



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI_25_0123

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 28/02/2025

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_25_0123

On 03/02/2025 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I would like to request the following information regarding theft from churches under the Freedom of Information Act.

More specifically:

1. In 2024 how many reports of theft from churches were made?
2. The name and location of each church if possible.
3. In each case what was stolen?
4. Were the items recovered?
5. The estimated value of what was stolen?
6. Were any prosecutions made?
7. How many churches in total reported thefts?

The same information for the years 2019-2023

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

I have numbered your questions for ease of reference.

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.

A search has been conducted of Gloucestershire Constabulary's Crime Recording System for all substantiated crimes where any offence falling under the Home Office Offence Group of Theft has been recorded, and where the MO Code for "Church" has been applied. Please see the data breakdown below.

1.

Year	Total
2019	23
2020	13
2021	17
2022	24
2023	35
2024	26
Total	138

2. The actual recorded address is exempt under Section 40(2) Personal Information

Section 17 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.

Section 40(2) applies to third party personal data. This would not be released under the Freedom of Information Act unless there is a strong public interest. The disclosure of any information which could lead to the identification of an individual would breach the Data Protection Principles contained within the Data Protection Act 2018, namely the first principle which states that personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to individuals.

This exemption is absolute and class based therefore I am not required to apply either the public interest test or harm test in disclosure.

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

Consideration has to be made regarding any information that is already known to members of the public and/or in the public domain already, that combined with information disclosed under the FOI legislation could lead to the identification of individuals. Therefore, although there is a legitimate interest in disclosing information surrounding this type of offence, any such disclosure cannot override the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the individuals involved.

I am, however able to provide the Local Policing Area (LPA) of where the offence occurred.

LPA	Year						Total
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Cheltenham LPA	1	1	3	2	12	7	26
Cotswolds LPA		2	2	2	4	3	13
Forest LPA			2	2	2	3	9
Gloucester LPA	10	4	3	6	5	5	33
Stroud LPA	5	4	4	8	11	5	37
Tewkesbury LPA	3		2		1	2	8
Unclassified LPA	4	2	1	4		1	12
Total	23	13	17	24	35	26	138

3. Please note the Constabulary does not routinely record stolen property items that do not have a unique identifier and of those recorded only approximate values are recorded.

Item stolen / Status	Year						Total
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
STOLEN							
audio video other						1	1
bicycle	1	1			3	1	6
cash	1		1				2
collection / donation box	1						1
debit card		1					1
document travel other				1			1
garden not tool ornament / tub / staddle stone	1						1
lamp			1				1
metal lead	1	1					2
office / comms phone standard			1				1
other	2						2
painting / drawing / print / map antique	1						1
road bike				1	1	1	3
scaffolding			1				1
Total	9	3	5	2	4	3	26

4.

Item stolen / Status	Year						Total
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
RECOVERED							
office / comms phone mobile / accessory	1		1				2

5. Where a value has been recorded on the crime, this has been provided in the table. However, please note that this is not likely to be accurate and no steps are taken to verify the value of stolen items.

Item Stolen	Recorded Value (£)
audio video other	
	0.01
bicycle	
	50
	250.01
	400
	750
	1000
	1320
cash	
	20
	40
collection / donation box	
	0.01
debit card	
	0.01
document travel other	
	0.01
garden not tool ornament / tub / staddle stone	
	0
lamp	
	100
metal lead	
	0
	6000

office / comms phone mobile / accessory
0
250
office / comms phone standard
0
other
600.01
700.01
painting / drawing / print / map antique
600
road bike
40
300
scaffolding
1000

6.

Recorded outcomes	Year						Total
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Charged/Summoned		1		1			2
Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)				2			2
Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action)	1		1			1	3
Investigation complete - no suspect identified	22	12	16	19	32	23	124
Investigation ongoing					3	1	4
Out of court (informal)				2			2
Taken into consideration						1	1
Total	23	13	17	24	35	26	138

7.

Year	Total individual churches
2019	20
2020	12
2021	17
2022	22

2023	32
2024	23
Total	126

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