



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

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Ref: FOI 2024/994

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024 concerning van and tool theft data.

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:**

Please provide:

1. Monthly totals January 2020 to December 2023:
  - a. Van thefts
  - b. Tool thefts from vehicles
2. Postcodes of all the above thefts
3. Total value of tools stolen
4. Number of tools recovered and returned

If unable to provide all within cost limits, prioritise points 1 and 2.

## **Our response:**

The information that you are requesting for the majority of your request is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. Whilst our crime recording system(s) are sophisticated, 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. As well as this, with regards to vehicles that have been reported as stolen, Wiltshire Police do not have a specific field in which to indicate that vans in particular have been targeted (as opposed to other vehicle types). Therefore, the only way we would be able to obtain the number of

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vans that have been reported to have been stolen over the time frame requested would be to look at offences that fall under "Theft of a Vehicle", and then further manually peruse each crime report that relates in order to break down the information held into vehicle type.

Tool thefts from a vehicle if likely to be recorded under the following Home Office category "Thefts from a Motor Vehicle". Therefore, in order for us to obtain the information requested in relation to the number of tool theft reports from vehicles there have been since January 2020 accurately, as well as the value of the tools stolen (if held) and the number of tools that may have been potentially recovered and returned – this would only be possible by manually accessing and reading through each individual crime report for offences that fall under the above Home Office category for the years requested, as there is no other way in which we can retrieve this data accurately otherwise.

As you can imagine, there would be hundreds if not thousands of "Theft of a Vehicle" and "Thefts from a Motor Vehicle" reports over the years 2020-2023 to physically trawl 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.

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

(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.

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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](mailto: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](mailto:mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk)