

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ
London Road
Devizes
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN
Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.uk

disclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

XXXXXX – by E Mail

Date: 16th January 2025

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2025 / 001

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 30th December 2024 concerning Complaints about Officers.

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 Complaints, Professional Standards, Counter Corruption and Finance Teams - I am now able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

1. How many Wiltshire officers were the subject of complaints in the calendar year 2024?
2. How many complaints were dismissed by the investigating officer but appealed and considered by your Professional Standards Department (PSD)?
3. How many of these complaints did the PSD uphold?
4. Optional for context: How many officers were serving in your Force in 2024?

Our response:

Your question-set and request for information does not correspond with how Wiltshire Police process any complaints that are made against either officers or staff.

With regards to Q2 and Q3, these questions do not fit within the context of our current organisational structure and terminology – our complaint handlers and investigating officers don't 'dismiss' complaints and PSD don't either deal with appeals or "uphold" complaints.



In addition, the term “Upheld” is not one we use within Force to describe when a Complaint is justified or the Officer is found to have not provided service of an acceptable standard.

The only instance when we use the term “upheld” within our Complaints Processes is when an individual has had a response to their initial complaint which they are not happy with and they request a review by an Independent Assessor (or the Independent Office of Police Complaints) which then overturns the original decision – or “upholds” the appeal made.

Before supplying information that we do hold – and under our Section 16 duty to be as helpful as possible to an applicant – it may benefit you if I clarified the current process in detail first.

Current Process for Complaints within Wiltshire Police

The OPCC (Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner) Complaints team initially deal with all complaints received by the Force.

Where it is appropriate to do so, this is done by a process we term Service Recovery. This is a thorough but informal resolution to a complaint. Service recovery can contain a number of outcomes including an apology, explanation or debrief of an incident or other action e.g, return of property. As these matters are dealt with on face value and resolved without investigation they are not assigned an upheld or not upheld outcome. They are all finalised as resolved.

If a complaint requires a subsequent investigation - or where the complaint is more serious - this is passed to either Wiltshire Police’s Professional Standards Department or Counter Corruption Team to carry out the additional work / investigation.

Upon conclusion of the complaint in PSD or CCU, the complainant will be entitled to a review should they request one. This review will usually be carried out by a an Independent Adjudicator in the OPCC but if it is a more serious complaint the review may be undertaken by the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

The answers that we can provide to your questions are as follows :-

Q1

As of 13th December, Wiltshire Police have so far received 589 complaints specifically about Police Officers in 2024. This number may increase as some cases that are still being considered identify other officers that may be involved.

Of these 589 complaints, 347 of these were dealt with via Service Recovery in the OPCC Complaints Team, whilst 242 were forwarded on to the Professional Standards Team for further investigation/work. An element of those 242 will subsequently have been sent on to Counter Corruption if there were cases of Misconduct or Gross Misconduct to be considered.

Q2

Not applicable – see note above.

Q3

Not applicable – see note above.

Q4

The number of Officers employed by Wiltshire Police varies over the course of a given calendar year, taking into account retirements, transferees between various Forces, dismissals of officers and recruitments of new officers.

As at 1st January 2024, Wiltshire Police employed 1,239 Police Officers. As at the end of December 2024, the number of Police Officers stood at 1,228.

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.



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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