

EIR Request (received 03 January 2023) - Reference: DFI/2023-0001

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 could let me know how many: 1) street lights were reported on the online portal by the following councillors for the period 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022, together with how many emails were sent to ArdsandNorthDown@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk. Could you provide the individual amount for each councillor?

Councillor Wesley Irvine, Councillor Karen Douglas, Councillor Ray McKimm, Councillor Craig Blaney, Councillor Stephen Dunlop, Councillor Alistair Cathcart.

Response (issued 19 January 2023)

Thank you for your emails dated 3 January 2022 to DfI Information Management Unit and DfI Roads Ards & North Down Section Office, requesting, under the Freedom of Information Act, information on emails and online fault reports from elected representatives for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022. Please accept this letter as a response to all three emails.

In considering your request on behalf of the Department I have determined that the information requested falls under the Environment Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), as opposed to FoI. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act specifically excludes from consideration under that Act requests for what is deemed to be environmental information. EIR gives rights of public access environmental information held by public authorities.

A guide explaining the Environmental Information Regulations can be found at:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-environmental-information-regulations/what-are-the-eir/>.

In response to your request, I can confirm that the Department does hold some of the information requested.

As EIR relates to public rights of access to information, I must consider whether information is suitable for release to the world at large, and not solely to the applicant. I have examined the information you requested and carried out a public interest test to determine whether this information is suitable for release to the public. Following consideration of the public interest in this case, I have determined that this information can be released.

In response to your request, I can advise that information on the number of emails sent to ArdsandNorthDown@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk for the period 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022 is not held in this format by the Department.

Please see the table below which includes similar information held by DfI Roads Southern Division in relation to your request. I shall explain what is included in the figures provided.

If a member of the public, or public representative, writes to the Department by letter or e-mail, reporting a routine defect then our staff will simply log this information onto our work systems (RMCS). These letters/emails are not treated as correspondence. Please note that the figures included in Column 1 relate to reports on road maintenance issues dealt with by the Ards & North Down Section Office.

Column 2, the figures for correspondence, relate to the number of letters / emails received which were considered to require a substantive response and logged onto the mail tracking system.

Councillors contacting Ards & North Down Section Office in 2022.		
Name	1. Online Portal (RMCS)	2. Correspondence (Mail Tracking)
Stephen Farry MP	0	1
Alex Easton MLA	761	109
Alan Chambers MLA	41	1
Andrew Muir MLA	13	43
Stephen Dunne MLA	92	57
Connie Egan MLA	5	14
Alderman Wesley Irvine	102	14
Councillor Karen Douglas	20	3
Councillor Ray McKimm	3	2
Councillor Craig Blaney	0	0
Councillor Stephen Dunlop	2	3
Councillor Alistair Cathcart	0	13

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