

Frequently asked questions

Who

Who is the app for?

Purple Alert is intended to help safe guard people with dementia and give reassurance to family and carers.

Is this just for people with dementia, why not all missing people?

Purple Alert is only for missing persons with dementia and is not intended for use with any other individuals. We want to be clear that you will only receive alerts if someone with dementia is missing. Multiple alerts for all sorts of missing persons – young people, vulnerable adults, pets etc. would be difficult to manage and perhaps frustrating for app users who may only have a particular interest in people with dementia.

Who will use this app?

The Purple Alert app relies on a community of users signing up to use the app in all locations across Scotland. We hope that the app will be used by a large percentage of the adult population, as well as businesses, voluntary organizations and charities etc.

Who's profile?

In the app there are two kinds of profile:

1. YOUR personal profile (as a member of the purple alert community)

This profile must be created before you can use the app.

2. The profile for the PERSON WITH DEMENTIA that you are caring for

Creating this profile is optional, but if you are caring for someone with dementia you should create his or her profile as soon as possible. Include as much details as you can now and don't leave it until the point of crisis when you need to send out an alert quickly.

Who will see my personal information?

When you sign up to the app, all your details are completely private.

A missing person profile can only be viewed by people logged onto the app.

A missing person profile will only be visible for the length of time the alert is active, and for 24 hours after the profile has been marked 'found'.

Your information as a member of the purple alert community will only be shared if you respond to an alert, by pressing the 'I have seen this person' button.

Your information will then only be seen by the missing person's carer if you text/phone or email them.

If you have created a profile for a person with dementia and you have sent an alert that the person is missing, then the missing person profile is made public and visible to everyone who has Purple Alert, within 30 miles radius of the 'last seen' location.

As a carer, your personal profile information will only be seen by someone who actively responds to your alert, by pressing the 'I have seen this person' button.

Comments are public and visible to everyone using the app, until the missing person is found, and then removed from the 'active alerts' feed.

'I have seen this person' / 'Seen alerts' are public and visible to everyone using the app until the missing person is found, and then removed from the 'active alerts' feed. This information is located at the bottom of the missing person profile page if they have been seen. Tapping on this, will reveal who has seen the missing person and the time and location of the sighting.

What

What about consent?

Does the person with dementia need to give their consent? YES

Consent must be obtained from the person with dementia before their personal information can be shared through the app.

The rights and wishes of the person with dementia are paramount and their personal information should not be shared without their consent.

However, in some instances, where the benefits can be clearly shown and there is power of attorney or legal guardianship in place, it may be possible to go ahead. Please refer to our guidance materials around obtaining consent for the use of technology on dementiacircle.org

What kind of phone do I need to use the app?

You will need a smartphone.

The Purple Alert app is available for download on iOS and Android devices.

The app has a minimum storage requirement of 40Mb.

What do I do if I see or find a missing person?

You can approach the person, offer reassurance and check that they are ok.

You can watch a video that may help you with this on dementiafriendsscotland.org (link)

You should then tap on the 'I have seen this person' button and phone the carer. You may want to offer the carer and the missing person the opportunity to speak to each other. Remember, you cannot detain a person against their will and you should not attempt to physically restrain them in any way. Be cautious, as you do not want to cause distress.

I'm not sure he/she is the missing person. What do I do?

You can still approach the person and simply ask if they are ok. Use your judgment and remember, you can always call the carer for clarification.

IMPORTANT: Remember the person may not think of himself or herself as missing.

Why

Why do you need my photograph?

We ask everyone to provide a recent photograph for their profile picture.

Many apps ask for a profile picture as well as contact information, so this should be familiar to many people. The photograph helps us to feel confident that you are a real person, with genuine good intentions.

Why is there a comments feature?

The comments feature becomes active when there is an alert of a missing person and it should be used to ask relevant questions e.g. "I just saw someone who looks similar to the description but they are wearing a red hat, does the person own a red hat and could they be wearing it?" "I'm just outside the library and I'm going to check inside?"

Please don't use comments for anything that doesn't directly assist in the search e.g. messages to say "hope you find them soon", as this may make it more difficult to see important messages.

Why do I have to record where and when my missing profile was found?

30% of people with dementia who go missing are likely to go missing again. This feature will allow you to keep a record of locations and times of these occurrences.

Where

How far will my alert go?

Alerts are sent by default to everyone within 30miles radius from the missing person's 'last seen location'.

Everyone who has Purple Alert on their phone within that radius will get a push notification (an alert).

Can I search for a missing profile outwith 30 miles of my current location?

Yes. You can tap on the magnifying glass located at the top right of the 'active alerts' screen and filter your search criteria there.

If I am travelling, will I get alerts from my place of origin or my destination?

Location data constraints have recently been introduced on both IOS and Android. In order to receive notifications within 30 miles of your new destination you will need to re-open Purple Alert app when you get to a new location. Unfortunately we do not have any control over this, as it is set by Apple and Android Operating Systems.

Where will my personal information be stored and is it secure?

Your privacy and the security of your personal information are important to us and Alzheimer Scotland undertakes to ensure that the app corresponds to robust data protection and privacy protocols. The hosting of the app and all its data is in the UK. However it is your responsibility to choose a secure password and to ensure your device is protected adequately.

When

When will I get an alert? How many will I get?

Purple Alert is a new service and it isn't possible to say how many alerts you are likely to receive, however we do not anticipate that the number will be excessively high. You will only receive alerts for people missing in your area, not for the whole of Scotland.

When will Police Scotland get involved?

IMPORTANT: you must phone 999 as soon as you realize that the person you are caring for is missing. Then send a Purple Alert.

Police Scotland have been consulted and included in the development of this app and are supportive of it's potential to help safe guard people with dementia when they are missing.

Any other questions?

Do I need wi-fi to operate the app?

No, but to receive alerts **as they happen** you need to have a 3G/4G connection or wi-fi.

Who is monitoring the app against misuse?

Alzheimer Scotland will oversee this and take action as necessary to remove users who do not adhere to the terms and conditions. Where appropriate, Police Scotland will be notified of misuse and action will be taken as required.

Is the app putting vulnerable people more at risk?

There are a number of steps and safeguards before anyone can view a missing person alert. These include entering personal profile information, uploading a profile photo, and agreeing to terms and conditions of use. These act as a significant deterrent and can be used to help trace anyone misusing the app. There is also a two-step email verification procedure to ensure every profile corresponds to a verified email address.

What happens if the missing person is approached by a malicious user?

We have taken advice from Police Scotland and they anticipate that the potential for misuse of this app is very unlikely. The ratio of responsible users to potentially malicious users is minimal and should mitigate the risk of criminal activity. However any unacceptable activity will be treated as serious and the user will be removed from the app and referred to Police Scotland.

Can I get alerts by text?

No, Purple Alert will only send push notifications that will pop up on your phone's 'home' display when there is an active alert.

Texts can be used to respond to an alert, although we strongly recommend phoning the carer as it's the quickest and the most direct way to make contact.

Terms and conditions

When signing up to the app you are directed towards the terms and conditions, which you are advised to read in full and must accepted before beginning to use the app. You can read the full T&C's under the 'Terms and Conditions' section in the 'Your details' tab.

Can I share the information and alerts on my Facebook and/or Twitter accounts?

1. An Alert may be shared to the Purple Alert facebook and twitter feeds. This can be selected in the Purple Alert app by the carer when they set up a profile for the person with dementia they are caring for.
2. Alzheimer Scotland may also share an alert to their facebook page.
3. There is the potential to re-share to a personal page thereafter.

Re-sharing alerts

Please be considerate when re-sharing alerts to your personal facebook and twitter accounts. We can only validate posts from the Purple Alert facebook and twitter accounts and not re-shares. When information enters the realm of the wider web it isn't possible to regulate what happens to it thereafter. Re-shares can dilute the effectiveness of the Alert because helpful communications may not

reach the person who has generated the Alert. The most effective way to support the search for the missing person is to communicate through the Purple Alert app.

What happens when an alert is shared on Facebook?

- The Purple Alert Service will manage alerts shared on the Purple Alert facebook page.
- You will only see these alerts if you 'follow' the Purple Alert facebook page and you can decide to 'unfollow' the page at any time.
- The Purple Alert page admin will moderate comments and answer questions, and will direct people to the app. We will endeavour to respond quickly, where able, but please be aware that we strongly advising using the app for relevant comments. Social media can help us to reach more people and it is useful in raising awareness of the app and encouraging new users.
- We cannot respond, monitor or in any way be responsible for alerts re-shared on personal facebook pages.
- If someone sees the missing person and comments on facebook we would advise them to -
 - a. Send a seen alert on the app and contact the carer directly.
 - b. If they do not have the app then we would seek to open another form of communication with them, perhaps a telephone call, to verify the information and convey it to the carer.