| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-1799  Responded to: 17 August 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## Q1: Could you please tell me how many adults were reported missing persons to Police Scotland in the last 6 years?

In response to your request for data for the last 6 years, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with all the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, the National Missing Persons Application (NMPA) is the system used to record missing person investigations, this went live on 1 April 2019. Prior to this time legacy police systems were used. To provide data from 2018 would require a significant manual check on each of the 8 legacy systems to determine if any information was still held. Each record held would need to be manually assessed for accuracy and relevance. This is an exercise which I believe would greatly exceed the cost threshold set out within the Act.

To create an approximate scale of volume of records for the year 2018, I have used figures from 01 April 2019 until 01 April 2020, I can advise that 5529 adults were reported missing, a conservative estimate is that it would take 5 minutes to assess a single record this would equate to an excess of 460 hours to determine the information you require.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so this part of your request would breach the cost threshold.

With regards to the data from 2018, whilst I would normally suggest a way you could revise your question to provide data, due to the way in which data is recorded, I do not believe there is a way this question can be answered within cost in its current form. Please note that this exemption applies to this period in each question of your response.

For the years 2019/2020, 2020/2021, 2021/2022, and 2022/2023 I can advise that 23,218 adults were reported missing.

## Can you provide a breakdown of their gender?

The table below provides the number of adults reported missing broken by year and gender.

Number of adults reported missing broken by year and gender.

| Year | Male | Female | Transgender | Intersex and Non-Binary | Unknown | Other | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2019/2020 | 3478 | 2028 | 21 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5529 |
| 2020/2021 | 3453 | 1984 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5450 |
| 2021/2022 | 3850 | 2214 | 18 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6088 |
| 2022/2023 | 3974 | 2139 | 27 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 6151 |

## Could you please break this down into local authorities?

The table below provides the number of adults reported missing broken by year and each local authority.

| Local Authority | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aberdeen City Council | 195 | 146 | 186 | 200 |
| Aberdeenshire Council | 105 | 111 | 124 | 114 |
| Angus Council | 57 | 82 | 97 | 89 |
| Argyll and Bute Council | 44 | 47 | 78 | 84 |
| Clackmannanshire Council | 45 | 84 | 58 | 66 |
| Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) | 14 | 12 | 21 | 17 |
| Dumfries and Galloway Council | 96 | 109 | 155 | 133 |
| Dundee City Council | 143 | 231 | 244 | 229 |
| East Ayrshire Council | 125 | 136 | 139 | 137 |
| East Dunbartonshire Council | 61 | 54 | 58 | 49 |
| East Lothian Council | 110 | 90 | 95 | 105 |
| East Renfrewshire Council | 37 | 48 | 55 | 28 |
| Edinburgh City Council | 623 | 699 | 714 | 717 |
| Falkirk Council | 182 | 215 | 206 | 250 |
| Fife Council | 411 | 303 | 513 | 546 |
| Glasgow City Council | 784 | 749 | 792 | 637 |
| Highland Council | 317 | 188 | 234 | 291 |
| Inverclyde Council | 39 | 26 | 48 | 58 |
| Midlothian Council | 130 | 124 | 124 | 108 |
| Moray Council | 67 | 32 | 74 | 50 |
| North Ayrshire Council | 147 | 171 | 191 | 172 |
| North Lanarkshire Council | 520 | 497 | 518 | 548 |
| Orkney Islands Council | 22 | 7 | 18 | 22 |
| Perth and Kinross Council | 90 | 110 | 108 | 132 |
| Renfrewshire Council | 96 | 67 | 116 | 149 |
| Scottish Borders Council | 161 | 150 | 160 | 148 |
| Shetland Islands Council | 9 | 14 | 9 | 12 |
| South Ayrshire Council | 133 | 133 | 116 | 140 |
| South Lanarkshire Council | 330 | 384 | 366 | 479 |
| Stirling Council | 91 | 107 | 93 | 75 |
| West Dunbartonshire Council | 103 | 85 | 120 | 115 |
| West Lothian Council | 242 | 239 | 258 | 251 |
| Grand Total | 5529 | 5450 | 6088 | 6151 |

## Q2: How many of the adults in Q1, were flagged as having dementia or Alzheimer’s?

## Could you please break this down into local authorities?

## Can you provide a breakdown of their gender?

In response to question 2, again I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

By way of explanation, there is no straightforward method to identify if a missing person has a medical condition, in this case specifically Alzheimer’s or dementia. To provide this information a manual assessment of each record would need to take place. Again, using the same figures as identified in the response to question 1, to examine the data for only a single year greatly exceeds the cost threshold set out within the Act.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

Again, should you wish to significantly reduce the time period of your request it may be that some information could be provided to you, however it is worthy of note that the time period may have to be significantly narrow that this would mitigate any meaningful comparative data.

Please note that as the response to point 1 of question 2 is exempt the subsidiary points are subsequently considered non-applicable.

## Q3: How many missing adults were reported as found?

I can advise that 23,163 adults were reported as found.

## Can you provide a breakdown of their gender?

The table below provides the number of adults reported missing and subsequently found broken by year and gender.

Number of adults reported missing and subsequently found broken by year and gender.

| Year | Male | Female | Transgender | Intersex and Non-Binary | Unknown | Other | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2019/2020 | 3470 | 2026 | 21 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5519 |
| 2020/2021 | 3445 | 1982 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5440 |
| 2021/2022 | 3835 | 2213 | 18 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6072 |
| 2022/2023 | 3959 | 2136 | 27 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 6132 |

## Could you please break this down into local authorities?

The tables below provide the number of adults reported missing then subsequently found broken by year and local authority.

| Local Authority | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aberdeen City Council | 195 | 146 | 186 | 198 |
| Aberdeenshire Council | 105 | 110 | 122 | 112 |
| Angus Council | 57 | 82 | 96 | 89 |
| Argyll and Bute Council | 44 | 46 | 77 | 82 |
| Clackmannanshire Council | 45 | 84 | 58 | 66 |
| Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) | 14 | 11 | 21 | 17 |
| Dumfries and Galloway Council | 95 | 109 | 154 | 133 |
| Dundee City Council | 143 | 229 | 244 | 228 |
| East Ayrshire Council | 125 | 136 | 139 | 137 |
| East Dunbartonshire Council | 61 | 54 | 58 | 49 |
| East Lothian Council | 110 | 90 | 94 | 105 |
| East Renfrewshire Council | 37 | 48 | 54 | 28 |
| Edinburgh City Council | 623 | 699 | 713 | 717 |
| Falkirk Council | 182 | 215 | 206 | 249 |
| Fife Council | 411 | 303 | 511 | 545 |
| Glasgow City Council | 781 | 746 | 791 | 637 |
| Highland Council | 315 | 186 | 233 | 283 |
| Inverclyde Council | 38 | 26 | 48 | 58 |
| Midlothian Council | 130 | 124 | 123 | 108 |
| Moray Council | 66 | 32 | 74 | 50 |
| North Ayrshire Council | 146 | 171 | 190 | 172 |
| North Lanarkshire Council | 519 | 497 | 518 | 547 |
| Orkney Islands Council | 22 | 7 | 18 | 22 |
| Perth and Kinross Council | 90 | 110 | 108 | 132 |
| Renfrewshire Council | 96 | 67 | 115 | 149 |
| Scottish Borders Council | 161 | 150 | 160 | 148 |
| Shetland Islands Council | 9 | 14 | 9 | 12 |
| South Ayrshire Council | 133 | 133 | 116 | 140 |
| South Lanarkshire Council | 330 | 384 | 366 | 479 |
| Stirling Council | 91 | 107 | 93 | 75 |
| West Dunbartonshire Council | 103 | 85 | 120 | 115 |
| West Lothian Council | 242 | 239 | 257 | 250 |
| Grand Total | 5519 | 5440 | 6072 | 6132 |

## Q4: How many missing adults with dementia or Alzheimer’s were reported as found?

## Could you please break this down into local authorities?

## Can you provide a breakdown of their gender?

In response to these questions please see the response to question 2.

## Q6: Could you please tell me how many people per year over the last 6 years have used the Herbert Protocol in Scotland?

## Could you please break this down into local authorities?

In response to this question, again I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

By way of explanation, as noted in question 2, there is no straightforward method to identify if a missing person has a medical condition. To identify any medical condition, specifically Alzheimer’s or dementia, then to identify if the Herbert Protocol was used a manual assessment of each record would need to take place. Again, using the same figures as identified in the response to question 1, to examine the data for only a single year greatly exceeds the cost threshold set out within the Act.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

Again, should you wish to significantly reduce the time period of your request it may be that some information could be provided to you, however it is worthy of note that the time period may have to be significantly narrow that this would mitigate any meaningful comparative data.

Please note that as the response to point 1 of question 6 is exempt the subsidiary points are subsequently considered non-applicable.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.