

21 May 2024

Our Ref: FOI 380

Request

We received your request on 24 April 2024 for the following information:

How many vacant properties there are in Downpatrick, and an estimation of points needed to secure one

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

Our response

As of the 26th April 2024 the Downpatrick District office currently has 37 void properties in total. As of 26th April 2024 Downpatrick Common Landlord Area (CLA) currently has 5 void properties.

Please note the above total is made up of 13 Actionable Voids (3 of which are in Downpatrick CLA) and 24 Non-Actionable Voids (2 of which in Downpatrick CLA). Actionable voids are properties which are vacant while in the process of being allocated/awaiting change of tenancy repairs.

These may also include properties deemed to be difficult to let. Non-Actionable voids are properties that are not immediately available for allocation and are held vacant for operational reasons i.e. decanting purposes (where they are being used to house a tenant on a temporary basis pending works to their home), planned maintenance schemes, and properties which have been identified for sale/transfer or have approval for demolition.

The table below provides data on the number of allocations and average points at the point of allocation for the Downpatrick Common Landlord Area (CLA) for the 5-year period from 01/01/19 to 31/12/23. The table should be viewed in conjunction with the accompanying notes. Please be advised that this table provides all allocations for the period, not just those to void properties as defined in the response to part 1. Allocations may also be made to

previously let properties and new build or newly acquired properties provided under the Social Housing Development Programme.

Allocations 01/01/19-31/12/23 for the Downpatrick CLA by Mean & Median Points on the Waiting List at the point of allocation			
CLA / Geography	No. of allocations	Mean Pts at the point of allocation	Median Pts at the point of allocation
Downpatrick	214	168.6	162.0
N. Ireland Total	30,529	144.5	142.0

Notes:

- This response is based on the most recently published data (allocations for the period from 01/01/19 to 31/12/23).
- Allocations data is a rolling 5-year total and includes 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.

This concludes our response.