



Homes
England

Date: 10 December 2020

Our Ref: RFI3138

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 – RFI3138

Thank you for your request for information which we have processed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You requested the following information:

- 1) *Can you please give me a figure for the number of homes bought using a Help to Buy loan that are currently in blocks with unsafe external wall systems (as of 14 September 2020)?*
- 2) *If Homes England does not have definitive figures for the number of homes, could it please provide me with a figure for the number of homes bought with Help to Buy loans it estimates are currently in blocks with unsafe external wall systems (As of 14 September 2020)?*
- 3) *Could Homes England provide me with the figure for the number of staircasing requests they have had under the Help to Buy programme between 1 July 2017 and 1 September 2020? And of these, the number of staircasing requests that have been rejected during that period? (1 July 2017 to 1 September 2020)*
- 4) *Could Homes England please provide me with the number of Help to Buy residents that have attempted to staircase (increase equity in their properties) between 1 July 2017 and 1 September 2020 after a leaseholder's property was given a lower valuation because of unsafe external wall systems?*
- 5) *Could Homes England provide me with the number of Help to Buy staircasing requests between 1 July 2017 and 1 September 2020 that have been rejected after a leaseholder's property was given a lower valuation because of unsafe external wall systems?*

We asked for clarification of your request on 12 October 2020 and you provided on 15 October 2020, the content of which is detailed below;

The questions are regarding how many flats bought through the Help to Buy programme (through Help to Buy loans) are currently affected by the cladding issues across England and Wales. To clarify these are flats in buildings over 18m found to have either dangerous aluminium composite cladding (ACM) or dangerous non-aluminium composite (Non-ACM) cladding (for example other metal composite materials or high-pressure laminate panels).

- 1) *Could you please provide me with 1) An up to date figure/estimate (as of 30 September 2020) for the number of Help to Buy homes affected by dangerous ACM cladding in buildings over 18m 2) a figure for the number of homes with live accounts that are affected, and across how many buildings? 3) The number of homes affected that have now redeemed their loans? 4) How many of the redeemed loans did Homes England*

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receive less than the equity loan originally lent? 5) Total figure for the amount of money Homes England lost for all of the redeemed loans where it received less than the original equity loan when added together?

- 2) *Could you please provide me with 1) An up to date figure/estimate (as of 30 September) 2020 for the number of Help to Buy homes affected by dangerous non-ACM cladding in buildings over 18m as defined above 2) a figure for the number of homes with live accounts that are affected, and across how many buildings? 3) The number of homes affected that have now redeemed their loans? 4) A figure for the number of redeemed loans Homes England received less than the equity loan originally lent? 5) Total figure for the amount of money Homes England lost on redeemed loans where it received less than the original equity loan when added together?*
- 3) *Could Homes England provide me with an up to date figure/estimate (as of 30 September 2020) for the number of staircasing requests they have had from Help to Buy leaseholders in blocks over 18m with unsafe ACM and Non-ACM cladding between 1 July 2017 and 30 September 2020 that have been accepted, and number that have been rejected during that period?*

Response

We can confirm that we do hold some of the information that falls within the scope of your request. We will address each of your points in turn below.

- 1) *Could you please provide me with 1) An up to date figure/estimate (as of 30 September 2020) for the number of Help to Buy homes affected by dangerous ACM cladding in buildings over 18m 2) a figure for the number of homes with live accounts that are affected, and across how many buildings? 3) The number of homes affected that have now redeemed their loans? 4) How many of the redeemed loans did Homes England receive less than the equity loan originally lent? 5) Total figure for the amount of money Homes England lost for all of the redeemed loans where it received less than the original equity loan when added together?*
- 1.1) We can confirm that there were 310 homes at the end of June 2020 that were supported by equity loans and in in buildings MHCLG has previously flagged at risk. Of these 310 homes, 276 were supported by Help to Buy (the other 34 are on other equity loans).
- 1.2) We can confirm that of the 276 homes, 157 homes were still live at the end of June 2020 (i.e. the customer had not repaid the loan in full). These 157 homes are across 28 buildings.
- 1.3) We can confirm that 119 have redeemed their loans.
- 1.4) The Equity Loan depends on market values time of valuation, RICS standard valuation principles and other factors that may have an impact on value. We received less than the amount lent on 21 of the 119 redemptions.
- 1.5) The total loss on the 21 is £395,000. That is the difference between the amount originally lent and the amount paid back across those 21 only.

We have set out the information above for ease, however, please note that some of the information can be found via the National Audit Office who has published a report, a link to this report is below;



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<https://www.nao.org.uk/report/investigation-into-remediating-dangerous-cladding-from-high-rise-buildings/>

To provide you with the data held from June 2020 to September 2020 would exceed the appropriate limit for the cost of compliance. We have therefore provided you with the data readily held in order to provide assistance with this part of your request.

The full text of the legislation can be found on the following link;

[Freedom of Information Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/1)

- 2) *Could you please provide me with 1) An up to date figure/estimate (as of 30 September) 2020 for the number of Help to Buy homes affected by dangerous non-ACM cladding in buildings over 18m as defined above 2) a figure for the number of homes with live accounts that are affected, and across how many buildings? 3) The number of homes affected that have now redeemed their loans? 4) A figure for the number of redeemed loans Homes England received less than the equity loan originally lent? 5) Total figure for the amount of money Homes England lost on redeemed loans where it received less than the original equity loan when added together?*

We can 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 Help to Buy 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.

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

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

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 Homes England only holds data from ACM cladded buildings.

You may wish to contact the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for information on non-ACM cladding, whose details are as follows:

Knowledge & Information Access Team
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
2nd floor NW, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
United Kingdom
Email - mhclgcorrespondence@communities.gov.uk



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- 3) *Could Homes England provide me with an up to date figure/estimate (as of 30 September 2020) for the number of staircasing requests they have had from Help to Buy leaseholders in blocks over 18m with unsafe ACM and Non-ACM cladding between 1 July 2017 and 30 September 2020 that have been accepted, and number that have been rejected during that period?*

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

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 we do not collect data on the number of "requests" to staircase from Help to Buy Lease holders.

We would advise that under a Help to Buy Equity Mortgage, requests for staircasing are not "accepted" or "rejected". Should an Equity Mortgage holder wish to staircase or redeem, a RICS appointed independent valuer will provide a valuation for the property. If Homes England is satisfied that the valuation provided represents Market Value then the mortgagee will be able to staircase part of the loan should they wish.

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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