

6OI REF:	14954
RESPONSE SENT:	19/12/2024

Request

Purpose – non-commercial use. To aid understanding of best approach to disrepair for social landlords, with a view to reducing the burden on rent accounts and deterring use of no-win no-fee solicitors. This relates only to legal disrepair claims brought under the pre-action protocol.

1. How many homes do you own?
2. How many live housing disrepair cases are you managing? Please state if this figure does or does not include 'dormant' cases – i.e. those with no communication from claimant's solicitor in 12 months or more. A case, for the purpose of this request, is any case involving a letter of claim before action for housing disrepair.
3. Is your approach generally to defend claims, or attempt early settlement?
4. For the financial years 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-23, 2023-24, can you please provide the following:
 - Disrepair claims received.
 - Disrepair claims settled in the claimant's favour (within that year, even if originally receive in a different year)
 - Average cost of each claim settled in the claimant's favour.
 - Disrepair claims settled in the defendant's favour (within that year, even if originally receive in a different year)
 - Average cost of each claim settled in the defendant's favour.
 - Total annual spend on defendant costs (legal and expert)
 - Total Annual Spend on claimant costs (legal and expert) and Compensation.

If it is not possible to provide all of the information easily, could you please focus on questions 1-3 and for the 4th, perhaps focus on just 2023-24?

Response

1. 5757 homes of which 5156 are rented accommodation.
2. 18 (including dormant and 1 partially settled case)
3. We do not have a general approach as we take a pragmatic view on each case.



4. For the financial years 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-23, 2023-24, can you please provide the following:

Disrepair claims received.

2021- 2

2022- 1

2023- 8

2024 - 8

Disrepair claims settled in the claimant's favour (within that year, even if originally receive in a different year) / Average cost of each claim settled in the claimant's favour -

We do not hold information about average settlements, but most claims settle for damages figure of between £1,000 and £2,000.

Total annual spend on defendant costs (legal and expert) - This information is not readily available- as it is difficult to differentiate payments to experts that were paid in connection with a claim as opposed to payments made in connection with responsive maintenance, where there has been no claim.

These costs can only be ascertained by examining each case.

However, for the current financial year, experts have been instructed to carry out an inspection on 3 claims – at a cost of £750 plus VAT for each. Most cases are handled by in-house lawyers- with use of external counsel being limited to some cases proceed that to trial.

Total Annual Spend on claimant costs (legal and expert) and Compensation.

This information is not readily available without examining each file.

As you have indicated in your request, that if it is not possible to provide all of the information easily, we have focused on questions 1-3 and for the 4th, the most recent information.

