

25th July 2011

Our ref: R283

Freedom of Information request – Empty Dwellings

Thank you for your request for information dated 24th June 2011 and made under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For ease of reference, individual responses to your questions are given below.

Q1) How many empty dwellings owned by your agency are currently empty? How many of these have been empty longer than 12 months?

A1) I can confirm that SEEDA currently own five empty dwellings and these have all been vacant for over 12 months, as they are located within the site of current development projects.

Q2) What is the greatest length of time a dwelling owned by your agency has been, and is currently still, empty? What is the address of this property?

A2) Approximately 5 years, as this is part of a long term development project. We believe that information such as the full postal addresses of these properties may be exempt from disclosure under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act. SEEDA believe that disclosure of this information could be prejudicial to the commercial interest of the Agency and could potentially lead to less value for public funds being achieved. However we can confirm that these properties are located within SEEDA developments as follows:

- West Medina Mills, Newport, Isle of Wight - 2 properties
- East Cowes, Isle of Wight - 1 property
- Queenborough, Isle of Sheppey - 2 properties

Q3a) What specific measures do you use to safeguard empty dwellings against risks (such as squatting)?

A3a) SEEDA undertake regular inspection visits to these properties as part of our management of the overall development projects.

Q3b) How much has it cost, in the last financial year, to secure empty dwellings owned by your agency from risks (such as squatters)?

A3b) We estimate these costs to be around £1,000 per property. We are unable to provide the exact cost to the Agency for the security of these five properties without incurring costs above the appropriate limit, as described in Section 12 of Freedom of Information Act.

Q4) How many empty dwellings that were owned by your agency have been transferred to another organisation under your control within the last two years?

A4) None.

