

Gloucestershire Constabulary
Police Headquarters
No.1 Waterwells, Waterwells Drive
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www.gloucestershire.police.uk



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI_26_0147

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 22/06/2026

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_26_0147

On 06/02/2026 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Please provide me with the following information:

1. The number of arrests you made in 2023 under section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 and section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988.
2. For the above, please provide a breakdown of the reason for arrest, e.g. social media post, hoax call, email, letter, etc.

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.

A search was complete for authorised detentions from 01 Jan 2023 to 31 Dec 2023, whereby the results were filtered for relevant detention codes. This provided the following results:

Offence	Arrests
Cause To Be Sent By Public Communication Network A False Message To Cause Annoyance / Inconvenience / Anxiety	1
Cause To Be Sent By Public Communication Network An Offensive / Indecent / Obscene / Menacing Message / Matter	7
Persistently Make Use Of Public Communication Network To Cause Annoyance / Inconvenience / Anxiety	6
Send By Public Communication Network An Offensive / Indecent / Obscene / Menacing Message / Matter	89
Send Communication / Article Of An Indecent / Offensive Nature	15
Send False Message By Public Electronic Communication Network To Cause Annoyance, Inconvenience Or Anxiety	4
Send Letter / Communication / Article Conveying A Threatening Message	54
Send Letter / Communication / Article Conveying False Information	15
Send Letter / Communication / Article Conveying Indecent / Offensive Message	7
Grand Total	198

This could not be broken down further to see how the offence was commissioned as there is no central register for this information and no way to retrieve the information by way of electronic searches. The Constabulary records arrests under specific reason for arrest codes and can only search against the specific codes. The only way of trying to determine whether any relevant information is held and to retrieve that information would be to manually review each arrest in all possible arrest codes. This would involve the review of all 198 records and would therefore take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by 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, we have supplied the 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.

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