



Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
Requests (Fol)
Criminal Justice and Mental Health

Policy & Research Officer
January 2009

Reason for the Research

In May 2008, SCoD published a research report, "[Making the Case for Specialist Mental Health Services for Deaf People in Scotland: with recommendations for action.](#)"

This report laid out the reasons why [Public Petition PE808](#) was lodged with the Scottish Parliament and why the issues raised in January 2005 were still the same, if not more serious in 2008. The report did not cover forensic mental health; neither did it mention anything about the numbers of deaf people with mental health problems who are part by the Criminal Justice system – supported by Criminal Justice Social Work Teams or in the prison system.

Scoping Exercise

The Policy & Research Officer wrote to all 32 Local Authorities in Scotland to request information about deaf people who are supported by the Criminal Justice Social Work Teams.

The questions asked were:

1. How many male Deaf BSL users are being supported by your Criminal Justice Social Work Services?
2. How many of these men have a mental health problem?
3. How many female Deaf BSL users are being supported by your Criminal Justice Social Work Services?
4. How many of these women have a mental health problem?
5. How many Deafblind men are being supported by your Criminal Justice Social Work Services?
6. How many of these men have a mental health problem?
7. How many Deafblind women are being supported by your Criminal Justice Social Work Services?
8. How many of these women have a mental health problem?
9. How many Deafened men are being supported by your Criminal Justice Social Work Services?
10. How many of these men have a mental health problem?
11. How many Deafened women are being supported by your Criminal Justice Social Work Services?

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12. How many of these women have a mental health problem?

The Scottish Prison Service was asked similar questions about the prison population in Scotland.

Analysis of the Results

Of the 32 Councils contacted, six did not reply. These are:

- Aberdeenshire;
- East Renfrewshire;
- Edinburgh City;
- Glasgow City;
- Inverclyde; and
- North Ayrshire.

The initial requests were made by email in October 2008. Follow-up emails were sent to these councils on two further occasions, but no reply was received.

One council (West Lothian) record information but does not distinguish between impairments or gender, but have recorded that 57 offenders are open cases – recorded as having mental, visual or sensory impairment.

Male offenders who are deaf and have mental health problems

Three councils do not hold the information requested so they are exempt under Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Fifteen councils confirmed that they have no male offenders meeting the criteria in the Freedom of Information request letter.

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Of the seven councils that could answer the questions in the request letters:

- Angus Council stated that the Criminal Justice Service has supported two male offenders who are Deaf and four that are Deafened; it is not known whether or not these men have a mental health problem.
- Dundee City Council has one male offender who is Deaf. There is no record as to whether or not he has a mental health problem.
- East Lothian Criminal Justice is working with two male offenders who are Deafened but do not have any mental health problems.
- Falkirk Criminal Justice Service is working with two male offenders who are Deafened; one of these men is receiving mental health advice.
- Fife Criminal Justice Service is working with one male offender who is Deaf and one who is Deafened; neither has a mental health problem.
- Renfrewshire Council have six male offenders who are Deaf, five who are Deafblind and four who are Deafened; their records show that all have a mental health problem. Their records show that “clients recorded as hearing impaired or deaf and in the category mental health are 109, but this was explained as probably meaning that there are 109 male offenders who have a mental health problem, not 109 male offenders who have a hearing impairment or are deaf and have a mental health problem. The figures given – 6, 5 and 4 are for those who are deaf and have a mental health problem and are known to the Community Mental Health Team (NHS).
- South Lanarkshire has one male offender who is Deaf; he does not have a mental health problem. The reply did state that the council Social Work Court Team has “a member of staff who is going through the BSL level 1 course.”

The reply from the **Scottish Prison Service** stated that the information is not held centrally and would “involve our health care staff in every prison having to check the medical records of some 8,000 prisoners.” The Nursing Services Manager, who responded to the FOI request, did state that ten male prisoners are recorded as having a hearing impairment, but there is no record as to whether or not they have a mental health problem.

Female offenders who are deaf and have mental health problems

Three councils do not hold the information requested so they are exempt under Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Twenty councils confirmed that they have no female offenders meeting the criteria in the Freedom of Information request letter.

Of the two councils that could answer the questions in the request letters:

- Angus Council Criminal Justice Service has supported one female service user who is Deaf and has mental health problems; and
- Renfrewshire Criminal Justice Service has worked with one Deaf female offender and one Deafblind female offender; both of whom have mental health problems. Their records show that “clients recorded as hearing impaired or deaf and in the category mental health are 64, but this was explained as probably meaning that there are 64 female offenders who have a mental health problem, not 64 female offenders who have a hearing impairment or are deaf and have a mental health problem. The figures given – 1 and 1 are for those who are Deaf and have a mental health problem and are known to the Community Mental Health Team (NHS).

The reply from the **Scottish Prison Service** stated that the information is not held centrally and would “involve our health care staff in every prison having to check the medical records of some 8,000 prisoners.” The Nursing Services Manager, who responded to the Fol request, did state that one female prisoner is recorded as having a hearing impairment, but there is no record as to whether or not they have a mental health problem.

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Council	Male			Mental Health	Comments
	Deaf	Deafblind	Deafened		
Aberdeen City	0	0	0	0	ACC can confirm that no Criminal Justice Social Work clients fit the categories in your information request.
Aberdeenshire					No response
Angus	2	0	4	0	Unfortunately the Council does not hold the information you want as these details are not currently recorded. However, I have been able to establish that seven service users with hearing impairments have engaged with the Angus Criminal Justice Service (since 2000). Of these seven service users, six were. I am unable to indicate the level of impairment, but one of the seven deaf/hearing impaired users, three were supported by sign language interpreters.
Argyll & Bute	0	0	0	0	
Clackmannanshire	0	0	0	0	
Dumfries & Galloway	0	0	0	0	The Council can confirm that following a search of records the answer is that there are no people who fit the criteria as set out in your questions.
Dundee	1	0	0	0	
East Ayrshire	0	0	0	0	
East Dunbartonshire	0	0	0	0	"I can confirm that East Dunbartonshire Criminal Justice service is not supporting any deafened, deafblind or hard of hearing customers within this authority."
East Lothian	0	0	2	0	East Lothian Criminal Justice is not currently working with any male offenders who are deaf or deaf/blind. We are currently working with two male offenders both of whom have reported hearing loss but neither have a diagnosed mental illness.
East Renfrewshire					No response
Edinburgh City					No response
Falkirk	0	0	2	1	There are no profoundly deaf/blind or partially sighted people currently on our caseloads. However, two male service users do use a hearing aid and one of these men is receiving mental health advice.
Fife	1	0	1	0	
Glasgow City					No response
Highland	0	0	0	0	
Inverclyde					No response

Criminal Justice and Mental Health

Council	Male			Mental Health	Comments
	Deaf	Deafblind	Deafened		
Midlothian	0	0	0	0	"I can confirm that our Criminal Justice Team have not needed to provide a service to any of the 12 categories of individuals listed."
Moray	0	0	0	0	We have no deaf or blind BSL users being supported by CJSW.
North Ayrshire					No response
North Lanarkshire	x	x	x	x	Lanarkshire Council does not hold information on whether service users supported by Criminal Justice Social Work Services are deaf, deafblind or deafened
Orkney Islands	0	0	0	0	
Perth and Kinross	0	0	0	0	No deaf, deafblind or deafened clients under the supervision of Criminal Justice Services in Perth and Kinross Council including prisons.
Renfrewshire	6	5	4	All	Clients recorded as "hearing impaired or deaf" and a client category 'mental health' - Male = 109.
Scottish Borders	x	x	x	x	As the Council does not hold this information it is exempt under Section 17 of FOISA
Shetland Islands	0	0	0	0	
South Ayrshire	0	0	0	0	
South Lanarkshire	1	0	0	0	We have a member of staff within the Social Work Court Team who is going through the BSL level 1 course.
Stirling	0	0	0	0	"I can confirm that we have no deaf BSL users amongst our criminal justice clients, no deafblind clients and no deafened clients."
West Dunbartonshire	x	x	x	x	"I confirm that I carried out a search and that in terms of section 17 (1) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, we do not hold the information you requested."
West Lothian	?	?	?	?	From 1 st April 07 – 30 th March 08 57 offenders who were open cases to us as they were subject to various statutory supervision orders were recorded as having Mental, Visual or Sensory impairment. Unfortunately this information does not distinguish between impairments or gender.
Western Isles	0	0	0	0	There are no Deaf BSL, Deafblind or Deafened users involved or being supported by Criminal Justice Social Work.
Scottish Prison Service	x	x	x	x	"This information is not held centrally and would involve our health care staff in every prison having to check the medical records of some 8,000 prisoners. I can tell you, however, that at the time of writing, 11 prisoners are recorded as having a hearing impairment. Ten of these are male. (Ten prisoners are recorded as having a visual impairment. All ten are male)."
TOTALS	11	5	13	16	29

X = no information held centrally. ? = not broken down enough to give figures

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Council	Female			Mental Health	Comments
	Deaf	Deafblind	Deafened		
Aberdeen City	0	0	0	0	ACC can confirm that no Criminal Justice Social Work clients fit the categories in your information request.
Aberdeenshire					No response
Angus	1	0	0	1	Unfortunately the Council does not hold the information you want as these details are not currently recorded. However, I have been able to establish that seven service users with hearing impairments have engaged with the Angus Criminal Justice Service (since 2000). Of these one was female. I am unable to indicate the level of impairment, but one of the seven deaf/hearing impaired users, three were supported by sign language interpreters. Also out of the seven users, the case files record that only one user appeared to have a mental health problem - this is the single female service user identified.
Argyll & Bute	0	0	0	0	
Clackmannanshire	0	0	0	0	
Dumfries & Galloway	0	0	0	0	The Council can confirm that following a search of records the answer is that there are no people who fit the criteria as set out in your questions.
Dundee	0	0	0	0	
East Ayrshire	0	0	0	0	
East Dunbartonshire	0	0	0	0	"I can confirm that East Dunbartonshire Criminal Justice service is not supporting any deafened, deafblind or hard of hearing customers within this authority."
East Lothian	0	0	0	0	East Lothian Criminal Justice is not currently working with any female offenders who are deaf or deaf/blind.
East Renfrewshire					No response
Edinburgh City					No response
Falkirk	0	0	0	0	There are no profoundly deaf/blind or partially sighted people currently on our caseloads.
Fife	0	0	0	0	
Glasgow City					No response
Highland	0	0	0	0	
Inverclyde					No response

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Council	Female			Mental Health	Comments
	Deaf	Deafblind	Deafened		
Midlothian	0	0	0	0	"I can confirm that our Criminal Justice Team has not needed to provide a service to any of the 12 categories of individuals listed."
Moray	0	0	0	0	We have no deaf or blind BSL users being supported by CJSW who are female.
North Ayrshire					No response
North Lanarkshire	x	x	x	x	Lanarkshire Council does not hold information on whether service users supported by Criminal Justice Social Work Services are deaf, deafblind or deafened
Orkney Islands	0	0	0	0	
Perth and Kinross	0	0	0	0	No deaf, deafblind or deafened clients under the supervision of Criminal Justice Services in Perth and Kinross Council including prisons.
Renfrewshire	1	1	0	All	Clients recorded as "hearing impaired or deaf" and a client category 'mental health' - Female = 64
Scottish Borders	x	x	x	x	As the Council does not hold this information it is exempt under Section 17 of FOISA
Shetland Islands	0	0	0	0	
South Ayrshire	0	0	0	0	
South Lanarkshire	0	0	0	0	We have a member of staff within the Social Work Court Team who is going through the BSL level 1 course.
Stirling	0	0	0	0	"I can confirm that we have no deaf BSL users amongst our criminal justice clients, no deafblind clients and no deafened clients."
West Dunbartonshire	0	0	0	0	"I confirm that I carried out a search and that in terms of section 17 (1) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, we do not hold the information you requested."
West Lothian	?	?	?	?	From 1 st April 07 – 30 th March 08, 57 offenders who were open cases to us as they were subject to various statutory supervision orders were recorded as having Mental, Visual or Sensory impairment. Unfortunately this information does not distinguish between impairments or gender.
Western Isles	0	0	0	0	There are no Deaf BSL, Deafblind or Deafened users involved or being supported by Criminal Justice Social Work.
Scottish Prison Service	x	x	x	x	"This information is not held centrally and would involve our health care staff in every prison having to check the medical records of some 8,000 prisoners. I can tell you, however, that at the time of writing, 11 prisoners are recorded as having a hearing impairment. One of these is female."
TOTALS	2	1	0	3	3

X = no information held centrally. ? = not broken down enough to give figures