

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXX
By email

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

Date 24th February 2026

Our Ref FOI 2026-150

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 5th February 2026, concerning characteristics recorded for suspects, offenders, witnesses, victims and rape statistics.

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 Force Policy Officer, Business Intelligence department and Data Quality Team 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:

With regard to the recording of crime data relating to suspects, offenders, witnesses and victims, please provide:

1. Clarification of which of the following characteristics you record:
 - a. Sex
 - b. Gender
 - c. Gender identity
 - d. Gender reassignment
2. Include the definitions of the above categories at a-d currently used by your force.
3. Provide your policy guidelines for the categories that you record.
4. Clarify on what basis the recording of sex is based. If based upon self definition by the person concerned only, please specify this. If any other factor applies, please specify this.
5. Provide a copy of any communication to your staff regarding the implementation and application of this policy/guidance.

Clarification received for Q5 (09.02.2026) - With regard to your query, the time period would be 16th April 2025 and would be for departmental communications from your chief officer Keeping Wiltshire Safe

team, corporate support dept, legal dept, training dept, crime recording team, data integrity team to the organisation as a whole.

6. With specific regard to the recording of crime data in relation to rape offences, specify on what basis the sex of the offender is recorded. For clarity, if recorded on the basis of self definition by the alleged offender, please specify this.
7. Provide your crime data for rapes reported Jan 2025-Jan 2026 to include number of rapes reported, total number of offenders recorded, breakdown of offenders by sex.

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.

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 - namely in relation to question 5 - is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. A colleague of mine, who is well versed in the email retrieval system, conducted a search using the keywords "sex" "gender" "gender identity" "gender reassignment". There were 330,000 emails returned using these keywords being searched for the period April 2025. A separate search of these terms since April 2025, for the Chief Officer Group only, returned 19,200 emails. To establish whether these emails were relevant to your request would require a manual interrogation and would far exceed the time obligations on the Force to respond.

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.

Although excess cost removes the Forces' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not

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affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. What I can provide you with is documented below:

With regard to the recording of crime data relating to suspects, offenders, witnesses and victims, please provide:

1. Clarification of which of the following characteristics you record:

- a. Sex
- b. Gender
- c. Gender identity
- d. Gender reassignment

Wiltshire Police record Gender.

2. Include the definitions of the above categories at a-d currently used by your force.

- a. Sex – We do not have this specific separate recording option, but this would be shown by gender (or potentially in the remarks field within the name field on Niche).**
- b. Gender – This should be their legal gender but is largely self-defined with new nominal records and will sometimes be recorded as unknown until confirmed.**
- c. Gender identity - We only have the additional facility to record the Transgender status, but we do often record in the person record information tab / name information tab that they “prefer to be called”, but these will often be alias names and references rather than their file name.**
- d. Gender reassignment – As above with c.**

3. Provide your policy guidelines for the categories that you record.

No information held – Wiltshire Police do not have any policy guidelines for categories we record.

4. Clarify on what basis the recording of sex is based. If based upon self definition by the person concerned only, please specify this. If any other factor applies, please specify this.

This should be their legal gender but is largely self-defined with new nominal records.

Any subsequent change to the gender / sex of a file name on an existing person record would have to be confirmed by deed poll, passport, birth certificate etc with appropriate documentation attached, in conjunction with additional checks on PNC.

6. With specific regard to the recording of crime data in relation to rape offences, specify on what basis the sex of the offender is recorded. For clarity, if recorded on the basis of self definition by the alleged offender, please specify this.

This should be their legal gender but is largely self-defined with new nominal records.

Any subsequent change to the gender / sex of a file name on an existing person record would have to be confirmed by deed poll, passport, birth certificate etc with appropriate documentation attached, in conjunction with additional checks on PNC.

7. Provide your crime data for rapes reported Jan 2025-Jan 2026 to include number of rapes reported, total number of offenders recorded, breakdown of offenders by sex.

Number of rapes recorded

Month / Year	Distinct Count of OccNo - All Rapes
Jan-25	55
Feb-25	42
Mar-25	59
Apr-25	62
May-25	66
Jun-25	68
Jul-25	88
Aug-25	55
Sep-25	65
Oct-25	73
Nov-25	59
Dec-25	66
Jan-26	58
Grand Total	816

Total number of offenders recorded

There are x590 suspects for the above occurrences. Some suspects may be involved in more than one occurrence, and occurrences may have more than one suspect.

Breakdown of offenders by gender

Distinct Count of PersonId	Female	Male	Not Recorded	Grand Total
Jan-25		39		39
Feb-25		36		36
Mar-25	1	45		46
Apr-25		50		50
May-25	1	54		55
Jun-25	2	61		63
Jul-25		65		65
Aug-25		40	1	41
Sep-25		48		48
Oct-25		52		52
Nov-25		37		37
Dec-25		36		36
Jan-26		40		40
Grand Total	4	585	1	590

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

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,

FDU 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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