

**Police Headquarters**

London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: 9th January 2025

Our ref: FOI 2025/032

Reply contact name: Joanne Rochfort

I write in connection with your request for information dated 8th January concerning car scam.

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 able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

I have heard of a scam where scammers pose as potential buyers, visit a car in person, distract the seller and sabotage the car to ask for the car at a lower price. I have seen that Surrey Police have mentioned this as part of their April 2024 Newsletter.

Please may you provide me with:

- 1) Is the above type of scam something your force have seen reports of during 2024 (1st January 2024 - 31st December 2024)?
- 2) How many cases of this type of fraud were reported to your force, between:
 - a) 1st January 2024 - 30th June 2024
 - b) 1st July 2024 -31st December 2024(if you are not able to provide figures between this window, please provide 1 year stats for the 2024 year, or 1 year and the date range they apply for)
- 3) Therefore, have you seen an increase/decrease in this type of fraud in the year 2024 compared to the previous year? (1st January 2023 - 31st December 2023 vs 1st January 2024 - 31st December 2024)?

- 4) How many cases of motor fraud were reported to your force between:

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

- a) 1st January 2024 - 30th June 2024
- b) 1st July 2024 - 31st December 2024

(if you are not able to provide figures between this window, please provide 1 year stats for the 2024 year, or 1 year and the date range they apply for)

5) Therefore, have you seen an increase/decrease in motor fraud in the year 2024 compared to the previous year? (1st January 2023 - 31st December 2023 vs 1st January 2024 - 31st December 2024)

Response:

The information that you are requesting is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.

Wiltshire Police does not have a specific crime classification for this type of crime, and therefore these offences are recorded under the general code for 'theft'. Additionally, we do not currently have the capability within our systems to specifically record information which may otherwise enable easier searches for information. This includes recording the specific details of how the crime was carried out, the details of which would be included within the crime report, victim / Officer statements, free text of the call log report etc.

To establish this information would require manually reviewing each occurrence recorded as 'Theft from the Person' and 'Other Theft' within the requested period to determine whether the occurrence related to this type of scam.

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.

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely

Force Disclosure Decision Maker

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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

Please note that the ICO's offices will be closed for the foreseeable future and are therefore unable to receive correspondence via post.

If you should wish you contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>