



PERFORMANCE BUSINESS SUPPORT
Community Services Directorate

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02/06/2009:

When calling or telephoning please ask for: Mrs Lesley Mainwaring

My Ref: 743962

Your Ref: FOI Request

Dear Mr Leslie

Re: your request for information – 4 separate requests.

The application that was received by the Council on 11 May 2009 has now been considered and this letter is a full response to that application.

Your request was for:-

1. **After a complaint in 2002 to the Local Government Ombudsman by a Council tenant, the Ombudsman stated that the Council had acted in an oppressive, discriminatory, excessive, and inappropriate manner. What changes, and what checks are being made to prevent this happening again?**
 - A At the conclusion of an investigation Plymouth City Council implements the recommendations given by the Local Government Ombudsman Office and follows the guidance provided in order to improve our services.
2. **In the last 10 years how many complaints has the Local Government Ombudsman dealt with and how many have been upheld? Results for each Housing Office please.**
 - A I would advise that in accordance with our policy and procedures Ombudsman records are destroyed 6 years after the administrative use is concluded however, I set out below the figures that are currently available. Unfortunately, many internal changes have occurred over this timescale and consequently it is impossible to allocate cases to individual housing offices.

2005/2006	26 Ombudsman complaints were recorded for the Housing Department
2006/2007	24 Ombudsman complaints were recorded for the Housing Department
2007/2008	20 Ombudsman complaints were recorded for the Housing Department
2008/2009	17 Ombudsman complaints were recorded for the Housing Department

I would advise that in order to answer the part of your question which asks for the number of Ombudsman cases that have been upheld; considerable time would be needed to read each case and the number of hours of staff time required may result in Plymouth City Council issuing a Fees Notice.

I should therefore be grateful if you would advise me if you wish us to proceed with further investigations or if the information that we have supplied is sufficient for your purposes.

You may wish to view the Local Ombudsman Office website:- www.lgo.org.uk

3. How many complaints have the Council's Housing Department received about dog faeces not being picked up by tenants on their gardens? How many ABCs have been issued to those tenants? In the last 5 years please.

A The Council does not hold the information that you have requested in that the Council does not hold any recorded information.

4. On page 15 of the Council Tenants Handbook, bullet points under the heading "Health and Safety" state: that you and any other person (including children) living in or visiting the property must not: store inflammable materials, including liquids, or gas in the property or garden. Store any appliances, which are powered by petrol, diesel or paraffin, as well as gas cylinders, within the boundary of the property or within communal areas. What do the Council perceive as the dangers to tenants of non-compliance with the above? Are exemptions being made, if so what are they?

4b How many occurrences of this breach of tenancy have been reported, and what action was taken? (By housing office if possible). And do the Council take the safety of tenants affected by the actions of those who breach this condition seriously?

A With regard to the wording of the tenants handbook, I can advise that Plymouth City Council are aware that some sections can be ambiguous which is why the handbook has been re-written ready for the transfer to Plymouth Community Homes. At that time all tenants will be issued with a copy of the new handbook.

With regard to question 4b the Council does not hold the information that you have requested in that the Council does not hold any recorded information.

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If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled you may ask for an internal review to take place.

I hope that we have now supplied the information that you have requested. If you wish to discuss this letter or the information that is supplied then my contact details are above, but please leave a contact telephone number if I am unavailable.

I trust this answers your enquiry.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Mainwaring
Freedom of Information Representative