

I am writing in response to your e-mail of 12 October 2011 requesting information about Departmental expenditure on hospitality. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I can confirm that DCLG does hold the information that you have requested and that I am able to provide you with the table below which shows what the Department has spent on hospitality/catering since January 2011:

Month	Amount
Jan 2011	£4,056
Feb 2011	£2,523
Mar 2011	£2,592
Apr 2011	£7,928
May 2011	£94
Jun 2011	£4,063
Jul 2011	£1,648
Aug 2011	£3,020
Sep 2011	£4,053

Hospitality/catering includes sandwiches and teas/coffees and soft drinks provided for meetings and official functions. These figures have been drawn from the Department's finance system as spend with the Department's in house supplier and external suppliers. It also includes expenditure on food and drink through the Government Procurement Card.

It would only be possible to breakdown these figures at excessive cost as it would involve examining individual invoices. I estimate the cost of locating and retrieving this information would significantly exceed £600. The Department is not obliged, by virtue of s.12 (1) of the FOI Act, to comply with a request where the appropriate limit of £600 would be exceeded.

The new administration has taken a series of steps to cut spending in this area. As an illustration, as Ministers have informed Parliament, the comparative spending on hospitality in 2009-10 under the last Government was £456,142.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm110201/text/110201w0003.htm#11020175000750>