

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXXXX
By email

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

Date 3rd March 2025

Our Ref FOI 2025-227

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 21st February 2025, concerning road traffic accidents.

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 the Justice Traffic department 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:

- Please provide the total number of recorded road traffic accidents in the UK (Scotland, England, Wales, North Ireland) from January 2024 to February 2025. Additionally, identify which month had the highest number of incidents.
- Break down these accidents by severity, categorising them into fatal, serious, and slight injuries.
- Provide a dataset detailing the number of road traffic accidents involving pedestrians, cyclists, scooters, and motorcyclists during this period.
- What were the leading causes of road traffic accidents in the given timeframe? Please include a statistical breakdown by category, such as speeding, drink-driving, reckless driving, poor weather conditions, vehicle defects, and driver distraction (e.g., mobile phone use).
- How many of these accidents involved drivers aged under 25 years old or over 70 years old? If available, please indicate any trends or patterns related to these age groups.
- Identify the most hazardous roads and junctions based on accident frequency during this period, along with the total number of incidents recorded at each location.
- Provide a ranked list of UK cities and regions with the highest number of traffic accidents, specifying the recorded figures for each.

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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 - namely in relation to the third bullet point - is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Wiltshire Police do not have a way to automatically extract details of accidents involving pedestrians, cyclists, scooters and motorcyclists without having to manually interrogate each collision individually. Between January 2024 and November 2024 (available data), there were 1142 injury collisions recorded. Even if one minute was allocated to check each collision, this would take in excess of 19 hours which exceeds the statutory time limit to respond.

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:

Please note:

The data provided is for Wiltshire Force area only. To obtain national figures, you will need to contact each Force individually.

The data is in relation to **injury only collisions**.

Due to a backlog in inputting the data onto the system, the data has been provided for 1st January 2024 to 30th November 2024 only. To obtain the data for the remaining months (December 2024 to February 2025), you will need to contact us again in several months' time to see if this data is then available.

- Please provide the total number of recorded road traffic accidents in the UK (Scotland, England, Wales, North Ireland) from January 2024 to February 2025. Additionally, identify which month had the highest number of incidents.

1142 - with January 2024 being the month with the highest number of injury collisions so far.

- Break down these accidents by severity, categorising them into fatal, serious, and slight injuries.

Slight collisions – 948

Serious collisions – 176

Fatal collisions – 18

- What were the leading causes of road traffic accidents in the given timeframe? Please include a statistical breakdown by category, such as speeding, drink-driving, reckless driving, poor weather conditions, vehicle defects, and driver distraction (e.g., mobile phone use).

Ranking	Description	Count
1	Failed to look properly	473
2	Careless/Reckless/In a hurry	262
3	Failed to judge other persons path or speed	249
4	Poor turn or manoeuvre	145
5	Loss of control	140
6	Slippery road (due to weather)	110
7	Exceeding speed limit	108
8	Following too close	84
9	Sudden braking	76
10	Inexperienced or learner driver/rider	74
11	Failed to look properly	57
12	Swerved	55
13	Impaired by alcohol	54
14	Travelling too fast for conditions	53
15	Distraction in vehicle	46

- How many of these accidents involved drivers aged under 25 years old or over 70 years old? If available, please indicate any trends or patterns related to these age groups.

Total number of injury collisions involving at least one vehicle driver aged over 70 within the above time frame – 145 (this includes motor vehicles, 2 wheeled motor vehicles, pedal cycles, horses and other).

Total number of injury collisions involving at least one vehicle driver aged under 25 within the above time frame – 441 (this includes motor vehicles, 2 wheeled motor vehicles, pedal cycles, horses and other).

- Identify the most hazardous roads and junctions based on accident frequency during this period, along with the total number of incidents recorded at each location.

Wiltshire Police do not have a way of looking at the most hazardous roads.

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- Provide a ranked list of UK cities and regions with the highest number of traffic accidents, specifying the recorded figures for each.

As previously stated, the data has been provided for Wiltshire Force area only. For national figures, each individual Force will need to be contacted for their Force area data. Once all figures have been received, you will then need to compare all to answer this question.

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

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

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 to contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

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