

14 May 2025

FOI Ref 21342

Request - You asked us the following:

I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

1. For 2024
 - a. 1. Using the key words 'Roblox', 'Fortnite', 'Clash of Clans', 'world of Warcraft', 'Minecraft' and 'FIFA', the number of reports of crimes involving online computer games.
 - b. The category of offence under which the report was logged - for example sexual activity of a child under 13
2. For 2023
 - a. 1. Using the key words 'Roblox', 'Fortnite', 'Clash of Clans', 'world of Warcraft', 'Minecraft' and 'FIFA', the number of reports of crimes involving online computer games.
 - b. The category of offence under which the report was logged - for example sexual activity of a child under 13
3. For 2022
 - a. 1. Using the key words 'Roblox', 'Fortnite', 'Clash of Clans', 'world of Warcraft', 'Minecraft' and 'FIFA', the number of reports of crimes involving online computer games.
 - b. The category of offence under which the report was logged - for example sexual activity of a child under 13

Please can I have these sent to me electronically on a spreadsheet.

If this request is too wide or unclear, I would be grateful if you could contact me as I understand that under the Act, you are required to advise and assist requesters. If any of this information is already in the public domain, please can you direct me to it, with page references and URLs if necessary. I would like to remind you of your duty under section 16 of the Freedom of Information act to offer such advice and assistance on a request if necessary.

If the release of any of this information is prohibited on the grounds of breach of confidence, I ask that you supply me with copies of the confidentiality agreement and remind you that information should not be treated as confidential if such an agreement has not been signed.

I understand that you are required to respond to my request within the 20 working days after you receive this letter. I would be grateful if you could confirm in writing that you have received this request.

We received your request on 12/05/2025 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:

There is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 7,500 occurrences which have no recorded text within the MO field of the Occurrence report. Therefore, a free text search cannot be performed for these records and a manual review of each record would be required to determine if each conformed with your request. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 4 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 500 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI 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.

In order to assist in refining your request, data could be disclose for the time period requested where a free text search has been performed for those records within our database where the MO field firstly contains text, and secondly where this includes 'Roblox', 'Fortnite', 'Clash of Clans', 'world of Warcraft', 'Minecraft' and 'FIFA' and whether the crime involved online computer games. However it would be of note that this would be limited to only those crimes within our database containing text within the MO field of the occurrence.

If required, this data could be broken down by the offence type. However, please note further exemptions may apply.

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:



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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