

10 February 2025

Our Ref: FOI 649

Request

We received your request on 07 November 2024 for the following information:

I am requesting a freedom of information on your current process of housing allocation. If you could please inform me on the points required and the number of dependants residing in the property that has been used to allocate in my areas of choice over the last 12 months.

I have knowledge of houses being allocated to individuals with less points and less dependents that I currently have and while I understand that you can only take into account what potential tenants are advising you, I feel the process is an unfair one and my application is not being the same merit or consideration as other individuals.

Clarification received 16.01.2025 regarding areas of choice:

Upper Dunmurry lane/ areema

Cluain mor

Clonard

Springfield park

Lower Springfield

Lower falls

Anderstown

Hannahstown

Lambeg

23.01 To enable us to proceed with this please clarify:

The Housing Executive can give you information on the average points (mean and median) held by applicants in your areas of choice at the point they were allocated their property, however that average may differ depending upon the type of property required. Can you confirm the size and type of property you are interested in? The Housing Executive cannot give you the number of points at allocation on a property by property basis as this is the personal data of the applicant who was allocated that property, and to do so would be a contravention of the Data Protection Act 2018.

23.01 Reply:

I'm not asking for individual properties I'm asking for the points required for 2 bedroom properties in my areas of choice which is not a breach of any applicants personal data. The housing im interested in is a 2 bedroom house.

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

Our response

The table below provides data on the number of housing allocations to applicants on the waiting list in the following Common Landlord Areas:

- Andersonstown
- Falls Court/Clonard Cres
- Cluan Mor Springvale
- Hannahstown
- Lambeg
- Lower Falls Grosvenor
- Lower Springfield Road
- Springfield Park
- Upper Dunmurry Lane/Areema

narrowed down to 2-bedroom houses and bungalows, by Mean and Median Points at the point of allocation for a 1-year period from 01/10/2023 to 30/09/2024. The table should be viewed in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Waiting List figures are produced quarterly and so the most up to date figures are as at 31st December 2024. However, Waiting List Statistics are included in the Department for Communities Housing Bulletin which is designated as a National Statistic.

Section 13(1) of the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007 states that 'the person producing any official statistics which are designated under section 12 as National Statistics must ensure that the Code of Practice for Statistics under section 10 continues to be complied with in relation to those statistics.' Provision of the requested figures before publication of the DfC Housing Bulletin in which the dataset from which they would be drawn is published would be a failure to comply with the Code in respect of parts [T3.3 and T3.4](#).

The December 2024 figures are therefore currently exempt from disclosure under Section 44 of the Freedom of Information Act - disclosure prohibited by other legislation. The December 2024 figures can be made available upon request subsequent to the publication of the next Bulletin which is currently anticipated around the end of February.

Allocations 01/10/2023 - 30/09/2024 to applicants on the waiting list in requested Common Landlord Areas (CLAs) by Mean & Median Points on the Waiting List at the point of allocation			
NIHE CLA	No. of allocations (2-bedroom houses and bungalows only)	Mean Points at the point of allocation	Median Points at the point of allocation
Andersonstown	>10	226.0	202.0
Falls Court/Clonard Cres	>10	196.0	212.0
Cluan Mor Springvale	0	-	-
Hannahstown	27	220.1	210.0
Lambeg	0	-	-
Lower Falls Grosvenor	>10	185.0	183.0
Lower Springfield Road	>10	200.0	200.0
Springfield Park	0	-	-
Upper Dunmurry Lane/Areema	>10	184.0	184.0
N. Ireland Total	1,454	164.2	160.0

Notes:

- This response is based on the most recently published data (allocations up to 30/09/2024)
- Allocations are aggregated over a 1-year period from 01/10/2023 to 30/09/2024 and include allocations to both Housing Executive and housing association properties.
- 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.

- <10 are cases where numbers are less than 10.
- 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.

- The Housing Executive does not report on the number of dependents per allocation. Housing assessments calculate the number of bedrooms required for an applicant's household regardless of dependency status.

This concludes our response.