

17 January 2023

Dear

ATISN 16978

Thank you for your request which I received on 15 December 2022. You asked for the following information:

Amount in £ spent across all departments on flags between 30 November 2021 and 1 December 2022. Please also specify the type of flag purchased, whether that be union, national, rainbow or otherwise.

Please also provide the same data for 1 December 2020 to 30 November 2021, 1 December 2019 to 30 November 2020, 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019, and 1 December 2017 to 30 November 2018.

Please present this information in tabular format as a .xlsx file with each year and flag type presented separately.

I have concluded that it will cost more than the appropriate limit established in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to consider your request. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. When calculating whether or not your request exceeds the appropriate limit, I am allowed to consider the time it is likely to take to establish if we hold the information, locate the information, retrieve the information and extract it. If these tasks are estimated to take more than 24 hours of working time, the limit will have been exceeded.

Flags (whether for example that be on buildings, handheld for events or free standing) are not purchased centrally – they may be purchased by individual areas of Welsh Government based on a specific requirement.

To locate, extract and retrieve information across the whole of Welsh Government for each year would require multiple searches by business areas to review financial records as well as any associated (and separate) purchase orders.

To illustrate, for just Welsh Government's administrative estate, I have identified that some flags for special occasions are supplied by various departments and therefore no central records are maintained. Also, flags are also purchased for Cadw sites and separately, our international estate (for specific special events). At an estimate of 2 minutes to investigate each financial record and associated purchase for such flags and in just these instances would take in excess of 24 hours for this area of business alone. The time limit would be further exceeded when carried out over multiple years and for different flag purchases (where searches would have to be carried out by other business areas).

You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what they type of flag on which you wish to receive information – combined with a narrower time frame could also help bring within the limit. If you do refine your request in this way, this will be treated as a new request.

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 e-mail: 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

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

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

Yours sincerely