



GUIDE TO THE INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY THE VALUATION TRIBUNAL SERVICE

**(complying with the Information Commissioner's
Model Publication Scheme)**

and

How to make a Request under the Freedom of Information Act

Governance

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Summary of changes

The list of information that is made available under the Scheme has been updated, together with hyperlinks to that information which is listed as being available on the website.

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1. Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “Act”) states that public authorities and bodies should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public.

This document provides guidance to the material that the Valuation Tribunal Service (VTS) makes available in accordance with the Information Commissioner’s (ICO) Model Publication Scheme¹, which has been adopted by the VTS. In line with section 20 of the Act, the Valuation Tribunal Service lists the information already published and held by the VTS or information that is to be published in the future. The coverage and categorisation of this list follows the relevant ICO Definition Document².

2. The information

There are seven classes of information in the Scheme as recommended by the Information Commissioner. Under each class there is a list of the information that we publish relating to that subject. Details of how the information is or will be published are set out there too. The information may be available for you on our website to download or available on request in electronic or printed form. The website, <https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk> contains much of the information we make available.

All the information in the list will be provided free of charge.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Where possible we publish datasets in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and the VTS is the only owner, we will make the information available for re-use under the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, if they apply, and otherwise under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act section 19. If you are interested in information we provide as a dataset, this may be reused under the conditions of the Open Government Licence³.

We retain information in line with our [Records Retention and Disposal Policy](#), and for the information included in the list this is generally three years or longer.

If you feel that certain information is not published under our Scheme but should be, you can make a written request (see page 9); its provision will be considered in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

¹ Information Commissioner’s Office: Model Publication Scheme version 1.2 (2015)
<http://www.ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1153/model-publication-scheme.pdf>

² Information Commissioner’s Office: Definition document for Non-Departmental Public Bodies and other public authorities version 3 (2014)

³ <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2/>

| CLASS | BRIEF DESCRIPTION | FORMAT OF INFORMATION | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|------------|---|
| | | Paper | Electronic | Website |
| WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO | | | | |
| Organisational information | Office locations and contacts | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/contact-us/ |
| Information about the legislation that governs the Valuation Tribunal | Statutes that established the VTS and VTE; appeals legislation | | | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/ |
| Areas of jurisdiction | For dealing with appeals | | | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/ |
| VTS Annual Report and Accounts | Summary information for each financial year | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/annual-report-accounts/ |
| Organogram | Shows the structure of the VTS (job titles) | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/organogram-data/ |
| Information about those responsible for making strategic decisions | Board and senior management biographies | | | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/vts/ |
| WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT | | | | |
| VTS Annual Report and Accounts | | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/annual-report-accounts/ |
| Procurement Policy | Including tendering and contracting | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |
| Contracts awarded | and their value (above the tendering limit) | √ | | |
| Standing Financial Instructions | Internal financial regulation, including scheme of delegation | √ | √ | |
| Financial statements for projects/events | | √ | √ | |
| Transparency agenda data | (csv files) All spending over £250 (MHCLG policy) | | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/spend-data/ |
| Framework Document | Outlines the governance of our relationship with the sponsor Department | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |
| VTE members' allowance rates | Details of allowance rates for Members | √ | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Board members' allowances and expenses | Paid during the last financial year | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/vts/board/register-board-members-expenses/ |
| Senior managers' allowances and expenses | Paid during the last financial year | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/vts/management/ceos-directors-expenses/ |
| Pay and grading structure | | √ | √ | |
| Datasets – payscales | (csv files) showing pay bands for senior and other staff | | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/organogram-data/ |
| OUR PRIORITIES AND HOW WE ARE DOING | | | | |
| VTS Annual Report and Accounts | | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/annual-report-accounts/ |
| VTS Business Plan and Corporate Plan | The VTS' aims for the year (including KPIs) and strategic objectives for a 3-year period | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |
| Statistics about our workload | Appeals statistics | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/vts-statistics/ |
| Audit information | Internal audit reports, summaries | √ | √ | |
| Statistics about complaints we receive | | √ | √ | |
| HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS | | | | |
| VTS Board Standing Orders | | √ | √ | |
| VTS Board Members' Code of Conduct | | √ | √ | |
| Non-Exempt Reports/Minutes of senior level meetings including results of any consultation exercises | Information circulated for internal and Board meetings, consultations and non-exempt policy proposals | √ | √ | |
| Summary Board Minutes | | | | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/vts/board-minutes/ |
| Internal Communications Policy | | √ | √ | |
| Consultation papers | | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |

| OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Communications Strategy | How we communicate with internal and external stakeholders | √ | √ | |
| VTS Customer Charter and Complaints Policy | Service aims and commitments; handling types of complaints | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |
| Data Handling Policy | | √ | √ | |
| Equality and Diversity policy | | √ | √ | |
| Fraud Policy | Areas of potential fraud, consequences and prevention measures | √ | √ | |
| IT Strategy | | √ | √ | |
| Records Retention and Disposal Policy | | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |
| Recruitment/Selection Policy | | √ | √ | |
| Risk Management Policy | Strategies we use in managing risks | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |
| Whistle blowing Policy | | √ | √ | |
| LISTS AND REGISTERS | | | | |
| VTS Register of Board Members' Financial & Other Interests | Details of any financial or other interests including dispensations | √ | | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/vts/board/register-board-members-interests/ |
| VTS Register of Board, Staff & Members' Gifts and Hospitality | Details of gifts/hospitality received | √ | | |
| Register of Freedom of Information/Data Protection requests | Requests received during the year and how we dealt with them | √ | √ | |
| Disclosure log | FOI request responses of wider interest; statistics | | | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/ |
| Register of complaints received | Complaints received during the year and how we dealt with them | √ | √ | |
| Asset Register | | | √ | |
| SERVICES WE OFFER | | | | |
| Tribunal decisions: non-domestic rating (NDR) on 2010 list | Issued since 1999 | | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/decisions-and-lists/ |
| Tribunal decisions: NDR on 2017 list | | | √ | https://appealsearch.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/ |

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|--|--|---|---|---|
| Tribunal decisions: council tax valuation or banding appeals | Issued in the last six years | | √ | https://appealsearch.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/ |
| Tribunal decisions: council tax liability appeals | Issued in the last six years | | √ | https://appealsearch.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/ |
| Tribunal decisions: council tax reduction appeals | Issued in the last six years | √ | √ | Specific decisions may be provided on request |
| Appeals received but not yet listed for hearing | | | √ | https://appealsearch.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/ |
| Appeals listed for hearing | Forthcoming lists on the website | | √ | https://appealsearch.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/ |
| Valuation Tribunal guidance booklets and checklists/flowcharts | To assist appellants through the appeals process | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/documents/ |
| Valuation in Practice (ViP) Newsletter | Quarterly news on judicial matters: legislation, case law, tribunal procedures | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/about-us/publications-policies/valuation-in-practice/ |
| Council Tax Guidance Manual | A reference manual for Council Tax | √ | √ | https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/documents/ |

3. Making an application for information to the Valuation Tribunal Service

Under the Act you are able to ask the VTS for information which is not already published under the scheme, (in other words it does not appear in the list above), provided it is not exempt from disclosure. You have the right to ask for information to be provided in a particular way and we will try to meet your request so far as is reasonably practicable. You can ask for assistance if you have any difficulty in formulating or making an application, by emailing the VTS at foi@valuationtribunal.gov.uk. We will help you as much as possible and will need you to make your request in writing, with:

- clear and understandable details so we can locate the information;
- your name and address so we can respond; and
- an indication about the format in which you want the information.

Your application will be dealt with as quickly as possible and we will respond within 20 working days, as specified in the Act.

Our information is held in English. The VTS acknowledges its obligations under disability and discrimination legislation to provide information in the appropriate format.

We respect the rights of privacy and our staff will observe regulations and guidelines regarding data handling and information security. Our [Privacy Notice](#) gives more details and can be seen on the website.

There are some types of information that are exempt from disclosure under the Act and we will let you know if we think an exemption applies to information you have requested.

If the estimated cost of providing the information (in terms of a staff time) would be above the appropriate limit set by the government then we will not be under a duty to provide it. However, we will inform you if the limit will be exceeded and will try to let you know what can be provided within the limit; the VTS will still be under a duty to advise and assist. There are rules which govern multiple applications for information which are clearly trying to avoid the financial limits set by the government. However, we will try to help you as much as possible to get the information you want.

If you are unhappy about the way we handle your request or, for example, disagree with our claim that one of the exemptions applies, you will have the right to request an internal, independent review. We will tell you about this process when we respond to your request.

4. Complaints and Feedback

If you want to make any comments about this guidance document or if you require further assistance or need to make a complaint then initially this should be addressed to the

VTS
Chief Executive's Office
2nd 120 Leaman Street
London, E1 8EU
Telephone: 0207 426 3900
Email: foi@valuationtribunal.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you get from the VTS or if we have not been able to resolve your complaint and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made then this should be addressed to the Office of the Information Commissioner. This is the organisation that ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and that deals with formal complaints. They can be contacted at:

ICO
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 54 57 45

Website: www.ico.org.uk