

20 March 2025

FOI Ref 17907

Request - You asked us the following:

I am writing to you under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 to request the following from your police force:

Please state how many instances of illegal killing of foxes (or lethal injuries that led to the fox having to be euthanised by veterinarians) have been reported to Staffordshire Police during the years of 2022, 2023, and 2024.

For each incident, please provide (1) a description as to what happened, (2) when the incident was reported, and (3) what the outcome was (e.g. did it result in any prosecutions or criminal convictions).

For each incident, could you also specify which illegal method was used (e.g. self-locking snares, other improper snares, air weapons that did not kill the fox immediately, spring traps, and others as stated here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foxes-moles-and-mink-how-to-protect-your-property-from-damage#illegal-pest-control-methods>).

Please provide the information in the form of an Excel sheet, broken down by year and month.

Clarification received on 19/03/2025

Yes, please treat my request under the Freedom of Information Act.

We received your request on 28/02/2025 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.

- I am writing to you under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 to request the following from your police force:
- Please state how many instances of illegal killing of foxes (or lethal injuries that led to the fox having to be euthanised by veterinarians) have been reported to Staffordshire Police during the years of 2022, 2023, and 2024. – **Disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 17907 Illegal Fox Killings Data'.**
- For each incident, please provide (1) a description as to what happened, (2) when the incident was reported, and (3) what the outcome was (e.g. did it result in any prosecutions or criminal



convictions). – **Disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled ‘FOI 17907 Illegal Fox Killings Data’.**

- For each incident, could you also specify which illegal method was used (e.g. self-locking snares, other improper snares, air weapons that did not kill the fox immediately, spring traps, and others as stated here: – **Disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled ‘FOI 17907 Illegal Fox Killings Data’.**
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foxes-moles-and-mink-how-to-protect-your-property-from-damage#illegal-pest-control-methods>).
- Please provide the information in the form of an Excel sheet, broken down by year and month.
- Clarification received on 19/03/2025
Yes, please treat my request under the Freedom of Information Act.

Please be advised that a search has been carried out on our incident management database for all incidents that include the word ‘Fox’, these have been manually checked to establish whether they are relevant to this request. Only incidents that specifically state that a fox has been killed have been included where it has been considered to be an illegal killing.

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.



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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

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