

Freedom of Information Request – Empty Properties

Date received 27/2/21

Request:

1) As of 26th February 2021 (or the most recently available date), please could you tell me how many private and council homes have been vacant in your authority for the following numbers of financial years:*

a. Less than one year (i.e. current financial year)

b. One year

c. Two years

d. Three years

e. Four years

f. Five years

g. Six years

h. Seven years

i. Eight years

j. Nine years

k. Ten years

l. 11 - 19 years

m. 20 or more years

*Please treat 'years' as financial years. If a home has been listed as empty within the current financial year, I would expect this to be listed as 'less than one year'.

Please could you break this information down by:

Column a) The 'number of years'

Column b) 'Private' or 'council' home - a separate count for private, and council, if available

Column c) The number of vacant homes

*2) For the last five financial years (2016/2017 - 2020/2021), please can

you tell me how many homes that had been vacant for two or more years were demolished in your authority? *

Please could you break this information down by:

Column a) The financial year

Column b) The number of homes demolished

3) For the last five financial years (2016/2017 - 2020/2021), please can you tell me how many reports related to squatting in a council-owned vacant property you have received?

Please could you break this information down by:

Column a) The financial year

Column b) The number of reports related to squatting

4) For the last five financial years (2016/2017 - 2020/2021) how much money has your council raised from charging extra council tax on homes that have been vacant for two or more years?

Please could you break this information down by:

Column a) The year

Column b) The amount raised via council tax paid on vacant dwellings

If time or cost restraints are an issue with this request, please can you prioritise the questions in this order: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Response:

We have no reports detailing the information you require or any reporting methods that break down what is 'private' or a 'council home', so this would require manual intervention to collate and check the details.

As each tax year has about 700 empty properties taking approximately 5 minutes each to verify, the Council considers the information to be exempt from disclosure under S12 of the Act. Section 12 of the Act allows the Council to refuse to answer the request where it estimates that answering the request would exceed the appropriate limit. For the purposes of the Act, the appropriate limit is £450 for local authorities.

