

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXX – By email

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

Date 20th May 2025

Our Ref FOI 2025-482

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 11th May 2025, concerning illegal raves.

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:

Please can you provide the following information:

- 1) The number of unlicensed music events (illegal raves) that police have been called to in the past five calendar years (2019-2024).
- 2) The number of individuals arrested for attending or hosting an unlicensed music event in the past five years
- 3) The number of individuals who have been fined for attending or hosting an unlicensed music event in the past five years, and the total sum that has been collected in fines for that period.
- 4) The age of the youngest person arrested or fined at an unlicensed music event each year. Please specify if they were arrested or fined.
- 5) The number of under 18s recorded as being at an unlicensed music event each year.

Please break down the figures by calendar year.

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.

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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 is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Unfortunately, there is no way of our systems retrieving this information as raves are summary offences. They could be linked to a number of offences such as trespass, breach of the peace, criminal damage etc. and in order to locate the data you are requesting, we would need to manually interrogate every offence that may be relevant of which there would be thousands.

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.

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

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