

Chief Constable
Chief Constable Robert Carden
Police Headquarters
Carleton Hall Penrith,
Cumbria
CA10 2AU



1st May 2025

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – FOI 449/25 – Sexual Offences

I refer to your request for information which was received by Cumbria Constabulary on 14th April 2025. I note you seek access to the following information:

1. *The number of reported incidents of:*
 - a) *Rape or attempted rape (Section 1 of the Sexual Offences Act)*
 - b) *Sexual assault by penetration (Section 2 of the Sexual Offences Act)*
 - c) *Sexual assault (Section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act)*
 - d) *Stalking (Section 2 of the Protection from Harassment Act)*
 - e) *Harassment (Section 2a of the Protection from Harassment Act)*

where the free text associated with the incident report contains any of the following the words:

'online dating', 'internet dating', 'tinder', 'bumble', 'feeld', '[match.com](#)', 'hinge', 'eharmony', 'dating app' or 'plenty of fish'

We would like this information for 1 Jan 2024 to 31 December 2024 (1 year), or the most recent 12 month period available.

2. *Of all the reported incidents of sexual assault, rape, and stalking (etc) made to your constabulary in the most recent 12-month period, what proportion involved cases where the victim first met or connected with the perpetrator through a dating app?*

Your request for information has been considered and I can confirm that Cumbria Constabulary does not hold the information you seek in an easily retrievable format. In order to provide information for Question 2, this would require a manual review of all sexual offences for the requested period, to ascertain those relevant to your request. Our crime system does not have flag where “first contact through a dating app” can systematically be recorded. This would require a trawl of crime and investigation notes to determine the information you seek. We have recorded over 1800 sexual offences, which based on an estimate of 5 minutes per record, will take approximately 152 hours, significantly exceeding the “appropriate limit”.

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



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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. At this time, unfortunately, I have no suggestions, due to the way that the information requested is recorded.

Complaint Rights

Your attention is drawn to the attached sheet, which details your right of complaint. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in Cumbria Constabulary.



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