

3 September 2025

Dear

ATISN 25075

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 20 August 2025. You asked for:

1. Costs and Expenditure

Please provide a detailed and itemised breakdown of all costs associated with this press trip, funded by the Welsh Government and/or the Welsh Government Drinks Cluster. This should include, but not be limited to:

- a. The total cost of return transport for the five attendees from their respective UK locations to Wales.
- b. The total cost of all transport and travel within Wales for the duration of the trip.
- c. The total cost of accommodation for all attendees whose stay was paid for.
- d. The total cost of the dinner held at Llannerch Vineyard Hotel, including all food, beverages, and any associated venue hire fees.
- e. Any fees, retainers, or commission paid to the marketing company Lever Cliff for the organisation and administration of this trip.
- f. Any other miscellaneous expenses, such as payments for tours, tastings, or other activities, including gifts to vineyards, attendees etc which may have been made.

2. Attendees and Accommodation

It is noted that a dinner was arranged at the Llannerch Vineyard Hotel for the invited individuals along with a number of additional guests. Regarding the stay and dinner at the Llannerch Vineyard Hotel connected to this press trip:

- a. Please state the total number of individuals for whom accommodation was paid for by the Welsh Government or its agents.
- b. Please state the total number of individuals who attended the dinner whose costs were covered by the Welsh Government or its agents. Please provide a breakdown of these individuals by category (e.g., journalist, Welsh Government official, Lever Cliff staff, vineyard representative).
- c. How the additional guests attending were chosen to attend, the costs of any transport to and from the venue for each guest attending and whether accommodation at the Llannerch Vineyard Hotel or other local hotel was paid for each additional guest, along with the cost of the accommodation for each additional guest attending the dinner (beyond the 5 journalists on the trip).

3. Selection and Justification

- a. Please provide all recorded information (including policy documents, meeting minutes, emails, or internal memos) that outlines the criteria used to select the five individuals for this trip.

- b. Please provide the recorded analysis or evaluation undertaken prior to the trip that assessed the expected media reach, audience demographics, and potential benefits to the Welsh wine industry from each of the five selected individuals and their associated publications or platforms.
- c. If any payments or commissions were paid by the vineyards to Welsh Government or to their agents to ensure a visit to their vineyards rather than to other vineyards across Wales.
- d. Please provide any business case, submission, or cost-benefit analysis that was prepared to justify the expenditure on this specific trip and to establish its value for money.
- e. Please provide any recorded information (such as planning documents or correspondence) that discusses the rationale for not including any publications based in Wales on this press trip.
- f. Please provide any recorded information that explains the geographical scope of the itinerary and the rationale for focusing on vineyards in certain regions of Wales while excluding others.

4. Third-Party Contributions

- a. Please state whether the individual vineyards visited as part of the press trip made any financial or in-kind contributions towards the cost of the event (e.g., providing meals, wine, or accommodation free of charge).
- b. If so, please provide a list of the contributing businesses and a description of the contribution made by each.

5. Historical Data on Similar Trips

Regarding previous press/promotional trips organised by or on behalf of the Welsh Government Drinks Cluster and/or Lever Cliff, please provide the following information for the period 1 January 2022 to the present date:

- a. A list of all such trips, with the dates they occurred.
- b. For each individual trip, the total cost to the public purse.
- c. For each trip, the number of external guests (e.g., journalists, influencers) who attended.
- d. Any recorded information, such as a formal policy or criteria document, used for selecting attendees for these past trips and what output and reach was achieved following such trips.
- e. Please outline the estimated income generated from each trip arranged during this period and how this was calculated.

Our response

The information you requested is detailed at Annex 1.

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

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 1

1. Costs and Expenditure

Please provide a detailed and itemised breakdown of all costs associated with this press trip, funded by the Welsh Government and/or the Welsh Government Drinks Cluster. This should include, but not be limited to:

- a. The total cost of return transport for the five attendees from their respective UK locations to Wales. **£1823.21**
- b. The total cost of all transport and travel within Wales for the duration of the trip.
Included in answer to question a.
- c. The total cost of accommodation for all attendees whose stay was paid for. **£2440**
- d. The total cost of the dinner held at Llannerch Vineyard Hotel, including all food, beverages, and any associated venue hire fees. **£1190**
- e. Any fees, retainers, or commission paid to the marketing company Lever Cliff for the organisation and administration of this trip. **£6350**
- f. Any other miscellaneous expenses, such as payments for tours, tastings, or other activities, including gifts to vineyards, attendees etc which may have been made. **£800**

2. Attendees and Accommodation

It is noted that a dinner was arranged at the Llannerch Vineyard Hotel for the invited individuals along with a number of additional guests. Regarding the stay and dinner at the Llannerch Vineyard Hotel connected to this press trip:

- a. Please state the total number of individuals for whom accommodation was paid for by the Welsh Government or its agents. **10**
- b. Please state the total number of individuals who attended the dinner whose costs were covered by the Welsh Government or its agents. Please provide a breakdown of these individuals by category (e.g., journalist, Welsh Government official, Lever Cliff staff, vineyard representative). **15 comprising 5 Journalists, 2 Levercliff consultants, 8 vineyard representatives**
- c. How the additional guests attending were chosen to attend, the costs of any transport to and from the venue for each guest attending and whether accommodation at the Llannerch Vineyard Hotel or other local hotel was paid for each additional guest, along with the cost of the accommodation for each additional guest attending the dinner (beyond the 5 journalists on the trip). **Costs on travel and accommodation are included answers to questions 1a and 1c. The guests that attended the dinner were journalists on the trip, trip co-ordinators (Levercliff) and vineyards that were a part of the trip**

3. Selection and Justification

- a. Please provide all recorded information (including policy documents, meeting minutes, emails, or internal memos) that outlines the criteria used to select the five individuals for this trip.

Vineyards that had attended the previous events that year (London Tasting and WWW Tasting) expressed their desire for a press trip to bring journalists into Wales – this was then discussed at SIG meetings, with notes shared post meeting, and vineyards then expressed their interest in being a part of the event. All vineyards that were a part of the

press trip had attended the last 4 events held by the Wine SIG (London x 2, WWW Tastings x 2)

b. Please provide the recorded analysis or evaluation undertaken prior to the trip that assessed the expected media reach, audience demographics, and potential benefits to the Welsh wine industry from each of the five selected individuals and their associated publications or platforms.

Guests were approached on the basis of the publications they were writing for. Final guests included writers for The Telegraph, Decanter, iPaper and Vineyard Magazine ensuring a spread of audience demographics.

c. If any payments or commissions were paid by the vineyards to Welsh Government or to their agents to ensure a visit to their vineyards rather than to other vineyards across Wales. **Not applicable.**

d. Please provide any business case, submission, or cost-benefit analysis that was prepared to justify the expenditure on this specific trip and to establish its value for money. **Not applicable.**

e. Please provide any recorded information (such as planning documents or correspondence) that discusses the rationale for not including any publications based in Wales on this press trip. **Guests were approached on the basis of the publications they were writing for. 21 publications were approached to attend the trip (including a publication based in Wales) – 5 accepted, 8 declined, 8 non responses. Final guests included writers for The Telegraph, Decanter, iPaper and Vineyard Magazine. One of the 5 guests was a Welsh writer, now based outside of Wales.**

f. Please provide any recorded information that explains the geographical scope of the itinerary and the rationale for focusing on vineyards in certain regions of Wales while excluding others. **All 5 journalists on the trip were based in the South – to minimise travel time and allow us to visit as many vineyards as we could during the 2 day trip, this pilot initiative focused on vineyards in West and South Wales. In light of the trip's success, we hope to carry out similar trips in other regions of Wales in the future.**

4. Third-Party Contributions

a. Please state whether the individual vineyards visited as part of the press trip made any financial or in-kind contributions towards the cost of the event (e.g., providing meals, wine, or accommodation free of charge). **Wine served during Tuesday's evening meal were the winners of the Welsh Wine Awards for red and white. 6 bottles of wine were provided by White Castle Vineyard.**

b. If so, please provide a list of the contributing businesses and a description of the contribution made by each. **As Above.**

5. Historical Data on Similar Trips **This is the first time a trip like this has been undertaken.**

Regarding previous press/promotional trips organised by or on behalf of the Welsh Government Drinks Cluster and/or Lever Cliff, please provide the following information for the period 1 January 2022 to the present date:

a. A list of all such trips, with the dates they occurred. N/A

b. For each individual trip, the total cost to the public purse. N/A

c. For each trip, the number of external guests (e.g., journalists, influencers) who attended. N/A

d. Any recorded information, such as a formal policy or criteria document, used for selecting attendees for these past trips and what output and reach was achieved following such trips.
N/A

e. Please outline the estimated income generated from each trip arranged during this period and how this was calculated. **Income, in terms of sales generated does not result in the immediate aftermath of the trip. Sales successes are dependent on the businesses reporting sales data at 6 and 12 months after the tour. The benefits are sector wide and not restricted to participating businesses. The success of the Welsh wine sector is indicative from the scaling-up that has happened in the past 10 years with more than a 5-fold increase in the number of vineyards.**