

**Registrar's Office**

Queen's University Belfast  
Belfast  
BT7 1NN  
Northern Ireland  
Tel +44 (0) 28 9097 2500  
Fax +44 (0) 28 9097 2510  
www.qub.ac.uk

Our ref: FOI/10/66

4 June 2010

Mr D Keenan  
The Limehouse Cut  
LONDON  
E14 6NQ

Dear Mr Keenan

**Freedom of Information Request – Years of Tree Ring Growth**

My letter, dated 12 May 2010, on the above refers.

Having reviewed your request and consulted with appropriate colleagues, I would respond as follows:

A file containing a list of all 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century trees that were living when sampled, and the year when the sample was carried out (this is not necessarily the age of the latest measured ring), has been uploaded onto the University's website and can be accessed via the following link:

[http://chrono.qub.ac.uk/Resources/dendro\\_data/dendro.html](http://chrono.qub.ac.uk/Resources/dendro_data/dendro.html)

All sections are aged by cross-matching to other, dated, samples. As no data, however, on the age of individual samples is held electronically (all electronic data held has already been released), this information can only be obtained by searching through records manually, in publications (listed on the above website), or by running cross-matching software on the data the University has published.

The volume of information requested, alongside the costs which would be incurred in extracting, copying, collating and preparing this information for release, is considered manifestly unreasonable under Regulation 12(4)(b) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. In addition, much of the information requested is already published and accessible.

There are in excess of 1,000 samples covered in the request – 5 minutes per sample is a conservative estimate of the time needed to locate the file, extract, transcribe the relevant data and re-file, which equates to over 83 hours. This is in addition to the 20 hours already taken to generate the file provided on the above website.

On this basis, this information is withheld under Regulation 12(4)(b) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

I can also advise that all modern data from sites considered reliable i.e. those with more than 10 samples, are held in the International Tree Ring Database (IRTDB), and can be found by searching, with the ages of every ring. The University does not hold a separate list of these samples – staff would use the IRTDB search facility to identify the data held on the IRTDB in order to pick out data that has not been published on the database.

If you are interested in more specific data associated with the files that the University has published, or more general information about the data and formats that are held, please contact the Head of School, Professor Keith Bennett, by telephone on 028 9097 5140 or email at [hos.gap@gub.ac.uk](mailto:hos.gap@gub.ac.uk).

In issuing this information, the University has fulfilled its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If you are dissatisfied with the response provided, please put your complaint in writing to me at the above address. If this fails to resolve the matter, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

Debbie Troy  
Registrar's Office