

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.ukdisclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

XXXXXX – by email

Date: 25th February 2025

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2025 / 158

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 5th February 2025 concerning Sextortion Cases.

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, we kindly request the following statistics on sextortion crimes recorded by your police force over the past five years. Could you please give us a yearly breakdown (by calendar year) based on the below:

- 1 The total number of reported sextortion cases.
- 2 The number of victims who were under the age of 18.
- 3 A breakdown of the victims by gender.
- 4 The number of cases where the victim has died by suicide following the crime.
- 5 The number of cases where the victim has attempted suicide following the crime.

Our response:

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

Wiltshire Police record crimes in accordance with the current standard Home Office crime recording codes and categories.

There is no specific HO offence or crime recording category for “Sexploitation” crimes.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Crimes of this nature would be recorded within our systems under the crime group of Blackmail offences.

For the time period you require, Wiltshire Police have recorded 1,689 Blackmail cases – each of which would need to be located and the occurrence log read in order to firstly, determine whether or not they met your criteria of being a case of suspected Sexpotation and secondly, to make a note of any specific information that met the criteria of your request.

Even allowing a very generous 5 minutes per record to undertake this task, due to the number of records involved this would take more than 140 man-hours to complete – which 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 also 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.

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 am able to provide you are the answers documented below :-

Questions 4 and 5

We are unlikely to hold any information in respect of this request – certainly not enough in order to provide a categoric and full response.

We do not always get notified of deaths of members of the public – we only do this if called to an incident – and even then, whether or not a death has been by suicide would only be confirmed if a suicide note was present for instance. Similarly, if an individual had attempted suicide following a crime, unless there was a specific reason to check whether or not it might be due to any previous case that the individual may have been involved with – this is likely to be a point of conjecture and opinion anyway.

Ultimately, the matter of an individual's passing is only an issue for Police if criminal behaviour has been suspected to have been involved or the cause (eg death by dangerous driving, murder and so on). There is no obligation on a Police force to record the reasons for an individuals' passing.

Under our Section 16 duty to be as helpful as possible to an applicant, we would suggest the best means of you obtaining this information would be by submitting an FOI request to Wiltshire Coroner's Office directly.

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,

Nick Penny
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
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