



Assurance Group
London Borough of Barnet,
2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale,
London NW9 4EW
31 October 2019
Our ref: 5669548

Thank you for your request received on 30 September 2019, for the following information:

Please tell me how many tenants claimed housing benefit for bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodations in the financial year 2018/2019.

In addition, I would like to know the total value of the housing benefit granted in the 2018/19 financial year for B&B accommodations and the number of people between which this amount was divided.

Please tell me the three most expensive amounts paid per single night of accommodation in B&B accommodation, and tell me the names and addresses of the B&Bs in which those costs were incurred

Finally, please tell me the longest period of time a claimant was homed in B&B accommodation, the cost per night, the total cost and the name and address of the B&B.

We have processed this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Response

I can confirm that London Borough of Barnet holds the information you requested.

However, we consider that the following exemptions apply to some of the information requested. The remaining information is not withheld and is below.

I am writing to inform you that we have searched our records and although we hold some of the information requested, some is not held by London Borough of Barnet because the figures given below relate to privately rented bed and breakfast accommodation as Temporary Accommodation provided by Barnet Homes does not include any meals/food and therefore it cannot be described as 'bed and breakfast' accommodation.

In addition, please note that we can only provide a 'snapshot' of the figures at a given point, and not a total for the whole year, so I have provided the figures as at the end of March 2019. This is due to the fact that the Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE) where the information is recorded is a snapshot in time and reports on the position at that time.

We have provided answers to your request below showing where we do not hold the information requested or where exemptions apply..

Please tell me how many tenants claimed housing benefit for bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodations in the financial year 2018/2019.

Number of tenants claiming housing benefit for privately rented B&B accommodation at the end of March 2019 was 5

In addition, I would like to know the total value of the housing benefit granted in the 2018/19 financial year for B&B accommodations and the number of people between which this amount was divided.

We are unable to provide this information under section 12 because we estimate that compliance with your request will exceed the "appropriate limit" under section 12. The appropriate limit is £450 which is equivalent to 18 hours at £25 per hour. The per hour figure is set by Regulations rather than actual salary paid to any officers handling requests. The appropriate limit includes the time it will take the council to discover if it holds the information requested, to locate it, extract it and collate it as well as putting it into any particular format requested by the requester.

We have calculated that checking the twelve Single Housing Benefit Extracts created for the financial year 2018/19 would take approximately 2-3 hours for each extract with regard to the information requested. Our calculation is as follows;

12 extracts to be checked with each taking 2-3 hours to locate and collate the requested information, so a conservative estimate of how long this would take is 24 hours, which exceeds the appropriate limit outlined above.

Please tell me the three most expensive amounts paid per single night of accommodation in B&B accommodation, and tell me the names and addresses of the B&Bs in which those costs were incurred

We are refusing this information under s.40(2) personal data exemption. Because of the small numbers involved there is a risk that the individuals could be identified. Please see formal refusal notice below.

Finally, please tell me the longest period of time a claimant was homed in B&B accommodation, the cost per night, the total cost and the name and address of the B&B.

Barnet Council do not house claimants in privately rented B&B – Temporary Accommodation provided by Barnet Homes does not include breakfast.

We can only provide a snapshot of the claims as at a given point in time: therefore we are unable to state the longest period of time a claimant has resided in privately rented B&B due to the appropriate limit under section 12 as explained above. Because of the small numbers involved this is also refused under s.40(2) personal data because there is a risk of individuals being identified.

Refusal Notice Section 40(2)

[Part 1 of Schedule 19](#) of the Data Protection Act 2018 amends the personal data exemption under section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI). These are consequential amendments designed to ensure that the correct provisions of the GDPR and the new Act are referenced instead of the now repealed DPA 1998. They

will not fundamentally impact when personal data can, and cannot, be disclosed in response to an FOI request.

Personal Information is governed by the Data Protection Act legislation and is defined as any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). It adds that: an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location number, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person.

The withheld information is exempt because disclosure would contravene the first data protection principle which requires that personal data is processed fairly and lawfully. Disclosure of the requested information would breach this principle and in particular the requirement of fairness.

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.