

Gloucestershire Constabulary
Police Headquarters
No.1 Waterwells, Waterwells Drive
Quedgeley, Gloucester. GL2 2AN
www.gloucestershire.police.uk



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_26_0304
E-mail: FOI
@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 25/03/26

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_26_0304

On 18/03/2026 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information relating to suspected possession of cocaine during the Cheltenham Festival period.

Please provide the data for each of the last five Cheltenham Festival weeks, including the most recent year available - ideally 2022-2026.

For the purposes of this request, please include incidents within Cheltenham Racecourse, the immediate surrounding operational policing area during the festival period and then the town centre (Monday–Friday of Cheltenham Festival week).

Requested Information

For suspected possession of cocaine (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) please provide the number of:

1. Arrests
2. Charges
3. Summons / postal requisitions
4. Cautions (including conditional cautions)
5. Community resolutions
6. Penalty notices or fixed penalty notices
7. Stop and searches where cocaine was found
8. Drug seizures where cocaine was confiscated
9. Voluntary interviews conducted relating to cocaine possession
10. Incidents recorded where suspected cocaine was seized but no further action was taken

We are committed to being an anti-discriminatory organisation. This means not only acting in a non-discriminatory way, but addressing systemic inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination.

Additional Breakdown

Where possible, please provide:

- A daily breakdown for each day of the festival week
- The location category (Cheltenham Racecourse vs surrounding town area vs town centre)
- The type of policing outcome applied

If precise location data cannot be provided for operational reasons, a summary for the Cheltenham Festival policing operation area will suffice.

Please also provide the total number of drug detection dog deployments, the number of positive indications, and the number of positive indications resulting in cocaine seizures during the same period - all for the last 5 years as per the above.

Clarification

For clarity, I am requesting all recorded policing outcomes related to suspected cocaine possession, not solely arrests or charges.

If any part of the request exceeds cost limits under Section 12, please provide the information that can be supplied within the limit and advise how the request could be refined.

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

Unfortunately, there is no way to retrieve the precise information requested by way of electronic searches. For the date ranges of the Cheltenham Festival weeks from 2022 and 2026 specified, searches were conducted of the arrest recording system for the local police area of Cheltenham which returned hundreds of records. A manual search of these records would need to be undertaken to identify any that related specifically to the Cheltenham Festival, Cheltenham Racecourse or town centre. Furthermore, the Constabulary records arrests under specific reason for arrest (RFA) codes and can only search against the specific codes. Whilst there is a code for the possession of Class A drugs, there is no code specifically for cocaine. 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 hundreds of records and would therefore take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by 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