

10 July 2025

FOI Ref 21548

Request - You asked us the following:

- Within the last 5 years, how many 'big cat' sightings have been recorded within the counties of Staffordshire? (This would exclude anything regarding 'domestic-size' cats, with the report potentially mentioning either panther/black leopard, lynx or puma/mountain lion-type sightings/encounters)
 - o Broken down by month and location if possible.
- Could the approx. location of each sighting please be disclosed, as well as whether an officer followed-up, in-person, on the report - and if there was any outcome to the animal

We received your request on 08/07/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police holds the requested information.

- Within the last 5 years, how many 'big cat' sightings have been recorded within the counties of Staffordshire? (This would exclude anything regarding 'domestic-size' cats, with the report potentially mentioning either panther/black leopard, lynx or puma/mountain lion-type sightings/encounters) – **Disclosed, 3.**
- Broken down by month and location if possible. – **Disclosed,**
February 2022 – Tamworth x2
May 2022 – Cannock Chase x1
- Could the approx. location of each sighting please be disclosed, as well as whether an officer followed-up, in-person, on the report - and if there was any outcome to the animal – **Disclosed,**
1. Amington, Tamworth – not followed up by an Officer, no outcome to the animal.
2. Amington, Tamworth – not followed up by an Officer, no outcome to the animal.
3. Wimblebury, Cannock – resourced by an Officer, no outcome to the animal.

Please be advised that the data has been provided by carrying out a free text word search in the incident log for the words 'panther', 'black leopard', 'lynx', 'puma' and 'mountain lion' in the time period requested. These have then been manually checked to establish whether they fit the criteria of the request.

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 incidents 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.

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

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.



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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