



Valuation Office Agency

Mark Wardell
Director of Information and Analysis

Valuation Office Agency
8th Floor
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU

To: Colin Arthur

Email: foi@voa.gsi.gov.uk

Email: request-513092-681da629@whatdotheyknow.com

Our Reference: 11793402.2/CEO

Date: 10 October 2018

Dear Mr Arthur

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 **VOA ref: 11793402.2/CEO**

Thank you for your request for information under the FOIA which was received on 12 September 2018.

Your initial request for information on 26 August:

"How many reviews have taken place since 1.1.2007 as a result of dwellings being restructured and how many reviews have resulted in no-change to the Tax Band ?...."

You clarified this on 12 September by saying:

"Re your letter of 10.9.18 the "Clarity" requested is as follows:-

- 1. In the New Forest National Park many small houses are purchased and then extended/alterd. I wish to have it confirmed that when they subsequently change hands these properties are properly assessed as to whether the original council tax band should be changed.*
- 2. The New Forest National Park is a southern part of Hampshire to the west of Southampton. The billing authority is the New Forest District Council.*

Notes

A) If council tax bands are not reassessed when properties change hands then the new owners pay less council tax than they should and local authorities (County, District, Town & Parish, Police and Fire) lose income.

B) The link which triggers a reassessment involves various departments in quite separate planning authorities including their building control departments, Revenue and Benefit departments, the Valuation Office Agency and a monthly billing report.

Many home owners feel that "improved" houses do not receive a Band change due to the lengthy chain of government departments not working properly and I believe that the "chain" through which information passes is not working properly."

Response to your request:

I have interpreted your request as the number of council tax band reviews undertaken by the VOA since 1 January 2007 in the billing authority of New Forest, where the property has been extended or altered. Of those, the number which have resulted in no change to the Council Tax Band.

As required by section 1(1)(a) of the Act I can confirm that the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) holds some information in the scope of your request.

As of 31 August 2018, the VOA has undertaken 4968 reviews of extended/alterd properties in the billing authority of New Forest since 1 January 2007. Of these, 3,793 resulted in no change to the council tax band.

If you are unhappy with this reply you may request a review by email to: foi@voa.gsi.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can make a request by writing to: Valuation Office Agency, Information Law and Disclosure Team, 8th Floor, 10 South Colonnade, Canary Wharf, London, E14 4PU.

A request for a review must be received within 2 months of the date of this letter. To assist our review, please set out which aspects of the reply concern you and why you are dissatisfied.

If you are not content with the outcome of our review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Valuation Office Agency. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

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