



Homes
England

Date: 9 May 2025

Our Ref: RFI4747

Tel: 0300 1234 500

Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

[REDACTED]
By Email Only

Dear [REDACTED]

RE: Request for Information – RFI4747

Thank you for your request for information which was processed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Please accept our apologies for the delay in providing this response to you. Our handling of your request has fallen outside the time for compliance as set out in the FOIA and below the standards we strive to provide. We also recognise that we have not kept you sufficiently informed as to the progress of your request, we are really sorry about this.

You requested the following information:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding housing initiatives in Croydon, as they relate to both national and local planning strategies. As an aspiring private developer, I seek to understand these initiatives to contribute effectively to our community's housing solutions. I am particularly interested in the following details:

Financial Aids

- **Availability of Grants and Loans:** Could you provide information about financial aids, including grants, loans, and policy incentives, that have been planned, are currently available, or were offered in the last two years in Croydon and other London boroughs? Please include their purposes, key terms, conditions, and a breakdown by borough, such as Croydon and Ealing.
- **Eligibility and Application:** What are the eligibility criteria and the application processes for these aids? Additionally, what is the typical duration of the application process?

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Planning and Policy Impact

- **Local Planning Strategy:** Could you provide the latest documents or links to Croydon's planning strategy, including any recent updates, consultations, and your current strategic position?
- **Strategic Alignment:** How does Croydon's strategy align with the broader national housing strategy for England?

Project Outcomes and Assessments

- **Successful Projects:** Information about successful housing projects completed in Croydon in the past two years would be appreciated.

Innovation and Sustainability

- **Innovative Practices:** Details on any innovative housing technologies or approaches being implemented or tested in Croydon, such as green building practices or modular housing.
- **Sustainability Objectives:** What are the specific sustainability goals aimed at by these projects?

Support and Training

- **Technical Support and Training:** What programs are available for developers or the community involved in these projects?
- **Post-Completion Support:** What forms of support are provided to communities after the completion of housing projects?

Challenges and Community Impact

- **Comparative Analysis:** An analysis of how the outcomes of aids in Croydon compare to other London boroughs, including success rates and demographic analysis of applicants.

Additional Aspects

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- **Guidance and Decision Factors:** Where can I find guidance, and what factors are considered in deciding whether to approve a planning application?
- **Partnerships and Collaborations:** Details of any partnerships or collaborations with private or third-sector organisations that are instrumental to these initiatives.
- **Lessons Learned:** Key lessons from past projects that have influenced current practices or policies.

Response

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

Financial Aids

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- **Eligibility and Application:** What are the eligibility criteria and the application processes for these aids? Additionally, what is the typical duration of the application process?

We can inform you that we do hold the information that you have requested. However, we rely on section 21, exemption where information is available to the applicant elsewhere.

The full text of the legislation can be found on the following link and we have quoted section 21 below for ease.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21>

Section 21 - Information accessible to applicant by other means.

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- (1) Information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant otherwise than under section 1 is exempt information.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)—
 - (a) information may be reasonably accessible to the applicant even though it is accessible only on payment, and
 - (b) information is to be taken to be reasonably accessible to the applicant if it is information which the public authority or any other person is obliged by or under any enactment to communicate (otherwise than by making the information available for inspection) to members of the public on request, whether free of charge or on payment.
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (1), information which is held by a public authority and does not fall within subsection (2)(b) is not to be regarded as reasonably accessible to the applicant merely because the information is available from the public authority itself on request, unless the information is made available in accordance with the authority's publication scheme and any payment required is specified in, or determined in accordance with, the scheme.

Advice and Assistance

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance in accordance with Section 16 of the FOIA. In accordance with this, we can confirm that Homes England does not have the legal power to operate in Greater London. This power was transferred to the Greater London Authority under the Localism Act 2011. However, we do have delegation from the Mayor of London in respect of the below programmes. These are available to London in its entirety, rather than individual boroughs.

- The Levelling Up Home Building Fund – you can access further information via this website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/levelling-up-home-building-fund-development-finance>
- Home Building Fund – Infrastructure Loans – you can access further information via this website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/home-building-fund-infrastructure-loans>
- Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land Fund – you can access further information via this website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/brownfield-infrastructure-and-land-fund>

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Planning and Policy Impact

- **Local Planning Strategy:** Could you provide the latest documents or links to Croydon's planning strategy, including any recent updates, consultations, and your current strategic position?
- **Strategic Alignment:** How does Croydon's strategy align with the broader national housing strategy for England?

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold this information. 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 Funding 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 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 is not information that Homes England would routinely hold. Croydon Council, the relevant local authority may hold this information. You can find information about their strategies on the following website: <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/council-and-elections/policies-plans-and-strategies>.

Project Outcomes and Assessments

- **Successful Projects:** Information about successful housing projects completed in Croydon in the past two years would be appreciated.

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We can confirm that one housing project in Croydon has been successful in the past two years. Zodiac House received £13,700,000 funding through the Levelling Up Home Building Fund to build 73 homes.

Advice and Assistance

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Innovation and Sustainability

- **Innovative Practices: Details on any innovative housing technologies or approaches being implemented or tested in Croydon, such as green building practices or modular housing.**
- **Sustainability Objectives: What are the specific sustainability goals aimed at by these projects?**

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold this information. 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 Research team who would have the requested information if held.

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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 is not information that Homes England would routinely hold. Croydon Council, the relevant local authority, may hold this information. You may wish to consider making

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a Freedom of Information request to them via this website: <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/council-and-elections/privacy-and-data-protection/freedom-information-foi-act>

Support and Training

- **Technical Support and Training:** What programs are available for developers or the community involved in these projects?
- **Post-Completion Support:** What forms of support are provided to communities after the completion of housing projects?

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold this information. 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 Research and Funding teams who would have the requested information if held.

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Challenges and Community Impact

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- **Comparative Analysis: An analysis of how the outcomes of aids in Croydon compare to other London boroughs, including success rates and demographic analysis of applicants.**

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold this information. 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 Research and Economics teams 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 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 has not conducted research into this area. You may wish to consider making a Freedom of Information request to the Greater London Authority (GLA) as they deliver most housing initiatives in London. You can do so via this website:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>.

Additional Aspects

- **Guidance and Decision Factors: Where can I find guidance, and what factors are considered in deciding whether to approve a planning application?**
- **Partnerships and Collaborations: Details of any partnerships or collaborations with private or third-sector organisations that are instrumental to these initiatives.**
- **Lessons Learned: Key lessons from past projects that have influenced current practices or policies.**

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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 the relevant local authority is Croydon Council. You may wish to consider making a FOIA request to them via this website: <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/council-and-elections/privacy-and-data-protection/freedom-information-foi-act>

You may also wish to consider making a FOIA request to the Greater London Authority (GLA) as they deliver most housing initiatives in London. You can do so via this website: <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>.

For matters related to planning, you may wish to make a FOIA request to the Planning Inspectorate. You can do so via this website: https://contact-us.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/requests/new?ticket_form_id=360002094717

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.

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Information Governance Team

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United Kingdom

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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