

Information Request Slip

Name:.....

Address:.....

Telephone Number:.....

Email:.....

Please provide details of your request:
(for detailed request please attach additional paper)

Preferred format for receiving the information:
electronic/summary/ hard copy/other (please specify)

* delete as appropriate

Council officer (if known):.....

Service (if known):.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Data Protection Statement

The information recorded on this form will be used only for processing your request and will not be used for any other purposes.

Appeals/Complaints

If you are unhappy with the information the Council has released to you, please let us know by writing to the FOI Panel, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG stating clearly what the issue is. We will endeavour to resolve any problems. If it is agreed that the information is incomplete, we will correct it.

If you are still unhappy with the way your request was handled by the Council, please contact the Office of the Information Commissioner at:

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: **01625 545700**

Website: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

For more information

If you would like more information about Freedom of Information, please contact:

Freedom of Information Officer

Torridge District Council

Riverbank House

Bideford

Devon

EX39 2QG

Telephone: **01237 428700**

Email: foi@torridge.gov.uk

Website: www.torridge.gov.uk/foi



A Guide to The Freedom of Information Act 2000



What this means to you



What is Freedom of Information?

It is legislation which gives you, the public, a general right of access to see information held by local authorities such as Torridge District Council. Freedom of Information allows people to see how public bodies work and encourages active participation in the process. You will now be able to find out much more about what the Council does and why. The Act is designed to:

- encourage greater openness and accountability in public authorities
- help increase levels of public trust
- encourage improvements in our interaction with the public

What sort of information can you have?

As a general rule, you are entitled to request any information created within the Council or received from elsewhere and held by us for any reason.

The 'spirit' of the Act is of full disclosure although there are some (23) exemptions applicable where certain information should not be released. Disclosure will also be governed by the Data Protection Act 1998.

The main categories for exemption are:

- National security
- Law enforcement
- Commercial interest
- Personal data

A public interest test must be applied to the remainder of the exemptions for more information visit our website.

How Can You Access Information Held by the Council?

The Council already has a policy of making general information available on request. This policy will continue. The Freedom of Information Act provides additional methods by which you can obtain information from the Council. These are:

1. The Publication Scheme

The Council is required to produce and maintain a Publication Scheme. This scheme is a database which lists the publications, documents and information that the Council makes publicly available. It sets out:

- what information the Council publishes
- how and when it publishes information

Every entry lists how the information is available. You can access this scheme through the Council's website. If you are unable to access the Publication Scheme electronically, there is a paper version available. For a copy of this, please contact the Freedom of Information Officer (see overleaf for details).

2. Individual Access Requests

If the information you want is not available through the Publication Scheme, you may submit an **Individual Access Request** to the Council to obtain it subject to some exemptions. The Freedom of Information Act requires these requests to be made in writing and the

Council will ensure that help is available to do this if needed. Translation and interpretation services can also be arranged.

What happens if you submit an Individual Access Request

If you submit a request, under the Act, the Council is legally required to provide the information requested within 20 working days. However, every attempt will be made to provide it more quickly if possible. If the information you requested cannot be released due to exemptions or if we do not hold the information, we will also inform you of this.

The Council will use the information contained in your request to respond appropriately. Your request will be acknowledged in writing. We may also contact you if any further clarification of your request is necessary.

Staff will find the information and check whether any exemptions apply. The Council will then contact you to make suitable arrangements for you to view it or receive a copy.

Can you request information held by the Council about you?

If you wish to obtain personal information held by the Council about you, you are entitled to do so under the Data Protection Act, 1998. For further information about accessing personal information held about you, please visit the Council's website at

www.torridge.gov.uk/dataprotection