

8 August 2024

FOI Ref 16515

Request - You asked us the following:

1. The total number of cars stolen in the Staffordshire Police authority in the last year, by postcode, including make and model of vehicle where possible.
2. The total number of car crashes reported in the Staffordshire Police authority in the last year, by postcode, including make and model of all involved vehicles where possible.

We received your request on 13/02/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

Staffordshire Police discloses/withholds the following information.

1. The total number of cars stolen in the Staffordshire Police authority in the last year, by postcode, including make and model of vehicle where possible. – **Withheld.**
2. The total number of car crashes reported in the Staffordshire Police authority in the last year, by postcode, including make and model of all involved vehicles where possible. – **Withheld.**

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 2,000 occurrences of 'theft of a motor vehicle'. Within our crime/occurrence recording system there exists no specific field within which the type of vehicle stolen is routinely recorded; this would be recorded within the main body of the occurrence report. In order to ascertain whether the vehicle stolen was a car, the record for each offence would require manual review. In addition, although the make and model of a vehicle is often recorded, there are instances within the dataset whereby the make and model of the vehicle stolen is not recorded and therefore this would require further review. Furthermore, some thefts may occur from roads without a postal code – motorways or trunk roads for example.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 100 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by some considerable margin.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- **Section 12(1) where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit.**
Section 12(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 prescribed limit'.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, in order to comply with this obligation please see below.

If your request was refined, Staffordshire Police are able to provide the number of vehicles stolen in the last year by Local Police Team Area. Staffordshire Police would also be able to provide the total number of car crashes recorded on our systems in the last year by road name or number.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response.

If you would like us to carry out a review of our response, please let us know within two months of the date of receipt of this email, review requests should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

Please remember to quote the reference number in any future communications.

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit