

7 July 2021
Our ref: 7388780

Thank you for your request received on 9 June 2021, for the following information:

I would like to know the following information, for the time period between 01/11/2020 and 01/02/2021:

- How many planning complaints were received by the LPA***
- The date each complaint was received by the LPA***
- The date a decision was made regarding enforcement by the LPA in relation to each complaint***
- The date each decision was actioned by the LPA***

I do not require identifying information about individual complaints, other than what I have detailed above.

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

Response

I can confirm that London Borough of Barnet holds the information you requested. However, we consider that the following exceptions apply to some of the information requested.

I would like to know the following information, for the time period between 01/11/2020 and 01/02/2021:

- How many planning complaints were received by the LPA***

328 service requests for were received by planning enforcement between 01/11/2020 and 01/02/2021

- The date each complaint was received by the LPA***

The attached documents provide a list of the cases opened, giving the reference numbers, date service request was received, date notice authorised and issued (if any was served), and date case closed (if closed).

- The date a decision was made regarding enforcement by the LPA in relation to each complaint***

Please see refusal notice below

- The date each decision was actioned by the LPA

Please see refusal notice below

Refusal Notice

We may hold some of the information requested.

R12(4) (b) the request for information is manifestly unreasonable

Regulation 12(4)(b) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 provides an exception to the disclosure of information in situations where the request is manifestly unreasonable. This exception may be invoked where the request places a substantial and unreasonable cost or burden of dealing with it. Information. The purpose of the exception is to protect public authorities from exposure to a disproportionate burden or an unjustified level of distress, disruption or irritation, in handling information requests.

This is a qualified exception under EIR which means that consideration must also be given to whether in all the circumstances of the case the public interest favouring disclosure is greater than the public interest in maintaining the exemption. The public interest means what is in the best interests to the public.

Public interest test considerations

I have considered whether the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information requested. There are a number of public interest arguments that weigh in favour of disclosing the information you have sought:

- * The general proposition of maximising openness to which the EIR and the Council aspire ;
- * The benefits of ensuring transparent and accountable government

However, there are also public interest arguments against disclosure:

- * It does not represent a cost effective use of the Council's resources, we received 328 complaints and it would take approximately 10 minutes per case so therefore this would equate over 55 Hours

(10 minutes times 328 cases divided by 60 minutes = 54.00 hrs)

- * The diversion of resources that will be necessary in providing the information requested negatively impact on its ability to deliver its core functions

The Council considers that the public interest in withholding the requested information outweighs the public interest test in disclosure of the requested information.

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.