

## **EIR Request (received 29 March 2023) - Reference: DFI/2023-0122**

I would like to request the following information:

1. The number of potholes reported per year in the last five years (broken down by district/council if possible).
2. The number of potholes repaired per year in the last five years.
3. The amount of money spent on pothole repairs per year in the last five years.
4. The number of compensation claims filed for damage to vehicles or personal injury per year in the last five years.
5. The amount of money paid out in compensation per year in the last five years.

## **Response (issued 27 April 2023)**

Thank you for your information request dated 29 March 2023. I note that you requested the following:

1. The number of potholes reported per year in the last five years (broken down by district/council if possible).
2. The number of potholes repaired per year in the last five years.
3. The amount of money spent on pothole repairs per year in the last five years.
4. The number of compensation claims filed for damage to vehicles or personal injury per year in the last five years.
5. The amount of money paid out in compensation per year in the last five years.

As Head of Roads Claims Unit, your information request has been referred to me to address on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure.

In considering your information request on behalf of the Department, I have determined that the information requested falls under the aegis of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

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

[https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-environmental informationregulations/what-are-the-eir/](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-environmental-informationregulations/what-are-the-eir/).

I can confirm that the Department for Infrastructure does hold information related to your request. 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 the information is suitable for release to the public.

I can confirm that the information requested is available. Some of the information requested has been presented below or overleaf. Alternatively, directions have been provided on where the other information can be found within the public domain. Please note, however, that: -

- i. The Department maintains information relating to road surface defects by Roads Section Office areas which broadly align with Council areas.
- ii. The Department maintains financial information by Financial Year. Therefore, the figures presented in the tables are the full financial years 2018/19 to 2021/22. However, the figures presented for the financial year 2022/23 are estimated as accounts have not been finalised yet and the figures may be subject to change.
- iii. The road maintenance expenditure figures have been determined by budget availability and capacity in a given year.
- iv. The figures presented in Table 4 represent total expenditure on compensation paid to claimants for roads related vehicle damage and personal injury claims.
- v. Claims received in a financial year are not always concluded in the same financial year. Therefore, the compensation figures presented in Table 4 include compensation for claims received in prior financial years.
- vi. Financial figures have been presented by rounding to the nearest million pound.

For each of your questions, I can answer as follows:

1. *The number of potholes per year in the last five years.*

This information is published at: <https://www.opendatani.gov.uk/@transportni/pothole-enquiries>.

2. *The number of potholes repaired per year in the last five years.*

This information is published at: <https://www.opendatani.gov.uk/@transportni/surface-defects>.

The datasets at 1 and 2 above can be downloaded as an Excel spreadsheet and sorted/filtered to access the specific information you requested.

3. *The amount of money spent on pothole repairs per year in the last five years.*

The cost for repairing potholes falls within the Department for Infrastructure’s budget for “patching”. This term is applied to small scale works including infilling potholes and repair of small areas affected by cracking or settlement.

Table 1, below, sets out the amount of money the Department has spent on the repair of carriageway patching from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

Table 1: Approximate Carriageway Patching Expenditure

Year	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Amount	c. £16.1m	c. £15.2m	c. £15.6m	c. £16.0m	c. £16.9m

Table 2, below, provides Structural Maintenance expenditure (which also includes carriageway patching expenditure) on the road and footway network across NI analysed between capital and resource for the financial years 2018/19 to 2022/23.

Capital Structural Maintenance is the collective term for expenditure on resurfacing, surface dressing, asphalt patching, structural drainage and structural stability of the road network and Resource Structural Maintenance includes mainly patching with some carriageway refurbishment.

Table 2: Approximate Structural Maintenance Expenditure

Year	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Capital	c. £91.9m	c. £92.2m	c. £82.1m	c. £88.7m	c. £111.1m
Resource	c. £16.6m	c. £14.1m	c. £18.3m	c. £16.0m	c. £15.3m
Total	c. £108.5m	c. £106.3m	c. £100.4m	c. £104.7m	c. £126.4m

4. *The number of claims received for damage to vehicles or personal injury per year in the last five years.*

This information is presented in Table 3 ,below, for vehicle damage and personal injury claims.

Table 3: Numbers of Vehicle and Personal Damage Claims Received

Year	Type	Received
2018-2019	Personal Injury	710
	Vehicle Damage	2,817
2019-2020	Personal Injury	643
	Vehicle Damage	1,952
2020-2021	Personal Injury	593
	Vehicle Damage	2,273
2021-2022	Personal Injury	705
	Vehicle Damage	2,160
2022-2023	Personal Injury	684
	Vehicle Damage	2,786

5. *The amount paid out in compensation per year in the last five years.*

This information is presented in Table 4 below for vehicle damage and personal injury claims.

Table 4: Approximate Amounts of Compensation Paid

<b>Year</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
Personal Injury	c. £1.3m	c. £2.3m	c. £1.6m	c. £2.3m	c. £4.7m
Vehicle Damage	c. £0.9m	c. £0.4m	c. £0.3m	c. £0.5m	c. £0.5m

This concludes my response to your information request.

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