

London Borough of Barnet  
2 Bristol Avenue,  
Colindale NW9 4EW  
8 June 2022  
Our ref: 8264928

Thank you for your request received on 10 May 2022, for the following information:

**Dear FOI Officers,**

**For the calendar years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 Could you send me:**

- how many times the council have employed bailiffs to collect council tax arrears**
- how many times the council employed bailiffs to collect council tax arrears from those receiving the maximum level of council tax relief**
- how much money was recovered from these incidents**
- how many of these cases were bailiffs the first method of rent arrears recovery**

**Could you please provide the information in an Excel spreadsheet or another machine-readable format.**

**Given details of suspected homicide victims are routinely published by police in appeals and in reporting in the press I believe privacy restriction in the Freedom of Information Act and restrictions around reporting on current investigations should not apply.**

**If you are encountering practical difficulties complying with this request, please contact me so that we can amend the request.**

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

## **Response**

I can confirm that the council holds the information you requested. However we are withholding the information because we consider that the exemption below applies to it.

***For the calendar years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 Could you send me:***

***- how many times the council have employed bailiffs to collect council tax arrears***

See attached.

***- how many times the council employed bailiffs to collect council tax arrears from those receiving the maximum level of council tax relief***

See exemption statement below

***- how much money was recovered from these incidents***

See attached.

***- how many of these cases were bailiffs the first method of rent arrears recovery***

This is not something the Council Tax team would hold, therefore you would need make a Freedom of Information request to Barnet Homes.

You can email a Freedom of Information request to [talk2us@barnethomes.org](mailto:talk2us@barnethomes.org):

### **Exemption Statement**

#### **S12 - Cost limit (Exceeds Appropriate Limit)**

We are refusing your request under section 12 because as we do not have this information readily available, 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 Regulation 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 estimate that compliance with your request will take 4,399 hours which will exceed the appropriate cost limit under section 12 FOIA.

This has been calculated as follows, we would have to check at least 52,791 records and we estimate it will take 5 minutes per record which totals 4,399 hours.

### **Advice and Assistance**

Due to the large volume of cases that go through the enforcement agents we would not be able to provide any advise on how to refine your request.

### **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](http://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](mailto:foi@barnet.gov.uk). Or by post to Records & Information Management Service, Assurance Group, 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](http://www.ico.org.uk)). There is no charge for making an appeal.