

**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: 1st February 2024

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2024 / 090

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 22nd January 2024 concerning Missing Persons Cases.

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 Policy & Missing Persons Teams - I am now able to respond as follows.

You wrote (and Our Response) :

Please provide the following information:

- 1) How many 'open' or 'inactive' / 'cold' missing persons cases are currently under your constabulary? (Inactive meaning at least 1 year old).

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- 2) What reasons are there as to why missing persons cases are still unsolved? i.e., funding, lack of resources, no new evidence, no body etc.

Exhausted lines of enquiry, no body located but suspected to be deceased, believed to be out of the country and unable to identify any sightings and presumed missing etc

- 3) Are there any policies and procedures that your constabulary uses specifically for 'inactive' missing persons cases? If yes, what are they?

Wiltshire Police follow College of Policing APP (Authorised Professional Practice). This is contained in our policy / procedure documentation.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

- 4) Which individuals are involved in the reviews of 'inactive' missing persons cases? I.e., Review Officer, Senior Investigating Officer, Crime Scene Manager, Forensic Scientist etc.

MCIT (Major Crimes Team) DS/DI

- 5) Does your constabulary work closely with other organisations when reviewing 'inactive' missing persons cases? If so, which organisations? And what do they do to help?

This would only be on a case by case basis, but it would likely encompass organisations such as Local Authorities , Social Workers, Homeless Shelters and so on. In terms of a definitive list of which specific organisations these might be is not known – No Information Held. However, please refer also to the answer to Q6 below.

- 6) What charities does your constabulary have access to for inactive missing persons cases? If so, what charities? And what do these charities do to help aid a long-term missing person's case review?

Wiltshire Police use a number of the well-known / recognised organisations such as Missing People, Runaway Helpline, Salvation Army, Barnardo's, Railway Children, Locate International, CFAB and so on. Officers are signposted to these and a number of other support charities via our internal Intranet system, although we have no idea how often these are accessed or used. Charities are not directly involved in any long-term missing person's case review.

Please Note – Longterm Missing Persons Cases

On occasion all reasonable lines of investigation into the whereabouts of a missing person may be exhausted without locating them. This may happen relatively quickly after the person is reported missing, but it is more likely after the passage time. Only after the matter has been thoroughly reviewed by both a Detective Inspector and MCIT SIO can the case be re-categorised as Long Term Missing.

The investigation must never be closed in these circumstances nor the person removed from PNC, and the family or persons with relevant interest in the case must be updated to this effect. Further review time would be set in accordance with the review timetable. It will often be appropriate that a Detective Inspector takes responsibility and ownership for the case to provide continuity and appropriate oversight for the investigation.

Under our Section 16 obligation to be as helpful as possible to an applicant, I have enclosed a copy of our current Missing Persons Procedure.

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