

I am writing in response to your email of 29 December 2011.

Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

1) *What is the total amount of money spent on legal fees by your department between January 1 and December 31 2011?*

£1,053,992

2) *What was the largest amount spent on legal fees by your department to cover a single case in the same period?*

£60,256

3) *What were the details of this case?*

The case that is being referred to is the Cala Homes (South) Ltd v SSCLG [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin) and the subsequent appeal [2011] EWCA Civ 639. This involved a claim for judicial review of a statement made by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and a letter from the Chief Planner, dated 10 November 2010, setting out the position regarding the Government's intention to revoke regional strategies in the context of planning decisions. The claim was dismissed by the High Court and the Court of Appeal.

The judgments are freely available on [www.bailli.org/](http://www.bailli.org/)

4) *How many cases in total did your department spend legal fees on?*

345 Cases

To put the above information in context, I think you may find it helpful to read an excerpt from a Parliamentary Question / Answer on this subject copied below.

"Litigation cases include judicial reviews, statutory planning appeals (some of which are also judicial reviews), compulsory purchase order challenges, personal injury, employment and contractual cases.

(a) In the last Parliament under the previous Administration from 5 May 2005 to 6 May 2010 there were on average 260 open cases at any one time and DCLG paid around £9,105,000 in total for that period;

(b) Since 7 May 2010 to 31 October 2011 there were on average 230 open cases at any one time, including legal challenges inherited from the previous Administration. DCLG paid around £2,084,000 in total for that period. The costs paid to the Treasury Solicitors included fees, disbursements and adverse costs."

Hansard, 12 December 2011 : Column 483W