

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXX – By email

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

Date 27th January 2025

Our Ref FOI 2025-016

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 5th January 2025 regarding crime statistics.

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.

Following receipt of your request, research was conducted by Team Performance at Wiltshire Police. Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

I am writing to formally request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, concerning crime statistics within your police force area.

In accordance with the aforementioned Act, I hereby request the disclosure of the following data:

1. Crime Reporting and Outcomes: For each calendar year commencing with 2014, please provide an itemized breakdown of the following:
 - a) The aggregate number of reported criminal offenses.
 - b) Of the aforementioned reported offenses, the number subjected to formal investigation.
 - c) Of the offenses investigated, the number subsequently referred to the Crown Prosecution Service for consideration of charges.
 - d) Of the offenses referred for prosecution, the number that culminated in a conviction in a court of law.
2. Offense Categorization and Suspect Demographics: For the data furnished in response to question 1, please provide a further disaggregation by:
 - a) Statutory categorization of the offense (e.g., offenses against the person, offenses against property, etc.).
 - b) Recorded ethnicity/race of the suspected perpetrator(s).
 - c) Age range of the suspected perpetrator(s).

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

3. Case Closure Rates: Please specify the proportion of reported offenses that are closed without the filing of formal charges. Further, please provide a breakdown of the principal reasons for such closures (e.g., insufficiency of evidence, withdrawal of complaint by the aggrieved party).

Our response:

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at s1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at s1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.

Whilst I can confirm Wiltshire Police do hold the requested information, section 12(1) of the FOIA states:-

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.

The information you are requesting, specifically with regard to questions 1c and 1d, is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Unfortunately, there is not yet a way to search the data on our systems to tell if an incident has been referred to CPS. In order to determine whether the occurrence was a police outcome or referred to CPS, we would need to manually review each occurrence log. Within the parameters of the request, this would require us to review 444739 logs, which would not be achievable within the obligatory timeframe.

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. Therefore the whole of the request should fall under the exemption of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please note:

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.

Forces may use different recording systems, therefore it may be possible some Forces can provide this information where others cannot.

Ordinarily under our Section 16 obligation to provide advice and assistance we would advise you of a way to refine your request to a more manageable level. Due to the difficulties in obtaining the requested information, as outlined above, I cannot think of a way in which this could be achieved.

Although excess cost removes the Forces' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. What I can provide you with is documented below:

Questions 1a and 1b:

Reported Year	Crimes	Investigated
2014	32149	28699
2015	36445	33450
2016	40816	36653
2017	44160	35965
2018	42711	34836
2019	44463	35210
2020	38793	33119
2021	39735	34546
2022	43806	39437
2023	41999	38191
2024	39662	38192

Question 2a:

Reported Year	Arson And Criminal Damage	Burglary	Drug Offences	Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society	Possession Of Weapons	Public Order Offences	Robbery	Sexual Offences	Theft Offences	Vehicle Offences	Violence Against the Person
2014	5580	3547	1515	472	140	927	160	1021	8730	2523	7537
2015	5426	3805	1318	636	230	1877	196	1374	9151	2446	9988
2016	5918	3809	1248	667	296	2747	207	1445	8670	3134	12676
2017	6233	4333	1074	831	266	2470	258	1699	9823	3931	13246
2018	5680	3227	1068	724	297	2702	344	1721	9970	2893	14089
2019	5776	3021	1536	697	446	2932	355	1532	10102	2638	15428
2020	4919	1972	1662	883	347	3485	289	1465	5967	2211	15592
2021	4986	1615	1253	816	341	3700	312	1691	6113	1931	16977
2022	5069	1942	1148	869	435	4101	359	1951	7487	2257	18185
2023	4750	1773	1035	816	420	3636	304	1909	8097	2296	16963
2024	4215	1644	1132	927	360	3504	215	2053	6987	2286	16334

Question 3:

21: Police - named suspect, investigation not in the public interest	-	-	-	5	338	368	436	502	484	487	476
20: Other body/agency has investigation primacy	-	-	1019	841	860	818	938	842	1000	1127	1287
18: Investigation complete no suspect identified	14923	14192	17718	19727	17129	18523	13266	12979	14301	14605	13893
17: Suspect identified but prosecution time limit expired	30	49	124	184	177	272	456	433	468	357	327
16: Victim declines/withdraws support - named suspect identified	1977	4156	7345	7124	7833	8054	8946	7168	9004	10050	8473
15: Named suspect ID-victim supports but ED	2188	3943	6735	7865	2637	-	-	-	-	-	-
15: Police - named suspect, victim supports but evidential difficulties	-	-	-	-	4366	7047	8278	8141	9420	7058	5689
15: CPS - named suspect, victim supports but evidential difficulties	-	-	-	-	258	519	672	497	494	548	504
14: Victim declines/unable to support action to identify offender	253	1782	803	862	621	473	707	790	868	792	707
13: Named suspect but victim/key witness deceased or too ill	15	10	18	27	14	12	29	20	25	22	30
12: Named suspect too ill to prosecute	177	225	466	519	400	474	468	702	724	703	659
11: Named suspect below age of criminal responsibility	42	78	152	160	170	127	157	189	237	230	235
10: Police - formal action not in public interest	41	106	110	76	84	128	134	114	156	120	102
9: CPS - prosecution not in public interest	7	18	25	7	22	19	27	23	36	47	37
5: Offender has died	4	13	8	8	7	15	14	13	11	20	12
Disposal Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires 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.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss the withheld information.

Yours sincerely,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker