

# WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXX

Sent via email: XXX



## Police Headquarters

London Road  
DEVIZES  
Wiltshire  
SN10 2DN

**Date:** 20/08/26

**Our ref:** FOI 2026/719

Reply contact name is: XXX

Dear XXX

I write in connection with your request for information dated 03/08/26 concerning communications received from Alliance Defending Freedom (UK or International) about abortion facilities, services etc.

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:**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as extended to Northern Ireland public authorities where applicable), I request the following information.

For the period 1 January 2022 to the date this request is processed:

Has your force received any correspondence, legal letters, pre-action protocol letters, threatened legal claims, judicial review correspondence, complaints from solicitors, or other formal legal representations from:

Alliance Defending Freedom UK (ADF UK)

Alliance Defending Freedom International (ADF International)

Lawyers, solicitors or counsel acting on behalf of either organisation

relating to:

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abortion clinic "buffer zones" or safe access zones;

public spaces protection orders restricting activity around abortion facilities;

alleged silent prayer incidents;

offers of conversation, support or assistance near abortion facilities; or

the policing of protests, vigils or other activity connected with abortion services.

If yes, please provide:

the date(s) of the correspondence;

the name of the organisation or legal representative sending it;

a brief description of the matter;

whether the matter related to a specific individual; and

the outcome (for example: no action taken, complaint resolved, policy review, settlement, court proceedings, judicial review, ongoing matter, etc.).

Please provide copies of:

correspondence received from ADF UK, ADF International, or legal representatives acting on their behalf – including any original legal letters sent to the force

correspondence sent by the force in response;

legal letters before claim;

internal briefing notes prepared in response to such correspondence;

records of meetings or communications between the force and ADF UK/ADF International concerning these matters; and

any final outcome letters, settlement agreements (with personal information redacted as necessary), court judgments, or formal decisions arising from such matters.

Please provide the number of cases, incidents, complaints, legal claims or threatened claims involving ADF UK or ADF International concerning the subjects listed above

### **Response:**

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at section 1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at section 1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held. The release of information under Freedom of Information (FOI) is a release into the public domain and not just to the individual requesting the information. Once information is disclosed by FOI there is no

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control or limits as to who or how the information is shared with other individuals, therefore a release under FOI is considered a disclosure to the world in general.

Wiltshire Police are neither able to confirm nor deny whether any relevant information is held or not in relation to your Freedom of Information request, by virtue of the following exemptions:

### **Section 40(5) - Personal Information**

Section 40 is an absolute exemption and therefore there is no requirement to articulate the harm or conduct a Public Interest test. However, the force can state confirmation or denial of the information requested would constitute personal data and as a result, would contravene the first Data Protection Principle, which states in part to process personal data fairly and lawfully.

### **Section 31(3) - Law Enforcement**

Harm-

There are significant sensitivity and highly emotive engagement from both pro- and anti-abortion activists around the work at these facilities, and confirming or denying information is held, provides both sides with policing procedures that can be used for criminal activity against individuals and organisations whose beliefs differ from their own. Whilst the level of criminality may be considered to be of a lesser level than say, that of organised crime, by confirming or denying the information is held, puts members of the public, be it individuals demonstrating outside the facilities, women needing the service, employees, general members of the public in the vicinity or the infrastructure itself, in direct harm of criminal behaviour.

Even where no information is held, confirmation of that fact would be informative. Responses from individual Forces could be compared and aggregated with other information already available in the public domain, allowing highly motivated interested parties, both nationally and internationally, to build a broader picture of policing capabilities, vulnerabilities and security arrangements across the United Kingdom. This mosaic effect could enable those intent on disrupting policing activity, evading detection, gathering intelligence on law enforcement capabilities, or exploiting perceived weaknesses in safeguarding and protective measures around the facilities to make more informed decisions. Such outcomes would be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of crime, the apprehension or prosecution of offenders and the maintenance of public safety.

Public Interest Test-

Factors favouring confirmation or denial

There is public interest in promoting openness and transparency regarding policing activities and their relationships with external organisations and individuals. Confirming or denying whether information is held would assist public understanding of how policing protects its information and operational environments and would facilitate scrutiny of decisions

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concerning the engagement with external organisations and individuals. Disclosure would also contribute to public confidence by demonstrating accountability and unbiased engagement in relation to policing of the activities outside the facilities of interest.

#### Factors favouring neither confirming nor denying

There is significant public interest in protecting the ability of the police service to prevent and detect crime and to apprehend offenders. Confirming or denying whether information is held would reveal information about policing capabilities, security arrangements and operational resilience. Confirmation or denial could assist criminal action, frustrate police activity, obtain intelligence about policing capabilities, safeguarding or protective measures, or exploit perceived gaps in security arrangements in and around the facilities. There is a strong public interest in ensuring that policing tactics, capabilities and protective security measures remain effective and are not undermined through incremental disclosures.

#### Balance Test-

Whilst the Force recognises the public interest in openness, transparency and accountability, greater weight must be afforded to the significant public interest in protecting interested parties and the effectiveness of law enforcement. Confirming or denying whether information is held would reveal information about policing's protective and safeguarding arrangements, operational resilience, and security capabilities. Such information, when combined with material already in the public domain or information obtained from other Forces, could assist those seeking to identify vulnerabilities, evade detection, frustrate policing activity, or undermine measures designed to protect members of the public in and around these facilities.

The Force therefore considers that the potential prejudice arising from confirmation or denial would outweigh the benefits of increased transparency and, accordingly, the balance of the public interest favours maintaining neither confirm nor deny position under Section 31(3) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

No inference can be taken from this refusal that the information you have requested does or does not exist.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Wiltshire Police, 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.

Exemptions applied:

Section 40(5) – Personal Information

Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

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I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed on 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**

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



### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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/>**