



Homes
England

Date: 26 November 2021

Our Ref: RFI3630

Tel: 0300 1234 500

Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

Making homes happen

By Email Only

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

Dear [REDACTED]

RE: Request for Information – RFI3630

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

In our letter to you dated 29 October 2021, we had stated that we required additional time to respond your request as a qualified exemption applied to some of the information that fell within the scope of your request. However, we have determined that the exemption at section 43(2) of the FOIA to withhold information that is commercial information is no longer engaged. This means that the public interest in withholding the information requested does not outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.

You requested the following information:

Please could you tell me if data has been published on the number of households who are now paying interest on their Help to Buy Equity loan?

How many households are in difficulties with regards to paying the interest on this loan?

And, how many of these loans have been repaid in full?

Response

We can confirm that we do hold some of the requested information. We will address each of your points in turn.

Please could you tell me if data has been published on the number of households who are now paying interest on their Help to Buy Equity loan?

We can confirm that data has not been published in respect of the number of households who are currently paying interest on their Help to Buy Equity loan. We can advise that this could be calculated using the already published statistics, however we can confirm that there are currently 41,786 Help to Buy customers paying interest as at September 2021.

How many households are in difficulties with regards to paying the interest on this loan?

We have interpreted your request to mean those customers that have passed the interest free period and are now in arrears on their interest payments. We can confirm that there are currently 1485 households paying interest on their Help to Buy Equity loan which have gone past the interest free period.

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And, how many of these loans have been repaid in full?

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.

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>

Advice and Assistance

We are able to advise that, if customers are currently paying interest on their loans, they will not have redeemed their loan in full. If they have redeemed in full then they would no longer be required to pay the interest as the loan will have therefore already been settled. We can confirm that the total number of redemptions as at March 2021 since the scheme began in 2013 is 70,617. The Help to Buy: Equity Loan repayment statistics can be found via Homes England's Annual Reports and Financial Statements which are published annually and can be found on the main gov.uk site via the below link:

[A list of Homes England's Annual Reports & Financial Statements. - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

For ease, the current 2020/2021 version can be found via the below link with the repayment statistics on page 52:

[Corporate reports overview: Homes England Annual Report & Financial Statements 2020/21 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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. You can request an internal review by writing to Homes England via the details below, quoting the reference number at the top of this letter.

Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

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Your request for review must be made in writing, explain why you wish to appeal, and be received within 40 working days of the date of this response. Failure to meet this criteria may lead to your request being refused.

Upon receipt, your request for review will be passed to an independent party not involved in your original request. We aim to issue a response within 20 working days.

You may also complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) 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/>

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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