

7 November 2024

FOI Ref 17408

Request - You asked us the following:

I am writing in relation to a request under the Freedom of Information Act. Specifically, I would like to ask the following:

1. How many people has your force arrested on suspicion of arson in 2024 (up until the 31st September), and every year since 2014. Please can yearly figures be broken down by month.
2. How many people have been charged with simple arson following an arrest by your force in 2024 (up until the 31st September), and every year since 2014. Please can yearly figures be broken down by month and ages of the persons charged.
3. How many people have been charged with arson with intent to endanger life following an arrest by your force in 2024 (up until the 31st September), and every year since 2014. Please can yearly figures be broken down by month and ages of the persons charged.

We received your request on 28/10/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Staffordshire Police's response to your enquiry is as follows:

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

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.

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

This is because on 20th May 2020 Staffordshire Police implemented a new case management system. This system brought data from a number of legacy systems into one to provide a single nominal record, including the custody system. The old custody system has now been decommissioned and as a result there is no search facility to be able to retrieve the requested data. It would entail searching thousands of records to establish if it fitted the criteria of the request. To achieve this task would exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold stipulated by the Freedom of Information Act.

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If the requirement for data prior to May 2020 was withdrawn, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide the following:

- The number of people arrested on suspicion of arson, broken down by month and year between May 2020 and September 2024.
- The number of people charged with arson following an arrest, broken down by month and year between May 2020 and September 2024 and broken down by age of those charged.
- The number of people charged with arson with intent to endanger life following an arrest, broken down by month and year between May 2020 and September 2024 and broken down by age of those charged.

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