

FOI Response Document

**FOI08887**

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 about ***Japanese Knotweed A4232 - Documents/Correspondence*** received on ***2nd September 2016***.

**This is to request a copy of all documents relating to the clearance of the Japanese knotweed on the A4232.**

Please see attachments 1 – 3

You will note that some of the information has been redacted (blanked out) as those parts of the response are considered to be exempt. The exemption applied is:

Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act effectively prohibits the release of personal information if doing so would breach the principles in the Data Protection Act 1998. We have a statutory duty under Section 4 (4) of the Data Protection Act 1998 – “to comply with the data protection principles in relation to all personal data”.

**I would also like the local authority to identify the specific Welsh Government codes of practice referred to, along with a list of the tools (hand or machine) used to cut down the stand in question as well as identification of where, when and how those tools were cleaned for biosecurity purposes.**

**RESPONSE :**

**The code of Practice is attached.   Attachment 4**

**There is no Council policy document in place**

**In the UK Japanese Knotweed has not yet been recorded as producing viable seeds, however, hybrid crosses can produce viable seed. So far all Japanese Knotweed plants recorded in the UK are female and all male plants have been shown to be hybrids. Fertile hybrids will add a whole new dimension to the control of the spread of Japanese Knotweed which currently only reproduces vegetatively.**

**The Council works with a professional weed control specialist with regards to the management of Japanese Knotweed.  However if the Council does manage Knotweed it ensures that machinery, tools and work clothes are free of fragments of Knotweed before leaving the site. Tracked vehicles, off-road tyres, tools and even work boots can harbour fragments of Knotweed and could potentially cause spread to another site. These items are cleaned before leaving a Knotweed contaminated site..**

I would also like the local authority to provide an example of the training and information it provides to staff who can expect to deal with Japanese knotweed as part of their job and to show that this training had been provided to the staff who carried out the work in question**.**

**RESPONSE :** **With regards to training, where operatives may need to deal with Japanese Knotweed then they would be given verbal instructions either in general terms or specific to each site.  Officers have been advised to manage Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) such as Japanese Knotweed (JK) and Ragwort in accordance with their respective codes of practice published by the Welsh Government and toll box talks take place with regards these invasive species. The Council does not have a policy on INNS management or specific training on INNS management but these are planned.**

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.