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Housing & Modernisation

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Tel: 020 7525 3766

Date: 20 February 2018

Ref: 883955

S Chapman

Via email

request-461234-fbd8088e@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear S Chapman

RE: YOUR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:

Thank you for your request for information that was received on 30 January 2018. We have now completed our search for the information you requested.

You requested:

Please state the number of residential homes owned by the Council and the percentage owned by leaseholders.

Please state the method of apportioning service charges - whether by number of units, square footage, rateable value or by any other method for:

- 1. General service charges***
- 2. Major works***

If there are different methods used please specify which method applies to which estate.

Our response:

Residential homes owned by Southwark = 37254

We do not hold the percentage of residential homes owned by leaseholders but can provide the number. Residential homes owned by leaseholders = 16350

1. Under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Council is not obliged to provide a response if the information requested is already reasonably accessible in the public domain.

Information on service charges, including how they are calculated can be found on our website. Please visit: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/home-owners-services/service-charges/about-service-charges>

2. Major works service charges are contracted on either the bedroom weighting method (as per the method used for most of the annual service charges) or by simple division amongst all properties receiving the service. This would depend on the work being carried out. Please find attached leaflet which explains the calculation further.

Method of apportioning Major works service charges:

Each property is allocated a weighting of four 4 units with an extra unit added per additional bedroom. Example:

1 bed	-	$4 + 1 = 5$ units
2 bed	-	$4 + 2 = 6$ units
3 bed	-	$4 + 3 = 7$ units

The total number of units in a property is referred to as its bed weighting. You have a X bedroom property, attracting a bed weighting of X units.

A total sum of units per block is tallied. The total cost is divided by the sum of units, providing a cost per unit. The cost per unit is multiplied by the number of units for each individual property which provides the service charge for each property. This means that leaseholders with more bedrooms will pay more than those with less in the same block.

For example - There are XXX units in the block. Therefore your contribution is X/XXX of the major works costs to the building.

The decision to charge in this manner was agreed with the Home Owners Council, which is the formal consultative body for home owners within Southwark. The Home Owners Council representatives are leaseholders and freeholders from across the borough, who have been nominated by the tenants and residents associations in their particular area. This construction method is considered to be reasonable, in particular taking into account the size of the property. It ensures that the leaseholders of smaller properties are not subsidizing those in larger properties. This method has been previously tested in Leasehold Valuation Tribunal Proceedings.

This information is being provided as a statutory obligation under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. 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. You may apply for permission to re-use this information by submitting a request to accessinfo@southwark.gov.uk; you can find details on these arrangements at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/re-using-public-sector-information/copyright-and-re-use/>. Detailed advice about the Reuse of Public Sector Information Regulations (PSI) 2005 is available from the Office of Public Sector Information at: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/advice/index.htm>

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, please write to accessinfo@southwark.gov.uk.

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 Data Protection Act is available through the Information Commissioner at the: www.ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Payal Panchal
Corporate Freedom of Information Officer