



REQUEST 19310

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request information about the deaths of people experiencing homelessness.

Please can I request information about the number of deaths from 1st January 2025 – 31st December 2025 (inclusive) in your local authority area, in each of the following housing situations:

- a. accommodation for homeless people, commissioned or directly delivered by your council, including nightshelter, hostels and supported housing services for people rough sleeping or with a history of rough sleeping
- b. exempt accommodation
- c. interim, emergency or temporary accommodation (commissioned or directly delivered) offered under Part VII Housing Act. (Please specify which if this is known).
- d. supported accommodation for homeless young people (commissioned and directly delivered)
- e. refuge accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse
- f. rough sleeping or with no fixed abode

RESPONSE

The Council recorded less than five deaths of adults who were experiencing homelessness during the period. We cannot disclose any further information because doing so would risk identification of the individuals and living persons connected to them.

Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not apply to the personal data of the deceased, the FOI Act 2000 still prohibits the disclosure of personal data relating to identifiable living individuals.

Releasing demographic or death information about these cases would:

- enable identification of the deceased, and
- indirectly identify surviving family members, partners, associates, and other individuals.

Because the cohort is less than five people, any level of detail, including age band, gender, date ranges, ethnicity, or immigration status would make identification likely.

Therefore, the Council is refusing this information under:

Section 40(2) – disclosure would contravene UK GDPR principles relating to identifiable living persons.

This is an Absolute exemption – no public interest test required.

Information on cause/suspected cause of death, medical circumstances, safeguarding context, or contact with services is derived from the coroner, NHS services, Homelessness outreach, supported accommodation providers and multi-agency safeguarding partners. This information is received in confidence and disclosure would constitute an actionable breach of confidence.

Therefore, the Council is refusing this information under:

Section 41– information provided in confidence - This is an Absolute exemption – no public interest test required.

Disclosure of circumstances surrounding the deaths of individuals with histories of rough sleeping, vulnerability, or insecure accommodation could place former partners, family members, or associates at risk, compromise safety, expose sensitive details about domestic abuse, exploitation. The Council has concluded that releasing details poses a real and immediate risk to the safety and wellbeing of living individuals.

Therefore, the Council is refusing this information under:

Section 38(1)(a) and (b) (this is qualified exemption and subject to a public interest test)

While there is public interest in transparency around homelessness, the likelihood of endangering the health, mental health, or safety of living individuals is high, and the potential harm is serious. The public interest in transparency does not outweigh this risk. Therefore, the public interest favours maintaining the exemption.