

**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: 19th January 2026

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2026 / 086

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 19th January 2026 concerning Offences at Football Matches.

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:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am looking into the prevalence of violence at semi professional and amateur football matches.

This would cover matches from step 6 (Conference South/North) down to regional divisions, and amateur leagues.

I would like to request data relating to recorded incidents at football matches hosted within your force area, for the years 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

I would be grateful if you could provide:

The number of recorded incidents at football grounds/parks/pitches on match days classified as:

- Assault (including common assault and ABH/GBH)
- Public order offences
- Violent disorder



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

- Any other violence-related offences

I'd also like to please be provided with:

- The number of arrests made in connection with semi-pro/amateur football matches in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 (with the figures provided separately for each year)

Where possible, a breakdown of:

- How many of the incidents involved players (rather than spectators, for example), and how many involved match officials.
- Where the incidents took place and any details of exactly what happened (but only if this is possible)

Our response:

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

Wiltshire Police record crimes and incidents in accordance with the current Home Office Crime Reporting guidelines.

Whilst our crime recording systems are fairly sophisticated and contain a number of dedicated fields in which certain specific information about a crime is recorded (such as victim name, suspect date of birth, witness address etc) – and which can theoretically be used to run searches against – we do not have dedicated fields in which we record the following :-

- a) Whether a crime or incident has occurred at a sports venue specifically (let alone whether it has been at a football match OR a cricket ground or rugby ground and so on)
- b) Whether a crime has specifically involved a player / participant as opposed to a spectator or match official

The ascertaining of this information would only be possible by physically locating and reading each and every crime log for the time period you require for offences falling under the crime categories of either Public Order or Violence Offences and reviewing each to determine whether or not they met your criteria in any way – and if they did – making a note of the specific details you require in your request.

For the 5 year period you require, Wiltshire Police have recorded the following volumes of crimes in those specific crime groups :-

Public Order Offences	18,997
Violence (with/without injury)	86,184
Total	105,181

Even allowing a very conservative 3 minutes per record to undertake this task, given the number of crimes involved this will take more than 140 man-weeks to undertake.

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.

Please also note that 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.

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request 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.



Force Disclosure Unit

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