

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Via Email



Police Headquarters

London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date 29/02/2024

Our ref **FOI 2024/170**

Reply contact name is:

Dear *****,

I write in connection with your request for information, dated 12/02/2024, concerning Request 1: Complaints regarding domestic abuse cases and Request 2: domestic abuse services and referrals.

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, searches were conducted with the Professional Standards and Learning and Development teams of Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered and it is not possible to meet your requirements in full.

You wrote:

Please provide the following information, from 2015 to the present day. Please provide monthly data on:

- Number of complaints from domestic abuse victims regarding your force's handling of their case.
 - Please provide this as a raw number and percentage of cases.
- The outcome of the above complaints. If this is categorised, please outline what these categories are and how many cases fell into each category.
- Which category each complainant falls into under the IOPC's guidance which lays out the three following categories:
 - claims to be the person in relation to whom the conduct took place
 - claims to have been adversely affected by the conduct
 - claims to have witnessed the conduct
 - (is acting on behalf of someone who satisfies one of the above three criteria)

For the second and third bullet points, please provide this as a raw number.

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Please provide the following information, from 2015 to the present day. Please provide monthly data on:

- How many complaints were made internally within your force regarding the handling of domestic abuse cases. Please include:
 - How many of the above complaints were taken forward.
 - The outcome of the above complaints.
 - The role of the individual making the complaint.
 - The individual the complaint was made to, for example a supervisor or the domestic abuse regional lead.
 - If you apply any further categories to your records regarding complaints, please also include this information.

Please provide the following information, from 2015 to the present day. Please provide monthly data on:

- The number of domestic abuse cases that were referred to domestic abuse support services. Please provide this as both a raw number and percentage of cases.
- Which support service the cases were referred to.
 - The instructions given to officers regarding how to make referrals to domestic abuse support services.
 - Please include any materials such as flyers or digital materials provided to officers as guidance on referrals.
 - If you are able, please provide information on how officers access guidance and instructions on making referrals, for example whether it is provided during training or officers need to seek it out themselves.

Response:

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at s1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at s1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.

Whilst I can confirm Wiltshire Police do hold the requested information, section 12(1) of the FOIA states:-

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.

The type of information you require is not stored in a way which allows for easy retrieval. The content requested in this FOI is not held in one place and would require a manual perusal of every complaint made. Complaints such as these have No allegation Code for DA complaints and Conduct Breach Codes.

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

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held, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it. Therefore the whole of the request falls under the exemption of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please note:

If one part of the request engages a Section 12 response, the whole request will engage a Section 12 response. The reason being is due to the fact that locating, retrieving and extracting any further information would only add to the already exceeded time obligations.

Forces may use different recording systems; therefore it may be possible some Forces can provide this information where others cannot.

Ordinarily under our Section 16 obligation to provide advice and assistance we would advise you of a way to refine your request to a more manageable level. Due to the difficulties in obtaining the requested information, as outlined above, I cannot think of a way in which this could be achieved. In respect of other questions within your request, I cannot think of a way in which you would be able to refine these questions, as they may incite further exemptions dependent on what information we may or may not hold.

As a gesture of goodwill, I can provide the following:

Wiltshire Police have an input from Fear Free which provides support and guidance to those who are subject to DA. This is delivered to all Initial Police Learners.

(Further information is provided to all officers who receive DA Matters training)

All officers trained by Learning & Development should be referred to DA sharepoint site which shows a list of DA Support agencies as per the links below:-

- **Horizon Victim and Witness Care** - <https://www.wiltshire-pcc.gov.uk/Victims-and-Witnesses/Horizon/>
- **National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV)** - www.ncdv.org.uk
- **Swindon Domestic Abuse Support Service (SWA)** - <https://swadomesticabuse.org/>
- **Fear Free (Used to be known as Splitz)** - <https://www.fear-less.org.uk/>
- **HomeTruths** - www.hometruths.coop
- **Refuge** - www.refuge.org.uk
- **SafeLives** - <https://safelives.org.uk/>
- **Victim Support** - www.victimsupport.org.uk
- **Respect** - <http://respect.uk.net>
- **Men's Advice Line** - www.mensadviceline.org.uk
- **ManKind** – www.mankind.org.uk
- **Samaritans** - www.samaritans.org
- **The Silver Line** - <https://www.thesilverline.org.uk/>
- **Escaping Victimhood** - <https://www.escapingvictimhood.com/>
- **First Light The Swindon and Wiltshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)** - <https://www.firstlight.org.uk/our-services/sarc-swindon/>

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Wiltshire Police, 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.

Exemption applied:

Section 12: Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker

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



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 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

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