

**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: 2nd June 2025

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2025 / 535

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 28thb May 2025 concerning Unauthorised Encampments.

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:

Law enforcement interactions with Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities in England and Wales.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I kindly request the following information:

1. Arrests: The number of arrests related to unauthorised encampments from 2018 to YTD 2025, disaggregated by year.
2. Charges: The number of individuals charged in relation to unauthorised encampments during the same period.
3. Prosecutions: The number of prosecutions initiated for offences associated with unauthorised encampments in each year.
4. Ethnicity Data: If available, please provide the ethnicity breakdown of individuals involved in these arrests, charges, and prosecutions, specifically identifying those recorded as Gypsy, Roma, or Irish Traveller.
5. Legislative Basis: Details of the specific legislation under which these enforcement actions were taken (e.g., Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022).



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Our response:

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

Whilst our crime recording system(s) are fairly sophisticated and contain a number of unique fields in which certain specific information about a crime is recorded (eg Victim Name, Suspect Age, Address of Crime, Witness Ethnicity etc) and which can theoretically then be searched upon to extract data, we do not have specific fields in which we record the following :-

- Whether a crime or incident occurred at an unauthorised encampment
- Whether an individual involved in a crime or incident is specifically from a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller community
- A list of unauthorised encampments (as potentially these could appear anyway at any time)

Wiltshire Police (and other Forces) record crime in accordance with Home Office crime recording guidelines – there is currently no specific HO Crime Code related to Unauthorised Encampments. In addition, there is currently no operational or legislative reason for us to record this information separately today.

In reality, anyone arrested at an unauthorised encampment will have been arrested for specific reason, whether it was an assault, criminal damage, a public order offence and so on.

The only way to ascertain the information you require would be to locate and read each and every crime log in order to determine the following :-

- a) whether it met your criteria of having been related to an unauthorised encampment
- b) whether one or more of the individuals involved was from either a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller community
- c) Make a specific note of the information

Given that in any given year, Wiltshire Police record c40,000 individual crimes, 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.

It should also be noted that there is no obligation on an authority to create new information – where none is currently held today – purely to answer an FOI request.

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request in respect of questions 3,5,6,9,10 and 11 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.



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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