

12 VOLUNTARY POPULATION SURVEY (AN424-2003)

The Voluntary Population Survey (VPS) took place for the third time in September 2003, initial support was agreed by Council Management Team for the three year period 2001/2003.

The VPS is an annual survey which gathers population data at a citywide level, specifically the number of people living in a residence and their age and sex. The information gathered allows the Council and it's partners to know how the population is changing, particularly at a smaller area level and assists in the planning and provision of services to meet the needs of residents. The availability of official statistics on an annual basis relating to population at a smaller level is very limited. The survey therefore provides crucial and essential information otherwise not available between the ten yearly Census gap. Return rates for the first two years surveys have been very encouraging at a rate of 63%, this compares well with other authorities carrying out similar exercises.

The Planning and Transportation Department manage the data collected and produce various analysis reports, looking particularly at differing age groups across the city, lone parent and pensioner households.

The survey is a cross department project; Support Services, IT Division and Finance provide vital support in the production of the form, data input and in the provision of results. In addition the project has three external partners; Tayside Health Board, Communities Scotland and Scottish Enterprise Tayside who provide an annual financial contribution. Scottish Economic Research based at Abertay University provide support in statistical methods and data analysis as part of their wider provision of an economic and labour market information unit to the Council.

All parties now agree that the survey will now proceed from its pilot period to a regular annual survey from 2004 onwards.