



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

21 July 2025

FOI Ref 21538

Request - You asked us the following:

1. Arrests and Stop and Search

- Annual number of arrests for cannabis and cocaine-related offences, disaggregated by:
 - o Possession
 - o Possession with intent to supply (PWITS)
 - o Trafficking
 - o Production/cultivation (for cannabis)
 - o Number of stop and searches where cannabis or cocaine was the suspected substance (with outcomes, where available)

2. Drug Seizures

- Annual quantity of cannabis and cocaine seized (kg/grams)
- Street or estimated value if recorded
- Location categories (e.g. public space, home or vehicle)
- If applicable, please confirm the internal classification or coding systems your force uses to record these seizures and offences (e.g. offence codes, controlled substance tags used to record your internal categories).

Please also distinguish, where possible, between the following types of cannabis and cocaine, as follows:

For cannabis:

- Resin forms (e.g. hashish), including THC% levels if known
- Herbal forms under 10% THC (e.g. ganja or "legacy" cannabis)
- High THC herbal forms (e.g. skunk, sinsemilla), with THC levels of 10% and above
- Synthetic cannabinoids (SSCs) such as Spice, K2, or HHC
- THC edible products containing over 1mg of tetrahydrocannabinol per product
- Known street-names of substances seized with THC and CBD levels, if recorded

For cocaine:

- Powdered cocaine
- Crack cocaine (rock form)

If your records do not routinely differentiate by these categories, please confirm this in your response.

3. Demographics and Geographic Data of Offenders

- Age breakdowns of individuals arrested or charged for the above offences (e.g. under 18, 18–24, 25–34, etc.)
- Gender and ethnicity breakdowns, where collected
- The borough names or policing districts controlled by your force
- Total number of cannabis or cocaine associated offences recorded within each borough / district

4. Outcomes and Classification Frameworks

- Annual number and description of disposal types used for the above cannabis or cocaine offences: e.g. warnings, community resolutions, cautions, charges or other outcomes



- Any associated offence codes, outcome codes, or internal classification systems used to record cannabis or cocaine-related offences.
- If these are recorded within a database or information system (e.g. crime recording systems), please include the relevant code labels or field descriptors.

5. Drug-Linked Secondary Offences

Any recorded incidents where cannabis or cocaine may not have been the primary offence but is noted as a contributing factor in the following offences (but not limited to):

- Violence against the person
- Domestic abuse-related incidents
- Public order or anti-social behaviour offences
- Weapons offences
- Youth offending charges or safeguarding referrals

Please include any internal tags, flags, or annotations used to denote drug involvement in these offences.

6. Drug-Related Motoring Offences

- Annual number of arrests or charges under Section 5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988
- Annual number of positive roadside swab tests for cannabis or cocaine with relation to the above offences
- Demographic breakdowns of motoring offenders (e.g. age, gender)
- Any recorded collisions or accidents involving cannabis or cocaine use

- o Please indicate the substance detected
- o Method of detection (e.g. swab, blood test)
- o Resulting legal outcome where known

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7. Online and Parcel-Based Drug Distribution

- Any measurable data showing how often social media platforms (e.g. Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram), websites or dark web marketplaces were used to facilitate cannabis or cocaine sales
- Actual or estimated number of cannabis or cocaine sales conducted via digital / online means
- Number of seizures or interceptions involving parcel-based drug distribution (e.g. Royal Mail, courier services, drop boxes, etc.)

8. Encrypted Communication Devices

Please provide the number of arrests and charges involving the use of the following encrypted communication platforms or modified devices (including discontinued services), specifically in relation to cannabis or cocaine offences:

- EncroChat
- Sky ECC
- ANOM / ANØM
- Phantom Secure
- Ciphre or other modified encrypted handsets

Offences may include:

- Possession
- Possession with intent to supply (PWITS)
- Trafficking or importation into the UK



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Also, please provide:

- Number of encrypted devices seized and linked to cannabis or cocaine-related offences
- Number of prosecutions where encrypted messages, images or drop-coordinates were used as evidence
- Whether your force uses any internal tags, codes or intelligence flags to track encrypted device use in drug-related offences - please include these, if available

9. Acquisitive Offences with Drug-Linked Motivation

- Any recorded acquisitive offences committed where cannabis or cocaine were contributing factors, including (but not limited to):

- o Theft (including shoplifting or vehicle-related theft)
- o Burglary (residential and non-residential)
- o Robbery and aggravated robbery
- o Fraud or deception offences

Where available, please indicate whether these were linked to drug-seeking behaviour or substance dependence (e.g. flagged as offences committed to fund a drug habit)

10. Harassment and Abuse Offences Involving Drug Influence

- Any recorded harassment, intimidation, or verbal abuse offences where cannabis or cocaine were noted as contributing factors, including:

- o Towards members of the public
- o Towards police officers or other emergency services personnel

Where applicable, please include any internal tags or narrative indicators used to denote behavioural intoxication or drug influence.

11. Format and Timeframe

With respect to all of the above, please provide the data on a year-by-year basis for the period 2000–2024. Where available, I would really appreciate any data tables, graphs, or charts that visually present this data in various quantitative and/or qualitative forms, in addition to raw data as requested.

We received your request on 04/07/2025 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 exemption has 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.

Additionally, for questions 2, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10, and parts of questions 1 and 6, there is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 1, there have been in excess of 24,000 stop searches conducted, each stop search would need to be manually reviewed in order to determine whether cannabis or cocaine was the suspected substance. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 1,200 hours.

For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 2, there have been in excess of 19,000 items of property seized with a classification of 'drugs and paraphernalia'. In order to determine the quantity of cannabis and cocaine, the value, where it was seized from and to distinguish the types of cannabis and cocaine seized, the record for each item of property would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 950 hours.

For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 5, there have been in excess of 268,000 offences categorised as weapons offences, public order offences or violence offences. In order to determine if cannabis or cocaine was recorded as a contributing factor, the record for each offence would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 22,333 hours.

For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 6, there have been in excess of 44,000 road traffic collisions recorded. In order to determine if cannabis or cocaine was recorded as a contributing factor, the record for each offence would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 3,666 hours.

For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 7, there have been in excess of 1,900 cocaine and cannabis supply, production and possession with intent to supply offences. In order to determine whether social media was used to facilitate sales of cocaine or cannabis, and the number of seizures/interceptions of parcel-based drug distributions, the record for each offence would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 158 hours.

For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 8, there have been in excess of 1,600 arrest relating to cocaine and cannabis offences. In order to determine whether an encrypted communication platform or modified device was used as part of the offence, the record for each offence would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 133 hours.



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For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 9, there have been in excess of 88,000 offences recorded as 'fraud', 'burglary', 'theft' or 'robbery'. In order to determine whether a drug offence was a contributing factor, the record for each offence would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 4,400 hours.

For the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024, for question 10, there have been in excess of 73,000 offences relating to harassment and intimidation. In order to determine whether these offences involved the influence of drugs, the record for each offence would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 3,650 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.

If your request was amended, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide the following information for the time period 20/05/2020 – 31/12/2024:

The number of arrests for cannabis and cocaine offences, broken down by year, age of detainee, gender of detainee, ethnicity of detainee, place of arrest and the disposal (outcome).

The number of arrests under Section 5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988, broken down by year, age of detainee and gender of detainee.

Please note that you can find information relating to the areas Staffordshire Police covers at the following link: <https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/police-forces/staffordshire-police/areas/staffordshire-police/au/about-us/force-structure/>

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

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



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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