

21 September 2026

FOI Ref 23403

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

1. The number of recorded crimes committed at pharmacies, for 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 1 January 2026 to 17 September 2026.
2. For each of 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 1 January 2026 to 17 September 2026, a breakdown of those crimes by offence type (e.g. theft/shoplifting, burglary, robbery, criminal damage, arson, possession of weapons, sexual offences, vehicle offences, assault, public order offences).
3. For each of 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 1 January 2026 to 17 September 2026, the number of those crimes classified as violent crime.
4. For each of 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 1 January 2026 to 17 September 2026, the number of crimes at pharmacies specifically involving theft of, or attempted theft of, controlled drugs or damage to controlled drugs storage (e.g. CD cabinets).
5. For each of 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 1 January 2026 to 17 September 2026, a breakdown of weapons or objects used in crimes committed at pharmacies.
6. For each of 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 1 January 2026 to 17 September 2026, the outcome of crimes committed at pharmacies, broken down by: no suspect identified, no further action, caution given, charged, other outcome.

Definitions used in this request:

- * "Pharmacy" means community/retail pharmacies only (please exclude hospital pharmacies).
- * "Crime" means recorded crime under Home Office Crime Recording Rules, not calls for service or incidents that were not recorded as crimes.
- * "Violent crime" means offences your force classifies under Violence Against the Person.

Note on searching: If premises type (e.g. "pharmacy") is not a distinct searchable field in your crime recording system, please state this and explain the method used to identify relevant records (e.g. free-text/address search on terms such as "pharmacy", "chemist", named pharmacy chains).

Address searches I'd like checked would be "pharmacy", "pharmacies", "chemist", "chemists" if the premises type of "pharmacy" is not a distinct searchable field in your systems.

SP received your request on 17/09/2026 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 local police systems to answer this request. For the period requested, there have been more than 1,500 crimes of theft or damage committed at pharmacies, with more than 1,700 crimes of any type. To ascertain whether these crimes specifically involved theft of, or attempted theft of, controlled drugs or damage to controlled drugs storage, as well as a breakdown of weapons or objects used in crimes committed at pharmacies, the record for each offence would require a manual review. 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 140 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information 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.

Unfortunately, SP cannot suggest a way in which questions 4 and 5 of your request could be simplified or pared down to bring it within the confines of the time and cost threshold. However, if you were to remove questions 4 and 5, then SP would be able to provide a response for the remainder of the request.

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:



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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/>

Freedom of Information
Information Access Team