HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE

Response Date:02/11/2026

2026/1113 - Use of basement at NWP headquarters from 2004 to the present day

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

I would like to obtain information about the use and purpose of the basement areas at North Wales Police Headquarters in Colwyn Bay, North Wales, from 1 January 2004 to the present day.
Please could you provide the following information:
1. Purpose of the basement
What has the basement area been used for during this period? Please include its official purpose and any operational activities carried out there, where this information can be disclosed.
2. Staff and other people using the basement
Has the basement been used by police officers, police staff, contractors, visiting personnel, or people working for other organisations? If so, please provide information about their roles and the purposes for which they used the area, where recorded.
3. Control rooms and operational facilities
Has the basement ever been used as a control room, communications centre, emergency operations centre, backup control room, or another operational facility? If so, please provide the dates and purposes of such use, where this information can be disclosed.
4. Hours of operation
What were the usual operating hours of the basement facilities during this period? Has the basement ever been used overnight or on a 24-hour basis?
5. Other organisations
Have any external organisations, agencies, or contractors been authorised to use or operate from the basement? If so, please provide details of the arrangements, where recorded and suitable for disclosure.
6. Changes in use since 2004
Have the purpose, use, occupancy, or operational arrangements of the basement changed at any point between 1 January 2004 and the present day? If so, please provide details and dates of those changes.
7. Documents and records
Please provide copies of any relevant documents held concerning the basement's use, including policies, reports, meeting minutes, building-use records, agreements, or other records that describe its purpose and activities.

Concerns have been raised in relation to disclosing the use and purpose of the basement areas at our HQ in Colwyn Bay.

Therefore, a public Interest Test has been carried out to weigh up the reasons for and against disclosure; to ensure the release is in the interest of the public as a whole and not just the applicant.

Section 31 (1) Law Enforcement

Therefore, Section 31 (1) Law Enforcement is to be considered as part of the Public Interest Test. A Public Interest Test has been carried out to weigh up the reasons for and against disclosure of the information requested, to ensure the release is in the interest of the public as a whole and not just the applicant.

Evidence of Harm

Disclosure under FOIA is disclosure to the world at large, not a private transaction. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, releasing the requested information would reveal the departments that are located in the basement and the use of the area, all of which are integral to the operations of North Wales Police. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, we have to accept the current threat landscape and threat to Policing.
We have concerns about disclosing specific departments and uses of the area as this would be of intelligence value to individuals or groups with criminal or malicious intent. This will make our building more susceptible to crime and this information could be used to disrupt areas of policing.

As such, the disclosure of information which would hinder the forces law enforcement functions cannot be in the public interest.

Public Interest Test

Section 31 - Factors favouring disclosure

Disclosure would promote transparency and accountability regarding the use of our buildings. It would also encourage public debate about whether public funds are being used responsibly.

Section 31 - Factors favouring non-disclosure

There is a significant public interest in maintaining the force's ability to prevent and detect offences. Any information which would undermine that strategy would not be in the public interest to disclose.

Releasing all the details requested relating to the departments and uses of areas within our HQ, all of which are integral to the operations of North Wales Police, would provide criminals with a tactical advantage and making our building more vulnerable.
The data could be used to cause disruption or undermine law enforcement effectiveness and negatively impact public safety.

Balance Test

Whilst the force recognises the public interest in transparency and accountability, greater weight is attached to the strong public interest in preserving the effectiveness of law enforcement activity, any disruption to our operations would be detrimental to the public we serve.

Therefore, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice under section 17 (1) of the legislation.

I can advise there has been no change of use in 2004.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 27/10/2026