

Publication Scheme for Bedford Group of Drainage Boards

What is and why does, the Bedford Group use a Publication Scheme?

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the Act”) gives a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities and sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. The Bedford Group of Drainage Boards, comprising the Bedfordshire and River Ivel IDB, The Buckingham and River Ouzel IDB and the Alconbury and Ellington IDB are deemed to be non-departmental public bodies for the purposes of the Act. Further information about the Act can be obtained from The Information Commissioner (<http://www.ico.gov.uk>)

The Group and the individual Boards are required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme setting out the classes of information it holds, the manner in which it intends to publish the information, and whether a charge will be made for the information. The purpose of a scheme is to ensure a significant amount of information is available, without the need for a specific request. Schemes are intended to encourage organisations to publish more information proactively and to develop a greater culture of openness.

What information is routinely available?

The IDB information is grouped into seven classes.

- 1. Who we are and what we do**
Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.
- 2. What we spend and how we spend it**
Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and audited accounts.
- 3. What our priorities are and how we are doing**
Strategies and plans, value for money indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.
- 4. How we make decisions**
Decision making processes and records of decisions.
- 5. Our policies and procedures**
Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.
- 6. List and registers**
All statutory and non-statutory registers.
- 7. The services we offer**
Information about the services we currently provide including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced.

How to access the information?

The information contained in each class may be accessed through a variety of means and in a number of formats where available. All information is available for inspection on request

and by prior appointment, where appropriate copies can be made available. A charge may be applied to the information supplied; each case is considered individually. Information will be provided within 28 days, if the request is reasonable.

1. **On the Bedford Group web-site**

Some information will be available on the web-site. This information is non-chargeable.

2. **By e-mail**

E-mail *contact@idbs.org.uk* with 'Freedom of Information Request' in the subject line.

3. **By post** To obtain paper copies of the information please contact:

Mrs F Bowler, Clerk of the Boards
Bedford Group of Drainage Boards
Vale House, Broadmead Road
Stewartby, Bedford
MK43 9ND

Tel: (01234) 767995 Fax: (01234) 768582 <http://www.idbs.org.uk>

Please note that where hard copies of information will normally be supplied upon request, multiple copies cannot normally be provided.

4. **In person**

Please contact the office to arrange an appointment.

Charges and Exempt Information

Charges may be imposed for the provision of some of the information within this publication scheme. Where a class contains information which may levy a charge this is made clear with a £ symbol shown below. In adopting this scheme there has been an effort to be as open as possible but there are instances where, for legitimate reasons, certain information is not available. Where this is the case the reasons behind the decision to exclude certain information is clearly stated. Justification for excluding information is made in consideration of the general exemptions contained in the Act, the Environmental Information Regulations, the Data Protection Act or where it may be of a confidential or commercially sensitive nature.

All copyright is reserved by the Boards.

The Information Available:

1. **Who we are and what we do**

Constitution of the individual Boards, including their structure & membership
Staffing Structure
Geographical area covered
Outline of responsibilities
Arrangement of the Group
Location of offices and contact details

2. What we spend and how we spend it (£)

Annual accounts

Audit of accounts

Revenue and capital spending plans

Procurement Regulations

Funding; details of drainage rates, special levies, grants and other financial contributions

Staff and Board members allowances and expenses

Contracts awarded and their value

3. What our priorities are and how we are doing (£)

Aims, objectives and plans

Performance against aims and plans

Programme of works

4. How we make decisions

Board meeting and sub-committee minutes

Public consultations

Reports of advisory groups

Environmental Impact Assessments

Assessment of flooding risks

Other publicly available reports

5. Our policies and procedures

Policies and procedures for the conduct of the Boards business

Policies and procedures about the provision of services

Policies and procedures about employment matters

Whistle blowing policy

Anti-fraud & corruption policy

Data protection policy

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Customer complaints procedure

Charging regimes and policies

6. List and registers (£)

Register of Drainage Infrastructure

Nuisance Register

Complaints Register

Rate Book

Electoral Register (for the purposes of an Election of IDB Members)

Register of Members' Interests

Register of Gifts and Hospitality

Members Attendance Register

Freedom of Information Act disclosure log

7. The services we offer (£)

Regulatory role

Byelaws

Information for landowners, developments and operations

Notices, leaflets and guidance

Media releases

Details of the services for which the Board is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees

Feedback

Feedback, comments or complaints about this publication scheme should be directed to the Clerk or the Chairman of the individual Board, forwarded to the address stated in section 3 above; How to Access Information - 3.By Post. If you are not satisfied that information is being published in accordance with this scheme you can refer your complaint to the Information Commissioner:

The Case Reception Unit
Customer Services Team
Information Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.gov.uk/complaints/freedom_of_information.aspx