

My Ref: IG-13831
Your Ref:
Contact: Freedom of Information Team
Email: FOI@nottinghamcity.gov.uk



Nottingham
City Council

Freedom of Information Team
Information Compliance
Legal & Governance
2nd Floor
Loxley House
Station Street
Nottingham
NG2 3NG

Requester

At contact address specified for request number above

Tel: 0115 876 4376

Email:

FOI@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk

28 July 2020

Dear Requester

Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act)

The council has considered your request which was received on 21 July 2020 and our response to your questions is shown below.

Please provide data on the number of properties (HMOs only) and beds exempt from council tax due to the occupation of students for each of the following years. If you are unable to provide the data for student properties only, then please provide the total number of properties exempt from council tax.

2015: eg 1,250 properties / 3,000 beds

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

In accordance with section 1(1) of the Act, the council has a duty to confirm whether it holds the information of the description specified in the request, and if that is the case, to have the information communicated to the requester.

Nottingham City Council's, Council Tax team does not record the requested information regarding HMO properties and beds in that property that are exempt from council tax due to them being occupied by students. In order to answer your request officers would need to manually trawl through Council Tax and HMO records to provide the requested information. It has been estimated this activity would exceed the appropriate limit. As per Regulation 4(3) of the Fees Regulations, when estimating the cost of compliance the Council can take into account the cost of the following activities:

- determining whether the Council hold the information;
- finding the requested information, or records containing the information;
- retrieving the information or records; and
- extracting the requested information from records.



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Whilst the Council Tax system does record exempt properties, it does not record if exempt student accommodation is a HMO or the number of bedrooms in the property. In order to extract this data officers would be required to manually trawl through approximately 76,000 council tax records and cross reference this with HMO records in each of the requested years to determine if it was a HMO, and if so how many bedrooms were in the property at the time. If this activity only took a conservative estimate of 5 minutes per property this would equate to over 6,000 hours work to identify the requested information. On this occasion, the council has therefore decided to exempt itself from complying with your request as it estimates the cost incurred in providing a response would exceed the appropriate limit of £450, which is equivalent to requests that would require more than 18 hours continuous work.

The council is withholding this information as detailed above under section 12(1) of the Act. Please accept this letter as a refusal notice issued in accordance with section 17 of the Act.

In accordance with section 16(1) of the Act, the council has a duty to provide advice and assistance to you, as far as it is reasonable to do so. The figures below show all properties exempt from 1 April of each year on grounds of being solely occupied by students. Not all student properties will be HMO's and we do hold figures for those only.

These figures include the number of properties exempt. Also included are properties coming under the heading of a 'halls of residence' which are also exempt.

2015 – 7,467 and 4,062 Halls of Residence
2016 – 6,969 and 4,146 Halls of Residence
2017 – 7,067 and 4,451 Hall of Residence
2018 – 9,002 and 3,988 Halls of Residence
2019 – 11,003 and 2,704 Halls of Residence
2020 – 12,131 and 3,048 Halls of Residence

In addition, the council can also advise, a version of the HMO Register is available to download via the following webpage, which includes the address, maximum occupants, and the dates of issue and expiry:

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/housing/private-rented-accommodation/landlords-and-tenants-before-a-tenancy/licensing-for-landlords/mandatory-licensing-for-hmos>

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If you are unhappy with the response provided or with the handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review in writing stating the reasons for your dissatisfaction. Your request for an internal review should be made to the council

within forty working days of the date of this letter. Please quote reference IG-13831 in all communications.

You can contact the Freedom of Information Team either by email:

FOI@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or writing to the **Freedom of Information Team, Information Compliance, Legal & Governance, 2nd Floor, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG.**

If you remain unhappy after receiving the response to your initial complaint you can request an independent review from the Information Commissioner's Office at **FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.** You may also contact the Information Commissioner's Office by telephone on 01625 545745 or by email at mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team
Legal & Governance
Nottingham City Council