

T/Chief Constable
T/Chief Constable Darren Martland
Police Headquarters
Carleton Hall Penrith,
Cumbria
CA10 2AU



9th December 2025

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – FOI 1498/25 Offensive Comments Complaints

I refer to your request for information which was received by Cumbria Constabulary on 11th November 2025. I note you seek access to the following information:

Request 1

- 1. How many times has your force spoken to people, either by visiting their home or workplace or speaking to them elsewhere, after receiving complaints about them that they made comments on social media or in person or in any other format that were offensive but not necessarily a criminal offence?*
- 2. Please provide the full number of people spoken to about their behaviour broken down for this calendar year (2025) to date, last calendar year (2024) and the year before (2023).*
- 3. Please provide as much narrative as possible about the nature of the complaint received (were the comments made online or in person or in another form etc. what was the nature of the complaint - ie, what words were allegedly used that formed the alleged bad or offensive behaviour that wasn't necessarily a criminal offence etc. and were they supposedly Islamophobic, transphobic, antisemitic etc.) What was the result in each case that someone was spoken to?*

Request 2

- 1. Has your force ever captured cyclists breaking the speed limit by speed cameras operated by your force?*
- 2. If so, please break down the number of times cyclists triggered speed cameras operated by your force because they were cycling above the speed limit. Please break it down for the current calendar year to date (2025) and last year (2024) and the year before that (2023).*
- 3. For each case, please specify what the speed limit was that was broken by the cyclist - was it a 20mph limit, 30mph, 40mph, 50mph etc.?*
- 4. Were any cyclists arrested or reprimanded for breaking speed limits and if so please specify.*

Your request for information has now been considered, and I can confirm that the information you seek is held by Cumbria Constabulary, however, I am not obliged to disclose this to you.

While the force does have records for visits to individuals regarding non-crime hate incidents relating to comments. It is important to note that not every instance where an officer speaks to an individual following a complaint will be formally recorded. Police forces often exercise discretion in these situations, and informal conversations or reassurance visits may not



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always result in an entry on a central system. This means that any data held would not necessarily reflect the full picture of such interactions.

Additionally, there is no statutory or universally agreed definition of what constitutes “offensive” comments. Perceptions of offensiveness can vary significantly between individuals and communities, and what one person finds offensive may not be considered so by another. As a result, complaints of this nature are assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account context, intent, and any potential risk or harm, rather than applying a fixed definition. It is not possible to provide a definitive figure for the number of times the force has spoken to individuals in response to complaints about allegedly offensive comments that do not amount to a criminal offence.

For these reasons, it would require an extensive amount of time to go through all records to find the relevant results where a complaint was relating to offensive comments then to go through those to find out which reports were followed with a visit and then which incidents are classed as non-crime incidents rather than actual crimes.

The “appropriate limit” is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 and the current limit for police forces is set at £450, which equates to 18 hours of work.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information 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 will exceed the appropriate limit. In view of this, and in accordance with Section 17(5) of the Act, this letter serves as a Refusal Notice for your request.

In accordance with my duty under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (Duty to provide advice and assistance), I have tried to think of a way to recommend that your request may be refined to bring it under the limit explained above. I would suggest in future, asking for crimes only or potentially specifying a term or keyword that can be used to search. Please note, there may still be difficulty getting accurate figures for visits.

Notwithstanding the above, in anticipation it will still be of interest to you, it is possible to provide you with some of the information requested in the remaining questions, as it was possible to retrieve this information directly. This is information I would otherwise have advised you to submit a revised request to seek disclosure of in accordance with the duty to provide advice and assistance.

Request 2

Cumbria Constabulary do not have any records for cyclists exceeding any speed limits therefore the response to request 2 is no information held.

Complaint Rights

If you believe your request has not been properly handled, or you are otherwise dissatisfied with the outcome of your request, you have the right to request an internal review.

In the first instance, please email freedomofinformation@cumbria.police.uk quoting the FOI reference number and explain why you are dissatisfied. Your complaint will be considered and a response will be provided to you after your complaint has been investigated.

If you remain dissatisfied following conclusion of the internal review, you have the right, under section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to complain directly to the Information Commissioner.



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The address for the Information Commissioner can be found below:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Complaints to the Information Commissioner can also be made online:

[Make a complaint | ICO](#)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in Cumbria Constabulary.



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