



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Further to your information request FOI/EIR 22/23-126 please find your question and our response below.

Request:

I write to request information on the number of households claiming Universal Credit and/or housing benefit who have presented to you as homeless while between January 2019 and April 2022.

As part of this request, I would like this information to be broken down into the following:

- (i) The total number of households claiming Universal Credit presenting as homeless since January 2019, broken down into households living in leasehold property and council-owned property (otherwise known as council tenants) and years;
- (ii) The total number of households claiming housing benefit – part of the legacy welfare system – presenting as homeless since January 2019, broken down into households living in leasehold property and council-owned property (otherwise known as council tenants) and years.

Response:

The Housing Department have advised that they do not separately record this data in a retrievable format. To supply this data, we would have to manually search through 3609 individual case files.

We have estimated that it would take approximately 30 minutes to go through each individual file to retrieve the requested information.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for local government is £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Request Revision:

Thank you for the attached information, although I am disappointed that you have not been able to provide the information requested, especially seeing that a number of authorities have been able to supply information with significant caseloads.

However, I appreciate the constraints you have listed above – so I am therefore willing to revise my request to only ask for data from May 2021 to April 2022, as opposed to 2019.

Response Revision:

Thank you for your response. We appreciate that different Councils record their data in different ways.

The Housing Department have advised that for your revised dates of May 2021 to April 2022, there were 907 homeless applications. As previously stated, we do not separately record the data requested in an electronically retrievable format. The Housing Department have managed to extract from the data that out of the 907 homeless applications, 431 were in receipt of Universal Credit or Benefits. This data cannot be broken down further without manually searching through each case file and extracting the required information. We estimate that the time to search through each case file would be approximately 30 minutes.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for local government is £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

This concludes your request FOI/EIR 22/23-126

If information has been refused please treat this as a Refusal Notice for the purposes of the Act.

If you disagree with our decision or are otherwise unhappy with how we have dealt with your request in the first instance you may approach foi@eastcambs.gov.uk and request a review. A request for review must be made in no more than 40 working days from the date of this email.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right under s50 of the Freedom of Information Act to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF.