



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_25_0172
E-mail: FOI
@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 10/03/2025

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_25_0172

On 10/02/2025 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Dear Information Officer,

I'm writing under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request information about sodium nitrite.

Please tell me the following:

The number of incidents or crimes or reports received or attended by your police department referencing "sodium nitrite" or logged as relating to sodium nitrite.

In each case, please include a brief description which summarises what happened.

Please provide the results broken down by year for the past two years - 2023 and 2024, as well as the start of 2025, up to and including 10 February.

Clarification was sought on 19/02/2025 with the following:

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.

A search can be conducted of the Incident Recording System where the term of 'Sodium Nitrite' is within the report.

Alternatively, a search can be conducted of the Crime Recording System where the term of 'Sodium Nitrite' is within the freetext of the MO.

Please can you advise which search you would like for us to conduct to aid with providing a response.

A response to the clarification was received on 19/02/2025 with the following:

Please could you conduct the free search within both the Incident Recording System and the Crime Recording System?

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

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.

Following receipt of your request, initial searches were conducted of the Crime Recording System for substantiated crimes recorded between 01/01/2023 – 10/02/2025. A filter has then been applied where the MO Freetext contains the words 'Sodium Nitrate'. This produced Nil results.

A secondary search was conducted of the Incident Recording System for all incidents recorded between 01/01/2023 – 10/02/2025. A filter has then been applied where the Freetext of the Comments contains the words 'Sodium Nitrate'. The results are as follows:

Year	Total
2023	2
2024	6
Total	8

The details of the incidents is exempt by virtue of Section 40.

In order to provide you further context to the use of the above exemption.

When a member of the public contacts the police and it's deemed to be a police matter, an Incident is recorded on the Incident Recording System. If it's then deemed to fall within the

Home Office Crime Recording Rules, a Crime is recorded on the Crime Recording System.

The Incident Recording System is largely free text and essentially records the caller's report of a potential offence. A member of the public would expect this data to be recorded (processed) according to the [Principles of Article 5 of the Data Protection Act](#). As such a member of the public would at least expect their data to be kept confidentially and fairly. It would not be a regular person's expectation that details of their report of a potential crime to the police would be placed into the public domain via an FOI request.

Due the incidents being a free text system, we would need to create a summary in response to the FOI, as this is a creation of data under the Act we are not obliged to do so.

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.

With regard to the disclosure of details of the incidents, the following exemption applies:

Section 40(2) Personal Information

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 with 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.

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