

Date: 20/02/2025
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/014065/B

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/014065/B

I write in connection with your request for information dated 24/01/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Revised from FOI/25/014034/U

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am writing to formally request the following information regarding motor vehicle thefts within the Greater Manchester Police for the period from 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2024:

Definition of Request:

For the purposes of this request, "motor vehicle theft" refers to the offense of taking a motor vehicle without consent as defined under Section 12 of the Theft Act 1968. Whilst I understand some Police Force Areas record theft of motor vehicles differently (e.g. Theft of Motor Vehicle, Aggravated Vehicle Taking), any data matching the concept of motor vehicle theft is sufficient.

Requested Information:

- 1. Incident Number: A unique numeric identifier for each incident (this does not need to correspond with your internal system).***
- 2. Date and Time: The date and time of the incident occurrence or, if unavailable, the date and time of the report. If time data is not recorded, please provide the date only.***
- 3. Location: The most granular location data available (or that you are allowed to provide) for each incident, preferably in latitude and longitude coordinates. If latitude/longitude cannot be provided, please return the next most granular location data available.***
- 4. Incident/crime description: The incident/crime description free text field.***

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information and I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP.

However, I am not obliged to supply you with all the information as an exemptions apply.

The exemption applicable to **question 4** of this request is **Section 14 – Vexatious or repeated requests**.

The Freedom of Information Act is a piece of legislation designed to give the public access to information held by public authorities. It exists to make the decisions of those authorities transparent and to keep the populace better informed regarding matters which affect them.

A Public Authority can refuse requests which can divert resources away from more deserving requests and other public business or threaten to undermine the credibility of the freedom of information system. It is recognised that dealing with unreasonable requests can place a strain on resources and get in the way of delivering mainstream services.

When identifying potentially vexatious requests the indicators contained within the Information Commissioner's guidance on **Section 14(1)** should be considered. In this case we feel the following indicator applies specifically to -

Burden on the Authority

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 14(1) of FOIA a request deemed as overly burdensome does not oblige GMP to comply with a request for information.

The ICO confirms within their guidance that they consider there to be a high threshold for refusing a request on such grounds if there is a viable case in line with the below recommendations:

- 1) The requester has asked for a substantial volume of information and
- 2) The authority has real concerns about potentially exempt information, which it will be able to substantiate if asked to do so by the ICO
- 3) Any potentially exempt information cannot easily be isolated because it is scattered throughout the requested material.

As such, Q4 - **4. Incident/crime description: The incident/crime description free text field**. is being refused due to the amount of time required to review and prepare the information for disclosure, which would impose a grossly oppressive burden on the organisation.

To provide the data requested for question 4, would involve manual redactions to each piece of data in the *MO Description Text* as they do contain sensitive and personal information which could identify directly/indirectly a living human therefore Section 40(2) Personal Information will be engaged as this represents information that identifies a living individual, to disclose this information would breach the principles of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Personal data is defined by Article 4 of the GDPR and Part 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). An identified natural person is one who can be identified directly or indirectly from that data.

The number of *crimes* for the period 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2024 is **37,206**, therefore, this request could not be completed in a reasonable amount of time.

For this reason, any further requests of this nature will be refused under **Section 14(1)** of the Act, which states that requests that are considered to be vexatious do not have to be complied with.

In addition, Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because this information is exempt) to provide you, the applicant, with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

Question 2 is exempted from disclosure under **Section 40(2) Personal Information** – this information constitutes personal data of an identifiable living individual, and to disclose this information would breach the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data is defined by Section 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and means data that relates to an individual who can be identified directly or indirectly from that data.

Section 40 is an absolute exemption with no requirement to complete a public interest test.

Please see the remaining data that can be disclosed.

1. There are 37,206 results that fall into this request. A dummy reference is used from 1 - 37,206.
2. See exemption above.
3. See table below.
4. See exemption above.

The location totals below have been merged in districts as by providing all this information split by individual location as you have requested would significantly increase the likelihood of identifying the individual(s) concerned, and as such the exemption under S40(2) – Personal Information, would be engaged and result in information being refused. By replacing the data this way, it can be provided in its entirety.

District	Total
Bolton	4338
Bury	2421
CoM Central	1876
CoM North	3430
CoM South	2285
Airport	164
Oldham	4069
Rochdale	3501
Salford	3498
Stockport	2855
Tameside	2786
Trafford	1932
Wigan	4032
Unknown	20