

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 002025
Date 5 March 2018

Private Sector Housing

Request:

1. How many service requests/housing complaints were received by Wolverhampton City Council between 1st January 2013 and 31st December 2016 (private sector housing only) where a HHSRS assessment was conducted?

In response to question 1 above, your request for information has now been considered and the City of Wolverhampton Council is not obliged to supply the information you requested for the reasons set out below.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires City of Wolverhampton Council, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you, the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states the fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies:

In relation to your particular request, the following exemption applies:

Section 12 - Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

We can confirm that the Council holds information falling within the description specified in your request. However, Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows a public authority to refuse a request if the cost of providing the information to the applicant would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information.

The Regulations provide that the appropriate limit to be applied to requests received by local authorities is £450 (equivalent to 18 hours of work). In estimating the cost of complying with a request for information, an authority can only take into account any reasonable costs incurred in:

- (a) Determining whether it holds the information

- (b) Locating the information, or a document which may contain the information
- (c) Retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information
- (d) Extracting the information from a document containing it.

For the purposes of the estimate the costs of performing these activities should be estimated at a rate of £25 per hour.

The information appertaining to your request is not easily accessible and as such this information is not held as a distinct set able to be retrieved or reported on. To gather the information would require a trawl through each scanned property record for which service requests were received or action taken during the period concerned (over 1,800 records). This would take at least 10 minutes per record.

2. How many of these service requests scored a category 1 for "Excess Cold? Please see response provided for question 1 above.
3. How many of the properties that scored a category 1 for "Excess Cold" were built before 1920?
Please see response provided for question 1 above.
4. How many category 1 hazards were resolved informally (i.e by letter or through verbal advice)?
Please see response provided for question 1 above.
5. How many category 1 hazards were eliminated by serving a legal notice under The Housing Act 2004?

(Please provide a breakdown as to what type of notice was served i.e improvement notice, prohibition order, emergency prohibition order, emergency remedial action, hazard awareness).

Please note that questions 4. And 5. relate to category 1 hazards for Excess Cold only. Please only provide answers to questions 4 and 5 which relate to category 1 Excess Cold hazards and not any other hazards under HHSRS
Please see response provided for question 1 above.

6. What proportion of cases outlined in question 2 were reactive, proactive or part of HMO licensing?
Please see response provided for question 1 above.
7. If any, what were the reasons for the proactive cases?
Please see response provided for question 1 above.

8. Since 1st January 2013 has Wolverhampton City Council carried out any proactive work or projects in relation to tackling Excess Cold, fuel poverty, energy efficiency or any other similar work?

Since 2013 the City of Wolverhampton Council, working in conjunction with Wolverhampton Homes, its managing agent for its own housing stock, has installed 1114 cross tenure properties with External Wall Insulation. They have upgraded the district heating systems to 956 properties and conducts 150 Home Energy Advice visits per year. In 2013 they retro fitted 12 properties with various renewable technologies. In addition, the City of Wolverhampton Council runs an Affordable Warmth Grant assistance that delivers energy efficiency measures to up to 200 of the City's most vulnerable private sector households per year.

9. Is there an enforcement procedure where officers have to consider serving notice under The Housing Act 2004 where an informal approach

In response to question 9, we can confirm that the department holds information that you have asked for in relation to the above. However, the information is exempt under section 21 of the FOI Act because it is reasonably accessible to you, and I am pleased to inform you that you can access it on our website via the following link:

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1642&p=0>

Section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act exempts disclosure of information that is reasonably accessible by other means, and the terms of the exemption mean that we do not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for you to have the information.

You can find out more about Section 21 by reading the extract from the Act, available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21>