

London Borough of Barnet
2 Bristol Avenue,
Colindale,
London, NW9 4EW
31 August 2022
Our ref: 8358104

Thank you for your request received on 4 August 2022, for the following information:

I would like Barnet Council to supply me with the following information regarding "Streets Trees" and all "Trees" that are managed by Barnet Council and fall on property that is either owned or managed by the said borough.

1. Since 1st April 2018 how many trees have been planted by Barnet Council or a contractor working on behalf council?

*** What is the breakdown, How many were planted on streets / How many were planted in public open spaces**

2. What is the total cost of planting these new trees in reference to question 1.

3. At the last know price point what is the unit cost of planting a street tree? This is to include the tree, planting, and all accessories, separate costs for trees with metal frames protecting the tree, which you normally see on the main road, and trees planted on a residential street with the wire guard.

4. How many trees are Barnet Council aware of that were planted since 1st April 2018 have either died or have been killed due to human interaction?

5. Who is Barnet Council's tree supplier?

5. What is the process and how is the decision made as to what trees are planted and where? How many new trees planted are not native indigenous trees? If not indigenous what is the country of origin?

6. What is the maintenance/upkeep/watering schedule for looking after newly planted trees by Barnet Council, how often are they watered, and the duration that they are directly watered and maintained?

7. What are the future proposals/plans does Barnet Council have regarding the planting of more trees?

8. How many trees have been felled in the London Borough of Barnet since 1st April 2018?

In that time frame

- * How many were directly felled by Barnet Council or a Contractor working on their behalf of Barnet Council?**
- * How Many Trees are Barnet Council aware of that were felled privately?**
- * How many of the trees felled were healthy?**
- * How many of the trees were subject to a Tree Protection Orders**
- * How many trees were felled due to insurance claims and substance, and what insurance companies were involved**
- * How many trees were felled due to domestic and commercial/industrial developments?**
- * How many trees are subject to current Tree Protection Orders/**
- * How many prosecutions have there been regarding the illegal felling of trees in Barnet since 1st April 2018**

We have processed this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Response

I can confirm that London Borough of Barnet holds the information you requested.

However, we believe that the exemptions detailed below apply to some of this information and this is withheld. Please see the Refusal Notice below.

I would like Barnet Council to supply me with the following information regarding "Streets Trees" and all "Trees" that are managed by Barnet Council and fall on property that is either owned or managed by the said borough.

1. Since 1st April 2018 how many trees have been planted by Barnet Council or a contractor working on behalf council?

**** What is the breakdown, How many were planted on streets / How many were planted in public open spaces***

We have planted 3,987 trees. We have planted 468 trees in parks and 3,519 trees on streets.

2. What is the total cost of planting these new trees in reference to question 1.

Please see the refusal notice S43 below.

3. At the last know price point what is the unit cost of planting a street tree? This is to include the tree, planting, and all accessories, separate costs for trees with metal frames protecting the tree, which you normally see on the main road, and trees planted on a residential street with the wire guard.

Please see the refusal notice S43 below.

4. How many trees are Barnet Council aware of that were planted since 1st April 2018 have either died or have been killed due to human interaction?

We usually lose between 5-10% of planted trees.

5. Who is Barnet Council's tree supplier?

Hilliers nurseries & Barchams nurseries.

5. What is the process and how is the decision made as to what trees are planted and where? How many new trees planted are not native indigenous trees? If not indigenous what is the country of origin?

Trees are planted according to our planting strategy outlined in Barnet Tree Policy (https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/barnet-tree-policy-08.11.17_pdf.pdf). We have a very strict biosecurity policy, 80% of our trees have been propagated in the UK and grown for their lifespan in the UK. The remaining 20% have been grown on UK ground for a minimum of one year before they are purchased (the trees would come to UK from Holland).

6. What is the maintenance/upkeep/watering schedule for looking after newly planted trees by Barnet Council, how often are they watered, and the duration that they are directly watered and maintained?

We are currently watering our trees 16 x times per year broken down as follows: 1 x in April, 2 x in May, 4 x in June, 4 x in July, 4 x August & 1 x in September. We sometimes carry out extra watering visits depending on weather conditions. We water our trees for the duration of 2 years. However if needed we extend watering to year 3 & possibly to year 4. Trees receive 50L of water on every visit, some bigger trees receive 100L per visit. We also weed all the pits on the first watering visit, apply mulch, check & secure all the hardware. The same process is repeated on the last watering visit of the year.

7. What are the future proposals/plans does Barnet Council have regarding the planting of more trees?

We are following our tree planting strategy as mentioned previously. However there might be increase in tree planting depending on available funding.

**8. How many trees have been felled in the London Borough of Barnet since 1st April 2018?
In that time frame**

2986

*** How many were directly felled by Barnet Council or a Contractor working on their behalf of Barnet Council?**

2986

*** How Many Trees are Barnet Council aware of that were felled privately?**

We do not hold this information

*** How many of the trees felled were healthy?**

163

*** How many of the trees were subject to a Tree Protection Orders**

The council has 700 tree preservation orders which protects individual trees, groups of trees, areas and woodlands. The total number of trees protected is not recorded.

**** How many trees were felled due to insurance claims and substance, and what insurance companies were involved***

Applications are received that implicate trees in causing damage to properties either within the ground of the effect property or on adjoining land. The total number of trees removed for these reasons is not available. Often the tree owners do not permit the removal of the tree.

**** How many trees were felled due to domestic and commercial/industrial developments?***

Planning applications are made and considered on their individual merits. The number of trees removed is not available. Where trees are removed the applicants must provide an appropriate level replacement tree planting.

**** How many trees are subject to current Tree Protection Orders/***

The council has 700 tree preservation orders which protects individual trees, groups of trees, areas and woodlands. The total number of trees protected is not recorded.

**** How many prosecutions have there been regarding the illegal felling of trees in Barnet since 1st April 2018***

No breaches of TPO legislation have been taken to court from 1st April 2018.

S43 - Commercial interests

We consider that the qualified exemption set out in Section 43 (Prejudicial to commercial interests) subsection 2 applies to the information requested. Therefore, we have decided to withhold the information.

We have concluded that this information is exempt under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) because the disclosure of this information would be prejudicial to the London Borough of Barnet's and partners' commercial interests. This is a qualified exemption and the public interest test applies.

We have consulted the relevant third parties/contractors who have confirmed that the disclosure of this information would give competitors an unfair advantage in future tenders while disclosure would also prejudice London Borough of Barnet's commercial interests and bargaining position in future negotiations because contractors and suppliers may become reluctant to enter into further free and frank negotiations. This would undermine the Council's ability to fulfil its role effectively and prevent it from achieving the value for money that is so important. These interests are commercial in nature and not merely financial.

In applying this exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the interest in favour of disclosure.

Factors in favour of disclosure

- Furthering the understanding, and participation in the public debate of issues
- Facilitate the accountability and transparency of public authorities for decisions taken
- Facilitate accountability and transparency in the spending of public money

- Allowing individuals to understand decisions made by public authorities affecting their lives and, in some cases, assist individuals in challenging those decisions

Factors in favour of withholding

- Council and partner's positions in a competitive environment, market sensitivity of information and potential usefulness to competitors
- Negative effect on competitiveness if competitors were to have access to information
- Loss of trust if companies fear the public authority will disclose commercial information
- Need to obtain value for money

For these reasons we consider that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Further information

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link www.ico.org.uk

For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.

Your rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: foi@barnet.gov.uk. Or by post to Records & Information Management Service, Assurance Group, London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website www.ico.org.uk). There is no charge for making an appeal.

