WILTSHIRE POLICE

XXXXXXXX
By email

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

Date 12th November 2026 **Our Ref** FOI 2026-1066

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 9th November 2026, concerning stolen and recovered bicycles.

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 department 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:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following information regarding bicycle thefts for the past three full financial years (2023/24, 2024/25, and 2025/26):

1) The total number of bicycles reported stolen in your policing area during each of the past three financial years (broken down by financial year).
2) Of those reported stolen, the total number of bicycles that were subsequently recovered by the police in each financial year (broken down by financial year).
3) Please provide a breakdown of this data (both thefts and recoveries) by policing district, borough, or town within your force's jurisdiction.

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 in relation to question 2 - is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. There is not a way to establish whether a stolen bicycle was recovered without manually interrogating each occurrence. For the period requested, there were a total of 1494 occurrences which would need reviewing. If only one minute were spent per record, which is likely an underestimation, it would take in excess of 24 hours to complete this task and is therefore exempt from disclosure.

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:

Please note:

- This data was obtained using the number of occurrences in the crime sub-group 'Bicycle Theft'.
- Blank cells in the table indicate a 'zero' figure.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following information regarding bicycle thefts for the past three full financial years (2023/24, 2024/25, and 2025/26):

1) The total number of bicycles reported stolen in your policing area during each of the past three financial years (broken down by financial year).

3) Please provide a breakdown of this data (both thefts and recoveries) by policing district, borough, or town within your force's jurisdiction.

Distinct Count of OccNo	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Grand Total
AMESBURY	5	6	7	18
ASHTON KEYNES			2	2
ATWORTH	1			1
AVEBURY			1	1
BISHOPDOWN		1		1
BOWERHILL	13	1	1	15
BRADFORD ON AVON	5	2	12	19
BULFORD	1	2	1	4
BULFORD CAMP		1	1	2
BURBAGE	1			1
BUSHTON			1	1
CALNE	5	4	5	14
CHIPPENHAM	22	19	21	62
CORSHAM	2	2	2	6
CORSLEY	1	2	3	6
CRICKLADE	1	2	1	4
CROCKERTON	1	2	7	10
DEVIZES	24	11	8	43
DOWNTON		1		1
DURRINGTON	1			1
EDINGTON	1			1
GREAT BEDWYN			1	1
GREAT HINTON			1	1
HAMPTWORTH		1		1
HILPERTON	2	3		5
KINGTON ST MICHAEL			1	1
LARKHILL	3	2		5
LAVERSTOCK			1	1
LUDGERSHALL			1	1
LYNEHAM	1			1
M4			1	1
MALMESBURY			1	1
MARLBOROUGH		1	2	3
MELKSHAM	15	19	12	46
MERE	1			1
MIDDLE WINTERSLOW		1		1
NUNTON			1	1
OLD SARUM		1	2	3
PERHAM DOWN		1		1
PEWSEY	8	1	1	10
PURTON		1	1	2
ROWDE	1		1	2
ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT		4	1	5
SALISBURY	47	60	86	193

SEEND			1	1
SEMINGTON	1			1
STAVERTON			1	1
STRATFORD SUB CASTLE	1			1
SWINDON	334	242	253	829
TIDWORTH	3	5	2	10
TROWBRIDGE	40	33	23	96
WARMINSTER	9	5	22	36
WESTBURY	3	8	4	15
WILTON	2	1		3
ZEALS		1		1
Grand Total	**555**	**446**	**493**	**1494**

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