

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: August 21, 2025

Our ref: FOI 2025/588

Reply contact name is:

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information, dated 13th June 2025.

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 Team Performance and Establishment Departments of Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You Wrote:

The 2021 ONS census data breaks down the ethnicity of towns, cities and districts. But it doesn't for police force areas.

- 1) Please would you confirm whether you do have an ethnic breakdown of the areas you serve?

If so, would you be able to provide an excel sheet of the data?

You are obliged to provide the Home Office of an ethnic breakdown of your force rank-by-rank. Unfortunately, the Home Office amalgamates all the data. The latest data is for 31 March 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2024/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2024>.

- 2) Please would you provide the figures [ethnicity rank-by-rank] for fiscal years [31 March] for the following years: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024? I am also going ask for 31 March 2025, and I'm not certain you can use exemption sec 22 because you don't appear to publish your data. Since you have the data, this should not be an exemption under section 12. To help you further, if you have fewer than five in

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the senior ranks [ACC, DCC and CC] please use an asterix [*] so you do not breach section 40 of the FOIA.

In April 2023, the government at that time said it had met its pledge to increase police numbers by 20,000. This was part of its 2019 manifesto. This was the so-called "uplift".

Please provide the following:

- 3) the total number of new officers recruited in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. This could either be fiscal year or annual year i.e., 31 March or 31 December of each year, respectively.
- 4) an ethnic breakdown of those numbers as you recorded them for the corresponding years – 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.
- 5) how many officers left your force during 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024?
- 6) an ethnic breakdown of those numbers as you recorded them for the corresponding years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Response:

The information that you are requesting, specifically for Question Two, is not stored in a way which allows for easy retrieval and Wiltshire Police does not have the search facility to automatically gather this data. To clarify, our Establishment Department have stated that to ascertain the information for ethnicity of SGTs and PCs, they would have to manually search and read each and every person's file individually to determine their ethnicity. In addition, our current system would include duplicates where they have changed role and may include data for those who have left Wiltshire Police, which would also have to be reviewed to see if it were a duplicate. This would exceed the 18 hour work limit to locate, retrieve and extract the information and therefore Section 12 applies.

However, under our Section 16 obligation to provide advice and assistance, I would advise that you could resubmit your request without this Question, however please note that other exemption(s) may be applicable.

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
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,



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



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 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

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/>