Government ministers have been accused of “keeping the public in the dark” as latest official figures show that the number of FOI requests rejected by Whitehall departments hit a record high.

Requests to government departments have nearly doubled since the law was enacted 14 years ago. 41% of all resolvable requests received by government departments last year were withheld in full — a 20% rise since the transparency law came into effect in 2005. Meanwhile, 42% of the 34,452 FOI requests received last year were granted in full, compared to 60% in 2005.

The Cabinet Office, the Department for Exiting the European Union and the Ministry of Justice topped the list of departments rejecting requests in full last year, turning down 58%, 54% and 53% of all resolvable queries respectively.

Labour MP Lloyd Russell-Moyle, speaking for the Best for Britain campaign, said: “It’s no surprise that the departments most keen to keep the public in the dark are those most heavily involved with Brexit.

“You have to ask yourself why this information is being hidden. The government is clearly desperate to avoid anyone getting hold of anything to do with its Brexit strategy, because it’s all an embarrassing mess.

“The lack of transparency over this is very worrying, but unfortunately consistent with the government’s refusal to allow

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