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Date: 04 March 2019

**Ref: 1022464**

Lois Liao  
Via email  
[request-545695-8cdc2004@whatdotheyknow.com](#)

Dear Lois Liao

**Re: Your information request**

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on the 18 January 2018. This information is being provided as a statutory obligation under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**Your request**

I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please send me:

1. List of council estates and their addresses (inc. postcode, longitude and latitude)
2. Number of social tenants living at and number of dwellings vacant at each estate
3. Number of social tenants that have expressed interest in each estate in the past 10 years
4. Number of people joining the waiting list every day in the past 100 days
5. Number of properties becoming available every day in the past 100 days
6. Social Housing Rental Details. I am looking for information in your council relating to social housing rental prices, categorised by number of bedrooms.
7. Number of new applications made for council housing last year

## Clarification sought for meaning of council estate:

Properties owned by the council

## Our response

1. The information that you have requested is in the public domain and is available using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/land-registry>

Under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the Council has met its duty to respond to your request by advising where the information is publically available.

2. We are able to give you information on the total number of Southwark Council's estate, we have 53,804 properties which consist of 35,663 tenancies.

The information you requested about vacant properties is being withheld under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The information concerning empty properties is exempt from the rights of access under the Act. The exemption which applies to this information is section(s) 31(1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### **Section 31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement - Releasing information would or would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime**

The information requested is exempt from disclosure under section 31(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 - law enforcement. Information is exempt from disclosure if such disclosure would prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. This exemption is subject to a public interest test. Putting the addresses of empty properties within the Borough into the public domain would, in the Authority's view, compromise the security of the properties concerned and create a significant risk of burglary, arson, criminal damage or squatting.

There is also known use of such empty properties to commit benefit fraud, identity fraud and money laundering. It has been concluded that disclosure of this information is not in the public interest as the disclosure of these details may lead to criminal activities. This view is supported by the Southwark Borough Commander of the Metropolitan Police.

The exemption available under section 31(1)(a) is one of the exemptions which is subject to the public interest test. Therefore even when, as here, the council considers the exemption is engaged it must then go on to consider whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Factors in favour of disclosure of the information you have requested include:

- the possibility that this would lead to a reduction in the number of residential properties;
- raising the profile of the issue in order to encourage public debate; and
- providing local residents with the opportunity to challenge the council on its policies and activities relating to the issue.

Factors in favour of maintaining the exemption include:

- the strong public interest in avoiding likely prejudice to the prevention of crime. In this regard the council has sought the views of the Metropolitan Police Borough Commander for the Southwark area and he has indicated that he fully supports the council's opinion that releasing details of unoccupied properties would prejudice the prevention of crime and would not be in the best interests of law enforcement;
- the public interest in avoiding damage to both public and privately owned property;
- the efficient use of police resources;
- the potential for indirect consequences of crime, for example the impact on neighbouring properties of crimes perpetrated on the empty properties; and
- the impact of crime on individuals, the council and corporate bodies

Having considered the above, the council is of the view that the factors in favour of maintaining the exemption outweigh the factors in favour of disclosure and therefore the balance of the public interest test is greater in maintaining the exemption available under section 31(1)(a) of the 2000 Act.

3. We do not hold this information. The Homesearch bidding system does not record bids on properties by each estate. This is listed by individual property addresses.

4. Please see attached spreadsheet

5. Please see attached spreadsheet

6. The average weekly rent by bedroom size for all properties excluding those used for temporary accommodation is as follows:

<b>No of bedrooms</b>	<b>Average weekly rent</b>
0	£78.96
1	£90.44
2	£99.81
3	£109.14
4	£117.75
5	£129.12
6+	£142.41
<b>All properties</b>	<b>£99.70</b>

The weekly rent for temporary accommodation is £204.17 regardless of bedroom size.

7. 6,337

Please note that under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 Southwark Council ask not to receive unsolicited marketing communications.

You are free to use the information provided for your own purposes, including any non-commercial research you are doing and for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use,

for example commercial publication, requires the permission of the copyright holder. If you have any queries or concerns then please contact us using the above details.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make an appeal for a review of our decision, you should contact us at [accessinfo@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:accessinfo@southwark.gov.uk), quoting the reference number above.

If you are not content with the outcome of your appeal you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted our internal appeal procedure and you should contact her within 2 months of the outcome of your internal appeal. Further information on the Freedom of Information Act is available through the Information Commissioner at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

Payal Panchal  
Information Officer