

9 October 2024

FOI Ref 17250

Request - You asked us the following:

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

- In the financial years, 2021/22, 22/23, 23/24 and 24/25 (Up to 10.09.24), how many instances of knife possession offences by women has been recorded by your force recorded? Please provide a breakdown by financial year.
- For the same financial years, how many of these women found to have committed a knife possession offence were under the age of 18? Please provide a breakdown by financial year.
- Please detail the youngest to have committed a knife possession offence in each financial year.

We received your request on 11/09/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police holds the requested information.

- In the financial years, 2021/22, 22/23, 23/24 and 24/25 (Up to 10.09.24), how many instances of knife possession offences by women has been recorded by your force recorded? Please provide a breakdown by financial year. – **Partially disclosed, please see accompanying file titled 'FOI 17250 Knife Possession Offences Data.PDF'.**
- For the same financial years, how many of these women found to have committed a knife possession offence were under the age of 18? Please provide a breakdown by financial year. – **Partially disclosed, please see accompanying file titled 'FOI 17250 Knife Possession Offences Data.PDF'.**
- Please detail the youngest to have committed a knife possession offence in each financial year. – **Disclosed, please see accompanying file titled 'FOI 17250 Knife Possession Offences Data.PDF'.**

The following exemptions have been applied:

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

- Section 30(1)(a)(b) – Criminal Investigations
- Section 30 is qualified and class based and, as such, we are required to apply the public interest test.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 30(1)(a)(b)

Disclosure of the information would improve the public's knowledge and understanding of the investigatory process and, as all police investigations are publicly funded, would show how public funds are being spent.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 30(1)(a)(b)

Disclosure of the requested information would prejudice how investigations are carried out in the future. Staffordshire Police is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. Any release of information relating to ongoing investigations could prejudice and undermine those investigations. The prevention and detection of such matters could therefore be hindered and therefore risk interference with evidence, which could have detrimental impact on future investigations. In addition, the right to a fair trial could be undermined.

Balance test

Disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is a release of information to the world in general and not an individual applicant. Having considered the public interest factors we are required to determine whether on balance the factors favouring disclosure outweigh those which are against disclosure. It is our view that the factors favouring disclosure do not outweigh those which favour non-disclosure.

Please note that this data has been provided to the best of our ability, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software. Additional offences may have been recorded during these timescales but are awaiting finalisation and input onto these systems and would not be present within this dataset.

Every effort is made to ensure that the data presented is accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that this has been extracted from multiple sources, developed for specific policing purposes, for which data extraction methods have not been specifically designed to directly correlate with the terminology of this request. Therefore, the data presented is subject to the inaccuracies and idiosyncrasies inherent in any large-scale recording system.

As a consequence, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of this data, so as to not misrepresent the whole or any part of the data disclosed.

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:



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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