

12 January 2022

### **Information requested**

Thank you for your request for information dated 10 December. You have asked:

1. How many potholes on trunk roads have been reported to the Welsh Government for every financial since 2017/18.
2. How long, on average, does it take the Welsh Government to repair a pothole once it has been reported.
3. How much money has been paid to drivers in compensation for damage/defect to their car or tyres as a result of a pothole, broken down by financial year since 2017/18.

### **Our response**

From my preliminary assessment, I estimate that it will cost more than the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to answer your request. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. This represents the estimated cost of it taking over 24 hours of time to determine whether we hold the information and to thereafter locate, retrieve and extract it.

In order to provide you with the information that you have requested, would require that we search for the information with our agents for both motorway and separately for the trunk road network, and additionally across our own files. Potholes are normally reported through an A&E (accident and emergency process), but additionally can be recorded from inspections (category defects) and other pavement surveys carried out throughout the year on pavement condition. Although we have electronic records of some of these various systems and reports, the nature of the manner in which the potholes are reported in these different locations is such that the individual reports must be interrogated in a manual process. That is to say, all A&E reports, inspection reports and pavement surveys would need to be reviewed in order to extract the information required.

For one of our agent areas, we have identified over the 5 year period requested, there are over 6,000 defects on the system recorded that would need to be reviewed for the first question alone, and additional work orders that must be reviewed to answer the second of your questions. In a sampling exercise we discovered it takes at least 5 and up to 10 minutes to review a record. Based on an average review time of 7.5 minutes, we believe that answering this request would exceed 750 hours work for the first and second questions alone. This substantially exceeds the appropriate limit and only covers one of our agent areas.

Consequently, I have decided not to provide you with the information you have requested.

You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain, including any dates or period of time relevant to the information required. If you do refine your request in this way, this will be treated as a new request.

### **Next steps**

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,  
Welsh Government,  
Cathays Park,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 3NQ

or Email: [Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales)

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,  
Wycliffe House,  
Water Lane,  
Wilmslow,  
Cheshire,  
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely