



Force Disclosure Unit

Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: 31st October 2024

Ref: FOI 2024/967

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 30th October 2024 concerning garden thefts.

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:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information regarding garden thefts within your police jurisdiction:

- 1) Number of Garden Theft Incidents
Please provide the total number of reported garden theft incidents (including thefts from garden sheds, patios, or any garden areas) within your jurisdiction for each of the following years: 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023.
- 2) Details of Items Stolen
If recorded, please provide information on the types of items reported stolen during garden theft incidents. For example, the count of stolen tools, bicycles, furniture, plants, ornaments, etc.
- 3) Time of Year (Seasonality) of Incidents
If the data is accessible, please provide details of the months or seasons in which garden theft incidents were most frequently reported.
- 4) Value of Items Stolen (if available)
If there is any record of the estimated value of the stolen items, please provide this information in aggregated form for each year.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting for the majority of your request is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. This is because whilst our crime recording system(s) are sophisticated, there is not an offence description of "garden theft" in particular that we can search on in order to retrieve this information in a timely and accurate manner.

Garden thefts could potentially be recorded under any of the following three Home Office categories:

- Thefts From A Person
- All Other Theft Offences

Therefore, in order for us to obtain the information requested in relation to garden thefts accurately, this would only be possible by manually accessing and reading through each individual crime log for offences that fall under the above Home Office categories over the time frame requested, in order to see what reports may relate. As you can imagine, there would be hundreds if not thousands of thefts reports over the requested time period to manually peruse through, which would undoubtedly take us well over the allocated time frame we have to complete your request within. As a result, your request is exempt from disclosure due to time/cost limitations.

Please also be aware that we do not have designated mandatory fields dedicated to the recording of either what item(s) have been specifically stolen (such as tools), their value or precisely where they were stolen from in an accurate and/or easily retrievable manner.

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.

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

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(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