

28 October 2024

**Our Ref: FOI 531**

**Request**

We received your request on 30 September 2024 for the following information:

- 1. How much did NIHE/ NIHMO spend to destroy the HMO Grants Financial evidence? Please note that it cost £19,250 in 2011 to interrogate the HMO Grants Database for Stranmillis and Holylands HMO Policy Areas.*  
  
*To search and destroy, for all of the HMO Grants evidence for Northern Ireland would be presumably much more expensive on the date the evidence was destroyed, than on the date requested in 2011.*
- 2. Was the NIHE HMO Grants evidence ever held on Computer Database Systems? If so please provide the relevant dates.*
- 3. Under what legal basis did NIHE/ NIHMO destroy the HMO Grants evidence?*
- 4. On what date was the NIHE HMO Grants evidence destroyed? If it happened on several dates please provide all the relevant dates.*
- 5. Does NIHE/ NIHMO destroy all Grants Financial evidence for all properties in Northern Ireland after a given number of years? If so what is the exact time period?*
- 6. What is the legal retention policy in terms of time period for retaining Financial records of Grants paid out by NIHE?*
- 7. Why did NIHE/ NIHMO destroy NIHE HMO Grants Financial evidence, if Financial Records of Grants paid out for other purposes is retained?*

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

## **Our response**

- 1. How much did NIHE/ NIHMO spend to destroy the HMO Grants Financial evidence? Please note that it cost £19,250 in 2011 to interrogate the HMO Grants Database for Stranmillis and Holylands HMO Policy Areas.**

**To search and destroy, for all of the HMO Grants evidence for Northern Ireland would be presumably much more expensive on the date the evidence was destroyed, than on the date requested in 2011.**

The Housing Executive has contracts in place so that confidential records are destroyed in line with its disposal of records schedule.

Contracts are for the Housing Executive as a whole and it is not possible to provide a figure for individual projects within specific areas of the business

- 2. Was the NIHE HMO Grants evidence ever held on Computer Database Systems? If so please provide the relevant dates.**

Information on HMOs was held on a computer database. All information held at the end of the financial year 2018-19 was transferred to Belfast City Council which assumed responsibility for HMOs from 1 April 2019.

- 3. Under what legal basis did NIHE/ NIHMO destroy the HMO Grants evidence?**

- Public Records Act (NI) 1923,
- Disposal of Documents Order (S.R. & O. 1925 No 167)
- Limitation Act 1980
- Housing (NI) Order 1988
- Housing (NI) Act 2010
- Test Instrument Register Part C Section 12

- 4. On what date was the NIHE HMO Grants evidence destroyed? If it happened on several dates please provide all the relevant dates.**

Records are destroyed in line with the Housing Executive's Disposal of Records Schedule. It is not possible to confirm dates. All information held at the end of the financial year 2018-19 was transferred to Belfast City Council which assumed responsibility for HMOs from 1 April 2019.

- 5. Does NIHE/ NIHMO destroy all Grants Financial evidence for all properties in Northern Ireland after a given number of years? If so what is the exact time period?**

Records were destroyed in line with the Housing Executive's Disposal of Records Schedule. It states:

Upon Satisfactory Completion HMO Individual Grant Files are destroyed after six years. Information required for Management Inspections is extracted and it is destroyed after 10 years.

Please note any information held at the end of the financial year 2018-19 was transferred to Belfast City Council which assumed responsibility for HMOs from 1 April 2019.

**6. What is the legal retention policy in terms of time period for retaining Financial records of Grants paid out by NIHE?**

Please note all The Disposal of Records Schedule sets out the disposal arrangements for records created by the Housing Executive.

*HMO*

Upon Satisfactory Completion HMO Individual Grant Files are destroyed after six years. Information required for Management Inspections is extracted and it is destroyed after 10 years.

Please note any information held at the end of the financial year 2018-19 was transferred to Belfast City Council which assumed responsibility for HMOs from 1 April 2019.

*Affordable Warmth Scheme*

Satisfactory Completion - 6 years

Cancelled/Withdrawn - 1 year

*Boiler Replacement Scheme*

Satisfactory Completion - 6 years

Cancelled/Withdrawn - 1 year

*Home Improvement Grants*

Technical

Satisfactory Completion - 6 years

Cancelled/Withdrawn - 1 year

*Test of Resources*

Approval of associated Grant Application - 10 years

Cancelled/Withdrawn - 1 year

*Group Repair*

Submission of Certificate of practical completion - 10 years

Cancelled / Withdrawn - 10 years

**7. Why did NIHE/ NIHMO destroy NIHE HMO Grants Financial evidence, if Financial Records of Grants paid out for other purposes is retained?**

The Housing Executive complies with the requirements of the Public Records Act (NI) 1923, the Disposal of Documents Order (S.R. & O. 1925 No 167) and other relevant legislation affecting determination of retention and disposal actions.

**//This concludes our response//**