

**FOI Reference Number:** FOI/237/1920

**Date:** 21/10/2019

**Request:**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information from your council.

My request relates to the Right to Buy scheme for council tenants to buy their homes.

Specifically, it relates to owners extending their leasehold leases with your council as the freeholder. I am asking each council in England and Wales with a housing brief in an effort to create a national picture.

In each case, I understand that records may be incomplete, and if this is the case, I would like whatever figures are available, together with their dates, to give the most accurate view possible.

Here is what I am requesting:

1. In total, how many leasehold extensions have been agreed since Right to Buy started? If records are incomplete on this, please also indicate what years of data are available.
2. How much has been raised from these extensions in total? Again, if this is for specific years, please also say which years are covered.
3. How many of these were 90-year extensions under the 1993 Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act? A percentage is fine.
4. How many extensions for each of the last 10 calendar years? How much was raised in total for each year? If the information is more easily available in fiscal years, please deliver it so, but please do indicate if that's the case.
5. For each year of the last 10 years, how many extensions were for leases with 80 years remaining or less? How much was raised from these extensions?
6. How much was raised from the single most-expensive extension? When was this, and how many years were left on the lease before the extension? Again, if records are patchy, please indicate whether this is the most-

expensive, or the most-expensive for whatever years are available, and what those years are.

7. How much was charged to leaseholders in fees in total for these extensions?
8. Who were the parties paid the fees and how much each? If this includes law firms, please name the top five and how much each of them received.
9. How many extensions went to tribunal per year for the last 10 years and in total? How much was spent on tribunals by the council?
10. In total, what percentage of Right to Buy properties were sold leasehold and what percentage freehold by the council? Again, if records are incomplete, a percentage relating to existing records and the timeframe of those records will be fine.

I am given to understand I should receive a response within 20 working days.

For the purpose of cost, please consider each of these questions a separate request. The response should be made by email, please, to [REDACTED]

If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, I would welcome any advice and assistance, under the Section 16 obligations of the Act, as to how I can refine my request.

Indeed, as an experienced handler of information requests, if you can identify any ways that my request could be refined I would be grateful for any further pointers.

I hope it can be seen from my request that I am trying to build as reliable a statistical picture as possible about the nature of leasehold extensions in England and Wales, so please forgive the comprehensive nature of my questions. They are delivered roughly in order of importance.

If any of them are proving particularly burdensome, to the detriment of the broader request, please let me know.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me via email or phone and I will be very happy to clarify what I am asking for and discuss the request. My details are outlined below.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

**Response:**

Thank you for your information request which Mid and East Antrim Borough Council received on 25/09/2019.

Please find below Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's response to the information you requested in relation to the Right to Buy Scheme.

***Please note that in Northern Ireland district councils are not responsible for the provision of Right to Buy schemes for council tenants to buy their homes. Please contact the Northern Ireland Housing Executive who should be able to help you with your request.***

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of part of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Chief Executive at the Braid Ballymena Town Hall, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ.

Please remember to quote the reference number FOI/237/1920 in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of an internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Please be advised that Mid and East Antrim Borough Council may release the response to this information request into the public domain via our website at <https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/>.

If we publish our response to your request, your personal data will be removed to protect your privacy.