



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_25_0464
E-mail: FOI
@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 27/05/2025

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_25_0464

On 30/04/2025 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

1. Please can advise whether your force has received reports / complaints about QR code stickers / adverts promoting drug sales in public places, in the two years to the end of March 2025.
2. If so, how many incidents have been reported?
 - a. Please outline the locations, if possible.
3. How many arrests have you made in connection with these stickers?
 - a. Please outline the nature of the arrest, and whether any arrests have resulted in a charge.

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

Unfortunately, it's not possible to electronically search for the information you have requested.

There are no fields/tags on the Incident Recording System nor the Crime Recording System to denote the presence of the above information. As such, any search for the information would need to be a manual search.

Given that the incident recording system records approximately 500 incidents per day, a 2 year period would clearly take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act to manually review for the requested information.

Having looked at arrests for drugs offences, to then see if it's possible to ascertain if the above scenario was present within the commission of the offence, would involve manually reviewing over 1000 detentions. This would also attract the exemption at Section 12 of the Act.

In a further bid to try and retrieve any relevant information, a search of relevant drugs offences has been considered but again this would involve a manual review of hundreds of crimes.

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, the only other way of trying to ascertain if any relevant information is held would be conduct a free text search of Incidents recorded or the MOs of crimes recorded.

If either search would be useful, please submit a new FOI request to foi@gloucestershire.police.uk confirming exactly what term you want us to search for.

Please note however, that the Incident Recording System is largely a free text system that records almost verbatim what is being said by the person contacting police and therefore will rely on the member of public using the specific phrase or term. Similarly, as the MO of a crime is essentially a precis of the original allegation, it will also have the same restrictions.

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