

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Police Headquarters

London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: August 5, 2026

Our ref: FOI 2026/662

Reply contact name:

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 16th July 2026 concerning organized crime.

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:

Please provide the following information for the period from 1 June 2020 to 1 June 2026, broken down into one-month intervals.

1) For each month, please provide the number of recorded offences within the Wiltshire Police force area that were tagged, flagged, or otherwise marked in Wiltshire Police systems as relating to "organised crime".

2) Please also explain how Wiltshire Police defines or applies the "organised crime" tag or marker, including the types or categories of offences that may be included.

3) If possible, please also provide the current total number of organised crime groups or organised criminal gangs identified within the Wiltshire Police force area, subject to any applicable exemptions.

If providing the information in one-month intervals would exceed the applicable Freedom of Information cost or time limit, please increase the interval length as necessary to bring the request within the limit, using the shortest intervals that can reasonably be provided.

Response:

Wiltshire Police can neither confirm nor deny that any information is held as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

Overall Harm in Confirming or Denying whether Information is Held

The information being requested seeks to establish whether Wiltshire Police holds information capable of identifying and quantifying offending assessed as being linked to organised crime.

Whilst it is publicly known that police forces identify and manage organised crime groups, information concerning the way offending is associated with organised crime forms part of policing's wider operational and intelligence picture.

Information relating to organised crime is not routinely available across the wider force and access is often restricted to those with a legitimate operational need to know. The extent to which a force can identify, assess or quantify offending associated with organised crime is therefore not information that is routinely placed into the public domain.

Confirmation or denial of whether information is held would reveal whether Wiltshire Police possesses information, capabilities, arrangements, or processes which enable offending to be associated with organised crime assessments and quantified for reporting purposes. Equally, denial would reveal information about the force's ability, or inability, to identify and quantify such offending.

The request effectively seeks to establish how the force develops and maintains its understanding of organised criminality affecting its area. Revealing whether such capabilities exist would provide insight into policing's operational and intelligence arrangements and assist those seeking to understand the extent to which organised crime-related activity can be identified, assessed, and monitored by the police.

Disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is a disclosure to the world at large. Confirmation or denial would therefore be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Public Interest Test

Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

Factors Favouring Confirming or Denying Information is Held

There is a recognised public interest in openness and transparency regarding policing's response to organised crime. Confirming or denying whether information is held may assist public understanding of the extent to which organised crime affects local communities and how police forces respond to that threat. There is also a legitimate public interest in ensuring accountability for the effectiveness of policing activity directed towards tackling organised crime and protecting the public from serious criminality.

Factors Against Confirming or Denying Information is Held

There is a significant public interest in protecting information which would reveal how policing identifies, assesses, and monitors organised crime-related activity. This request seeks to establish whether Wiltshire Police possesses the capability to identify and quantify offending linked to organised crime assessments and how such information is recorded, assessed, or otherwise applied. Confirming or denying whether information is held would provide insight into policing's operational and intelligence arrangements relating to organised crime and could contribute towards a wider understanding of how forces develop and maintain their organised crime picture.

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that information concerning policing capabilities is not disclosed where doing so could assist those involved in organised criminality. Confirmation or denial may provide information about the extent to which offending associated with organised crime can be identified, assessed, and monitored by the police. Considered alongside responses from other forces, this could contribute to a broader understanding of policing arrangements and capabilities in relation to organised crime. There is therefore a substantial public interest in protecting information which could undermine the effectiveness of law enforcement activity and prejudice the prevention and detection of crime.

Balance Test

Wiltshire Police recognises the public interest in transparency and accountability regarding policing's response to organised crime. However, there is a stronger public interest in protecting information which would reveal whether it possesses capabilities, arrangements or processes that enable offending to be identified and quantified as being linked to organised crime. On balance, we consider that the public interest favours maintaining the Neither Confirm Nor Deny position.

No inference can be taken from this refusal that information does or does not exist.

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.



Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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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 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
Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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/>