



FOI REF:	15787
RESPONSE SENT:	30/07/2025

Request

Please treat this as a formal request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am requesting information regarding the use of Dukes Bailiffs Ltd by your council between 1 January 2022 and the present day.

Please provide:

- The number of enforcement instructions issued to Dukes Bailiffs Ltd in that period
- How many of those instructions related to vulnerable individuals (mental health, financial hardship, or other known indicators)
- Copies of any policies, agreements, or clauses in your contracts with Dukes covering the treatment of vulnerable individuals, affordability concerns, or complaint escalation
- How many complaints you have received in that time related to Dukes, particularly involving the treatment of vulnerable people
- Whether the council has ever escalated, reviewed, or suspended activity involving Dukes Bailiffs Ltd due to public concern or complaint handling

Response

1. 3,010
2. We do not keep a record of this information and I am unable to produce this retrospectively.
3. Clause in the 'Specification and Code of Practice':

'VULNERABILITY'

The Enforcement Agent shall determine vulnerability and, the impact of the vulnerability on the ability to pay and shall act appropriately, ensuring the vulnerable debtor has had opportunity to seek independent advice.

The Enforcement Agent shall report any 'vulnerable' cases to the Authority and, where appropriate, seek instruction before proceeding further.

Upon making contact with the debtor for the first time, the Enforcement Agent should endeavour to establish whether the debtor or their partner falls into any of the following categories:

- a) *Ongoing mental illness/severe depression*
- b) *Allegations of attempted suicide*
- c) *Long standing health condition*
- d) *Learning disability*
- e) *Terminally ill*
- f) *Recent bereavement*
- g) *Elderly – where it is clear the person is unable to deal with payment or their affairs*
- h) *People with severe disabilities (physically or mentally)*
- i) *Where the debtor or partner is in the final weeks of pregnancy (to be reviewed after the birth of the child)*
- j) *Where severe social deprivation is evident*
- k) *Communication difficulties where an advisor or an interpreter would be helpful (profound deafness, blindness or language difficulties)*

This is not a prescriptive list but potential indicators, all individual cases will still have to be considered on merit.

The Enforcement Agent will inform Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Authority of any safeguarding concerns.

The Enforcement Agent will ensure that the vulnerable debtor has had opportunity to seek independent advice before pursuing the case further and may refer to the Authority prior to proceeding.'

- 4. 0
- 5. No