

14 April 2025

FOI Ref 21156

Request - You asked us the following:

What department currently deals with allegations of wildlife crime within your force?

How many officers/staff are currently employed by your force?

How many incidents of wildlife crime (including but not limited to hunting, baiting, wildlife disturbance, poaching, illegal fishing, egg theft, offences against badgers, bats, birds of prey) have been reported to the force within the last 5 years?

How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in a charge for the suspect within the last 5 years?

How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in a conviction within the last 5 years?

How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in Proceeds of Crime Act penalties following conviction within the last 5 years?

How many officers/staff members within your force have been trained in wildlife crime investigation?

How many officers/staff within your force are Accredited Financial Investigators?

We received your request on 31/03/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police holds some of the requested information.

- What department currently deals with allegations of wildlife crime within your force? **Disclosed, most incidents are dealt with by Rural, wildlife and heritage trained local response officers or officers and PCSO's within our local neighbourhood police teams. If there are reports of serious organised crime, the Criminal Investigation Department may get involved, the incident will be reviewed by a detective for advice and guidance or support from our new County Pro Active and Rural Teams in the south of the county and Newcastle/Moorlands.**
- How many officers/staff are currently employed by your force? – **Disclosed, Police Officers (including PCSO's) 2201 and Police Staff 1646.**
- How many incidents of wildlife crime (including but not limited to hunting, baiting, wildlife disturbance, poaching, illegal fishing, egg theft, offences against badgers, bats, birds of prey) have been reported to the force within the last 5 years? – **Disclosed, 1,396.**
- How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in a charge for the suspect within the last 5 years? – **Disclosed, 0.**

Please be advised this data has been extracted from our incident recording system, whereby the call type description has been recorded as 'wildlife' and where this has been transferred onto our crime recording system where a 'charged' outcome has been recorded.



- How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in a conviction within the last 5 years? – **Not held.**
- How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in Proceeds of Crime Act penalties following conviction within the last 5 years? – **Not held.**
- How many officers/staff members within your force have been trained in wildlife crime investigation? - **Disclosed, 76.**
- How many officers/staff within your force are Accredited Financial Investigators? – **Disclosed, we have 11 Financial investigators Accredited and 3 currently being trained to be Financial investigators.**

Please note that there are 3 offences that are still being investigated so with regard to these cases we are citing Section 30(1)(a)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Investigations conducted by Public Authorities.

The following exemption has been applied:

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



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Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the Staffordshire Police website although personal details are not included.

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.

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.

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.

Staffordshire Police do not hold conviction data. We would advise that you approach the Government HM Courts & Tribunals service website.

Please find below links to previously disclosed HMCTS data and details upon how to submit a further Freedom of Information request to the Government HM Courts and Tribunals Service for this information.

Make an FOI request - [how to make a request](#).

Check [our previous releases](#) to see if we've already answered your question - [our previous releases](#)

Make a new request by using the details below.

FOI requests

Disclosure Team

Postal Point 10.38, Floor 10

102 Petty France

London

SW1H 9AJ

United Kingdom

Email : data.access@justice.gov.uk

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



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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

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



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