

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXX – By email

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

Date 6th March 2026

Our Ref FOI 2026-194

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 13th February, concerning cannabis cultivation sites.

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 able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

1. Cannabis cultivation sites attended -

For each calendar year from 2015 to the most recent complete year available, please provide the number of sites your force has dealt with that were confirmed or suspected to be used for cannabis cultivation.

For the purposes of this request, a "site" refers to any address or location attended by police officers in the course of their duties where cannabis cultivation was suspected or confirmed, regardless of whether this resulted in arrest, charge, or prosecution.

If providing data for the full period from 2015 would exceed the cost limit under Section 12 of the Act, please instead provide the figures for the most recent five calendar years.

Numeric totals only are requested; no personal or case-specific information is required.

2. Policies, procedures, or guidance -

Please confirm whether your force holds any written policies, procedures, standard operating procedures, or operational guidance relating to how officers should deal with sites that are used, or suspected to be used, for cannabis cultivation.

If so, I would be grateful if you could:

- Provide a web link to the relevant material, or

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

- Attach copies of the documents to your response, or
- Confirm if the material is exempt from disclosure and specify the relevant exemption(s).

Our response:

I have considered your request, and I am able to provide a partial response to your request. Some of the information relevant to this request is exempt by virtue of Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement and Section 38(1) – Health and Safety.

Section 31 and section 38 are both qualified prejudice-based exemptions and therefore require Wiltshire Police to establish the harm in disclosure, along with the public interest favouring and against disclosure.

1. Please note: The response is the distinct count of occurrence addresses for 092/21 Production of Cannabis

	Distinct Count of Occurrence Address
2015	62
2016	41
2017	33
2018	35
2019	35
2020	52
2021	49
2022	32
2023	35
2024	24
2025	23
Grand Total	409

Harm Test

A disclosure under Freedom of Information is a disclosure to the world, not just the individual requesting the information. Disclosing information into the public domain – specifically the Force's cannabis site procedure – would undermine the core principles of policing; namely to prevent and detect crime. Disclosure of this information could cause substantial harm to planned policing operations, and all individuals involved i.e. police employees and the community. If Wiltshire Police were to place this information into the public domain, this would prejudice our ability to prevent and detect crime, and to apprehend or prosecute offenders; providing offenders with the information they would need to evade detection and therefore effecting the Force's ability to

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

protect the community. In addition, disclosing this procedure would put the health and safety of officers attending potential cannabis sites at risk.

Section 31 - Factors favouring disclosure

Placing this information into the public domain would lead to an increased public awareness of these issues and how we as a Force handle suspected cannabis sites. This in turn may lead to a reduction in crime or more information being supplied by the public and would also allow the public to better protect themselves against crime. Disclosure would also ensure that Wiltshire Police can be held accountable for the actions taken and show the Force as being as open and transparent with the public as possible.

Section 31 - Factors against disclosure

Releasing the cannabis site procedure document would hinder the prevention and detection of crime. It would detail how the Force identifies the existence of these sites, types of equipment used in such sites and actions taken by officers once a site is discovered. This would result in investigations being compromised, as offenders would be able to gain valuable information that would assist them in evading capture. By offenders evading capture, the public will be put at a greater risk resulting in trust in the Force diminishing and increase of crime being seen. Disclosure of information sensitive to operations and tactics used would severely impact on the Force's resources, also assisting offenders to evade capture.

Section 38 - Factors favouring disclosure

Placing this information into the public domain would lead to an increased public awareness regarding how Wiltshire Police are approaching suspected cannabis sites. Additionally, disclosure would demonstrate Wiltshire Police as being as open and transparent with the public as possible.

Section 38 - Factors against disclosure

If this information were to be disclosed, the health and safety of officers attending suspected cannabis sites would be put at risk. Disclosing the contents of the procedure would provide criminals with additional information regarding the potential risks faced by officers when attending these sites. This would put the health and safety of these officers at risk.

Balance Test

Whilst there is a public interest in transparency and openness between the Force and the public, in addition to the public seeing how the Force are engaging with the threat from criminals, there is a stronger interest in ensuring the public are protected from the threat of criminals, and that the enforcement of the law and the prevention and detection of crime is upheld. To disclose information which is likely to assist offenders would seriously undermine the effective delivery of operational law enforcement. There is also a strong public interest in ensuring the safety of individuals is upheld and Wiltshire Police will not divulge any information if doing so would cause harm to these individuals.

For these reasons, the public interest lies in favour of non-disclosure of this information.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Constabulary, when refusing to provide 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.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for those aspects of your request.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

Exemptions applied:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement

Section 38(1) – Health and Safety

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,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker