

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Your request for information has now been considered and the Council's response to your questions is shown below.

You asked:

Freedom of Information request, with regards article for DMFed in-house magazine “The Way Ahead” and Website.

Do local Authorities know how many Vulnerable People, are living in their own local communities? That is in case of natural and non-natural emergencies happens and affects the local community, so directly affecting the safety and welfare of Vulnerable People or they are placed in harm's way's as result. Or even know where Vulnerable People are actually living in the community? Or what level of dependence they have or their personal needs are too?

In the field of emergency planning, Leicester City Council works with other local authorities in Leicestershire and Rutland as part of a formal “Resilience Partnership”. It also coordinates its plans with the emergency services, health sector organisations, the Environment Agency, utilities and voluntary sector through the Local Resilience Forum.

The City Council specific plans and the multi-agency plans normally make specific reference to considerations around vulnerable people but there is also a dedicated “Identification of Vulnerable Persons & Support in a Crisis Plan”. This plan lists various data bases containing details of known vulnerable people held by various organisations, along with contact details should this information be required during the response to a major incident. It recognises that these data bases will never identify all vulnerable people in an area at any one time but would allow a good starting point that would need to be supplemented by local knowledge and the effective processing of dynamic information as it is received.

In addition this plan recognises the potential shortage of emergency responders during the initial stages of a major incident and promotes early community engagement with the vulnerable to encourage, where possible, a culture of self-help. The plan emphasises the need for emergency responders to avoid making assumptions about vulnerable people and whenever possible to ask them what they need, giving them dignity and respect, rather than just going ahead with what they assume to be right. For example “a blind person may be capable of evacuating themselves but may be suspicious as to who is directing them to leave if done by a stranger. This heavily relies on whether a guide dog is harnessed or not or if the carer is available to help”. The social model of disability runs as a theme throughout the plan.

This plan is due to be exercised / tested early this year and targeted community engagement will be intensified in areas at a high risk of flooding. Outside of the field of emergency planning, people might be deemed vulnerable for a range of reasons, some of which present as acute need (e.g. people fleeing persecution or violence) while others are due to more chronic need (e.g. people with an illness or disability, people in or at risk of poverty). In this broader sense, people who are potentially vulnerable include:

- Asylum seekers and refugees
- People fleeing domestic violence
- Temporary or permanently ill
- Disabled people
- People with learning difficulties
- People with unpaid caring responsibilities
- Teenage parents
- Any household in receipt of a means-tested or disability-related benefit
- Ex-service personnel
- Ex-offenders and people known to the probation service

Links to further information on needs assessments in different policy areas, including health, crime and community safety and housing, can be found on the council's research and intelligence webpages (<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/research>) and JSNA pages (<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/jsna/>).

The legislation allows you to use the information supplied for your own personal use. Please be aware that any commercial or other use, for example publication, sale, or redistribution may be a breach of copyright under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 as amended unless you obtain the copyright holder's prior permission.

Not all the information that is supplied which is covered by copyright will be the Council's copyright, for example it may be the copyright of a government department or another Council. You should seek either the Council's consent or their consent as appropriate. The Council is willing to advise you of any such potential issues on request. In order to make a request to re-use the information please contact the Information Governance Manager using the details below.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:
Information Governance Manager
Information and Support
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG
e-mail: info-requests@leicester.gov.uk

Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please be aware that the Information Commissioner does not normally consider appeals or complaints until the internal appeals and complaints processes of the public authority which is answering the request have been exhausted. You are therefore advised to complain or appeal to the Information Governance Manager before contacting the Commissioner.