

24 June 2026

FOI Ref 22957

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

Please provide the following data regarding recorded crimes and weapon seizures within your force's jurisdiction over the past five calendar years, plus the current year to date (from January 1, 2021, to May 31, 2026).

To ensure this request remains within the appropriate cost limit, please apply a two-stage filtering process to your search:

1. **Stage 1 (Cohort):** Identify all recorded offences or incidents that feature a "bladed article", "sharp instrument", or "knife crime" marker, OR fall under Home Office offence codes for possession of an offensive weapon.
2. **Stage 2 (Keyword Search):** Within that specific cohort, search the Modus Operandi (MO) text, summary, or free-text notes fields for any of the following keywords:
 - "kirpan"
 - "ceremonial dagger"
 - "ceremonial knife"
 - "religious exemption"
 - "religious article"

To help minimise administrative time and keep this request within the appropriate cost limit, please provide the data in a digital, machine-readable format such as a Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) spreadsheet or a Comma Separated Values (.csv) file.

SP received your request on 04/06/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

SP holds the requested information.

Please provide the following data regarding recorded crimes and weapon seizures within your force's jurisdiction over the past five calendar years, plus the current year to date (from January 1, 2021, to May 31, 2026).

To ensure this request remains within the appropriate cost limit, please apply a two-stage filtering process to your search:

3. **Stage 1 (Cohort):** Identify all recorded offences or incidents that feature a "bladed article", "sharp instrument", or "knife crime" marker, OR fall under Home Office offence codes for possession of an offensive weapon.
4. **Stage 2 (Keyword Search):** Within that specific cohort, search the Modus Operandi (MO) text, summary, or free-text notes fields for any of the following keywords:
 - "kirpan"
 - "ceremonial dagger"
 - "ceremonial knife"
 - "religious exemption"



- "religious article"

To help minimise administrative time and keep this request within the appropriate cost limit, please provide the data in a digital, machine-readable format such as a Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) spreadsheet or a Comma Separated Values (.csv) file.

- **Disclosed: Nil.**

A search of the crime recording system of SP was made in accordance with the requested two-stage filtering process. Specifically, all recorded offences that featured a 'knife crime' marker (flag) were identified. Under the second stage a search of the Modus Operandi (MO) text was made using filters for each and all the requested keywords. This did not return any matches.

It is important to note, that terms other than the keywords stated in Stage 2 may have been used in the MO to describe the bladed article/ sharp instrument/ knife crime such as weapon or knife. Consequently, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of the response to this request, to not misrepresent what has been disclosed.

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 SP response to the original FOI request.



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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 twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to forty 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