prevent and detect crime, particularly when this is in relation to disclosing low figures regarding honour based abuse / violence. To disclose this information into the public domain would prejudice our ability to prevent and detect crime and to apprehend or prosecute offenders, with this causing substantial harm to planned policing operations and those involved (i.e. Police employees and the community). If the Force placed this information into the public domain, we would be providing offenders with the ability to obtain the information they would need to evade detection. In turn, this would affect our ability to protect the community.

Factors favouring disclosure

Placing this information into the public domain would show Wiltshire Police are being as open and transparent with the public as possible. This would also lead to an increased public awareness regarding these issues, which in turn may lead to a reduction in crime or more information being supplied by the public to the Force. This would also allow Wiltshire Police to be held accountable for the actions we have taken.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

Factors against disclosure

To place information into the public domain relating to the specifics of honour based abuse / violence, especially where the numbers are low, would hinder Wiltshire Police's ability to prevent and detect crime. This would result in investigations being compromised and valuable information being given to offenders that would assist them in evading capture - particularly as honour based abuse / violence offences are often carried out by individuals close to the victim within their community (i.e. family members, close friends etc). To disclose low numbers relating to these types of offences would indicate to offenders whether their crimes have been reported to the Force. This would provide them with confirmation as to whether their crimes have been detected, which in turn would increase the risk to current / potential victims if they have not or allow the offenders time to evade capture if they have. By offenders evading capture, potential victims will be put at a great risk and trust in the Force will diminish, resulting in these types of crimes likely going unreported. Disclosure may also reveal information sensitive to operations and tactics used, which would severely impact on the Force's resources and aid offenders to evade capture.

Balance test

Wiltshire Police agree that there is a public interest in being as open and transparent with the public as possible, in addition to the public seeing how we are engaging with the threat from criminals. However, there is a stronger public interest in ensuring potential victims, and the wider public, are protected from the threat posed by criminals in addition to the enforcement of the law and the prevention and detection of crime being upheld. Disclosing information that will likely assist offenders would seriously undermine the effective delivery of operational law enforcement and is therefore exempt from disclosure.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Constabulary, when refusing to provide 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.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for those aspects of your request.

Exemptions applied:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) - Law Enforcement

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,

Abigail Standidge

Phone: 01722 547081

Email: abigail.standidge@wiltshire.police.uk

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



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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.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

Please note that the ICO's offices will be closed for the foreseeable future and are therefore unable to receive correspondence via post.

If you should wish to contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

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