

Date: 20 October 2026

Dear

ATISN 27568

Thank you for your request which I received on 24 September 2026. You asked for the following information:

For the 10-year period ending on the date of receipt of this request:

1. The number of Freedom of Information requests that were refused (in whole or in part) on the grounds that the requested information/records had been destroyed or were no longer held because they had been destroyed.
2. For each such refusal (or in aggregate if individual cases cannot be disclosed), the reason(s) given for the destruction of the records (e.g. retention schedule, routine destruction policy, specific authorisation, etc.).
3. The subject area(s) or broad topic(s) of the FOI requests that were refused on these grounds (e.g. policy area, department/function, or high-level description of the information sought).

Our response

I have reached the conclusion 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 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.

The information you have requested is not something that is collated by the case management system used to monitor requests for information. Whilst we record if we hold information or not this not expanded as to why we do not hold the information. Where we do hold at least some information caught by a request, we only record whether we provided that in full, in part or withheld in full, and not why we do not hold all of the requested information. We would need to undertake a manual search of every request to see if it sought information that was asking for older information, and then if there was reference to information being destroyed and then further investigation if it was not clear or to address your second question.

At the time of your request, we had received 1,033 requests in 2026. At even a conservative estimate of 2 minutes to retrieve and search each requests file, that would take more than 34 hours $[(1033 \times 2)/60 = 34.433]$. Each of the last 10 years would take a similar length of time to work through, giving us an estimated time of 345 hours to comply with your request.

Because this exceeds the appropriate limit established in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, I have decided not to process your request.

If you wish to make a further request on this you would need to reframe your request to a much shorter time period.

Welsh Government retention and disposal schedules are published at the following link: [Welsh Government retention and disposal schedule | GOV.WALES](#)

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 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

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