

26 February 2026

FOI Ref 22532

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

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, where applicable), please provide the following information regarding illegal fly-tipping and waste sites within your jurisdiction for each of the last five calendar years (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025) and for 2026 to date:

1. Incident and Arrest Data

- The total number of incidents recorded by your force with the closing category/tag of "Fly-tipping" or "Illegal Waste Disposal."
- The total number of arrests made where the primary or secondary offence was related to Section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (unauthorised deposit of waste).
- The number of vehicles seized by your force suspected of being involved in fly-tipping or illegal waste transport.

2. Illegal Waste Sites

- The number of "Illegal Waste Sites" your force has assisted in shutting down in partnership with the Environment Agency or Local Authorities.
- The number of active criminal investigations currently being led by your force (or a dedicated rural/environmental crime unit) regarding organized waste crime.

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 parts of this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 700 possible occurrences. There are a few different offences that 'fly-tipping' could be recorded under including 'Public Health Offences'. In order to ascertain whether 'fly-tipping' was involved in these offences, the record for each one would require a manual review. Additionally, further manual checks of each record would need to be carried out to establish the number of vehicles seized in relation to these offences and also the number of 'Illegal

Waste Sites' shutdown along with the number of investigations regarding organised waste crime. 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 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 58 hours. 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**

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, to comply with this obligation please see below.

In order to refine your request, data can be provided for the total number of offences recorded as 'Depositing, causing the deposition or permitting the deposition of controlled (but not special) waste in or on land without a license' and 'Depositing, causing the deposition or permitting the deposition of controlled special waste in or on land without a license' in the time period requested. Data can also be provided for the total number of arrests made where the primary or secondary offence was related to Section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (unauthorised deposit of waste).

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](mailto: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.



STAFFORDSHIRE  
**POLICE**

### **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 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