

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXX – by E mail

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

Date 2nd December 2025

Our Ref FOI 2025-1141

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 2nd December 2025, concerning tool theft.

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:

1 What is the monetary value of tools (hand tools and power tools) your police force recovered that have been stolen from vehicles, construction sites and home premises' between December 1 2024 and December 1 2025?

2 Are you able to identify these figures relating to tradespeople?

3 How many reports of tool theft has your police force received between December 1 2024 and December 1 2025 ?

4 and what percentage of stolen tools have you recovered in that time period?

5 Are you able to identify these figures relating to tradespeople?

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.

Wiltshire Police record crimes in accordance with current Home Office Crime Classifications. There is no specific crime category to record Tool Theft specifically. Any thefts of this type would be recorded under any of the following crime groups :-

- Thefts from a Motor Vehicle
- Thefts from a Person
- Burglary
- Any Other Thefts

Whilst our crime recording systems are fairly sophisticated and we have a number of specific fields in which we record certain specifics of a crime (eg victim name, suspect data of birth, offence address and so on) which can then theoretically be used to run searches against, we do not have any specific fields in which we record the following :-

- a) The type of item stolen
- b) Its value
- c) The occupation of the loser
- d) The type of building or location an item was stolen from

If held, the above information would be only be recorded in either the narrative of the crime occurrence log, in statements, records of interview or in other paperwork associated with each particular crime.

For the time period you require, Wiltshire Police have recorded 10,220 crimes under the 4 particular crime categories aforementioned above.

Even allowing a very conservative 3 minutes per record to locate and read each of these crime records in order to try firstly try and identify those Thefts that meet your criteria and then secondly, to locate and record the specific information you require, I estimate that this task would take in excess of 500 man-hours to complete.

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.

There is no obligation on an Authority to create information – in this case the % of Thefts from Tradespeople specifically - where none currently exists, solely to answer an FOI request.

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,

Nick Penny
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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