

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXX - By email

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

Date 9th April 2024

Our Ref FOI 2024-307

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 12th March 2024, concerning paranoid schizophrenia.

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 warrants department and team performance at Wiltshire Police. Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

1. How many people diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia have outstanding arrest warrants for them obtained by your police force?
2. What's the longest period of time someone diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia has had an outstanding arrest warrant for them obtained by your police force?
3. Please can you provide me with figures for the number of arrest warrants for paranoid schizophrenics obtained by your police force and the number of paranoid schizophrenics arrested by your police force for each of the last five years.

Please could you conduct a free text search for "paranoid schizophrenia" to see how many records the condition appears in. Using this method, other police constabularies have been able to provide a response to all parts of my request within the cost limit.

Our 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:-

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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 information you are requesting is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Our systems do not have the ability to search outstanding warrants via "free text", therefore, in order to determine whether any outstanding warrants note that the person was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, we would be required to review each warrant manually.

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. Therefore the whole of the request should fall 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.

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 can provide you with is documented below:

You wrote: 3. Please can you provide me with figures for the number of arrest warrants for paranoid schizophrenics obtained by your police force and the number of paranoid schizophrenics arrested by your police force for each of the last five years.

Our response: Though as explained above, we are unable to provide a response to the first section of this question surrounding arrest warrants, Wiltshire Police can confirm that no records appear for the past 5 years for people having been arrested when using a free text search for paranoid schizophrenia as requested.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires 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.

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In accordance with section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for this particular request.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss the withheld information.

Yours sincerely,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker