



DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE

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[Redacted]
By email: [Redacted]

Our ref: EIR2025/16956
29 August 2025

Dear [Redacted]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Cornwall Council's Regulation 14(1) & (2) & Schedule 4 statutory returns since 2020

Thank you for your request for information of 6 August 2025 about Cornwall Council's Regulation 14(1) & (2) & Schedule 4 statutory returns since 2020. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your information request and our response are set out below.

With reference to Private Water Supplies Regulations (2016) as amended 2018: To provide electronic copies of the Regulation 14 (1) & (2) & Schedule 4 statutory returns provided by Cornwall Council for the years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025.

We enclose a copy of the information you requested:

Annex C: Cornwall_Council_2020-2024_redacted.xls

Data for 2025 is due to be submitted to the DWI from the Local Authority by 31 January 2026.

We have redacted the source location and SiteRef of these Private Water Supplies under regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIRs which relates to information whose disclosure would adversely affect international relations, defence, national security or public safety.

In applying this exception, we have had to balance the public interest in maintaining the exception against the public interest in disclosure. We have also applied a presumption in favour of disclosure, as required by regulation 12(2) of the EIRs.

We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information which aids accountability and transparency in government. However, to release the specific location

or name of the supply could result in an act of sabotage to these private supplies. While it may be of interest to know where the private water supplies are in a specific catchment area, release of this information to the public could affect the safety of these private water supplies.

We have decided to redact and withhold the names and contact details of the staff of Cornwall Council in the attached document, along with the Private Water Supply sites or owners of the private water supply under regulations 12(3) and 13(1) of the EIRs as the information constitutes personal data relating to persons other than you. These regulations exempt personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would breach any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle, which provides that personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner. Disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data because those individuals would not reasonably have expected the location of their private water supply to be made public.

For your information, we provide a general overview of the Private Water Supplies in England and Wales in our annual reports on our website at the following link:

<https://www.dwi.gov.uk/private-water-supplies/what-are-private-supplies/pws-annual-reports/>

Information disclosed in response to this EIRs request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

DWI FOIA and EIR team

dwi.enquiries@defra.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Vanessa Drury, Head of Information Rights via email at InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk and they will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure is on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure.

The ICO can be contacted using the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>