

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXX
By email

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

Date 17th September 2026

Our Ref FOI 2026-809

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 2nd September 2026, concerning vehicle theft and recovery rates.

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 Business Intelligence and Vehicle Recovery departments 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:

Please provide the following information covering the most recent 12-month period for which complete data is available:

- The total number of vehicle thefts recorded.
- The number of vehicle thefts identified as involving keyless entry, relay attack, or any equivalent offence code or marker used to identify keyless vehicle thefts (where separately recorded).
- The vehicle recovery rate for the same period (or, if recovery rate is not routinely recorded, the number of stolen vehicles recovered).

I would like the information to be provided in CSV or Microsoft Excel format, containing the following columns:

- Total vehicle thefts
- Keyless vehicle thefts
- Vehicle recovery rate

If your force does not separately record whether a theft involved keyless entry or relay attack, please confirm this within your response.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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 for question 2 - is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Wiltshire Police do not have an automatic way to establish if a vehicle theft involved the use of keyless entry or relay attack. To establish this information would require manually interrogating each 'aggravated vehicle taking', 'aggravated vehicle taking (driving/being carried) offences causing damage to vehicle and/or other property under £5000', 'theft of a motor vehicle' and 'unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle' offence for the requested period. Between 1st September 2025 and 31st August 2026, for these offences, there were 623 occurrences. If 2 minutes were spent checking each occurrence log and/or accompanying documents to establish whether keyless entry or relay attack was used, which is likely an underestimation, it would take more than 20 hours to complete this task.

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 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:

Q1 : The total number of vehicle thefts recorded.

623

Q3 : The vehicle recovery rate for the same period (or, if recovery rate is not routinely recorded, the number of stolen vehicles recovered).

Stolen vehicles recovered in the last 12 months = 265

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