



27 September 2018

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – 1235/18

Dear Sir/Madam

Your request for information has now been considered and the information requested is provided below.

Request:

I am requesting the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

Intentional homelessness

In this section, if the council does not record the reason for a finding of intentional homelessness (other than in the individual records of the household in question), please exclude part (d) of each question from 1 to 4 and fulfil the remainder of this request.

1. In 2015/16, how many households:

a) applied to the council for support as homeless (prior to homelessness assessment)

b) were accepted by the council as owed a main homelessness duty

c) were found to be intentionally homeless by the council and therefore not owed a main homelessness duty

d) within the figure for (c), were found to be intentionally homeless and not in priority need by the council on grounds of rent arrears?

2. In 2016/17, how many households:

a) applied to the council for support as homeless (prior to homelessness assessment)

b) were accepted by the council as owed a main homelessness duty

c) were found to be intentionally homeless by the council and therefore not owed a main homelessness duty

d) within the figure for (c), were found to be intentionally homeless and not in priority need by the council on grounds of rent arrears?

3. In 2017/18, how many households:

- a) applied to the council for support as homeless (prior to homelessness assessment)
- b) were accepted by the council as owed a main homelessness duty
- c) were found to be intentionally homeless by the council and therefore not owed a main homelessness duty
- d) within the figure for (c), were found to be intentionally homeless and not in priority need by the council on grounds of rent arrears?

4. In 2018/19 until the end of August 2018, how many households:

- a) applied to the council for support as homeless (prior to homelessness assessment)
- b) were accepted by the council as owed a main homelessness duty
- c) were found to be intentionally homeless by the council and therefore not owed a main homelessness duty
- d) within the figure for (c), were found to be intentionally homeless and not in priority need by the council on grounds of rent arrears?

Bedroom tax

This section is heavily dependent on the data the council routinely records. Therefore, if the information for any question from 5-7 is not routinely recorded, please mark the question as 'information not held' and fulfil the remainder of this request.

- 5. How many households that are currently subject to the Spare Room Subsidy ('bedroom tax') include a current recipient of Employment Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or the Personal Independence Payment?
- 6. How many of the households referred to in response to question 5 are recipients of a disabled facilities grant for their current accommodation?
- 7. Since the start of 2017/18, how many households have been subject to the Spare Room Subsidy whilst including a recipient of Employment Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or the Personal Independence Payment?

Universal Credit rent arrears

If the council does not have its own council housing or ALMO housing stock, please ignore questions 8-19 and proceed straight to question 20 in the next section.

- 8. How many council housing tenant households are there overall?
- 9. Of the households referred to in response to question 8, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least one month?
- 10. Of the households referred to in response to question 8, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least two months?

Please note - the figure for question 9 should include the households referred to in response to question 10.

11. How many council housing tenant households currently receive Housing Benefit (not Universal Credit)?

12. Of the households referred to in response to question 11, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least one month?

13. Of the households referred to in response to question 11, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least two months?

Please note - the figure for question 12 should include the households referred to in response to question 13.

14. How many council housing tenant households currently receive Universal Credit?

15. Of the households referred to in response to question 14, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least one month?

16. Of the households referred to in response to question 14, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least two months?

Please note - the figure for question 15 should include the households referred to in response to question 16.

17. How many council housing tenant households currently receive Universal Credit, whose Universal Credit claim was opened after 1st April 2018?

With regard to question 17, a claim was "opened" when it started; subsequent alterations to the claim (due to variations in monthly earnings, for example) are irrelevant. Regarding households that moved into the local authority area after 1st April 2018 but had (or may have had) a pre-existing Universal Credit claim already in operation - please categorise these at your discretion, based on what is administratively easiest.

18. Of the households referred to in response to question 17, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least one month?

19. Of the households referred to in response to question 17, how many are currently in arrears on their rent by at least two months?

Please note - the figure for question 18 should include the households referred to in response to question 19.

Social housing refusals

20. For each financial year since 2015/16 (including 2018/19 year-to-date), the number of households towards whom the council has accepted a main homeless duty, whose nomination for housing as a homeless household was refused by a social housing landlord (including the council itself)

21. For each financial year since 2015/16 (including 2018/19 year-to-date), please state how many of the households referred to in response to question 20 had their nomination for housing refused by a social housing landlord on grounds of affordability or limited entitlement to welfare assistance. Please break this figure down by each social landlord if possible.

To provide clarity on questions 20 and 21 - councils accept a main homeless duty to households. They then nominate those households to social housing landlords in order to house them. Social housing landlords can refuse. That refusal might be due to the household failing an assessment of whether they could afford the rent, and/or limited entitlement to welfare assistance (i.e. their benefits won't cover the rent). This is what questions 20 and 21 are about.

Response:

In order to determine this, an officer would have to manually inspect records to determine whether it fell within the scope of your request and if so, extract the relevant data. Given the number of records involved, we believe it to be a reasonable estimate that to comply with your request would exceed the appropriate cost limit of £450. This figure is set out in Regulations and is equivalent to one person working more than 18 hours to determine whether we hold the information, and to locate and extract the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Authority is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your request further.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please contact the Head of Corporate Governance, Rutland County Council, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545700

Yours faithfully

FOI Administrator
Business Support Team
Rutland County Council