

29 May 2024

Our Ref: FOI 409

Request

We received your request on 21 May 2024 for the following information:

How many points people have had to get a house in new builds in west Belfast.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Our response

Thank you for your clarification of 22nd May, in which you agreed to be provided with average points by property type, as average points for new build properties only is not available.

The table below provides data on the number of housing allocations to applicants on the waiting list at West Belfast Area NIHE Office level by property type, number of bedrooms and Mean and Median points at the point of allocation for a 3-year period from 01/04/2021 to 31/03/2024. The table should be viewed in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Allocations 01/04/2021 - 31/03/2024 at West Belfast NIHE Area Office by Property Type & Number of Bedrooms and Mean & Median Points on the Waiting List at the point of allocation					
NIHE Area Office / Geography	Property Type	No. of Bedrooms	No. of allocations	Mean Pts at the point of allocation	Median Pts at the point of allocation
West Belfast	Bungalow	1	25	132.4	138.0
		2	14	186.3	180.0
		3	<10		
		Total	39*	151.8	152.0
	Ground floor flat	1	63	137.3	142.0
		2	39	157.6	174.0
		3	<10	173.0	173.0
		Total	102*	145.6	153.5
	House	1	<10		
		2	170	201.5	202.0
		3	134	223.5	222.0
		4	16	218.9	230.0

Allocations 01/04/2021 - 31/03/2024 at West Belfast NIHE Area Office by Property Type & Number of Bedrooms and Mean & Median Points on the Waiting List at the point of allocation					
NIHE Area Office / Geography	Property Type	No. of Bedrooms	No. of allocations	Mean Pts at the point of allocation	Median Pts at the point of allocation
		5	<10		
		Total	320*	211.3	210.0
	Upper floor flat	1	122	148.1	148.0
		2	98	156.7	162.0
		3	<10	146.7	150.0
		Total	220*	151.9	154.0
N. Ireland Total	N. Ireland Total	Total	17,514	145.9	146.0

Notes:

- This response is based on the most recently published data at the point of the request (allocations up to 31/03/2024)
- Allocations are aggregated over a 3-year period from 01/04/2021 to 31/03/2024 and include allocations to both Housing Executive and housing association properties (not limited to new build properties only).
- When a question of “average waiting times” or “average points” is asked MEAN and MEDIAN averages are provided.

Reasons for this include:

The MEAN is the arithmetic average and as a statistic can often be unreliable, having been skewed by significant outliers i.e. applicants who have been on the waiting list for a number of years.

This degree of skewing makes the arithmetic average, the MEAN, unreliable.

Therefore, following expert advice on this matter a methodology that utilises the MEDIAN (a measure of central tendency) as a more reliable indicator in relation to Waiting Lists and Allocations is also provided.

- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 - It is important to note the GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018 regarding the potential risk of identifying individuals and individual households. Guidance from NISRA suggests that equality monitoring information should not be disclosed in sensitive cases where individuals or individual households could be identified. Also, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) 'Anonymisation: Managing Data Protection Risk' Code of Practice states 'where less than 10 responses have been given to an answer that identifies something factual, all variables relating to that question have been suppressed'. However, 'it should be noted that attitudinal questions are not bound by this rule, in addition to responses of 'Don't know', 'Refused', 'Other' or similar'. As the information provided is considered sensitive, some statistical disclosure controls may have been placed on the tables with the omission of data in cases where there are less than ten Applicants.
- <10 are cases where the number of allocations is less than 10.

- * Totals minus cases where there the number of allocations is less than 10.
- Further in the interest of Data Protection we have had to remove the points for some categories where there were less than 10 allocations and where the points were substantially different (we used a deviation of 20%) from the overall N. Ireland mean average points.

This concludes our response.