

London Borough of Barnet
2 Bristol Avenue,
Colindale NW9 4EW
26 April 2024
Our ref: 11980540

Thank you for your request received on 18 April 2024, for the following information:

Subject: Freedom of Information Request - Distribution of SIM Cards and Devices by Libraries

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Digital Poverty Alliance (DPA) is requesting electronic information from 2022 onwards regarding the distribution of SIM cards and digital devices by libraries within your county council's jurisdiction.

Accordingly, we seek detailed information on the following aspects:

1. SIM Card and Device Distribution:

- 1. The total number of SIM cards and devices each library within your council has distributed.**
- 2. The timeframe over which these distributions took place.**

2. Criteria and Process:

- 1. The criteria used to determine eligibility for receiving SIM cards and devices.**
- 2. The process followed by libraries to distribute these items to beneficiaries.**

The DPA values your efforts in advancing digital inclusion and eagerly anticipates your response within the statutory timeframe specified by the Freedom of Information Act. This information will significantly contribute to our work in advocating for effective solutions to end digital poverty in the UK.

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

Response

SIM Card and Device Distribution:

1.The total number of SIM cards and devices each library within your council has distributed

- 206 SIM Cards
- 0 Devices distributed from libraries.

2.The timeframe over which these distributions took place. January - March 2024

Criteria and Process:

1.The criteria used to determine eligibility for receiving SIM cards and devices.

We follow the criteria set out by the digital inclusion charity, The Good Things Foundation.

Someone receiving data through the National Databank must:

- Be 18+ years old
- **AND** be from a low-income household

And qualify in one or several of the following statements:

- Has no access or insufficient access to the internet at home
- **AND/OR** has no or insufficient access to the internet when away from the home
- **AND/OR** cannot afford their existing monthly contract or top-up

Before an individual receives data, they must sign a declaration of eligibility, stating that they meet the above criteria.

2.The process followed by libraries to distribute these items to beneficiaries.

We hold sessions in libraries and other community venues such as food banks, having first distributed promotional information via the contingency hotels and relevant teams within the council and community. As stated above all individuals are required to sign a declaration of eligibility before they can claim a SIM. Library staff then explain how the SIM works and the data allowance available from the various providers.

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 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). There is no charge for making an appeal.