

Our ref: FOI 14/16805

RE: Green Deal Home Improvement Fund

22 August 2014

Thank you for your email of 25 July where you requested information relating to applications for the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (GDHIF) between Tuesday 22 July and Thursday 24 July.

We have considered your request in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) as the information you have sought disclosure of, does in our view, fall within the definition of 'environmental information' as stated in the EIRs.

The information you requested is as follows:

1. *"Data showing how many individuals or businesses made more than one application for the GDHIF between and including the day the announcement was made that the maximum available through the scheme would fall, on Tuesday 22 July, to the closure of the scheme on Thursday 24 July,"*

Between 22 July and 24 July inclusive 8986 Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (GDHIF) applications were submitted. **625** scheme applicants submitted more than one application.

Under the GDHIF terms and conditions applications could be made by owners or occupiers of residential properties, including landlords who could apply for more than one property they own. Up to two applications were permitted for a single property so long as they were for different, eligible offers and combined did not exceed the maximum of £7,600 per property.

The scheme terms and conditions did not set an overall limit on the number of applications which could be made by a single applicant. However, additional eligibility criteria for undertakings in Part E 15 states that incentive payments made to Undertakings are a de minimis aid under the EU *State Aid De Minimis Regulation*, and must therefore be within the de minimis threshold. This places a limit on the amount of incentive which can be redeemed by any one undertaking, and will vary from landlord to landlord.

2. *"How many individuals made more than five applications over this period and what was the largest number of applications from a single individual between the specified dates?"*

Over the period 22 to 24 July inclusive, **195** applicants submitted more than 5 applications.

We are not currently able to answer the final part of your query regarding the largest number of applications received from a single individual. Capita, who

administer GDHIF on behalf of DECC, are continuing to process and audit applications received during the final days of the scheme. Auditing will ensure multiple applications are valid and meet the terms and conditions both for customers and supply chain participants. It will also identify ineligible or duplicate applications, meaning figures on applications are not yet finalised.

Given the incomplete nature of the data, we consider that this information is exempt from disclosure under Regulation 12(4)(d) and should be withheld. These exceptions are subject to the public interest test. The key public interest considerations we have taken into account are set out below. In considering the public interest we have applied a presumption in favour of disclosure as required by regulation 12(2) of the EIRs.

Regulation 12(4)(d) provides an exception to the duty to make environmental information available when the request relates to material which is still in the course of completion, unfinished documents or incomplete data. In taking this decision we recognise there is a general public interest in the disclosure of information, as greater transparency makes Government and decision making more open and accountable and enables the public to be better informed about issues that affect their daily lives. However, the data is under review by the scheme administrator. There is a risk that releasing incomplete or unfinished information, in what is a complex area, could give an inaccurate impression as to the profile of GDHIF applicants.

Appeals Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be sent to the Information Rights Unit at:

Information Rights Unit
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
E-mail: foi.requests@bis.gsi.gov.uk

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Household Energy Efficiency
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