



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_24_1036
E-mail: FOI
@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 16/12/2024

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_24_1036

On 18/11/2024 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I am requesting the following information under the Freedom of Information Act because I cannot find it on your website.

1a. How many complaints or reports have your force had regarding dogs being stolen in your area between the following years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, January 2024-30 September 2024?

1b. Please breakdown the figures into the respective years.

1c. Please breakdown the breed of dog in the respective years.

2. In each year, please provide the number of missing dog cases the police investigated.

3. In each year, please provide the number of missing dogs officers found because of their investigations.

4. In each year, what was the average time officers spent investigating a missing dog case? I understand that officers may not keep logs, but I would accept an estimate if at all possible.

5. In each year, how many suspects did officers arrest for stealing a dog? Please give details of the charge. I know the Pet Abduction Act became law in 2024, but what would suspects have been charged with prior to this act?

6. Have your officers discussed the possibility of organised criminal gangs stealing dogs to order? If so, please provide any internal documents or briefing notes.

I do not believe that I have asked for any information which comes under any FOIA exemptions, including section 12.

I respectfully remind you that under the FOIA that under section 16, you must help me obtain the information I have requested.

Under the FOIA, you have 20 working days to respond to my request.
Should you need to clarify any part of my request, please do so immediately.

If you need to redact any information, please redact the minimum and explain why you feel the need to this.

Should you refuse any part of my request, please explain the legal reasons for your doing so in case I wish to appeal.

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

When an Individual contacts the police and it is deemed to be a police matter, an incident will be created on the Incident Recording System. Please note that the word “incident” in Gloucestershire Constabulary's terminology refers to a type of record, not the event as a whole. If an offence is being reported (rather than a missing person for example) the “incident” will be assessed to determine if the offence falls within the Home Office Crime Recording Rules. If that incident is deemed to fall within the counting rules, a “crime” will be recorded on the Crime Recording System.

Please note that the Incident Recording System is largely a free text entry system and does not record information in as much detail as the Crime Recording System and therefore its reporting function is limited.

Unfortunately there is no way of electronically searching for the information you have requested. The Incident Recording System does not have any way of identifying incidents where a dog has been stolen, therefore in order to ascertain incidents that relate to dogs being stolen, a manual review of all incidents for the years requested would be required. Given that the Constabulary records approximately 500 incidents per day, this would clearly take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act

Please see below for suggestions on how you may be able to refine your request to come within the cost constraints of Section 12 of the 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.

Under Section 16 duty to assist, a search of the Crime Recording System for substantiated crimes for theft offences, where the property item is recorded as 'Dog' and the status of the property item is Stolen/stolen Recovered.

Please note that question 6 will engage a Section 12.

If this would assist please resubmit a new request.

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