

**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: 2nd August 2024

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2024 / 722

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 1st August 2024 concerning Frauds or Scams involving QR Codes.

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 Business Intelligence Team - I am now able to respond as follows.

You wrote

Can you please disclose:

-The number of reports involving the key words 'QR fraud' or 'QR scam' or 'QR' from 2022 to now. Please provide a month by month breakdown.

-Details of the allegation made including the exact location the offence allegedly took place (for example an NCPP car park) and the original purpose of the QR code (for example to pay for parking, or order a meal online).

-The number of arrests and or charges made

Our Response

There have been no crimes or incidents recorded on our system(s) since 1st January 2022 where the specific words you require have been mentioned in the summary description of the offence (see note below).



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Please Note - Wildcard or Free-Text Searches

Unless an applicant specifically asks for a wildcard or free-text search in their request (as you have), we would not normally advocate that this is an appropriate mechanism by which to undertake searches for information on our systems. Results from searches of this type invariably produce results that cannot be guaranteed as being accurate or reliable.

It needs to be remembered that the use of “wildcard” or free-text searches are limited for an number of reasons such as – but not limited to – the following :-

- a) We are only able to undertake searches of the abbreviated summary description of crime report (which is limited to c200 characters) rather than the whole crime occurrence log of a given offence
- b) The specific key words being sought need to physically appear in the field being searched (eg if the term “QR Fraud” was included in the longer (full) occurrence log of a crime record but not the abbreviated summary description, then it would not be featured in any results generated using this methodology)
- c) Wildcard or free-text searches are reliant on the specific keyword being spelt grammatically correctly in that field (eg if the crime recorder mis-spelt “QR Fraud” as “QR Frawd” for instance, or “QR” as “Q-R” again it would not feature in any results generated)

Whilst we are happy to provide information found using a wildcard or free-text search (if an applicant asks for one), the above caveats should be taken into account when interpreting the results obtained using searches of this nature.

The only other way of finding the information you require would be to review manually each and every crime record recorded on our systems to try and ascertain whether or not they fitted your criteria or not and – if so – record the details.

Given the number of crime reports that Wiltshire Police log in any given year numbers more than 40,000, undertaking this task manually would undoubtedly invoke a Section 12 (Time Cost) exemption in respect of this request and nothing would be able to be disclosed to you anyway.

Under our Section 16 duty to be as helpful as possible to an applicant, it might be worth you submitting a similar request to the Local Authorities (Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council) – they may hold information about reports related to QR codes and car parking for instance.

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