# Ofcom fines 4chan £20,000 in first use of Online Safety Act enforcement



Ofcom has taken a significant enforcement step under the UK's new Online Safety Act by fining the US-based social media platform 4chan £20,000 for failing to comply with statutory information requests. The regulator had asked 4chan to provide its illegal harms risk assessment along with details of its qualifying worldwide revenue—documents essential to Ofcom’s ability to properly regulate and investigate online platforms to safeguard internet users.

This fine marks the first usage of Ofcom’s punitive powers under the recently enacted Online Safety Act, which aims to protect children and vulnerable individuals from illegal and harmful online material. The Act imposes a legal obligation on internet services to respond promptly and accurately to regulators’ information requests. 4chan’s failure to do so has prompted Ofcom to escalate the matter, imposing an additional £100 daily penalty starting 14 October, to be applied for up to 60 days or until the information is provided.

Controversial for its anonymous, unmoderated content-sharing, 4chan has long been associated with extremist groups and harmful content, making its regulation a priority under the government’s commitment to online safety. Liz Kendall, the UK Secretary of State for Technology, described the fine as a “clear warning” to firms that disregard the Online Safety Act. Speaking publicly, she emphasised that the legislation offers a vital lifeline for protecting people across the UK, especially children, from the devastating impact of illegal content such as material encouraging self-harm or suicide.

“This fine is a clear warning to those who fail to remove illegal content or protect children from harmful material,” Kendall stated. “We fully back the regulator in taking action against all platforms that do not protect users from the darkest corners of the internet.”

Ofcom’s broader enforcement activity under the Act is ongoing. The regulator has opened 21 investigations covering 69 sites and apps, demonstrating a rigorous commitment to holding online platforms accountable and ensuring robust safety measures are in place to prevent exploitation and harm. This comprehensive approach signals the UK’s determination to lead the way in responsible AI and digital innovation, balancing freedom of expression with user protection.

While some observers suggest the £20,000 fine may appear modest given the scale of 4chan’s challenges, the imposition of daily penalties highlights Ofcom’s resolve to maintain pressure until compliance is achieved. The platform’s refusal to cooperate raises wider questions about the responsibilities of multinational tech companies in adhering to national regulations designed to create safer online environments.

Overall, this enforcement action underscores the UK’s proactive stance on digital regulation, reflecting a positive step toward establishing a safer and more accountable internet landscape. The Online Safety Act’s implementation illustrates the government’s ambition to build the best environment for responsible digital innovation while confronting the complex realities posed by platforms like 4chan that have historically operated with minimal oversight.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.digit.fyi/ofcom-fines-4chan-through-online-safety-act-powers/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/britain-issues-first-online-safety-fine-us-website-4chan-2025-10-13/> - Britain has imposed its first fine under the new Online Safety Act, issuing a £20,000 penalty to U.S.-based internet forum 4chan for failing to provide required information about the risks of illegal content on its platform. Media regulator Ofcom stated that 4chan did not respond to requests for its illegal harms risk assessment and other required documentation. The act aims to protect children and vulnerable users from harmful online material and has sparked debate over its impact on free speech, particularly among U.S. tech firms. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/britain-issues-first-online-safety-fine-us-website-4chan-2025-10-13/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/investigation-into-4chan-and-its-compliance-with-duties-to-protect-its-users-from-illegal-content> - Ofcom has issued a £20,000 fine to 4chan for failing to comply with two statutory information requests under the Online Safety Act. The platform did not provide its illegal content risk assessment or information regarding its qualifying worldwide revenue. Ofcom has mandated that 4chan comply with these requests and has imposed a daily penalty of £100, starting from 14 October, for either 60 days or until the information is provided. ([ofcom.org.uk](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/investigation-into-4chan-and-its-compliance-with-duties-to-protect-its-users-from-illegal-content?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/ofcom-issues-update-on-online-safety-act-investigations> - Ofcom has provided an update on its enforcement activity under the Online Safety Act, including the £20,000 fine imposed on 4chan for failing to respond to information requests. The regulator has also opened 21 investigations into 69 sites and apps, with a focus on holding services accountable and ensuring robust safeguards are in place to protect children and prevent offenders from exploiting these platforms. ([ofcom.org.uk](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/ofcom-issues-update-on-online-safety-act-investigations?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://betanews.com/2025/10/14/uk-regulators-hit-4chan-with-paltry-fine-for-failure-to-comply-with-the-online-safety-act/> - UK regulators have fined 4chan £20,000 for failing to comply with the Online Safety Act. The platform ignored multiple requests from Ofcom for its illegal harms risk assessment and other details related to its global operations. Ofcom has also imposed a daily penalty of £100, starting from 14 October, for either 60 days or until 4chan provides the requested information. ([betanews.com](https://betanews.com/2025/10/14/uk-regulators-hit-4chan-with-paltry-fine-for-failure-to-comply-with-the-online-safety-act/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://cybernews.com/news/ofcom-issues-20k-fine-to-4chan-for-ignoring-information-requests/> - Ofcom has fined 4chan £20,000 for ignoring formal information requests. The platform failed to provide a copy of its illegal harms risk assessment and information relating to its qualifying worldwide revenue. Ofcom has also imposed a daily penalty of £100, starting from 14 October, for either 60 days or until 4chan provides the requested information. ([cybernews.com](https://cybernews.com/news/ofcom-issues-20k-fine-to-4chan-for-ignoring-information-requests/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.computing.co.uk/news/2025/legislation-regulation/ofcom-fines-4chan-twenty-thousand> - Ofcom has issued its first-ever fine under the new Online Safety Act, targeting the controversial US-based internet forum 4chan for failing to cooperate with regulatory demands. The platform ignored multiple requests from Ofcom for a copy of its illegal harms risk assessment and other details related to its global operations. Ofcom has also imposed a daily penalty of £100, starting from 14 October, for either 60 days or until 4chan provides the requested information. ([computing.co.uk](https://www.computing.co.uk/news/2025/legislation-regulation/ofcom-fines-4chan-twenty-thousand?utm_source=openai))