



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

**Department of Energy & Climate
Change**

3 Whitehall Place,
London SW1A 2AW
www.decc.gov.uk

Redacted
Redacted

Our ref: FOI2014/26612

5 December 2014

Dear **Redacted**

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your email of 21 November in which you asked for the following:

"I write to request 1) details of all meetings, 2) any gifts (financial or otherwise) and 3) any hospitality received from the following groups and individuals since May 2005.

- a) *Representatives of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church*
- b) *Representatives of the Exclusive Brethren*
- c) *Preston Down Trust*
- d) *Garth Christie*
- e) *Bruce Hazell*
- f) *Graham Reiner*
- h) *Bruce Hales*
- i) *Keith Birch*
- j) *Walter Paterson*
- k) *Ian Richardson*

In the case of meetings, please detail: i) The names of those present; ii) The date; iii) The location; iv) The purpose of the meeting

In the case of gifts, please detail: i) The donor(s); ii) The recipient(s); iii) The date; iii) Details of what the gift was; iv) The estimated value; v) Whether or not it was accepted.

In the case of hospitality, please detail: i) The donor(s); ii) The recipient(s); iii) The date; iv) Details of the hospitality; iv) The estimated value.

If it is not possible to complete these request under the time limits set out in the Act, please restrict the search to the time period May 2010-present. If you need to further restrict the request, please exclude the individuals listed at i), j) and k)."



Department of Energy & Climate Change

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

We have considered your request in relation to all the Department's civil servants and ministers.

Regarding the details of all junior civil servants and senior civil servants below director general grade in the Department, the information you have asked for is not held centrally and to comply with this part of your request would require a major search of the whole of the Department to establish if any meetings, correspondence or written communications had taken place, or if any gifts and hospitality were received. This would also apply to the two ways you have suggested for refining the initial request.

The Department wishes to be as open as possible in answering requests, and to help people obtain the information they are looking for. Unfortunately with regards to this part of your request, we cannot provide you the information as your request is too wide and the effort to administer your request would exceed the limit prescribed in Regulations made pursuant to Section 12 of the Act. This limit is £600 which represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information. The Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with requests where the estimated cost of complying would exceed this limit. Therefore, this part of your request will not be processed further.

Concerning the part of your request which would relate to the Department's Ministers, Permanent Secretary and Director Generals I am writing to advise you that, following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that the Department of Energy and Climate Change does not hold the information you requested.

For your information details of external meetings and hospitality of the Secretary of State, Ministers, the Permanent Secretary and Director Generals from May 2010 to March 2014 have been published and can be found on the www.gov.uk website at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-of-energy-climate-change&publication_type=transparency-data

Details for ministers prior to April 2012 are available on the National Archives website at the following link:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130102164008/http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/accesstoinform/registers/ministermtgs/ministermtgs.aspx>



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

Information about meetings, gifts and hospitality after April 2014 is exempt under Section 22 of the Act as the information is intended for publication at a future date on the www.gov.uk website. Section 22 is a qualified exemption and we have therefore considered the public interest test. There is a public interest in knowing information about ministerial and senior civil servants' meetings and hospitality as this leads to greater transparency in government. However, the best use of public resources would be applied in pulling this information together, ensuring the information is accurate and published in a consistent and comprehensive format, rather than issuing it in a piecemeal fashion. This information is still being checked prior to publication. Please be assured that the Department is committed to publishing this information. Having considered the public interest test, the Department's decision is to withhold the information about meetings, gifts and hospitality after April 2014

The Department of Energy and Climate Change was established in October 2008 therefore no related information is held prior to this date.

Appeals procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Information Rights Unit (foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk).

Information Rights Unit (DECC Shared Service)
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

Redacted
Redacted