

17 September 2024

FOI Ref 17137

Request - You asked us the following:

As a resident in the Lichfield area we are part of a number of Facebook groups for the Community... it is becoming clear, and having been a victim first hand of vehicle theft, particularly motorhomes / campervans, that the Police (Staffordshire) are particularly impotent in tracing, recovery and catching / breaking up criminals and the chain required for vehicle theft disposal. From my personal experience the words I would use to describe them would be 'nice, slow, ineffective'.

I write to you to ask what is the policy on this matter, what the statistics are for vehicle theft, by type of vehicle, recovery figures, what happens to / where do stolen vehicles go....

At present there is certainly a loss of confidence in the ability of the Staffordshire police, and a wider matter for the UK as a whole in actually being effective in deterring, breaking up, disrupting, catching and prosecuting criminals and associated gangs and the recovery of vehicles

CLARIFICATION RECEIVED 09/09/2024

Ideally I would like 10 years of information, however I am uncertain how much you hold, what data / fields you hold / can share and what format you can supply it it.

Please can you provide some detail around this before fully processing the request... Ideally I would like to use XL to review and analyse the data

We received your request on 09/08/2024 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.

- I write to you to ask what is the policy on this matter, what the statistics are for vehicle theft, by type of vehicle, recovery figures, what happens to / where do stolen vehicles go

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can easily retrieve information from our systems to answer the theft by type of vehicle. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 16,270 occurrences. In order to ascertain the type of vehicle, each offence would require manual review. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 2 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 542 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by some considerable margin.



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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.

In order to assist in refining your request, data can be provided for where the offence has been recorded as the 'Theft Act 1968, Section 12'. Likewise, we may be able to provide the total of vehicles seized for recovery for 2023 and 2024 and what happens to stolen vehicles.

Please note, Staffordshire Police do not hold a specific policy for vehicle theft.

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