



Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request 2023.0488

On 2 May 2023 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I'm writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) to ask that you please disclose to me information relating to records kept on people arrested on ideological grounds (including but not limited to protest action).

Specifically I'd like to know how many individuals from the following groups have been arrested for the years 2021 and 2022:

Extinction Rebellion, Ocean Rebellion, Coal Action Network, Right to Roam, Earth First, Youth Strike 4 Climate, Rising Tide, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), Burning Pink, Tree Defenders, Fossil Free, Just Stop Oil, Insulate Britain, HS2 Rebellion (or anti-HS2 protestors), or any other relevant groups falling into the broad field of climate activism and education.

Alternatively, if the information cannot be split that way, would it instead be available by more broad key fields like "environmental protests" or "climate protest", as this would be preferable so as not to miss out on people included from smaller groups. Any way it can be made available would be fine, but to clarify, I'm not seeking the personal information of anyone involved, nor do I need to know the specific reason for arrest beyond it being related to action within an environmental group, or whether (or which) covert tactics or policing methods were used to make the arrests.

Ideally, just the base figures of either how many people from this group have been arrested (or times have people been arrested. as I', aware the same person could get arrested on multiple occasions), or how many times individuals have been arrested for engaging in climate action.

If the information still cannot be retrieved due to cost, then I'd like to request that the information regarding people arrested during such protests is made available to me in whatever form it can be (redacted as necessary) so that I can manually sift through this information, so as to avoid going over cost limit for the Act (if, for example) it's split into protest and technically searchable, but a large data set).

If however information can be given such as "disruption", or if alternatively, this information would have recorded been under certain acts or offensive, such as anti-protest legislation, terrorism, or a specific category made for ease of reference for this type of case, then please could you advise the best way in which to hone down in that way for both my own

ease and ease of the processor of the request. If this is how it's recorded, then I'd like to know under which legislation the arrests have been made, please.

I'd like to know, if possible, the easiest form this would be retrievable in, as I'm aware different forces will record things on different systems, but that there will likely be common ways in which records are kept by the individual forces. A spreadsheet with the group or ideology, number of arrests, and non-essentially for the offences.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s1, I can confirm that Gloucestershire Constabulary may hold some relevant information.

Unfortunately, there is no way of electronically searching for the information you have requested.

There is no field on the Custody Recording system that might denote that the arrested person was alleged to have committed an offence specifically at a protest. Nor is there any field for recording that a person is aligned to or associated with any specific environmental group. The custody system also does not identify that the arrest is directly or indirectly associated with an environmental or climate protest. Given these limitations, the only way to determine if the Constabulary holds any relevant information would be to manually review all custody records for the time period requested. This would necessitate examining in excess of 7900 detentions in 2022 and would clearly take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Gloucestershire Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

In relation to your request Section 12 applies.

Section 12(1) – Fee Regulations states:

Section 1(1) of the Act 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 appropriate limit. (As detailed in the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Fees Regulations of 2004)

The appropriate limit at the moment is £450 calculated at an hourly rate of £25 per hour for all staff time incurred in:

- i. Determining whether information is held
- ii. Locating it
- iii. Retrieving it
- iv. Extracting the information to be disclosed from the other information.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request.

Unfortunately, I'm unable to assist in suggesting ways of refining your request to come within the confines of Section 12 of the Act. Even reducing the timescale would not reduce the number of records enough that a manual review could be conducted within the timescale but still provide meaningful information.

If you are not satisfied with this response or any actions taken in dealing with your request, you have the right to ask that we review your case under our internal procedure. Please note that a request for an internal review must be made within 20 working days of the response to your original request.

If you decide to request that such a review is undertaken and following this process you are still unsatisfied, you then have the right to direct your complaint to the Information Commissioner for consideration.

Yours sincerely,