



THE HERBERT PROTOCOL

Family Preparation Checklist

What to have ready before you ever need it.

If someone living with dementia goes missing, police may need important information quickly. This checklist helps you gather it in advance.

1. Gather

Fill in this checklist.

2. Register

Use the local police scheme.

3. Update

Review it when things change.

1. Who are we looking for?

- ☐ **A recent, clear photograph**
Keep one head-and-shoulders photo and one full-length photo.
- ☐ **Full name and any other names**
Include nicknames, maiden names or previous surnames.
- ☐ **Date of birth and home address**
Include the postcode.
- ☐ **Physical description**
Height, build, hair, eyes, glasses and any distinctive features.
- ☐ **Usual clothing or items they carry**
For example: coat, handbag, walking stick, keys, wallet or hat.

2. Health and communication

- ☐ **Medication and important health needs**
Note regular medicines and anything that becomes urgent if a dose is missed.
- ☐ **Mobility needs**
Walking aids, falls risk or difficulty with steps and uneven ground.
- ☐ **How they communicate best**
Preferred name, hearing or sight needs, first language or communication aids.
- ☐ **What may frighten or distress them**
Write down known triggers if this could help someone approach them safely.
- ☐ **What helps them feel safe**
A familiar person, phrase, object, routine, music, drink or calm approach.



Where might they go?

Think beyond where they live now.

Dementia can affect time and orientation. A place from years ago may still feel current or familiar to someone.

3. Places and routines

- ☐ **Previous home addresses**
Especially childhood homes or long-term family homes.
- ☐ **Previous workplaces, schools or clubs**
Add addresses if you know them.
- ☐ **Places they may try to return to**
For example: a former home, church, pub, shop, park, allotment or bus stop.
- ☐ **Usual walking routes**
Note which direction they normally set off in and where they usually stop.
- ☐ **Places they have been found before**
Very useful after any previous missing incident.
- ☐ **People who are important to them**
Family, friends, neighbours or people they may try to visit.
- ☐ **Regular routines and transport habits**
Shops, appointments, cafes, day services, dog walks, buses or taxis.

4. Contacts

- ☐ **Main family or carer contact**
Name, relationship and phone number.
- ☐ **Second emergency contact**
Someone who can be reached if the main contact is unavailable.
- ☐ **Relevant care or support contact**
Service name and phone number, if appropriate.
- ☐ **GP or key health service details**
Only where useful and appropriate.



Keep the information useful

A checklist only helps if the details are still right.

Last reviewed: _____ Next check: _____

Update it when...

- ☐ **Something important changes**
For example: a move, medication change, new phone number or new regular route.
- ☐ **Mobility or communication changes**
Record what is different and what helps.
- ☐ **There has been a missing incident**
Add where they went, where they were found and anything police found useful.
- ☐ **Your review reminder comes round**
Check photographs, phone numbers and all regular places and routines.

If someone goes missing

Do not wait 24 hours.

IF THERE IS IMMEDIATE DANGER OR RISK OF HARM, CALL 999.

Otherwise, report the person missing online or call 101.

1

Tell police about the Herbert Protocol.

Say that you have completed one or registered with a local dementia safeguarding scheme.

2

Have a recent photo ready.

Also have what they were wearing and when and where they were last seen.

3

Share the places they may go.

Think about old addresses, familiar routes and people they may visit.

4

Mention anything that has changed recently.

For example: routine, health, behaviour or mobility.



Your Care

Thoughtful care, from our family to yours.

OFFICIAL LINKS

Complete the official scheme

This Your Care checklist helps you prepare. It does not replace the official Herbert Protocol or local safeguarding scheme.

Avon & Somerset Police Dementia Safeguarding Scheme

For families in the Avon & Somerset Police area. Register key information so it can be available if the person goes missing or needs assistance.

[Open official link](#)



Police.uk printable Herbert Protocol form

Prefer a paper copy? This is the national printable Herbert Protocol form from Police.uk.

[Open official link](#)



Before you put this away

- ☐ Save a recent photograph somewhere easy to find
Make sure another trusted person can access it too.
- ☐ Tell someone you trust where the information is kept
For example, a family member or regular carer.
- ☐ Set a reminder to review it
Update the details whenever anything important changes.

PRIVACY NOTE

Keep the completed information secure. Do not send a completed copy back to Your Care because it may contain sensitive personal information.

Information checked 15 September 2026 against Avon & Somerset Police and Police.uk.