

12 November 2024

FOI Ref 17039

Request - You asked us the following:

1. Are heritage crimes recorded in their own category or in a general category such as theft
2. How many of these heritage crimes as described (examples listed below) has your force recorded for the year 2023 (from 1st of January 2023 to 31st of December 2023)
 - Theft
 - Looting
 - Fraud
 - Violation of national patrimony laws
 - Burglary
3. How does your force respond to the crimes listed below (these are the most common crime types linked to cultural heritage trafficking) in relation to heritage crime as described
 - Theft
 - Looting
 - Fraud
 - Violation of national patrimony laws
 - Burglary
4. What is the most common outcome to heritage crimes investigations in the year of 2023
 - Arrest
 - Conviction
 - No charge
5. What locations in your forces area are the most targeted for heritage crimes in the year of 2023
6. What items are the most targeted in your forces area for heritage crimes in the year of 2023 – such as historical coins, historical artefacts, art works, lead roofing from churches
7. Are groups or individuals committing heritage crimes in your forces area in the year 2023
8. Are there links to organised crime in your forces area in relation heritage crime in the year 2023
9. Have items stolen in heritage crimes from England been retrieved in your forces area in the year 2023
10. Have items stolen in heritage crimes from abroad been retrieved in your forces area in the year 2023
11. Does your force work with international partners such as Interpol when dealing with heritage crimes

We received your request on 12/07/2024 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:

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 18,000 occurrences recorded of crimes that may or may not be linked to heritage crimes. These include offences of theft, burglary, fraud, and those relating to counterfeit goods. In order to ascertain whether the crime involved articles that may have historical or cultural value, the record for each offence would require manual review.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 4 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 1,200 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.

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.

Please note that Staffordshire Police would be able to provide a response for questions 8 and 11 if the remaining questions were withdrawn.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Staffordshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Or by Post to:

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

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Central Disclosure Unit within two months of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Central Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

ICO Website for complaints link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit