

3 March 2026

FOI Ref 22578

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

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am writing to request the following information:

1. The number of recorded crimes in your force area from 1 January 2018 to present where the location was a place of religious worship (church, mosque, synagogue, temple, gurdwara, or other).
2. If available, please break down these figures by type of religious site and by crime category (e.g., criminal damage, arson, burglary, hate crime, assault).
3. If your force does not hold records that identify crimes at places of religious worship, please provide a justification for this. For example:
 - The location type is not available to record on your reporting system
 - It has never been recorded in this level of detail
 - Officers are instructed not to record that particular location type
 - Other reasons (please specify)
4. Please confirm whether your crime recording system (e.g., NICHE, Athena, or other) has a field for “location type” and whether “religious site” is an available option.
5. Please state whether there are any plans to improve recording granularity for crimes against religious sites.

Clarification requested on 26/02/2026:

In relation to Question 2 of your request, we are able to provide the number of offences whereby the location has been recorded as ‘Church/religious building’, broken down by offence category and year of offence. We are not able to further break these offences down by type of religious building, as this would engage a Section 12 exemption as it would exceed the time/cost limit as stipulated by the FOI Act. Please confirm that you are happy to remove this part of your request. Please also be advised that where the occurrence record does not have the location type recorded, these would not be included within the dataset.

Clarification received on 26/02/2026:

Thank you for your clarification regarding my request. I confirm that I am happy to remove the part of my request seeking a breakdown by type of religious building. Please proceed with providing the number of offences recorded as ‘Church/religious building’, broken down by offence category and year of offence, as outlined in your clarification. I note your advice that records without the location type recorded will not be included, and I am content to proceed on that basis.

SP received your request on 23/02/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP’s response to your enquiry is as follows:



SP holds/does not hold the requested information.

- 1. The number of recorded crimes in your force area from 1 January 2018 to present where the location was a place of religious worship (church, mosque, synagogue, temple, gurdwara, or other). – **Disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 22578 Crimes at Places of Worship Data.xlsx'.**
- 2. If available, please break down these figures by type of religious site and by crime category (e.g., criminal damage, arson, burglary, hate crime, assault). I confirm that I am happy to remove the part of my request seeking a breakdown by type of religious building. Please proceed with providing the number of offences recorded as 'Church/religious building', broken down by offence category and year of offence, as outlined in your clarification. I note your advice that records without the location type recorded will not be included, and I am content to proceed on that basis. – **Disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 22578 Crimes at Places of Worship Data.xlsx'.**
- 3. If your force does not hold records that identify crimes at places of religious worship, please provide a justification for this. For example:
 - The location type is not available to record on your reporting system
 - It has never been recorded in this level of detail
 - Officers are instructed not to record that particular location type
 - Other reasons (please specify) – **Not applicable.**
- 4. Please confirm whether your crime recording system (e.g., NICHE, Athena, or other) has a field for "location type" and whether "religious site" is an available option. – **Disclosed, yes.**
- 5. Please state whether there are any plans to improve recording granularity for crimes against religious sites. – **No information held.**

Please note this data only includes occurrences where the location has been recorded as a 'church/religious building' and further occurrences may have occurred where this field has not been completed, as it is not a mandatory field for officers to complete.

Please note that this data has been provided to the best of the ability of SP, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software. Additional offences 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.

Consequently, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of this data, to not misrepresent the whole or any part of the data disclosed.



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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 SP 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 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/>



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Freedom of Information
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