| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-0579Responded to: 10 April 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## In each year since 2007, how many police stations have closed in Scotland.

There is no requirement to record when a police station is closed, and, as such, in terms of section 17 of the Act, the information requested is not held.

To be of assistance, The table below details the number of stations sold since 2014, which is when Police Scotland was formed.

Please note that Scotland’s policing estate has been built up over the course of several decades, and some buildings are no longer in the right place or operationally fit for purpose.

Many police station sales were as a result of properties declared surplus by Legacy Forces, although the sales occurred post-formation of Police Scotland.

The majority of these decisions, which took place prior to the formation of Police Scotland, were taken after lengthy and detailed consultation with our partners and local communities and this process remains the same today.

In the vast majority of cases, police stations which were closed were moved to new, modern co-located accommodation within the same towns, or officers were moved to new police stations nearby.

| **Year** | **Number of police stations sold** |
| --- | --- |
| 2014 | 5 |
| 2015 | 11 |
| 2016 | 10 |
| 2017 | 14 |
| 2018 | 11 |
| 2019 | 26 |
| 2020 | 6 |
| 2021 | 6 |
| 2022 | 9 |
| 2023 | 4 |
| 2024 | 7 |
| 2025 to date | 3 |

## In each year since 2007, how many police stations have been mothballed in Scotland.

The information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the following exemptions apply:

**Section 35(a) and (b) Law Enforcement**

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime.

To publicly identify mothballed sites, would put the security of those sites at risk. The identified sites may be at risk from those with criminal intent, who wish cause damage to the sites specifically or to manipulate critical infrastructure, this would provide a tactical advantage when planning or perpetrating any unlawful activities and maximise the impact of destruction, harm and disruption that may be caused, whilst avoiding being brought to justice.

## Section 39(1) Health, Safety and the Environment

As noted above, disclosing information relating to mothballed sites, has to the potential to harm critical infrastructure. Any harm caused may affect the ability of the Police Scotland to react to any ongoing situation, the main purpose of the organisation is to protect individuals and members of the public, to disclose the requested information would be contrary to that purpose.

## Public Interest Test

I believe that public accountability may favour disclosure, given that the information concerns the efficient and effective use of resources by the organisation. Additionally, disclosure of the information would also inform the public debate on the issue of policing and contribute to the accuracy of that debate.

However, any disclosure under FOI legislation is a disclosure to the world at large and any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of criminals.

Consequently, in terms of the applicability of the exemptions listed above, the need to ensure the effective conduct of the service in relation to prevention and detection of crime and the public safety considerations involved in the delivery of policing clearly favour non-disclosure of the information requested.

Accordingly, I would argue that the need to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of the service favours non-disclosure of the information requested and on balance is significantly in the public interest. I cannot identify any corresponding viewpoint in disclosing the requested information and therefore the exemptions are upheld.

I must advise you that it is doubtful it could ever be in the public interest to disclose information which would jeopardise the delivery of policing and the safety of individuals or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by email or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by email or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.