



Our ref ATISN 16453

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

2 August 2022

Dear ,

**Request for Information – ATISN 16453**

Thank you for your request for information dated 5 July. You have asked for the following information:

1. Has Welsh Government provided additional funds to consultants/NMWTRA/SWTRA specifically for the surveying of Ash Die Back on the Welsh Government Trunk Roads in Wales?
2. If so, what is the total budget for the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent and South Wales Trunk Road Agent?
3. Has a budget been allocated to the Trunk Road Agents to remove trees infected with Ash die Back on the Trunk Roads?
4. If so, what is the total budget for the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent and South Wales Trunk Road Agent?
5. Have Local Authorities been provided additional funds to survey and remove Ash trees with Ash Die Back disease?
6. If so, what is the value of the total budget/funds to Gwynedd County Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council and Conwy County Borough Council (please segregate into organisations and budgets)?
7. Roughly how many Ash trees are scheduled to be felled across the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road network?
8. What compensatory measures/environmental management schemes are being provided to mitigate the loss of the habitat?
9. Is there a budget for compensatory measures?
10. What is the value of the budget of compensatory measures for NMWTRA, SWTRA, Gwynedd Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council, Conwy County Borough Council (please segregate into organisations and financial budgets)

**Our response**

The information you requested is as follows:



**BUDDSODDWYR | INVESTORS**  
**MEWN POBL | IN PEOPLE**

Llywodraeth Cymru /  
Welsh Government  
Parc Cathays / Cathays Park  
CF10 3NQ

FOI.EconomyandInfrastructure@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

On the Motorway and Trunk Road Network (for which Welsh Ministers are directly responsible), Welsh Government has been managing the impacts of Ash dieback (ADB) since 2013/2014 when the disease was first observed on our soft estate.

In the early years of managing the impacts of the disease (between financial years 2013/2014 – 2019/2020) there was no separate budget allocation for ADB, as numbers requiring removal for safety reasons were relatively low and managed through our normal 'Hazardous Trees' budget. The required uplift to the 'Hazardous Tree' budget across those early years to manage Ash dieback infected trees is estimated to be £1M - £1.5M although there is no breakdown, splitting out ADB infected trees.

Following ADB surveys and observations in 2019, we were recording/observing a much higher rate of ADB infection and resulting hazardous trees, compared to earlier years. Subsequently, in Financial Year 2020/2021 we created a dedicated budget line within our capital programme to manage the impacts of ADB on the Motorway and Trunk Road Network in Wales. This budget allocation is provided to the Trunk Road Agents to manage the impacts, being inclusive to cover;

- additional surveys and inspections,
- consultancy support (for example in the preparation of protected species licences),
- removal of hazardous infected trees,
- and compensatory replacement planting.

Budget allocations provided to manage the impacts of ADB:

**FY 2020/2021** – SWTRA = £2M, NMWTRA = £1.6M – TOTAL £3.6M

**FY 2021/2022** – SWTRA = £2M, NMWTRA = £1.85M – TOTAL £3.85M

**FY 2021/2022 (current)** – Full year allocations have not yet been confirmed. However, partial allocations made to date have been – SWTRA = £1.2M, NMWTRA = £1M

Therefore the answer to your specific questions is:

1. Yes, the funding is described above.
2. We do not have separate budgets for Ash dieback surveys/inspections, these are included in the overall budget allocation we provide the Trunk Road Agents as set out above.
3. Yes, as set out above.
4. We do not have separate budgets for removal of infected trees, these are included in the overall budget allocation we provide the Trunk Road Agents as above.
5. In March 2021 the WLGA received over £4.3M from the Green Recovery Scheme which was designed to support Local Authorities to deliver the Green Recovery Delivery Partnership Priority Themes:

- Reducing carbon emissions and increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change
- Reversing the decline in biodiversity and connect people and nature
- Contributing to tackling unsustainable levels of production and consumption by keeping resources in use for as long as possible, avoiding all waste and moving to more sustainable alternatives.
- Job creation, skills development and new markets
- Groups, communities and places that are most vulnerable/ have been hit hardest are prioritised to address the underlying inequalities and deprivation
- Chalara ash dieback

In total 16 Local Authorities applied for projects directly related all or in part to the management of ash dieback.

6. The value of the budgets for these local authorities was as follows:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
Isle of Anglesey	96,419	7,231
Gwynedd	184,291	13,822
Conwy	0	0

Conwy County Council's application for funding from the Green Recovery Scheme was a project not related to the management of dieback.

7. The number of Ash trees scheduled to be felled varies year on year and is determined by the outputs from Ash dieback surveys and hazardous tree inspections. The methodology used to determine the point when an infected ash tree is scheduled to be removed (for safety reasons) is based on The Tree Councils Risk Assessment for managing ADB. We do not carry out pre-emptive felling.

We do not have an accurate count of the number of ash trees on the soft estate. For the NMWTRA area we estimated the number of ash trees located on the motorway and trunk road network that will require removing for safety reasons, for the period we are likely to be managing this disease could be between 200,000 and 250,000. These range across tree age classes i) young ii) young/mature iii) mature/veteran.

Additionally, there are a significant number of ash trees adjacent to our network (within falling distance of the carriageway) in private ownership. A proportion of these may also need removing, if infected by ADB and presenting a risk to road safety. Privately owned trees requiring removal are the responsibility of the landowner.

8. On the Motorway and Trunk Road Network, as part of managing the impacts of ADB, we have an on-going planting programme. We use tree planting mixes containing suitable alternative native species. Where sites allow, we also include native shrub species (hawthorn, hazel, holly, blackthorn etc.) within mixes to improve the ecological benefits, diversity and resilience within roadside plantations. Additionally, should roadside plantations have good potential for natural regeneration (of species other than ash) we factor those considerations into replanting requirements. Our overall objective in managing for ADB is to have no net loss of overall tree cover, higher biodiversity value and more resilience (through utilising a broader range of species) in our roadside plantations by the end of the period we are managing for ADB.

In some areas, where European protected species have been identified, ash tree removal is carried out under licence issued by Natural Resources Wales. Under the conditions of such licences compensatory measures are specified by Natural Resources Wales.

Should stocks of native ash, resistant to ADB, become commercially available at some point in the future these would be utilised as part of our overall planting strategy

Currently Welsh Government are not providing any additional direct financial support for landowners and managers following the felling of ash trees as a response to ash dieback.

9. Currently there is no budget for compensatory measures.
10. For NMWTRA and SWTRA we do not have separate budgets for compensatory measures, these are included in the overall budget allocation we provide the Trunk Road Agents as above

For Gwynedd Council, Isle of Anglesey County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Ash dieback compensatory measures may be funded through schemes above as well as other generic sources of funding. Welsh Government does not hold the information you have requested. You may request the information from the relevant councils at the following addresses:

**Gwynedd Council**

[RhyddidGwybodaeth@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:RhyddidGwybodaeth@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)

Senior Statutory Data Protection Officer

Council Office

Shirehall Street

Caernarfon

Gwynedd

LL55 1SH

**Isle of Anglesey Council**

[foi@ynysmon.llyw.cymru](mailto:foi@ynysmon.llyw.cymru)

Legal and Committee Services

Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Council Offices  
Llangefni  
Anglesey  
LL77 7TW

**Conwy County Borough Council**  
[info-gov.unit@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:info-gov.unit@conwy.gov.uk)  
Information Governance Unit  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Bodlondeb  
Conwy  
LL32 8DU

### **Next steps**

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,  
Welsh Government,  
Cathays Park,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 3NQ

or Email: [Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales)

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office,  
Wycliffe House,  
Water Lane,  
Wilmslow,  
Cheshire,  
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely