

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

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

- 1) List of unoccupied private sector properties homes owned by 'individuals'**
- 2) List of unoccupied private sector homes owned by 'non-individuals'**

The lists supplied should include date properties first became empty, type of property, use of property, contact details for the registered owners and whether the council has been in contact with these registered owners

Response:

- 1) This information is considered to be exempt under section 31(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act and is therefore being withheld. Disclosure of the requested list of properties would be likely to have significant negative impact on the prevention of crime. Disclosure of this information could be of use to squatters and would, on a balance of probability, lead to significant harm in the form of criminal activity.

The Council considers there is a strong public interest in avoiding likely prejudice to the prevention of crime, including avoiding damage to property and personal distress to the victims of crime and to those in the wider neighbourhood. On balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption does outweigh the public interest in disclosure (which include properties coming back into use and the ability to review the Council's activities).

Having considered the public interest, the Department's decision is therefore to withhold details of vacant privately-owned domestic properties. Please treat this document as the statutory refusal notice for the exempt information as required by section 17.1 of the Freedom, of Information Act 2000 for the reasons stated directly above.

- 2) Please see attached Excel spreadsheet.

A couple of points to bear in mind about the data provided:

1. The data is constantly changing - what is vacant on a Monday may become occupied on a Tuesday, so please remember it will always be in a state of flux.
2. Our data is only as accurate as the information notified to us; therefore it is possible we have inaccurate information if we have not been correctly advised.

3. We always need time to process work, therefore there may be changes notified to us that we had yet to action, which will affect the status of the properties on the list.

We cannot provide property type and property usage information as this is not collected for Council tax purposes. Therefore, this part of this letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with this section of the Act, this information is not held.

Finally, all owners of unoccupied properties are contacted by the council as a matter of course.

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 Head of Information Governance using the details below.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:

Head of Information Governance
Information and Support
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG
e-mail: FOIA@leicester.gov.uk

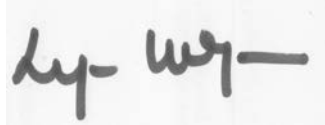
Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

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 Head of Information Governance before contacting the Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn Wyeth', written on a light-colored rectangular background.

Lynn Wyeth
Head of Information Governance