

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators
Enquiries, Fees Guidance and Complaints Policy under the
Environmental Information Regulations 2004

In the spirit of openness and transparency that the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC) embrace, we aim to proactively publish information that we believe is of interest to the public and to respond to requests for particular information. For the purposes of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR 2004), WPCC is considered a public authority and the guidance below sets out the process that WPCC will follow for the handling of information requests made under this legislation. (For avoidance of doubt, WPCC is not considered a public authority for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000).)

We strongly recommend that requests for information under the EIR 2004 are made in writing, either hard copy or email at:

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators
Manor Cottage
Windmill Road, Wimbledon Common
Wimbledon SW19 5NR

rangersoffice@wpcc.org.uk

WPCC may not always be able to release all of the information you have requested. This might be because certain information is exempt from release to the public or it contains personal data, which is subject to protection under the Data Protection Act 2018. (Full details on exceptions to the duty to disclose information and information requests involving personal data are set out in regulations 12 or 13 of the EIR 2004.) More information is available at [ICO Refusing a request under EIR 2004](#).

Charging for Environmental Information

The EIR 2004 allow public authorities to charge for making environmental information available, but any charge must be reasonable. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) states that any charges should be compatible with encouraging transparency and should not be an obstacle to such access. In general, a reasonable charge may include the "disbursements costs" in transferring the information to the applicant and the "staff costs" in time taken to locate the information.

This policy sets out how WPCC will comply with the charging regime laid out in Regulation 8 of the EIR 2004 and, in particular, what constitutes a "reasonable amount". As a general rule, the charges should not exceed the actual costs of producing the material in question; the purpose of charging is to recover the costs incurred in complying with requests and managing demand.

Responding to an EIR 2004 Request for Information

WPCC is normally required under the EIR 2004 to respond to your request for environmental information by providing the information within 20 working days, unless an exception to disclosure applies. This can be extended to 40 working days, to allow time to locate and provide the information:

- when a request is for a large amount of information that is complex; and
- it would be impracticable to comply with the request or decide to refuse to comply within 20 working days.

Schedule of Charges

There are two broad types of costs for which a public authority can charge and public authorities must have a published schedule of charges in order to be able to charge applicants for environmental information. The following rates apply for EIR requests from WPCC:

- “preparation costs” of staff time, including overhead costs, incurred when preparing information to be supplied in response to a specific request. This includes time spent locating, retrieving and extracting the information from a document containing it and including the time taken to summarise information, or to edit information. These costs are £35.00 for the hourly rate for calculating the value of staff time;
- “disbursement costs” covering the costs associated with communicating the information to you, eg of printing out or photocopying the information, or transferring the information to whatever format is requested, and of sending it to you. These detailed costs are set out at Appendix 1 – Schedule of Charges.

There is no charge for certain information:

- environmental information available from our website;
- inspection of public registers or examination of information at WPCC’s offices.

Processing Charges

If a decision to issue a charge is made, a **Fees Notice** letter will be sent to the requestor within 20 working days from receipt of the information request, informing them that a fee is payable and how to make the payment. However, the time which passes from the day we issue a Fees Notice to the day we receive your payment is not counted towards the 20 working days to comply with your request for information.

Payment will be required in advance of disclosure. The fee charged should be based on an estimated cost calculated by a senior member of WPCC. The remaining number of working days in which to fulfil your request is therefore calculated from the first working day after we receive your payment.

Requestors will have 60 days for payment to reach WPCC and the Fees Notice letter will specify the 60 day deadline date. If payment is not received, a reminder communication from WPCC will be issued, 30 days after the original fees notice, reiterating the deadline date. If payment is still not made within the 60 day period, it will be assumed that the information is no longer required and WPCC is not obliged to proceed with the request and it will be deemed to have lapsed.

Payment can be made by cheque/postal order made payable to WPCC, and posted to:

The Ranger’s Office
Windmill Road
Wimbledon
SW19 5NR

Review of Costs

WPCC reserves the right to keep under review the rates of calculating our costs. We will endeavour to keep our costs reasonable, in order to assist public access to information in accordance with the spirit of the EIRs.

More Information on EIR 2004

For more information, read [The Guide to the Environmental Information Regulations](#)

How to Complain about Request Handling

Complaints (or “representations” as they are called in the Regulations) about how WPCC has managed your request can be made in writing using Complaints Procedure set out below. If dissatisfied with the outcome, you can complain to the ICO. You can in any event complain straight to the ICO, but the ICO may ask you first to direct your complaint to us.

(1) Please write to us or e-mail at:

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators
Manor Cottage
Windmill Road, Wimbledon Common
Wimbledon SW19 5NR

complaints@wpcc.org.uk

You will initially be sent an automated email or letter that registers your complaint within three working days of receipt of your complaint.

(2) In accordance with the EIR 2004 and with published guidance, we will aim to provide an impartial review by someone who was not involved in the original decision and to respond to your complaint within 20 working days, and in any event no later than 40 working days from the first working day after we receive the complaint.

(3) If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the review, you can complain to the ICO.

The ICO is a Crown appointment, responsible for monitoring compliance with the EIR 2004. The ICO’s contact details are:

Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

You may also like to visit the website of the ICO at: www.ico.org.uk/.

Appendix 1

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators – EIR 2004 – Schedule of Charges

ITEM	COST
Photocopies	
A4 Black and White	10 pence per sheet (single sided)
A3 Black and White	20 pence per sheet (single sided)
A4 Colour	50 pence per sheet (single sided)
A3 Colour	£1.00 per sheet (single sided)
Postage	At face value
Staff Time	£35.00 per hour