

Date: 14/01/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/016054/K

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/016054/K

I write in connection with your request for information dated 23/12/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please can I request the following information:

Q1. In the years 2020 - 2021, 2021 - 2022, 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, how many times did officers from your force recover stolen property from car boot sales. Please breakdown by 1. Financial year 2. Property recovered (e.g. bicycles, tools, electronics, vehicles, other) and 3. Location of car boot sale.

Q2. In the years 2020 - 2021, 2021 - 2022, 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, how many arrests or charges arose from recoveries of stolen goods at car boot sales during this period. Please breakdown by 1. Financial year 2. Arrest or charge.

Q3. Please provide any policy documents or standard operating procedures currently in force that relate specifically to policing car boot sales for stolen goods.

Please contact me if you need me to clarify my request and if it exceeds the allocated budget, do let me know how it can be amended.

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 some of the information requested is held by GMP.

However, GMP does not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format.

GMP are unable to respond to this FOI without carrying out a manual review of all theft offences. There is because there is no specific field or flag for the crime location being a car boot sale on our

systems to easily extract any data. A review of over 546,000 records would need to be viewed to understand how many relate to “car boot sales”, and this would not be achievable in under 18hrs.

Therefore, as per **Section 12(1)** of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the cost of providing you with the information is above the amount to which we are legally required to respond i.e. the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the ‘appropriate level’ as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice.

GMP is obligated, pursuant to section 16(1) of the Act to provide you with advice and assistance on refining your request to bring compliance within the fees limit. In order for the force to attempt to keep this within the fees limit, the information you are requesting will need revising with a listed of keywords being provided by yourself to allow us to complete a search. This would then allow any arrest or charges being linked to such crimes.

With any request that requires a manual review there is always a chance of a request being refused under S12 due to the enormity of work that is usually needed to provide the data, therefore the resulting response cannot be guaranteed at this point as it will be dependent upon the number of records that fall within the scope of any new request, as they would still have to be manually assessed.

Should you wish to refine and resubmit your request in line with the advice above please respond to freedomofinformation@gmp.police.uk.

Although excess costs remove GMP’s obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied some information relative to your request that was retrieved before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceed (see below information). I hope that this is of use to you, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fee’s regulations for the remainder of your request.

For question 3, GMP do not hold a policy linked to this FOI.