Information Management & Data Directorate (IMDD)
Information Access Unit

Date: 22nd September 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/017547/Z

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/017547/Z

I write in connection with your request for information dated 01/09/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Between 1 April 2026 and 30 April 2026, please provide the following information for each incident log or notification in which the force was notified of an intended pigeon shoot for pest control purposes:

- date of the intended shoot
- address of the intended shoot
- name of the reporting organisation

If there isn't a specific incident code or category for bird shoots, please identify relevant records by making a search using the keyword "pigeon" and manually review the results to exclude irrelevant matches.

Please provide information as recorded in the relevant incident log or notification. Where a requested field is not recorded please indicate this.

I am not requesting personal details relating to individual shooters. If you consider any information to be personal (for example a residential address) please redact it.

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information. I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP. However, I am not obliged to provide all the information requested as an exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires GMP, when refusing to provide such information (because the 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.

The information requested is exempt by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 38(1)(a)(b) Health and Safety.

Section 38 is a prejudice based qualified exemption; there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing such information as well as carrying out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Harm

The release of the requested information would be likely to endanger the physical and/or mental health and safety of individuals associated with pest control companies and companies effected by pigeons. Disclosure could identify, either directly or indirectly, employees, pest control companies and effected properties/businesses who are involved with or are connected to pest control issues. Disclosure may result in those individuals and companies becoming the focus of protests, campaigns, harassment or other unwanted attention from members of the public or activist groups.

As information disclosed under Freedom of Information Act is effectively released into the public domain without restriction, there would be no control over its subsequent use or dissemination, thereby increasing the likelihood of harm occurring.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

There is a general public interest in promoting openness and transparency regarding the activities of organisations within the Greater Manchester area. Disclosure would assist in informing public debate, increasing accountability and providing reassurance that matters are being handled appropriately.

Release of the information could also contribute to public understanding of the relationship between the force and the issues raised within the request.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

There is a significant public interest in protecting the health and safety and wellbeing of individuals. Disclosure of the requested information could identify or enable identification of pest control companies and their employees. Given the nature of the circumstances, to release the name of the reporting organisation and the address of the effected property and/or business could expose individuals to unwanted attention, harassment, intimidation or targeting by protest groups or activist.

There is also a strong public interest in ensuring that individuals are able to carry out their professional duties without fear of becoming targets of harassment or protest activity as a consequence of information being released into the public domain.

Balance

Whilst the public interest in transparency and accountability is recognised, it is considered that the greater public interest lies in protecting the health, safety and welfare of the individuals who could be affected by the disclosure. The potential consequences of releasing the information, including the risk of employees and companies becoming the subject of protests, harassment, intimidation or other harmful conduct carry significant weight.

On balance, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Therefore, the information is withheld under Section 38(1) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Please see below information relating to your request which is not exempt from disclosure.

Caveats:

In July 2019, GMP implemented one of the largest IT infrastructure changes in UK policing. The systems are in continual development and the data provided for this request is what the systems currently hold.

This data contains incidents with a created date between 01/04/2026 and 30/04/2026 where the title, details or contact comments contains 'pigeon', excluding incidents with a closing code of L10 Duplicate, L19 Error or L22 Test or training. Please note:

- The keyword methodology does not account for spelling errors.
- The appearance of the keywords in the text fields does not necessarily mean that records are relevant to this request.

There has been a total of **13 reported incidents** relating to notifications from pest control.

Location: District	Total
CoM Central	2
CoM North	2
CoM South	1
Oldham	2
Rochdale	1
Trafford	4
Wigan	1