

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 003584  
Date            16 May 2019

### *Paupers Funerals*

#### **Request:**

Please could you kindly send me any information you may hold relating to Paupers funerals carried (sometimes referred to as 'Public Health Act' Funerals) where persons who have died with no known next of kin (blood relatives) since 1/3/2019 to the day of your reply.

Please include:

1. full names of deceased persons,  
[See information provided on page 3.](#)
2. dates of death,  
[See information provided on page 3.](#)
3. marital status,  
[See information provided on page 3.](#)
4. maiden surnames of married or widowed females,  
[In response to question 4, Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at:](#)
  - [Section 1\(1\) \(a\) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held.](#)
  - [The second duty at Section 1\(1\)\(b\) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.](#)

[In respect of question 4, it has been established after careful consideration that the Council does not hold the above information.](#)

[Consequently, we are unable to provide any information relating to the above, and are informing you as required by Section 1\(1\) \(a\) of the Act, that states:](#)

"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request".

5. dates of birth or ages at death,  
See information provided on page 3.
6. last known addresses,  
In response to question 6., the Council will not be disclosing the requested information.

The Council is of the view that this would constitute information whose disclosure to the wider world would raise concerns around the prevention or detection of crime and that Section 31(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI, The Act) is engaged.

Section 31(1) states that:

*"Information which is not exempt information by virtue of Section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice*

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*(a) the prevention or detection of crime ..."*

In considering the public interest for and against disclosure in this case, the Council has considered the public interest in disclosing the last known address of the identified deceased people could aid the resolution of any estate-related queries.

Set against this however, the Council has also considered that disclosure to the wider world (which is how any disclosure made under the provisions of the Act must be judged) may cause harm such as fraud, identity theft, criminal acts and criminal trespass and damage to vacant residential property especially when this information is put together with information that is already in the public domain.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council has taken account of guidance from the Information Commissioners Office and further considers that its approach is in accordance with the decisions reached by the Information Commissioners Office, published in decision notices FS50454267 regarding Westminster City Council – 4 December 2012 and also the decision in relation to Birmingham City Council FS50584670 – 14 October 2015.

In both cases the ICO accepted the arguments put forward by the public authorities in question regarding the application of Section 31 as detailed above.

The Council has also considered the case involving London Borough of Camden versus Mr Yiannis Voyias heard at the Information Tribunal on 22 January 2013 (EA/2011/0007).

In this case the Tribunal accepted the risk attendant in disclosing details regarding vacant properties to the wider world.

7. estimated value of estates,  
Please see response provided to question 6.
8. date(s) when the information was passed (or information that is about to be or likely to be passed) to any third party, if so to whom, or confirmation that this will not be happening and the reason why.  
See information provided below.

Name	Date of Death	Aged	Date of Birth	Next of Kin	Marital status	Referral to Treasury	Date of funeral
PRITCHARD John Edward	24/01/2019	81	23/05/1937	Y	Single	N/A	18/03/2019
HIGHFIELD David John	01/01/2019	55	07/05/1963	Y	Partner	N/A	27/03/2019
JOHNSON Keith Stanley	24/02/2019	68	26/03/1950	Y	Married	N/A	01/04/2019
AKOTANGNI Maxime	22/02/2019	52	27/11/1966	Y	Married	N/A	09/04/2019
HILL Margaret Elizabeth	27/12/2018	68	24/03/1950	Y	Married	N/A	11/04/2019
LESLIE Stewart John Lee	04/03/2019	40	04/04/1978	Y	Single	N/A	29/04/2019