

5 March 2024

Dear

Request for Information - ATISN 20177

Thank you for your request for information dated 7 February.

Information requested

Regarding the sections of the M4 having trees removed at night involving many vehicles and cranes –

Why this is happening and at what cost to the public purse?

Our Response

I can confirm that the Welsh Government holds some of the information you have requested.

Vegetation management and tree works are being undertaken on the M4 motorway by the South Wales Trunk Road Agent (SWTRA). The main objective of this work is safety related by removing dead, damaged or diseased trees that are at risk of falling onto the motorway or neighbouring properties. In addition, some plots are thinned to allow the retained trees to grow and mature naturally.

We are managing the impacts of Ash dieback disease which is killing a high proportion of our native ash trees. Ash is one of the predominant tree species growing alongside our road network. As part of our response to Ash dieback we are also delivering a tree replacement programme as part of these works to ensure that any negative impacts on biodiversity and the natural environment are mitigated.

The budget allocated to undertake these works this financial year is circa £1.4 million. The allocation is inclusive of the necessary traffic management costs.

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: Freedomofinformation@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.

The request you sent me contains personal information about you - for example, your name. The Welsh Government will be the data processor for this information and, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, it will be processed in order to fulfil our public task and meet our legal obligations under the Act to provide you with a response. We will only use this personal information to deal with your request and any matters which arise as a result of it. We will keep your personal information and all other information relating to your request for three years from the date on which your request is finally closed. Your personal information will then be disposed of securely.

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data we hold about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

For further information about the information which the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you wish to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ

Email: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

Any information released under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 will be listed in the Welsh Government's Disclosure Log (at <https://gov.wales/about/open-government/freedom-of-information/responses/?lang=en>).

Yours sincerely