

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_0305

E-mail:

FOI@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 22/05/2026

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_26_0305

On 20/03/2026 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

1. The quantity of illegal/black market cigarettes your police force has recovered from raids and other operations in the past year, and in the previous five years to the date of your reply. These should be split up into statistics for each year. I am happy for this to be valued according to the number of boxes of cigarettes or the value of the cigarettes.
2. The number of raids your police force has carried out in relation to illegal/black market cigarettes in the past year, and in the previous five years to the date of your reply.

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

Following receipt of your request, I can confirm that searchers were undertaken within Gloucestershire Constabulary in order to identify and locate the relevant information.

Unfortunately, there is no central register for this information and no way to retrieve the information by way of direct electronic searches. The Constabulary records property linked to crime recordable offences. Therefore, this would require a manual review of every crime recorded within the specified timeframe of the request. It would also require a review of a significant number of operations conducted by the Constabulary in order to see if any relevant information is held. For example, an operation surrounding controlled drugs could have inadvertently resulted in illicit tobacco being seized.

The manual review process 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.

In relation to your request, you may find it beneficial to contact Gloucestershire Trading Standards who often have primacy over matters involving counterfeit goods.

They can be contacted on the below links.

Gloucestershire Trading Standards (GTS)

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/trading-standards/>

Gloucestershire City Council Freedom of Information Request

[Make a Freedom of Information \(FOI\) Request | Gloucester City Council](#)

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