

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:

1. **How many households has your local authority identified as being subject to the under –occupation housing benefit reduction?**

A total of 4141 (LCC and Housing Associations based on January 2013 data)

- a) **How many of these households have registered or requested for a transfer to smaller accommodation and how many are projected to have transferred before April, and during 2013/14?**

As at 31.1.03 there were 294 households on the housing register who had applied to downsize to smaller accommodation.

As at 10.1.13, 39 households have downsized to smaller accommodation, we expect this to be approximately 50 by the end of March 2013.

We expect this figure to increase during 2012/13 however, this is difficult to project due to peoples individual choices and how they will deal with the bedroom tax on its implementation.

- b) **How many households will move to private sector accommodation, and what is the projected change in housing benefit expenditure as a result of these changes?**

It is not possible at this time to determine the number of households who will make the decision to move to the private sector. We are currently in the process of collecting data from home visits to get an indication of what decisions people may take in relation to the implementation of the bedroom tax and benefit cap, however the decisions people make will be determined by their own individual circumstances.

- c) **What projections have been made of rent arrears arising from the under-occupation housing benefit reduction?**

See attached.

- d) **What assessment has been made of the impact of Housing Association tenants in the area?**

A total of 1314 Housing Association households will be affected by the bedroom tax (based on January 2013 data)

1069 under occupied by 1 bed

219 under occupied by 2 bed
 41 under occupied by 3 beds
 8 under occupied 4 beds
 2 under occupied by 5 beds

2. **What assessment has been made of the availability and possible shortfall of suitable accommodation in the social sector for tenants requesting to downsize as a consequence of the under-occupation housing benefit reduction?**

LCC Under Occupied cases – as at Dec 2012 (Please note this is in the process of being updated with recently received January data)

Beds Needed	Total	LCC Availability 2011/12					Shortfall
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	673	782					
2	1765		267				1498
3	103			260			
4	19				21		
5	7					3	5
Total	2657						

The above is based on 2011/12 LCC properties advertised and assumes that all those affected will apply to move. It should also be noted this does not take account of any other priority cases that may be on the housing register. Also those tenants who are currently under occupying 2 bed properties if they decide to downsize would make more 2 beds available.

3. **What assessment has been made of the impact of the projected rent arrears on your councils ability to build additional council homes?**

The Council have approved in principle the building of 19 new council houses, at the time of the financial appraisal a 2% standard void and bad debt allowance applies across all 22,000 housing stock. The properties will be part of the overall HRA dwelling stock and therefore any risk of voids and bad debts will be absorbed by the whole of the stock. Any future plans will take account of this.

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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

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