

27 February 2026

FOI Ref 22529

Request - You asked Staffordshire Police (SP) the following:

1. In the period from 1.1.25 to 31.12.25 how many times has your force carried out an operation to see if drugs have been present at a football stadium within your area? By this I mean an operation to check if drug residues have been left behind at a building or facility indicating that drug taking has gone on at the venue at some date in the past.
2. If so please state the (i) venue where the tests were carried out, (ii) the area within the venue where the tests were carried out and (iii) details of the types of drugs that were detected/or if no drugs were detected.
3. In the period from 1.1.25 to 31.12.25 how many times has your force seized illegal drugs from people at a football stadium within your area?
4. If so please state the (i) the stadium venue where the drugs were seized, (ii) the quantity and type of drug that was seized.

SP received your request on 13/02/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP'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 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 SP can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. There are in excess of 30 football grounds or stadium class venues across the force area. In order to determine whether any operations and tests were carried out, the types of drugs that were detected, the type of drugs seized and the quantity. Each Local Policing Team would need to be contacted and every operation reviewed. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by a considerable margin.

Advice and assistance

In order to assist in refining your request, data could be provided for your requested time period for questions 1,2,3 and 4 for the three largest professional stadiums:



- Bet365 Stadium (Stoke City FC)
- Vale Park (Port Vale FC)
- Pirelli Stadium (Burton Albion FC)

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the SP 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 SP, 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:

IAT@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Information Access Team
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 Information Access Team 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 a supervisor who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Information Access Team 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 Supervisor 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, considering the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Supervisor will reply to the appellant with the result of the review. If the appellant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information



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Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following link:
<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Information Access Team