



**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

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Our ref: FOI.2025.7

**By Email**

Date: 27.02.2025

Dear ██████████

I refer to your e-mail of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025 in which you requested the following information:

- 1. Can you please tell me how many ownerless properties there are currently in Scotland?**
- 2. Can you please give a total estimated value for the ownerless properties?**
- 3. Can you please tell me how many people have died in the last five years (2020 to 2024) without a will or successor and break down the numbers for each year?**
- 4. Can you please give a total value for each of these year's assets that fell to the crown?**

This request will be managed by The King's and Lord Treasurer's Rembrancer (KLTR) under the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002 (FOISA).

I am able to provide you with the following information in relation to your queries.

- 1. Can you please tell me how many ownerless properties there are currently in Scotland?**

We are unable to answer this question, as we do not hold this information. There is no comprehensive record of ownerless properties in Scotland.

Outside of the scope of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, we can provide you the following information, which hope will be useful. The KLTR operates in a responsive manner to notifications we receive about properties which might be ownerless, for example, properties which most recently belonged to a company which is now dissolved. We then investigate these

<http://www.kltr.gov.uk>

properties to determine if they really are ownerless, or *bona vacantia*. Last year we received 167 notifications. Over the last 5 years we have received:

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Number of Notifications</b>
20/21	190
21/22	191
22/23	188
23/24	167
24/25	140 (to date)

This number reflects how many times KLTR has been approached about land potentially considered *bona vacantia*. It does not indicate how many were confirmed as *bona vacantia* and subsequently disposed of via OPTS, assessed market value, auction, or disclaimed, as each case is dealt with separately.

It might interest you to know that the KLTR is now exploring a new approach to ownerless property. We have recently started a project which will allow us to proactively seek out ownerless property across Scotland. This is likely to give more of an indication of how much ownerless property there is in Scotland. More information can be found [here](#).

## **2. Can you please give a total estimated value for the ownerless properties?**

As with the first question, we are unable to estimate the value of ownerless properties in Scotland as we are only aware of those properties which are notified to us. The value for the properties we dealt with are described under Non-Company Property receipts in our annual accounts, found [here](#). Our accounts for the last 5 years are published on our website.

It might be helpful for us to provide some context for these figures. In Scots law, the Crown can choose to claim ownerless property. Where we claim and deal with property, its realised value is paid by the KLTR into the Scottish Consolidated Fund. The KLTR has also developed a new scheme for dealing with ownerless property through the Ownerless Property Transfer Scheme, which allows the KLTR to transfer property at a cost recovery value, rather than market value, to local authorities or community groups who can use these properties for the benefit of the public. Naturally this has an impact on the transfer value of the properties we transfer as part of our work.

## **3. Can you please tell me how many people have died in the last five years (2020 to 2024) without a will or successor and break down the numbers for each year?**

We are not able to answer this question as we do not hold this information. We cannot say for certain how many people have died within the last 5 years without a will or heir, as a will can be discovered or an heir may come forward at any time.

Outside of the scope of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, we can provide you the following information, which hope will be useful.

<http://www.kltr.gov.uk>

Based on the cases referred to us where no heir has come forward to date or will be discovered (that is, unclaimed cases) the figures are as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Unclaimed Cases</b>
2020	116
2021	93
2022	73
2023	96
2024	16

**4. Can you please give a total value for each of these year's assets that fell to the crown?**

This information is available from our annual accounts, found [here](#). Please refer specifically to the section on heirless estates receipts.

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any further questions, please contact the policy team on [policy@kltr.gov.uk](mailto:policy@kltr.gov.uk).

If you are dissatisfied with the KLTR response to your FOI request, you have the right to ask us to review it. Your review request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter; please e-mail [enquiries@kltr.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@kltr.gov.uk) and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt.

The review will be undertaken by a member of the KLTR FOI team who was not involved in the original consideration of your request.

Under section 47(1) of FOISA if the KLTR position is unchanged following a review you have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months of receiving the review.

Yours sincerely,

  
Policy, Communications  
and OPTS  
KLTR