



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

5 September 2025

Dear ,

**ATISN 25088 - Request for information – Climate emergency evidence and housing need methodology**

**Information requested**

Thank you for your request which I received on 25 August 2025. You asked for the following:

- 1) A copy of the Climate Emergency Declaration.
- 2) The CO<sub>2</sub> concentration levels (ppm) or equivalent greenhouse gas measurements used as the evidential basis for the Welsh Government's climate emergency declaration in April 2019, and the adoption of its Net Zero target.
- 3) The most recent recorded CO<sub>2</sub> concentration levels (ppm) or equivalent greenhouse gas measurements for Wales.
- 4) Any health impact assessments, NHS Wales data, or other evidence showing fatalities or serious health consequences in Wales directly attributed to climate change.
- 5) Any scientific or legal briefing papers linking the climate emergency declaration to statutory planning policy or specific infrastructure projects.
- 6) The statutory criteria or scientific thresholds that prevent the Welsh Government or local authorities from abandoning or postponing their Net Zero commitments

**Our response**

**1) A copy of the Climate Emergency Declaration**

The Written Statement declaring a Climate Emergency can be found here: [Written statement: Welsh Government declares Climate Emergency \(30 April 2019\) | GOV.WALES](#)

**2) The CO<sub>2</sub> concentration levels (ppm) or equivalent greenhouse gas measurements used as the evidential basis for the Welsh Government's climate emergency declaration in April 2019, and the adoption of its Net Zero target**

Data on Welsh greenhouse gas emissions are published each year in June, approximately two years after the end of the year. Therefore, in April 2019 the emissions data that was available for Wales covered the year 2016. For this year (2016) Welsh greenhouse gas emissions were estimated to be 48.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This estimate includes emissions associated with international shipping and aviation. More information is available at the following link:

[Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland: 1990-2016 | National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory](#)

The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change 2013 synthesis report, the most recent at the time of the initial climate emergency declaration, states that “the atmospheric abundance of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) was 390.5 ppm (parts per million) (390.3 to 390.7) in 2011; this is 40% greater than in 1750.” More information is available at the following link:

[AR5 Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis — IPCC.](#)

**3) The most recent recorded CO<sub>2</sub> concentration levels (ppm) or equivalent greenhouse gas measurements for Wales.**

The most recent data for Wales covers the year 2023. For this year (2023) Welsh greenhouse gas emissions were estimated to be 34.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This estimate includes emissions associated with international shipping and aviation. More information is available at the following link:

[Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland: 1990-2023 | National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory](#)

The most recent Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change synthesis report, 2023, states that “In 2019, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations (410 parts per million) were higher than at any time in at least 2 million years (high confidence)”. More information is available at the following link:

[AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023 — IPCC](#)

**4) Any health impact assessments, NHS Wales data, or other evidence showing fatalities or serious health consequences in Wales directly attributed to climate change.**

I attach a report "Exploring the Effect of Temperature on Mortality, Wales" alongside this letter.

A report titled “Exploring the population health impacts of climate change induced temperature increases in Wales” is under development and within scope of this request but is exempt from disclosure under regulation 12(4)(d) of the Environmental Information Regulations and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying these exceptions are set out in full at Annex A to this letter, and we anticipate this report will be published in the coming months.

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that we have no further information to release in terms of any further health impact assessments, NHS Wales data, or other evidence showing fatalities or serious health consequences in Wales directly attributed to climate change.

It is worth noting that we do not hold NHS Wales data directly and are advised on matters of public health by Public Health Wales (PHW). You may want to contact these bodies directly and you can find information on how to do this here: [Freedom of information - Public Health Wales](#)

For further information, the following resources in the public domain relate to your request and may be of interest to you:

- Climate Change Committee advice on [Wales’ Fourth Carbon Budget](#) and [Summary for Wales \(CCRA3-IA\)](#)
- [Climate Change in Wales: Health Impact Assessment Summary Report](#) (PHW)
- [Climate change: health effects in the UK - GOV.UK](#) (UK Health Security Agency)

**5) Any scientific or legal briefing papers linking the climate emergency declaration to statutory planning policy or specific infrastructure projects.**

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I was not able to specifically identify any scientific or legal briefing papers held by the Welsh Government linking the climate emergency declaration to statutory planning policy or individual infrastructure projects.

For this exercise I focussed on scientific and legal briefing papers only in line with the request.

**6) The statutory criteria or scientific thresholds that prevent the Welsh Government or local authorities from abandoning or postponing their Net Zero commitments**

Section 29 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, as amended in 2021, requires Welsh Ministers to ensure that the net Welsh emissions account for the year 2050 is Net Zero, relative to the baseline as set out in Section 38 of the Act.

You can find the Act in full here: [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#)

Additionally, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides additional safeguards to reinforce the importance of Net Zero for the Welsh Government and public bodies. This includes the Sustainable Development principle, Well-being Duty and Goals, National Indicators and Annual Well-being Report.

You can find the Act in full here: [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)

### **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

## **Annex A**

### **Application of exemptions/exceptions**

The Environmental Information Regulations provide a right for anyone to ask a public authority to make requested information available to the wider public. As the release of requested information is to the world, not just the requester, public authorities need to consider the effects of making the information freely available to everybody. Any personal interest the requester has for accessing the information cannot override those wider considerations.

I have decided to withhold the following information:

**Science Research Evidence report: Exploring the population health impacts of climate change induced temperature changes in Wales under the exception detailed in regulation 12(4)(d) of the Environmental Information Regulations.**

This Annex sets out the reasons for the engagement of regulation 12(4)(d) of the Environmental Information Regulations and our subsequent consideration of the Public Interest Test.

**Engagement of regulation 12(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion, unfinished documents, and incomplete data - of the Environmental Information Regulations**

The Welsh Government believes that the Science Research Evidence report: Exploring the population health impacts of climate change induced temperature increases in Wales should be excepted from disclosure. This is because the data and evidence used in the report is still being validated to confirm accuracy and the report is awaiting final peer review including approval from senior advisers in Welsh Government. The report will be published once finalised and in the next few months.

### **Public Interest Test**

In order to satisfy the public interest test in relation to the exemption(s), it is necessary to conclude that the public interest arguments in favour of withholding the information are sufficient to *outweigh* the public interest arguments in favour of release.

### **Public interest arguments in favour of disclosure**

The report provides a summary of the evidence relating to population health impacts of climate change induced temperature increases in Wales which is of interest to the public in terms of managing their individual knowledge around potential health risks and benefits of climate change and self-management of those risks and benefits.

### **Public interest arguments in favour of withholding**

The Welsh Government is still validating and confirming the information in the report to ensure accuracy, as well as finalising how the information is presented so that it is clear and can be interpreted effectively. This includes sign off by Welsh Government senior medical advisers. Releasing the information at this stage could be potentially misinterpreted and is therefore not in the public interest. The report will be published once finalised and this is expected to happen in the next few months.

### **Balance of public interest test**

We consider the balance of public interest lies on the side of withholding the information to avoid any potential unnecessary confusion. It's therefore better in terms of public interest to wait until the report is finalised and has received endorsement from senior medical advisers. In the meantime, sources of related information from other bodies been shared with the requester as well as an unpublished report from the same Science Research Evidence team: Exploring the effect of temperature on mortality, Wales.