



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_25_0466
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_0466

On 01/05/2025 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Please provide information for the following for the years: 2022, 2023 and 2024.

1. How many incidents did you attend which involved a person possessing a crossbow?
2. How many people under the age of 18 were found to be in possession of a crossbow?
3. Of the overall number of incidents, how many involved a fatality?
4. How many crossbows did you seize per year?

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.

Searches have been carried out to ascertain if any relevant information is held but the result of each search would require a manual review that would take longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

When a member of the public contacts the police and it's deemed to be a police matter, an incident will be created on the Incident Recording System. If it then falls within the Home Office Crime Recording Rules, a Crime will be recorded on the Crime Recording System.

The 2 systems do not correlate when it comes to statistical information. The Incident Recording System is largely free text and therefore it's reporting function is limited. A free text search has been conducted of incidents recorded from 01/01/2022 to 31/12/2024, which has returned 741 incidents with this term recorded. In order to ascertain if any relate

specifically to the possession of a crossbow during this time period, a manual review of each incident would be required. This would clearly take longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

A further search has been conducted of crimes recorded whereby the offence recorded falls under the Home Office Class of 'Possession of Weapons'. This resulted in 368 crimes, which would need to be manually reviewed to ascertain if they related to the possession of a crossbow. Again, this would likely take 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.

Providing Information Outside of the Act

By way of assistance and although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, I can confirm the following information relevant to your request which has already been retrieved. We trust this is helpful but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

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 for any cases whereby the following offences were recorded:

- CB87019 - Possession of a crossbow by person under 18 years of age - Crossbows Act 1987
- CB87020 - Possession of crossbow parts by person under 18 years of age - Crossbows Act 1987

The results were zero.

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