

**FOI number:** HBC\_FOI\_20200078  
**Date FOI Received:** 28/01/2020  
**Department:** Housing  
**Title:** Office conversion and temporary accommodation  
**Description:** Information regarding properties in the council which have been granted permission to convert office space to residential use

**Request:** (As Redacted sent by requestor)

To Whomever it may concern,

In 2013, planning legislation was changed to allow conversion of office premises to residential use under permitted development rights without seeking planning permission. This was provided for under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013: A temporary permitted development right for change of use from offices (Class B1(a)) to residential (Class C3).

Please would you let me know in writing if you hold information of the following description:

A list of all properties (and the names of the developers/company owners) in your council which have been granted permission to convert office space to residential use since the introduction of this legislation.

Please also provide an annual breakdown, since 2013/14, of money paid by the council to the owners of said properties (or properties of this type in other areas) for the housing, temporary or otherwise, of residents.

Where possible, please stipulate the nightly rate charged by the companies providing housing and the number and age of occupants (or merely a breakdown of the occupants into adults and minors).

For example:

2014/15: The council paid Company A, providing temporary accommodation in a property converted from office space to residential under the aforementioned government Act, £XXX over the financial year to house X number of residents. X number of residents were adults, Y were minors. Company A charged a fee of £X per night/per occupant/residential unit.

2014/15: The council paid Company B...£XXX to house X number of residents...in a property outside of the council's catchment area.

I would like a copy of the information and would prefer for it to be sent by email if possible.

If any part of the information requested is covered by one or more of the absolute exemptions in the Act please treat this request as a request for that part of the information which is not covered by the absolute exemption. If you need further details in order to identify the information requested or a fee is payable please let me know as soon as possible.

If you are of the view that there may be further information of the kind requested but it is held by another public authority please let me know as soon as possible. Please continue with this application as quickly as possible.

I believe that the information requested is required in the public interest for the following reasons: 1. To uphold public confidence that the council has thorough policies on the type of information it is obliged to record.

Sincerely

**Response: (Response as Redacted sent by service)**

1. A list of all properties (and the names of the developers/company owners) in your council which have been granted permission to convert office space to residential use since the introduction of this legislation – please refer to our planning access database for this information
2. Please also provide an annual breakdown, since 2013/14, of money paid by the council to the owners of said properties (or properties of this type in other areas) for the housing, temporary or otherwise, of residents – none
3. Where possible, please stipulate the nightly rate charged by the companies providing housing and the number and age of occupants (or merely a breakdown of the occupants into adults and minors) – N/A

If you have any queries about the processing of your request then please do not hesitate to contact me. Further information explaining the Council's process for responding to information requests together with a complaints/appeals procedure is available in our reception or via our website at:

<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Your-Council/Official-Publications--Guides--Policies/Access-to-Information.aspx>

The Information Commissioner oversees the application of the Freedom of Information Act. You may contact the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioners Office

Wycliffe House, Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545700

Website: [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

Please include the above reference number on all correspondence related to this request.

Thank you for your request.

Kind regards

Information Services