



Valuation Office Agency

Information & Analysis Valuation Office Agency

Wingate House
93/107 Shaftesbury Avenue
London
W1D 5BU

Email: statistics@voa.gsi.gov.uk
Your Reference:
Date: 07 January 2016

To: Steven Syme

Via email: request-298992-351b80eb@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Mr Syme,

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) –Request VOA ref: 11773612.2/CEO

Thank you for your email received on 10 December 2015, which we are treating as a request for information under FOIA. Your original reply (dated 29 October) in response to our clarification letter (of the same date) was not received and it is marked as 'left an annotation' on whatdotheyknow.com. Consequently we are taking 10 December 2015 as the date of receipt. If you would like an Interval Review information is provided on page 2 of this letter.

Following a search of our records, I have established that that the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) does hold the information you requested namely,

"Can you inform me of how many requests for council tax rebanding have ever received for properties for postcodes DE72 3XE and DE72 3XG, since their construction in 2006.

Also, whether these requests for rebanding were for 2-bed flats within these two areas."

At our request, you provided further clarification:

"In particular, I was seeking how many individuals had written to the VOA since 2006 from the two previously quoted postcode areas seeking a council tax band change, and if the information held would also identify whether the changed properties were 2-bed flats as opposed to 'other' property types?"

Response to your request:

I can confirm that between 10 and 20 challenges have been made in relation to Council Tax bands of properties in postcodes DE72 3XE and DE72 3XG between January 2006 and December 2015.

These challenges can take three forms, which we refer to as 'band reviews', 'proposals' and 'appeals'.

A band review is carried out when a potential inaccuracy is brought to the attention of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). The VOA will investigate the matter and inform the taxpayer of the outcome. The taxpayer does not have the right to appeal the outcome of a band review. However, they may be eligible under certain circumstances to submit a proposal.

A proposal is a formal challenge made to a council tax list entry. The VOA will review the band and provide the taxpayer with a written decision. There are limited circumstances under which a taxpayer is eligible to submit a proposal, for example when the taxpayer is new to the property. Where a valid proposal has been made, the taxpayer then has the right to appeal against the VOA's decision at a Valuation Tribunal (VT). The VT is an independent body responsible for making decisions on council tax appeals. Appeals are often withdrawn or settled before being heard by the VT.

None of these challenges resulted in a change to the Council Tax band of any property.

To put this information in context, you may find it helpful to view the tables and commentary in our 'Council Tax: Challenges and Changes' publication. The publication can be viewed online here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/council-tax-challenges-and-changes-in-england-and-wales-2014-15>

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Your formal appeal rights

If you are not happy with this reply you may request a review by writing to The Customer Service Team at the Valuation Office Agency, Head Office, Wingate House, 93/107 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W1D 5BU.
email: foi@voa.gsi.gov.uk .

You must request a review within 2 months of the date of this letter. It would assist our review if you set out which aspects of the reply concern you and why you are dissatisfied.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal 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,

Adrian Ball
Director of Information and Analysis
Valuation Office Agency