



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**

Response Date:02/10/2025

2025/999 - Long-term missing persons investigations

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

I am submitting the attached Freedom of Information request in relation to the disappearance of John Iveson and the historical arrests of Paul Billington and Mark Done. This request is being made for purposes of research and transparency regarding the handling of long-term missing persons investigations. I would be grateful if you could provide the requested information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I understand that the investigation into the disappearance of John Iveson remains technically ongoing. I am therefore seeking only historical, procedural, and administrative information that does not compromise any current investigative activity.

Specifically, I request the following information:

Any public statements or press releases issued by your force regarding the disappearance of John Iveson.

The dates on which the disappearance was reported and any key investigative milestones (for example, initial investigation start, case review dates), without requesting sensitive investigative details.

Administrative records, reports, or summaries prepared for internal purposes or for sharing with other agencies, excluding content that could jeopardize the investigation.

Policies, procedures, or guidance followed by your force regarding investigations of long-term missing persons, particularly in cases involving potential criminal activity.

Confirmation of whether formal case files, summaries, or administrative logs exist regarding the disappearance of John Iveson, without requesting the content of such files.

The total number of witnesses interviewed (without requesting statements).

The number and types of investigative actions taken (for example, searches, evidence types logged, or forensic examinations) in non-sensitive, anonymized form.

Pencadlys yr Heddlu,
Glan-y-Don, Bae Colwyn LL29 8AW
www.heddlugogleddcymru.police.uk

Police Headquarters,
Glan-y-Don, Colwyn Bay LL29 8AW
www.northwales.police.uk

Any recorded outcomes of key investigative milestones, such as case reviews, without disclosing sensitive details.

Please provide the number of reported sightings of John Iveson since January 2007, including the locations of each sighting.

What procedural steps were undertaken to locate Mr Iveson's missing vehicle?

Who contributed the £30,000 reward, and was it funded by the family or from public sources?

What information or evidence led to the arrest of Paul Billington and Mark Done? Please provide in historical or procedural terms, without disclosing sensitive investigative material.

REQUEST 2:

What would you like to know?: How many officers were deployed during searches of the following properties:

Burton Meadows Farm, Rossett

Hill Farm, Sound, Nantwich

On which dates were the above properties searched?

Were any additional properties searched during the investigation? If so, please provide their locations and approximate search dates.

Were any formal case reviews conducted following the initial investigation? If so, please provide dates and responsible officers or units.

Were any external agencies or police forces (e.g., the National Crime Agency or neighboring forces) formally requested to assist with the investigation? If so, please specify the agencies involved and their role.

Were any public appeals, media campaigns, or missing persons initiatives undertaken concerning John Iveson? If so, please provide details of the dates and channels used.

Are copies of press statements, leaflets, or other public communications regarding the case available?

Was John Iveson's missing vehicle formally recorded as part of the investigation? If so, please describe the procedural steps taken regarding its recovery.

Were any items of evidence recovered from the searched properties? If so, please provide their general categories (e.g., vehicle, documents, tools), without disclosing sensitive details.

What policies or procedures were followed when conducting large-scale property searches in long-term missing persons investigations?

Was Mr Iveson subject to any criminal investigation prior to his disappearance, or was any criminal activity reported after he went missing?

Were other police forces or agencies formally requested to provide assistance in the investigation? If so, please specify the agencies and the nature of their involvement.

Were formal requests made to access CCTV, vehicle tracking, or telecommunications data for investigative purposes? Please confirm in procedural terms only, without disclosing content.

Has there been any formal case closure or long-term review concerning John Iveson's disappearance? If so, please provide the dates and the authority responsible for the review.

Were any follow-ups conducted on leads submitted by the public (e.g., reported sightings) after the initial investigation?

I understand that certain information may be exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, particularly material that could affect ongoing investigations. If any part of this request cannot be disclosed in full, I ask that you release the non-exempt portions and provide reasons for any exemptions applied. Additionally, I would be grateful if you could confirm whether each item listed above exists within your force's records.

As this remains an unsolved missing person case/undetected crime, concerns have been raised in disclosing information into the public domain. North Wales Police can neither confirm nor deny whether information relevant to this request is held, as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 30(3) Investigations

Section 30 is a class based qualified exemption and consideration of the public interest must be given as to whether neither confirming nor denying the information exists is the appropriate response.

Section 38 (2) Health and Safety

Section 38 provides an exemption from disclosing information if it would endanger any individual (including the applicant, the supplier of the information or anyone else).

- The exemption does not necessarily deal with what are commonly thought of as health and safety matters such as establishing the cause of an accident.
- Section 38 focuses on two particular areas where disclosure of information would or would be likely to endanger:
 - i. the physical or mental health of any individual, or
 - ii. the safety of any individual.

Harm

FOI requests are disclosures to the world (not just to the applicant making the request), if North Wales Police were to use exemptions against the information requested (rather rely on the use Section 30 (3)) this could provide the public with the exact information we are trying to protect.

To disclose (confirm or deny) if the information requested is held could hinder the investigation when it is reviewed or if and when new information comes to light.

The disclosure of information which is likely to undermine the Police service's ability to serve the public in preventing and detecting crime can only be considered as being harmful to the public.

Confirmation of any information held/or not is likely to cause distress and upset to individuals concerned/family or friends.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring Confirming or Denying for Section 30 & 38 (2)

The disclosure of this information would adhere to the general principle of openness and transparency, by providing better awareness which may reduce crime or lead to more information from the public.

It would provide information as to what investigations are being carried out in relation to this case.

Factors against Confirming or Denying for Section 30 & 38 (2)

The information requested relates directly to an unsolved missing person case/undetected crime, which may be subject to further investigation and continual review in the future.

Confirming or denying that any information is held regarding your specific questions has the potential to undermine any criminal proceedings which could arise.

It would be unfair to place any information into the public domain which is likely to cause an individual distress (for example the family or friends).

Balance Test

The Police Service is tasked with enforcing the law and protecting the community we serve and there is a public interest argument in ensuring we are open and transparent.

However, the ability of North Wales Police to conduct enquiries is crucial to the principles of prevention and detection of crime. We are unable to disclose information which could potentially form part of proceedings down the line.

There is also a large amount of information in the public domain which has been carefully assessed for release to help aid the investigation. Anything additional to this is not suitable for disclosure as it could be detrimental to the case/ future investigations.

Therefore, in accordance with section 30 (3) & 38 (2) of the FOIA 2000, I can neither confirm nor deny that this information is held by North Wales Police. This refusal should not be taken to mean that the information you have requested exists or does not exist.

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

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 30/09/2025