



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**

Response Date: 14/08/2026

2026/745 - Dangerous Dogs Teams

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

I am requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding your force's current arrangements for dealing with incidents and investigations involving dangerous dogs and offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

Please provide the following information:

1. Dedicated dangerous dog function

Does your force currently operate a dedicated dangerous dog team, unit, or specialist function?

Please confirm which of the following applies:

- **Yes** – dedicated standalone team/unit
- **Yes** – specialist function within another department (there is a dedicated DLO team that sits within the Dog Section)
- **No** – dangerous dog investigations are managed through general policing teams
- **Other** – please provide details

2. Structure and location within the organisation

If a dedicated team or specialist function exists:

a) What is the name of the team/function? DLO Team

b) Which department does it sit within? Dog Section – Operational Support

(e.g. Local Policing, CID, Public Protection, Specialist Operations, Operational Support, or other)

c) Is the function:

- Force-wide ✓
- Locally managed by individual commands/divisions; ✓
- **Provided through collaboration with another force or organisation?**

3. Staffing levels

Please provide the current staffing establishment for this function, expressed as full-time equivalent (FTE) where possible.

Please provide a breakdown of:

- **Police officers (including rank breakdown)** – 3 (1 x Sgt, 1 x PC admin, 1 x PC associate DLO)
- **Police staff** – 1 (DLO)
- **PCSOs**
- **Other personnel (please specify)**

4. Dedicated or wider duties

Are personnel allocated solely to dangerous dog work, or do they undertake other duties?

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

**Yn gwneud Gogledd Cymru'r lle mwyaf diogel i fyw, gweithio ac ymweld yn y DU
Making North Wales the safest place to live, work and visit in the UK**

If they undertake other duties, please provide a brief description of those additional responsibilities. – The civilian staff member is full time DLO, the Police Officers are also operational Dog Handlers with specialist and GP dogs.

5. Specialist roles

Does your force have any of the following roles:

- **Dog Legislation Officer (DLO)** - Yes
- **Dangerous dog coordinator/lead** - Yes
- **Police staff member(s) dedicated to dangerous dog administration or case management** - Yes
- **Other personnel whose sole role, or additional role, involves dangerous dog investigation, tactical advice, or specialist support** - Yes

If yes, please provide the number of posts and whether they are full-time or part-time.

1 x Civilian DLO - full time

1 x PC admin support / specialist dog handler - full time

1 x DLO Team Sgt - full time

1 x PC associate DLO – Full time dog handler / DLO if required

9 x Dog handlers who can offer tactical advice / specialist support

6. Training and accreditation

Does your force provide any dedicated training or accreditation for officers/staff undertaking dangerous dog investigations? - Yes

If yes, please provide details of the training provided. – DLO course hosted by Merseyside Police or Metropolitan Police

7. Operational model

Please provide a brief description of how dangerous dog incidents are managed within your force, including whether:

- **Initial response is provided by general policing teams;**
- **Investigations are subsequently transferred to specialist staff;**
- **Specialist staff provide advice/support only.**

Spontaneous Dangerous dog incidents are resourced by Local Policing teams supported by operational dog handlers and the DLO Team if required. All Section 3 offences remain with local officers for investigation, supported by the DLO team if required. All Section 1 and Section 4b cases are dealt with by the DLO team.

8. Policies and documents

Please provide copies of any publicly releasable documents that describe the role, remit, or operating model of your dangerous dog function (for example role profiles, terms of reference, guidance documents, or similar).

For clarity, this request relates to dangerous dog investigation/enforcement functions and not police dog units or operational police dogs.

Concerns have been raised in relation to providing the current policies. 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 s31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement

Section 31 (1)(a)(b) is a prejudice based qualified exemption, therefore there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in confirming or not that the information is held as well as carrying out a public interest test.

The Harm Test process requires North Wales Police to consider any possible harm that might arise as a result of placing the requested information into the public domain. This process considers the potential harm to:

- Individuals

- The community as a whole
- North Wales Police and the wider policing service
- Other bodies

S31(1) - Evidence of Harm

A Freedom of Information Act request is not a private transaction. Both the request itself and any information disclosed, are considered suitable for open publication. This is because under the Act, any information disclosed is released into the wider public domain, effectively to the world, not just to an individual.

Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, providing any information relating to specific tactics utilised would reveal our capacity and capability, which would be of intelligence value to criminals.

Disclosure of policing tactics and the tools at the police's disposal will mean that those members of the public who are committing crimes and pose a risk to the public, would be able to formulate ways to circumvent the tactics and tools used. If disclosed the tactics will become less effective and will mean that the police are not able to detect and prevent crime, apprehend or prosecute offenders or to administer justice for the wider community.

There is always a duty of care to the general public and the Police Service has a clear responsibility to ensure the prevention or detection of crime, and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders is always delivered. There are a number of tactics available to the Police Service to ensure the effective delivery of operational law enforcement.

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

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure for S31 - Disclosure of the requested information would enable the public to assess whether the force has appropriately taken steps to help reduce crime by such means. Release would enhance public debate as to whether or not the force is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by the criminal fraternity.

Factors against disclosure for S31 - Disclosure that reveals our force capacity and capabilities would compromise law enforcement tactics. Criminals could use the information to target areas of weakness knowing that their activities are less likely to be detected. It may be used by criminals who are intent on pursuing their criminal activity, to identify and exploit the limitations of these resources.

To release information relating to tactics utilised by North Wales Police would have a detrimental effect on our policing capabilities. Therefore, to mitigate any risks, disclosure of this information needs to be protected, to ensure that those with intent to do so cannot manipulate it or undermine its purpose in any way.

Any disclosure of information which would compromise law enforcement tactics and thus lead to more crime being committed by reducing the opportunity for the prevention and detection of crime, would therefore increase the risk to public safety, which is not in the public interest.

Balancing Test

Law enforcement is of paramount importance and the Police service will not disclose information if to do so, it would undermine its purpose and place the safety of individual(s) at risk. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of enabling the public to assess whether the force has appropriately taken steps to help reduce crime, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police investigations and operations.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of law enforcement, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Any disclosure which hinders our capability and assists criminals cannot be in the public interest.

It is for these reasons that I have determined that the balance test favours non-disclosure of the requested information.

Therefore, 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 13/08/2026