

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXX – Via email



Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN
disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date: 18th August 2026

Our ref: FOI 2026-666

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 17th July regarding reports of misogyny and harassment.

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 Professional Standards Department and the Strategy Unit at Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered, and I am able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would be grateful if you could provide the following information for the period: 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2025.

1. Reported Incidents

Please provide the number of reported incidents relating to:

- * Misogyny;
- * Misogynistic behaviour;
- * Sexist conduct;
- * Gender-based discrimination; and/or
- * Sexual harassment

where the subject of the report was a police officer, member of police staff, volunteer, contractor, or other force employee, and where possible, the rank of the accused individual within the organisation.

Where incidents are not specifically recorded under one or more of the categories above, please provide any equivalent categories used by your force to record allegations of this nature.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

Staff type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Police Officer	9	6	13	21	16
Special Constable					2
Community Support Officer		2			
Police Staff	3	5	2	3	2

2. Outcomes

For the reports identified in Question 1, please provide the number that resulted in:

- * No further action;
- * Reflective practice, management advice, or management action;
- * Misconduct proceedings;
- * Gross misconduct proceedings.

3. Findings

For the reports identified in Question 1, please provide the number of cases that resulted in:

- * A finding of misconduct; and
- * A finding of gross misconduct.

Year	No case to answer	Misconduct	Gross Misconduct	Reflective Practice	Disciplinary outcome
2021	3	1 Misconduct – no case to answer	3 Gross Misconduct	1	2 Dismissals
2022	2 No case to answer, 1 withdrawn, 1 NFA	2 Misconduct – both proven	2 Gross Misconduct	0	2 final written warnings, 2 Dismissals
2023	3 No case to answer, 1 NFA, 1 de-recorded		6 Gross Misconduct	0	3 Dismissals, 1 Final written warning,
2024	3 No case to answer, 1 NFA and 1 de-recorded	3 Misconduct	5 Gross Misconduct	1	1 Dismissals, 3 Final Written Warnings, 1 Written Warning, 3 Would have been dismissed if still employed.

2025	3 No case to answer, 2 withdrawn	4 Misconduct	2 Gross Misconduct	0	2 Dismissals, 1 Written Warning, 2 NFA
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4. Definitions and Recording Practices

Please provide any force definition, guidance, policy, recording standard, or categorisation criteria used to identify or record:

- * Misogyny; [No information held](#)
- * Misogynistic behaviour; [No information held](#)
- * Sexist conduct; [No information held](#)
- * Gender-based discrimination; [No information held](#) and/or
- * Sexual harassment [Please see attached policy at the end of this document.](#)

within workforce misconduct, complaint, grievance, or professional standards records.

I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed to me and 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

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.police.uk.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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 you contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>



Sexual Harassment Policy

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POLICY STATEMENT.

1. Aim.

1.1. NPCC Sexual Harassment Policy 2026 adapted and adopted as Wiltshire Police Policy.

1.2. Wiltshire Police is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming working environment for all officers, staff and police volunteers, free of sexual harassment and victimisation and where everyone can feel supported, safe and reach their potential.

1.3. Wiltshire Police has a zero-tolerance policy in relation to sexual harassment.

1.4. Sexual Harassment is unlawful under the [Equality Act 2010](#).

1.5. The aim of this policy is to:

- Advise what constitutes sexual harassment
- Make clear the professional behaviour expected of all officers, staff and volunteers, contractors, workers and prospective job applicants
- Empower those to raise a complaint by setting out a clear process
- To support those who are affected by sexual harassment
- Make clear the responsibility on the force, and managers, to remove sexual harassment from the workplace
- Make clear the expectation of all members to be an upstander, challenging sexual harassment if observed or otherwise believed to be happening in the workplace
- To ensure individuals know the support available in Wiltshire Police

2. Scope.

2.1. This policy applies to members of Wiltshire Police, which includes police staff, student police officers, police officers, special constabulary and volunteers, workers and contractors

3. Definitions.

- i. **Sexual Harassment** - occurs when a person engages in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of:
- Violating someone's dignity, whether intended or not.
 - Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, whether intended or not.

Although anyone can experience sexual harassment, women are more likely to experience sexual harassment than men and perpetrators of sexual harassment are overwhelmingly men.

- ii. **Victimisation** - When you are treated poorly or unfairly because you have made a complaint related to a protected characteristic or you have helped someone else who has raised a complaint and are seen to be siding with them and are then treated badly.

4. Responsibilities.

4.1. We all have a responsibility to create and maintain a work environment free of harassment and victimisation and to treat our colleagues with dignity and respect.

4.2. Individuals are responsible for:

- Being aware of how their behaviour may affect others
- Treating colleagues with dignity and respect
- Taking a stand if it's inappropriate jokes, comments or gestures are being made
- Making it clear to others when their behaviour is unacceptable
- Intervening to stop sexual harassment and discreditable conduct and giving support to anyone who may have been harassed
- Reporting harassment to a Supervisor, Manager, or to the Professional Standards Department (PSD) and/or the Counter Corruption Unit (CCU) and co-operating as required in investigations

- If a complaint of harassment is made, not prejudging or victimising the complainant or alleged harasser

Please note that simply ignoring and/or walking away from such incidents or refusing to get involved is not acceptable and may even be seen as collusion with allowing it to continue within the policing culture.

4.3. Managers have a responsibility to:

- Implement the zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment
- Set a good example by their own behaviour
- Review their own team culture
- Ensure that there is a proactive and supportive working environment
- Make sure that staff know the standard of behaviour that is expected of them
- Intervene to stop bullying or harassment earlier and more decisively
- Record preventative steps
- Report promptly to Professional Standards (CCU or PSD) any complaint of harassment, or any incident of harassment witnessed by them and ensure that appropriate steps are taken to provide safeguarding to any person subjected to such behaviour. PSD have an on-call facility that can be contacted out of hours for advice.

4.4. The Force has a responsibility to ensure that sexual harassment will not be tolerated in the workplace and that complaints will be taken seriously, will be dealt with quickly and will be treated as serious disciplinary offences and may be considered as gross misconduct.

Additional Responsibilities for forces - Worker Protection (amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023.

4.5. The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 (Oct 26th, 2024) will impose a new legal obligation on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. This new proactive duty shifts the focus from merely responding to instances of harassment to actively working to prevent them.

4.6. To comply with this legislation we must demonstrate we have taken reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in our workplace.

4.7. Employers are expected to:

- Assess the risk of sexual harassment occurring during employment
- Identify preventive actions that could mitigate those risks
- Evaluate which steps are reasonable to implement
- Implement those steps into practice
- In addition to addressing sexual harassment between employees, the preventative duty includes a duty to prevent sexual harassment by third parties such as customers, clients, service users, patients, friends and family of colleagues, delegates at a conference and members of the public. Employers should assess the potential risks posed by third-party interactions and take reasonable steps to protect their employees in those situations of such harassment.

4.8. There are five practical steps that as a force we will carry out:

1. Conduct risk assessments - much like health and safety, as an employer we must proactively assess the risk of sexual harassment occurring in the workplace. This involves identifying high-risk areas, such as lone working environments or roles with high interaction with third parties and reviewing any existing preventive measures. Regular updates to the risk assessment are crucial as workplace dynamics change.

2. We will foster an inclusive workplace culture - prevention is better than cure. A positive, inclusive workplace culture that promotes respect and zero tolerance for harassment is essential. We will foster this by:

- > Ensuring visible support from our senior leadership.
- > Regularly communicating harassment policies.
- > Promoting a respectful and inclusive environment.

As per [Section 9](#) we will continue to ensure effective reporting and complaint mechanisms - employees must feel safe and supported in reporting harassment. We will establish clear, accessible reporting processes and ensure all complaints are taken seriously and handled professionally.

3. We will ensure continued messaging on our anonymous reporting tools to encourage more workers to come forward, knowing their concerns will be treated with confidentiality.

4. We will ensure we provide regular training - regular, tailored training on sexual harassment is essential for all staff, ensuring everyone understands what constitutes harassment, how to report it, and the consequences for those who breach policy. Beyond compliance, training should foster an environment of inclusivity and mutual respect.

5. We will monitor and evaluate progress - prevention efforts are not static. We will continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their harassment prevention measures.

On the 6th of April 2026, under the Worker Protection Act 2023, further protections came into effect which extends whistleblowing safeguards to protect workers who report sexual harassment. The law now makes it explicit that workers who raise concerns about sexual harassment will be protected under the whistleblowing legislation.

4.9. A Whistleblower is an individual who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the following.

4.10. Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. Please see the [Reporting of Wrongdoing Policy](#) for further information and reporting processes.

4.11. ACAS guidance requires employers to assess and mitigate third-party risks for example (home visits, custody interactions, public events).

5. General.

5.1. Sexual harassment can happen regardless of the individual's or alleged perpetrators gender identity or sexual orientation.

The force recognises however, that there are environments that are at a high risk of sexual harassment than others. Women are significantly more likely to be vulnerable to experiencing sexual harassment than men and that there is a gender equality issue in relation to sexual harassment. If sexualised behaviour and sexual objectification of women is perceived to be tolerated in the workplace, it is more likely that sexual harassment will occur.

The Force recognises that there is also an issue of intersecting protected characteristics in relation to sexual harassment, and that there may be additional concerns for Black or minoritised officers and staff, LGBTQ+, disabled and younger workers where the harassment may be bound up with other forms of discrimination.

5.2. Sexual harassment in the workplace may occur from:

- Someone you work with
- A manager, supervisor or someone else in a position of authority
- A member of the public/visitor

5.3. Sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviours including but not limited to:

- Sexual comments or jokes
- Displaying sexually graphic pictures, posters or photos
- Suggestive looks, staring or leering
- Propositions and sexual advances
- Making promises in return for sexual favours
- Sexual gestures
- Uninvited discussion of one's sex life or inappropriate discussion of sex life
- Sexual posts or contact on social media
- Spreading sexual rumours about a person
- Sending sexually explicit emails or text messages
- Unwelcome touching, hugging, massaging or kissing
- Predatory behaviour
- Criminal behaviour, including sexual assault, stalking, grooming, indecent exposure and sending offensive communications
- Coercion

5.4. Sexual harassment is usually directed at an individual or minority group, but it's not always the case. It may be perpetrated by one individual, a pair, a small group, a large group, or to permeate through a whole section of the force.

5.5. Sometimes there can be a culture of sexual harassment in a workplace that's not specifically aimed at one person – such as sharing sexual images and leering at members of the public. Someone could still make a complaint of sexual harassment in this situation.

5.6. An individual can experience sexual harassment from someone of the same or different sex and the recipient of the behaviour decides whether the approach was unacceptable or undignified.

5.7. Sexual harassment can be a one-off event and does not need to be directed at a person. It can be witnessed or overheard. Sexual conduct that has been welcomed or tolerated in the past may, over time, become unwanted and if it continues becomes harassment.

5.8. Forces will be liable for sexual harassment committed by their officers, staff or volunteers during their employment/volunteering unless they can show that they took all reasonable steps to prevent the harassment. 'In the course of employment' includes acts committed in any other place where work is conducted such as offsite, at a training course, conference or external meeting, as well as other circumstances in which the officer or staff member is not actually working but relate to work, such as at a leaving party or other social event.

6. Taking Action.

6.1. Wiltshire Police wants to provide a professional working environment for its officers, staff and volunteers and has a 'duty of care' to do so.

6.2. Wiltshire Police has a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and ensure there is support available for anyone who feels they have had their dignity violated or where an individual(s) has created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, whether intended or not.

6.3. Reasonable action includes:

- Setting standards and a culture so all are made aware that such behaviour will not be tolerated
- Monitoring that culture
- Providing opportunities for teams to discuss sexual harassment and the importance of tackling unlawful and discriminatory practices
- Proactive Prevention and recording of actions taken
- Ensuring there is a clear reporting process in place
- Ensuring accusations are fully investigated and appropriate action taken
- Ensuring support is available to individuals affected by sexual harassment
- Reactive reporting through anonymous reporting systems
- A continual risk assessment of sexual harassment in the workplace
- Investigation of reports of sexual harassment and monitoring of trends

6.4. Wiltshire Police will adopt an anticipatory, preventative approach.

7. Setting Standards.

7.1. Standards of professional behaviours are set by the [Police Conduct Regulations 2020](#), the [Police Staff Council Joint Circular 54](#) and the [Code of Ethics](#).

7.2. The [Code of Ethics](#) is a first for everyone who works in policing in England and Wales. It sets out the principles and standards of behaviour we expect to see from police professionals. It applies to every individual who works in policing, whether a warranted officer, member of police staff, volunteer or someone contracted to work in a police force.

7.3 For the purpose of this policy the following standards are highlighted:

- Members are expected to act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy
- Members should not abuse their powers or authority and respect the rights of all individuals
- All members are to challenge and report improper conduct

7.4. Everyone has the right to a working environment free of harassment, from others within the service and members of the public. Wiltshire Police will proactively support such a working environment.

7.5. A breach of such standards could damage public confidence in the police service.

7.6. Any breach of any of the standards could potentially lead to disciplinary action, which in serious cases may result in dismissal without notice.

8. Training.

8.1. Training and information is crucial to the success of policies on sexual harassment and in changing the workplace environment.

8.2. Training programmes should include:

- Details on the policy, its implementation, and promotion
- What misogyny, sexism and sexual harassment mean, their effects and consequences
- What victimisation means
- How to report incidents and unacceptable behaviour
- How to address issues of third-party harassment if applicable
- How to get support
- The help available to those being harassed

8.3. Records should be kept ensuring that everyone is trained and that they regularly receive refresher training. Officers and staff should also be encouraged to help each other, either by lending support or informing management of their concerns through the appropriate channels. The procedure should also make it clear that staff have a right to be accompanied by a staff association/trade union representative at all stages.

9. Clear Reporting Process.

9.1. Individuals are encouraged to come forward if they believe they have been harassed. Wiltshire Police has robust procedures in place designed to promptly take action.

9.2. Wherever possible, Wiltshire Police will ensure the individual and alleged harasser are not required to work together whilst the complaint is under investigation.

9.3. Individuals who have been harassed should raise the issue to their line manager, PSD or CCU. This can be via internal email or the [Safe2Say](#) anonymous reporting portal.

9.4. If an individual becomes aware of sexual harassment between a colleague and another individual they should raise the issue to their Supervisor or Manager. If they do not feel comfortable reporting it in this manner, please contact PSD or CCU as above, or for anonymous reporting via [Safe2Say](#).

9.5. Sexual harassment can also give rise to situations where there is coercive or predatory behaviour. If intimate relationships arise between colleagues, and any person has concerns about any predatory or coercive element to such relationship, they are encouraged to report the issue to their supervisor or line manager. As stated above, if someone does not feel comfortable in discussing with line management, an approach should be made to PSD, CCU or via Safe2Say.

9.6. Investigations into complaints or allegations of sexual harassment may also lead to a criminal investigation being instigated. Where there are concerns that a criminal act has taken place, advice must be taken from line management, a member of the Senior Leadership group, PSD or CCU. If a criminal act is suspected any action taken must avoid prejudicing the criminal investigation. Appropriate action will be taken depending on the circumstances.

9.7. Any investigations into allegations of sexual harassment by members of staff, officers, volunteers or contractors will be conducted by either PSD or CCU.

9.8. Confidentiality will be maintained, subject to any requirement to involve external agencies where a criminal offence may have been committed or where maintaining confidentiality would pose a risk to the person making the report, or to others.

9.9. Any person who raises concerns ("blows the whistle") about sexual harassment will be protected under whistleblowing legislation from both detriment and unfair dismissal.

[Employment Rights Act 2025: strengthening protections for whistleblowers factsheet.](#)

10. Misconduct Process.

10.1. The alleged perpetrator, if a member of Wiltshire Police, will be fairly investigated through the appropriate process.

10.2. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken very seriously. Wiltshire Police will handle any investigation in a way that's fair and sensitive to:

- The person who made the complaint
- Someone who witnessed it
- Someone who's been accused of sexual harassment

10.3. An individual who sexually harasses someone at work will be held responsible for their actions, and if a member of Wiltshire Police, face an investigation into their conduct at work which could result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal. In addition, they could be held personally liable to pay compensation in legal claims.

10.4. Tribunals may impose up to a 25% uplift in compensation where an employer has failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment.

11. Support and Advice for Individuals.

11.1. There are many sources of support available. These include:

- Line Managers
- HR Specialists and Advisors
- PSD and CCU staff
- Staff Association and Police Federation representatives
- Culture and Inclusion team
- Peer Supporters
- TRIM
- Reporting of Wrongdoing Policy
- Staff Support Networks

- Health and Wellbeing

12. Further Advice.

12.1. For further advice regarding this policy please contact the Detective Chief Inspector within PSD or CCU. Details can be found on the [PSD Portal on SharePoint](#).

LEGAL BASIS AND DRIVING FORCE.

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[Police \(Conduct\) Regulations 2020](#)

[Worker Protection \(Amendment of Equality Act 2010\) Act 2023](#)

[Abuse of Position of Trust for Sexual Purposes - NPCC Strategy 2021](#)

APPLICABILITY.

This policy applies to members of Wiltshire Police, which includes police staff, student police officers, police officers, special constabulary and volunteers, workers and contractors.

RELATED DOCUMENTS and Authorised Professional Practice.

[Code of Practice for Ethical Policing \(statutory\)](#)

[The Police Staff Council \(PSC\) handbook Part 2 section 6\(5\) Standards of Professional Behaviour](#)
(as amended by the Police Staff Council Circular 54)

[Abuse of Position of Trust for Sexual Purposes - NPCC Strategy 2021](#)

[NPCC Policy Significant Social Relationships](#)

[NPCC Appropriate Personal Relationships and Behaviours Guidance](#)

[Reporting of Wrongdoing Policy](#)

[Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure](#)

[R.A.S.S.O \(Rape and Serious Sexual Offences\) Policy](#)

[Non-Contact Sexual Offences Policy](#)

[APP > Professional Standards](#)

DATA PROTECTION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION.

Any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual recorded as a consequence of this policy will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulations and the [Data Protection Policy](#).

This document has been assessed as suitable for public release.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY IMPACT.

This policy has been drafted to comply with the principles of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010. Members of Wiltshire Police administering this policy are responsible for ensuring that in its application, those to whom the policy applies, shall not receive less favourable treatment because of their age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Revision History



Version	Date	Summary of Changes
2.0	20.03.2026	Scheduled review: Policy amended to bring it into line with the Worker Protection(Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 Requirement for Reactive reporting through anonymous reporting systems, A continual risk assessment of sexual harassment in the workplace, Investigation of reports of sexual harassment and monitoring of trends added.
2.0	07.04.2026	Policy amended to align with the NPCC Sexual Harassment Policy 2026 and the additional protections coming into force 06.04.2026 under the Worker Protection Act 2023 - paragraph 4.5 amended, new paragraphs 4.6 to 4.10 added.

