



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

Date: 18th March 2024

Ref: FOI 2024/319

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 18th March 2024 concerning fox hunting activities. This request has come in following original request FOI 2024/288.

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 I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

Any documents, memos, or correspondence between Wiltshire Constabulary and fox hunting groups or representatives, including any agreements or understandings reached between the parties.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. All communications had between our Rural Crime Team who deals with allegations of illegal hunting under the Hunting Act 2004 and hunt personnel has been in the investigation of alleged offences, so this would include communications such as arranging solicitors and timings for criminal interviews etc, and this information is not only likely to be held within our crime recording system(s), but this information is also very likely to be held in email format, as officers in charge of the cases would liaise directly with those alleged and/or their representatives in this manner. As a result of communication between the force and fox hunting groups and/or their representatives taking place over email, this would involve us having to delve into every officer's and staff member's emails for the last 3 years (as per the time frame given in your previous request – FOI 2024/288), to see what correspondence was communicated with such groups and their representatives.

All staff and officer's emails would need to be perused and not just our Rural Crime Team's, because as per my response to your previous request (FOI 2024/288), other

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officer's and members of the force may have been involved in other reports involving members of fox hunting groups for other alleged offences (such as assault, criminal damage etc, dependent on what has been reported) so again, the only way in which we would be able to ascertain accurately the total communications had between our force and such groups and their representatives, would be to go through all emails held across the force.

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.

Please note, that 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.

Ordinarily under our Section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request to a more manageable level. However, due to the difficulties outlined above, I cannot see how this can be achieved in this particular case and even if you were able to refine your request further, further exemptions may still be engaged.

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,

Force 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

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.

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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