



Homes
England

Date: 15 June 2020

Our Ref: RFI3002

Tel: 0300 1234 500

Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

Making homes happen

██████████
By Email Only

Windsor House
Homes England – 6th Floor
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

Dear ██████████

RE: Request for Information – RFI3002

Thank you for your recent correspondence, which was processed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). For clarification, you requested the following information:

*Can you please provide me with a list of solicitors firms instructed, employed or on a retainer by **Homes and Communities Agency** for matters pertaining to the South East of England for the **period 2003 – present day**.*

*Can you please provide me with a list of solicitors firms instructed, employed or on a retainer by **English Partnerships** for matters pertaining to the South East of England for the period **1998 – present day**.*

We wrote to you to advise that English Partnerships is a predecessor body to Homes England, which is the trading name of the Homes and Communities Agency. You advised that you would therefore like to request *a list of all solicitors firms employed by Homes England and all predecessor bodies from 1998 – present day*.

Response

We can confirm that we do hold some of the requested information.

For clarity, Homes England is the trading name of Homes and Communities Agency (the legal entity). Homes England was launched by the Secretary of State on 11 January 2018. Where we have used the term “Homes England” in this response, this includes all predecessor bodies and organisations.

All legal work undertaken by external law firms on behalf of Homes England is undertaken by a panel of procured firms.

Panel Firms 1998-2004

I am able to confirm that Homes England does not hold the information detailed in your request. This is because there is no legal or business reason for Homes England to do so.

In order to conclude that the information is not held, we have searched with our Legal team who would have the requested information if held.

The FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create information to answer a request if the requested information is not held. The duty under section 1(1) is only to provide the recorded information held.

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The full text of section 1 in the legislation can be found here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/1>

Advice and Assistance

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance in accordance with Section 16 of the FOIA. To comply with this duty we are able to confirm that this information is not retained by Homes England (nor by Homes England on behalf of our predecessor bodies) due to our retention period for data storage.

Panel Firms 2005-2010

Homes England employed a South East and Thames Gateway Panel consisting of:

Addleshaw Goddard
Berwin Leighton Paisner
Eversheds
Hammonds
Nabarro Nathanson
Norton Rose
Trowers & Hamlin

Panel Firms 2010 – 2014

Homes England employed a South Panel to cover the South-East, South-West and London as well as a National Panel that operated across all regions.

South Panel:

Ashfords
Bond Pearce
Denton Wilde Sapté
DLA Pipers
Hammonds

National Panel:

Berwin Leighton Paisner
Eversheds
Pinsent Masons
Trowers & Hamlin

Panel Firms 2014 – 2018

Homes England employed only a national panel in which firms were engaged dependent on work type, not geographical area which consisted of:

Berwin Leighton Paisner
Browne Jacobson
DWF
Hewitsons
Pinsent Masons
Trowers & Hamlin
Walker Morris



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Panel Firms 2018 – present

This information was released in response to a previous request for information, RFI2995. This response will be available on our disclosure log by the end of June 2020 on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homes-england-disclosure-log>

For completeness, we also provide this information in this response as follows:

Homes England employed only a national panel in which firms were engaged dependent on work type, not geographical area which consisted of:

Ashfords
BC Legal
Browne Jacobson
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner
Clarke Wilmott
DWF
Eversheds
Hewitsons
Mills & Reeve
Pinsent Masons
Trowers & Hamlins
Veale Wasbrough Vizards
Walker Morris
Womble Bond Dickinson

Right to Appeal

If you are not happy with the information that has been provided or the way in which your request has been handled you may request an internal review by writing to;

The Information Governance Team
Homes England – 6th Floor
Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

Or by email to infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

You may also complain to the Information Commissioner however, the Information Commissioner does usually expect the internal review procedure to be exhausted in the first instance.

The Information Commissioner's details can be found via the following link

<https://ico.org.uk/>



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Please note that the contents of your request and this response are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Homes England may be required to disclose your request and our response accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

The Information Governance Team

For Homes England

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