



London Borough of Barnet,
2 Bristol Avenue,
Colindale,
London NW9 4EW
13 September 2019
Our ref: 5550580

Thank you for your request received on 15 August 2019, for the following information:

To whom it may concern,

Please find below a request for information from your authority under the Freedom of Information Act.

We are carrying out a Freedom of Information (FOI) request of local authorities to determine new information about the extent of community asset transfer (CAT) across the country, as part of our campaign on the importance of community spaces. This work is being carried out by Locality, the national network for community organisations, in partnership with the Co-op.

FOI Questions:

We would be grateful if you could provide the name of the authority in full; your region; and a contact for any follow-up questions, if possible here:

The authority's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy

1. Does the authority have a published Community Asset Transfer* policy?

***Community Asset Transfer enables local authorities to transfer the ownership/management of their assets to community organisations at less than full market value in order to achieve a defined public benefit.**

a. If yes, please provide a web-link to the policy.

b. If no, is Community Asset Transfer (CAT) integrated into another policy within your local authority ' such as wider asset management strategies or VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) policies? Please provide a web-link to this, if so.

c. If no, does the authority have a CAT policy that is not-published / only available on request? Please provide a copy if available, if so.

2. If the authority has a CAT policy (whether integrated into another strategy or a non-published policy), when was this last updated or reviewed?

The volume of Community Asset Transfer over the last five years

3. How many land or building assets has the authority transferred to community ownership* through Community Asset Transfer in the following time periods (financial years): 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, and 2018/19?

*** For the purpose of this question, please provide the number of assets that have been transferred using the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003**

(Local Government Act 1972), which enables the transfer of assets at less than best or nil consideration to achieve a defined community benefit.

4. Of those assets that have been transferred, how many are on:

- a) A freehold agreement
- b) A long lease of at least 25 years or more
- c) A lease of between 5 years and 25 years
- d) A lease of less than 5 years.

Please provide this information for the same time periods as Q3 if possible.

5. Currently, how many land or building assets does the authority own in total? Please exclude social housing assets from this total.

How many of the authority's land and building assets are currently identified as potential assets available for CAT? Please state if you do not review assets available for CAT in this way.

We have processed this request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Response

The council holds the information requested and it is attached/ the answers to your questions are below

The authority's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy

1. Does the authority have a published Community Asset Transfer* policy?

****Community Asset Transfer enables local authorities to transfer the ownership/management of their assets to community organisations at less than full market value in order to achieve a defined public benefit.***

No the London Borough of Barnet does not have an official Community Asset Transfer policy

a. If yes, please provide a web-link to the policy.

N/A

b. If no, is Community Asset Transfer (CAT) integrated into another policy within your local authority ' such as wider asset management strategies or VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) policies? Please provide a web-link to this, if so.

Yes, the Community Asset Strategy From June 2015 (covering to 2020)
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s25649/Appendix%201%20-%20Community%20Asset%20Implementation%20Plan.pdf>

c. If no, does the authority have a CAT policy that is not-published / only available on request? Please provide a copy if available, if so.

No

2. If the authority has a CAT policy (whether integrated into another strategy or a non-published policy), when was this last updated or reviewed ?

LBB does not have one

The volume of Community Asset Transfer over the last five years

3. How many land or building assets has the authority transferred to community ownership* through Community Asset Transfer in the following time periods (financial years): 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, and 2018/19?

None

**** For the purpose of this question, please provide the number of assets that have been transferred using the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 (Local Government Act 1972), which enables the transfer of assets at less than best or nil consideration to achieve a defined community benefit.***

Instead of having a policy for Community Asset Transfers, LB Barnet created the CBAT (Community Benefit Assessment Tool) programme, that fell under the Community Asset Strategy, approved at Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee in 2015. This is a way of supporting community groups through rent subsidy, calculated by software that weighs social value provided by the community group. Leases at full market rental value are offered, with the rent subsidy coming off the market rent. The rent subsidy is only offered for the first five years of lease term, and will be reviewed at this point. This is a fully transparent way of offering community groups subsidy, as the amount of subsidy they are offered is directly proportionate to the amount of help and support they provide to the community.

One asset that LB Barnet owns, Homeless Action Barnet, on Woodhouse Road, is being offered a peppercorn lease. This is however a unique situation whereby HAB built the building on LB Barnet land and therefore had a 20 year implied lease, with the option to renew for a further 20 year years. Therefore, we are currently in the process of documenting a new lease, as a lease renewal.

4. Of those assets that have been transferred, how many are on:

a) A freehold agreement

None

b) A long lease of at least 25 years or more

None

c) A lease of between 5 years and 25 years

None

d) A lease of less than 5 years .

None

Please provide this information for the same time periods as Q3 if possible.

5. Currently, how many land or building assets does the authority own in total?

Please exclude social housing assets from this total.

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How many of the authority's land and building assets are currently identified as potential assets available for CAT?

None

Please state if you do not review assets available for CAT in this way.

LB Barnet does not have a CAT policy so we do not review assets for this purpose. As mentioned in a previous reply, we have a bespoke programme to help our community groups called the Community Benefit Assessment Tool (CBAT).

Further information

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link www.ico.org.uk

For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.

Your rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: foi@barnet.gov.uk. Or by post to Information Management Team (FOI) London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website www.ico.org.uk). There is no charge for making an appeal.