



London Borough of Barnet,
2 Bristol Avenue
Colindale , NW9 4EW
11 May 2021
Our ref: 7228216

Thank you for your request received on 13 April 2021, for the following information:

I am aware some information on DHPs is submitted to the Department for Work & Pensions in its analysis of End of Year returns from local authorities. This includes the total number of awards, DHP financial expenditure and Government contribution original allocation. These monitoring returns provide details of the purpose of the DHP award, such as to secure and move to alternative accommodation and rental costs, split by the welfare form for which households have been affected.

What is not included in this information is the amount and value of DHPs applied for which are not awarded, or if only partial amounts are given. I am requesting this information, as detailed in Table 1 below, and also request splits of this data by the age band of the claimant. If possible, please can the figures just for those where the claimant is aged between 16 and 30 be provided.

Separately, I am requesting information on your Council's use of rent guarantee schemes: these are typically used to help people facing homelessness by providing a written guarantee to the landlord to cover any unpaid rent/damage. The information I require is written below, but also in a Table 2:

- * Total amount of rent guarantees issued in 2019/20**
- o How many rent guarantees were issued to care leavers**
- o Age bands of those issued rent guarantees**

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

Response

We are refusing your request 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 it will take approximately 175 hours to comply with your request. Our calculation is as follows:

- Regarding the applicant's age – the way to obtain this is by using the benefit extract, however this only shows details for live claims where either HB or CTS are in payment at the time it is produced (ie a snapshot of the information at the end of that month). A sizeable proportion of applications we dealt with in 2019/20 are no longer active, and a further large proportion were in receipt of Universal Credit, so the details would have to be extracted by looking at each application individually
- Regarding how successful the application was – i.e. if the application was fully/partially awarded or refused – our applications do not ask the applicant to specify the amount they are applying for. Sometimes the applicant enters a figure, for example for rent arrears, or a rent deposit, but on many occasions they are vague, and in any case this is not recorded on the system, or by the DHP team in a spreadsheet because we are not required to collect and/or report on these figures. Therefore to obtain this information would also require us to look through every application individually, and in many cases make an educated guess of the actual amount that was being applied for.

There were 2105 DHP applications processed in 2019/20. Allowing 5 minutes to look at each application and record the information, it is estimated it would take 175 hours to comply with your request: $2105 \times 5 / 60 = 175$.

In relation to the Rent Guarantee Scheme, please be advised Barnet Council does not hold this information.

Please make your request directly to Barnet Homes.

Housing services (including homelessness, allocations, housing repairs and so forth) are provided by Barnet Homes who are an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) who manage the council's housing stock and associated services on the council's behalf. They are a public authority under Freedom of Information Act 2000 and so you may make a FOI request to them. Their contact details are:

Email: talk2us@barnethomes.org

Post: The Data Controller

Barnet Homes

2 Bristol Avenue,

Colindale,

London NW9 4EW

Advice and Assistance

We could provide you with a random sample of cases and give a breakdown of those cases as requested.

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.