



Our reference: BVFOI/307/16 re Helen Myrtle Hodgess

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

You asked for the following information from the Government Legal Department (“the Department”):

We saw the entry for Miss Hodgess on the Unclaimed Estates list where it first appeared in August 2016, but cannot any longer see it there and wonder whether either

a fully documented claim has been made and if so, the relationship of the claimant to the deceased
or
the estate has been removed from the list for some other reason.

Your request will be dealt with by the Bona Vacantia Division (“the Division”) under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Following the advertisement of the estate, it is apparent that the deceased has been survived by a relative or relatives and that there is no Crown interest in the estate. As such, the details have been removed from our unclaimed estates list.

I have withheld the information from the file in relation to the relationship of the claimant as it is exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the Act. The information is exempt from disclosure because it constitutes the personal data of a living individual as defined in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998 and disclosure of the information would be in breach of the data protection principles set out in Schedule 1 of that Act. In particular, disclosure of the information would contravene the first data protection principle, which requires that personal data be processed fairly and lawfully.

The information has also been withheld as it is exempt from disclosure under section 41 of the Act as the Division considers that the information was received in confidence, and that to reveal the information would constitute an actionable breach of the duty of confidence.

In considering whether disclosure would be an actionable breach of confidence the Division has considered whether there is a public interest in disclosing the information that would outweigh the public interest in keeping the information confidential.

There is a strong public interest in keeping confidential information that has been disclosed in confidence, and in this case there is no specific reason in favour of disclosure of the information. Disclosure would not protect public safety, nor would it expose wrongdoing such as misfeasance, maladministration, negligence or other iniquity on the part of the Division. In this case the Division considers that the public interest in keeping the information confidential outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.