



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI_25_0251

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 31/03/2025

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_25_0251

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

I am writing to you under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 to request the following from your police force:

Please state how many instances of illegal killing of foxes (or lethal injuries that led to the fox having to be euthanised by veterinarians) have been reported to Gloucestershire Constabulary during the years of 2022, 2023, and 2024.

For each incident, please provide (1) a description as to what happened, (2) when the incident was reported, and (3) what the outcome was (e.g. did it result in any prosecutions or criminal convictions).

For each incident, could you also specify which illegal method was used (e.g. self-locking snares, other improper snares, air weapons that did not kill the fox immediately, spring traps, and others as stated here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foxes-moles-and-mink-how-to-protect-your-property-from-damage#illegal-pest-control-methods>).

Please provide the information in the form of an Excel sheet, broken down by year and month.

In accordance with Regulation 9, can you please provide any advice and assistance that may help my request to be more effective? In any case, if my request is too general, please provide advice and assistance as to how it can be refined.

I look forward to your response within 20 working days, as stipulated by Regulation 5.

I acknowledge that you have requested the release of information under the Environmental Information Regulations, however as the information you have requested refers to criminal activity, not information that impacts the environment, it is most appropriate for the response to your request to be issued under the Freedom of Information Act.

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's deemed to be a police matter, an incident will be created on the Incident Recording System. If that incident is deemed to fall within the Home Office Crime Recording Rules, a crime will be recorded on the Crime Recording System.

There are no crimes under the Crime Recording Rules that relate to the killing of foxes. The only offences related to foxes fall under the Hunting Act, therefore to determine if there is any information held in relation to your request, a search is required of the Incident Recording System. This 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. As such, electronic searches cannot be carried out and a manual review of incident records would be required in order to determine if any information relevant to your request is held. As this would involve manually reviewing over 3,000 records, this 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.

Section 16 – unable to assist

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.

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