

10 March 2026

FOI Ref 22610

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

Please may you provide me with:

1. The total number of previously cold cases your police force has reopened and is currently working on.
2. The total number of cold cases relating to homicide.
3. The total number of cold cases relating to unidentified remains.
4. The names of victims relating to homicide cold cases and the year of the crime.
5. The names of victims relating to unidentified remains cold cases and the year of the potential crime.

Please provide the information in Excel format. Please, do not provide it in PDF/Word as this makes my life much more difficult.

For the context of this FOI, can cold cases refer to any unsolved crime that is not the subject of a current criminal investigation? If your police force has another definition for this term that it uses, or has a similar category/term with a different definition, could that be used instead? If this is the case, can you please explain your definition and how you use the term?

When you give your response, can you provide it in the following format please?

And then for the list of names, can you provide them on a separate Excel sheet or document please?

SP received your request on 03/03/2026 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 question 4 of this request. For the time period requested, there have been 125 homicide cold cases, in order to ascertain the further details being requested such as the victim name and the year of crime, the record for each case would require a manual review. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-

intensive manual trawl through each record. Additionally, further exemptions would apply to this information.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 15 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 31 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 questions 1, 2 and 3. With regards to question 5, SP are unaware of the identities of the unidentified remains and the cases do not necessarily involve a crime.

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 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