



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_2023.1175
E-mail: FOI
@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 09/01/2024

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request 2023.1175

On 07/12/2023 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

- How many arrests involving a knife or bladed article has your police force made in the past 10 years? Please break this down by year and split by age, gender, and ethnicity of the offender (please contact me for tables as I am unable to attach anything).
- How many confiscations of knives or bladed articles has your police force made in the past 10 years? Please break this down by year and split by age, gender, and ethnicity of the offender (please contact me for tables as I am unable to attach anything).

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

Unfortunately, although the Constabulary has a property recording system that can readily log a property item through the process of being seized and any subsequent action, it's not possible to electronically obtain statistics from the system. Therefore in order to ascertain if any knives, or bladed weapons had been seized would involve manually reviewing thousands of entries. This would clearly take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

When applying the Section 12 exemption our duty to assist under Section 16 of the Act would normally entail that we contact you to determine whether it is possible to refine the scope of the your request regarding how many confiscations of knives or bladed articles has Gloucestershire Constabulary has made in the past 10 years, to bring it within the cost limits. However, from the information we have outlined above I see no reasonable way in which we can do so.

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.

Providing Information Outside of the Act

By way of assistance and although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, we have supplied the information relevant to your request which has already been retrieved. We trust this is helpful but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

Police Forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the data. It should be noted that for these reasons the figures given relate to information from the specific recording system of Gloucestershire Constabulary and should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you receive.

Please note that our systems are designed to record information for policing purposes and the investigation of crime and not to extract statistical information. Accordingly whilst we endeavour to extract relevant data within the time limits of the Act, any data supplied is subject to these limitations.

I can confirm that a search of the Custody System for the number of arrests with the Reason for Arrest (RFA) is Possess Pointed Article or Blade for 01/01/2014 – 07/12/2023. The results are as follows:

A yearly breakdown of Possess Pointed Article or Blade

Year	Possess Pointed Article or Blade	Total
2014	33	33
2015	30	30
2016	31	31
2017	39	39
2018	59	59
2019	62	62
2020	39	39
2021	73	73
2022	74	74
2023	74	74
Total	514	514

A breakdown of those arrested for Possess Pointed Article or Blade by age groups

Year	18 To 24	25 To 34	35 To 44	45 To 54	55 To 64	65 and over	Under 18	Total
2014	7	11	3	5	0	1	6	33
2015	5	10	4	5	2	0	4	30
2016	12	9	3	4	0	0	3	31
2017	6	12	11	5	1	1	3	39
2018	9	11	18	5	2	0	14	59
2019	11	15	15	11	1	0	9	62
2020	10	11	8	4	0	0	6	39
2021	18	25	11	7	3	1	8	73
2022	15	20	11	8	5	1	14	74
2023	15	17	13	7	4	1	17	74
Total	108	141	97	61	18	5	84	514

A breakdown of those arrested for Possess Point Article or Blade by gender

Year	Female	Male	Total
2014	7	26	33
2015	3	27	30
2016	7	24	31
2017	9	30	39
2018	17	42	59

2019	13	49	62
2020	7	32	39
2021	12	61	73
2022	5	69	74
2023	7	67	74
Total	87	427	514

A breakdown of those arrested for Possess Point Article or Blade by ethnic group

Year	Asian	Black	Mixed	Not Stated	Other	White	Total
2014	1	2	1	0	0	29	33
2015	1	3	2	0	0	24	30
2016	0	1	1	0	0	29	31
2017	0	7	1	0	0	31	39
2018	0	6	3	0	1	49	59
2019	0	7	2	2	0	51	62
2020	0	4	2	2	0	31	39
2021	0	2	1	3	0	67	73
2022	2	8	5	2	0	57	74
2023	1	13	4	1	1	54	74
Total	5	53	22	10	2	422	514

A search has been conducted on the Property Recording System for the yearly breakdown of knife and blade being seized within a 10 year period, the results are as follows:

Year	Knife	Blade
2014	461	114
2015	410	112
2016	459	129
2017	450	115
2018	453	130
2019	479	140
2020	517	156
2021	488	126
2022	474	139
2023	457	122
Total	4648	1283

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.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following means:

Website - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Call their helpline - 0303 123 1113

Email - casework@ico.org.uk

Post –

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary