

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXXXXX

Sent by Email



Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date 14th February 2025

Our ref: FOI 2025/196

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information, dated 13th February 2025 concerning thefts of mobile phones at festivals.

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:

I would like to obtain the following data:

1. The number of reported mobile phone thefts at each festival in your area for the years:
 - o 2024
 - o 2023
 - o 2022
2. The number of total thefts in general at each festival in your area for the years:
 - o 2024
 - o 2023
 - o 2022
3. If available, please also provide:
 - o The number of stolen phones that were later recovered or found for each year and each area.
 - o A breakdown of the models of stolen phones (if this information is recorded) for each year and each area.

If possible, I would appreciate it if the data could be provided in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet format (.xlsx or .csv).

Response:

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

Wiltshire Police record crime in accordance with current Home Office crime recording classifications. There is currently no crime classification specifically for the theft of mobile phones – these types of offences are therefore recorded under general crime classifications for Thefts, namely either Thefts from The Person, All Other Thefts or possibly Robbery.

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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 property stolen (i.e. mobile phones), the details of which would be included within the crime report, victim / Officer statements, free text of the call log report etc. It is also very difficult to simplify searches by location as "festival" would not necessarily be in the summary description of each crime log and it is not a building type that our systems are able to record, causing the search to be inaccurate and unreliable.

To establish this information would require manually reviewing each crime log recorded as 'All Other Theft', 'Theft from the Person' or 'Robbery' within the requested period of 2022 – 2024, to determine whether the occurrence related to a stolen mobile phone or not and the location of the incident.

Given that for the time period(s) you require, Wiltshire Police have recorded 10,640 general thefts under these 3 categories. I am absolutely confident that 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:

- 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 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

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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



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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 Fol 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
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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/>