

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act to request the following information on Wigan:

- 1) How many complaints about mould did your local authority receive in each year of 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023?
 - a) 2020 = 23
 - b) 2021 = 29
 - c) 2022 = 70
 - d) 2023 = 119

- 2) What was the average time taken (in weeks) for the local authority to resolve the complaint in each year of 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023?
 - a) 2020 = No reporting available
 - b) 2021 =
 - c) 2022 =
 - d) 2023 =

- 3) What was the longest time taken (in weeks) for the local authority to resolve the complaint in each year of 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023?
 - a) 2020 = No reporting available
 - b) 2021 =
 - c) 2022 =
 - d) 2023 =

- 4) What percentage of these complaints (if any) remain outstanding?
 - a) 2020 = No reporting available
 - b) 2021 =
 - c) 2022 =
 - d) 2023 =

"In relation to questions 2, 3 and 4, we do not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) relieves a public authority from the obligation to comply with a request for information where the estimated time required to locate, review and extract the information exceeds a certain threshold set out in Regulations.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3244) set out the rules in relation to the cost limit (otherwise called the "appropriate limit"). These Regulations are published by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) and are viewable on their web site from this link: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf

The Regulations set out the cost limit for Government departments and for other public authorities. For local government, Regulation 3 states that the cost limit is £450 and Regulation 4(4) states that the prescribed hourly rate is £25. Regulation 4(4) further provides that where the local authority estimates the time taken to gather the information would exceed this limit (which based on the prescribed hourly rate, equates to 18 officer hours), it may refuse the request under section 12 of FoIA.

I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case".

To extract the figures provided for Q1, we have used the search function for the words 'damp' and 'mould'. However, the damp and mould are often part of a wider complaint.

The complaints we receive are not necessarily categorised specifically as damp and mould. The complaints often form part of a wider complaints; therefore it would be a manual process to interrogate the IT system of all jobs, then to respond to Questions 2, 3 and 4, to establish the time taken to resolve that particular element of each complaint relating to damp and mould. This also applies to the percentage of these complaints which are still live, as the 'damp' and 'mould' element of the complaint may have been resolved, with other issues still outstanding. This exercise would take several weeks to undertake.