

## **Schedule of Charges for provision of Property Search Information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004**

The County Council makes a reasonable charge for the provision of this information in accordance with Regulation 8. The County Council is developing a process to require advance payment of charges in accordance with Regulation 8(4). Until this process is developed, in order to deal with requests efficiently and quickly, the County Council will not require advance payment of charges, unless there are previous charges from the same requestor that remains unpaid. In such cases, the County Council will not process the request until advance payment has been made.

Until the online payment process is in place, an invoice will be raised by Norfolk County Council's Finance Department for all work undertaken and completed.

### **Information to the circumstances in which a charge may be made or waived**

The County Council will only make a charge in respect of requests for information relating to 'property search information'. This means any request where information related to or is substantially similar to the questions on property search form CON29. The County Council does not presently charge for other Environmental Information requests and the reason for this difference is that a significant volume of requests in this category have been expected. These charges took effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2015. There are presently no concessions whereby the charges will be waived. In accordance with the Regulations, the County Council makes no charge for inspecting information at our offices.

### **Schedule of charges**

The County Council has applied a minimum staff time cost of £20 per hour, and for each information request related to or substantially similar to a single CON29 question, a charge will be made of £6.66 plus VAT, together with an additional charge of £1.66 plus VAT per question. These charges are per property.

These charges assume that the information request results will be sent in electronic format. Where the information is requested by post, the County Council will additionally apply a copying charge of £0.10 per copy and current postage charges at cost.

The CON 29 and CON290 questions this may apply to are:

- 1.2
- 2.1 (a-d)
- 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5
- 3.1, 3.2
- 3.4 (a-f)
- 3.5
- 3.6 (a-l)
- 3.7 (e)
- 3.7 (g)
- 4

- 7
- 16
- 18
- 21
- 22

The County Council has arrived at these charges by applying a process to answer a single question as set out below. The County Council has only applied charges for the cost of staff time spent locating, retrieving and extracting the information and the costs incurrent when printing or copying requested information and sending it to the requestor. The process steps thus charged for are:

- Receiving email and recording the enquiry on a simple spreadsheet
- Opening the mapping system
- Locating the address
- Conducting minimum research (to find out what any symbols represent)
- Producing a map layout with the property address, legend, scale and date
- Annotating any item of interest
- Save as PDF
- Write email reply
- Attach map
- Send back to customer
- Request invoice

As many of these steps are duplicated for a second question for the same property, the County Council has estimated this reduces the time taken for a second and subsequent question to 5 minutes, which derives the charge of £1.66 referred to above. It is not considered there is any appreciable time saving by combining requests in respect of multiple properties, so no discount is made in respect of this.

By way of example,

A request is received for the Environmental Information held that related to question 3.4 and 3.5 in CON29 for Property A, B and C.

The total charge would be calculated:

£6.66 for the first question per property, £1.66 for each subsequent request per property. This request is repeated for three different properties so a total charge of £24.96 applies.