

11 March 2025

FOI Ref 17804

Request - You asked us the following:

1. the records for theft/taking of a motor vehicle from

- a. 01/01/2023 to 31/12/2023 and
- b. 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024

(inclusive) month on month i.e. the number of vehicle thefts notified each month, in EXCEL FORMAT, detailing:

2. the date of theft

3. about the vehicle, its:

- a. the make
- b. model
- c. categorisation i.e. car, HGV, moped etc

2. whether the vehicles concerned have been recovered 3. the month of recovery held against the record

4. the age of the vehicle*

*I am only seeking characters 3 and 4 of the VRM; the two numbers (the age identifier. For example, 51 represents September 2001. The age identifier changes every six months in March and September. Where a cherished/personal, none age related plate, these characters will suffice - in Excel, I will be able to sort the data

Clarification received on 10/02/2025

Should any of the information not be in a readily retrievable format i.e. could give rise to a costs (s12) exemption, please advise and remove the request number.

We received your request on 10/02/2025 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.

- 1. the records for theft/taking of a motor vehicle from
 - a. 01/01/2023 to 31/12/2023 and
 - b. 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024

- (inclusive) month on month i.e. the number of vehicle thefts notified each month, in EXCEL FORMAT, detailing:
- 2. the date of theft
- 3. about the vehicle, its:
 - a. the make
 - b. model
 - c. categorisation i.e. car, HGV, moped etc
- 2. whether the vehicles concerned have been recovered 3. the month of recovery held against the record
- 4. the age of the vehicle*
- *I am only seeking characters 3 and 4 of the VRM; the two numbers (the age identifier. For example, 51 represents September 2001. The age identifier changes every six months in March and September. Where a cherished/personal, none age related plate, these characters will suffice - in Excel, I will be able to sort the data
- Disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 17804 Vehicle Theft Data'.
- Clarification received on 10/02/2025
Should any of the information not be in a readily retrievable format i.e. could give rise to a costs (s12) exemption, please advise and remove the request number.

Please be advised that the data has been provided in uncorrelated tables to avoid identification.

Please note that there are 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. These have been included in the overall figures for question 1 but with regards to any further breakdown these have been removed under Section 30.

Please be advised that the data has been provided for the offences of 'Theft of a motor vehicle' and 'Unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle' from 1st January 2023 until 31st December 2024. The vehicle make, model and type has been included, however please note that these are free text fields and are not compulsory to complete therefore where there are blank spaces, no data has been input onto the recording system. The third and fourth digits of the vehicle registration plate have also been provided however please be advised that these may not always relate to a number/year due to personal registration plates. The month and year of the recovery (where applicable) has been provided, where the field is blank a date has not been recorded on the system used to service this 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 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.

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.

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.

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



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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