

## Public Probate Data - November 2023

### How to use this data

One of the benefits of the modernisation of HMCTS systems is the high quality of the data available. Unfortunately, detailed data is not available prior to the new system being introduced in 2019, so a full comparison of performance is not possible.

The data in these spreadsheets is mainly from public sources. However, we have adapted the spreadsheets combining data sets so we have unbroken data since Feb 2020. We have also included ILM calculations of the "backlog". We define backlog as the increase in case load at HMCTS since March 2019. We calculate this by observing that historically 96% of applications result in a grant and calculating how far short of expected output the actual output has been. The ILM will continue to put pressure on HMCTS until the backlog as we calculate it returns to 0.

Annual data includes a pessimistic, central and optimistic outrun. It is worth noting that applications are expected to be very high and, even if HMCTS only keep pace with these, 2024 will see record output even if the backlog is not reduced.

Monthly data is released 6 weeks after the end of the month and published within the HMCTS Management Information Data Set - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmcts-management-information> which is the best data set to use if you are looking for the most recent data.

Quarterly data is more accurate and in depth but is not released for almost 3 months after the end of the quarter. This data is useful for analysing performance but the delay does limit its importance.

**Data collated by James Stebbings, Chair of the Institute for Legacy Management**


<https://legacymanagement.org.uk>


## Annual Data


When looking at the data it is important to note that not all applications result in a grant. This table shows that there is a natural attrition of about 4%. The shortfall is over and above that natural attrition.


Year	Deaths*	Deaths to Application for a Grant	Applications for a Grant	Shortfall in Applications vs 45.7%	Grants Issued	Deaths to Grants Issued	Applications where Grant Issued	Expected Grants Issued	Shortfall in Grants Issued	Backlog
2012	559,426	45.5%	254,599	1,059	243,642	43.6%	95.7%	244,415	773	773
2013	584,989	46.5%	272,111	-4,771	260,969	44.6%	95.9%	261,227	258	1,031
2014	555,688	45.8%	254,602	-653	247,298	44.5%	97.1%	244,418	-2,880	-1,849
2015	601,503	47.4%	285,135	-10,248	276,420	46.0%	96.9%	273,730	-2,690	-4,540
2016	589,562	44.3%	261,251	8,179	253,347	43.0%	97.0%	250,801	-2,546	-7,086
2017	601,412	47.6%	286,371	-11,526	260,660	43.3%	91.0%	274,916	14,256	7,170
2018	628,377	42.8%	269,074	18,094	264,227	42.0%	98.2%	258,311	-5,916	1,254
2019	589,408	45.7%	269,343	16	237,719	40.3%	88.3%	258,569	20,850	22,105
2020	659,827	41.5%	273,506	28,035	256,862	38.9%	93.9%	262,566	5,704	27,808
2021	671,583	42.1%	283,035	23,878	273,554	40.7%	96.7%	271,714	-1,840	25,968
2022	638,628	45.8%	292,184	-331	269,808	42.2%	92.3%	280,497	10,689	36,657
2023	681,014	44.8%	305,000	6,223	260,000	38.2%	85.2%	292,800	32,800	69,457
2024	656,000	45.0%	295,200	0	260,000	39.6%	88.1%	283,392	23,392	92,849
2024	656,000	45.0%	295,200	0	283,392	43.2%	96.0%	283,392	0	69,457
2024	656,000	45.0%	295,200	0	340,000	51.8%	115.2%	283,392	-56,608	12,849

\* Deaths are applied with 8 month lag to reflect average lag from death to probate.

 ILM Estimate - based on continuation of 2023 applications and grants issued

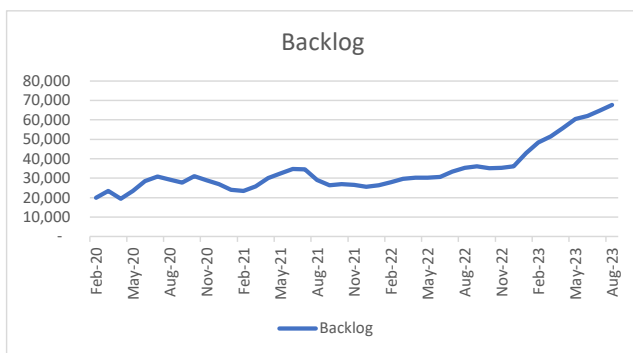
 Pessimistic - 10 year average output of 260,000 grants

 Central - Output in line with applications

 Optimistic - HMCTS expected outcome for 2023

Monthly Data

Month	Total Grant Applications	Total Grants Issued	Application to Issue	Digital Applications	Digital Grants Issued	Digital Application to Issued	Paper Applications	Paper Grants Issued	Paper Application to Issued	Movement in Backlog	Backlog
Feb-20	23,213	18,821	No Data	4,453	3,788	No Data	18,760	15,033	No Data	3,463	19,913
Mar-20	21,652	20,178	No Data	4,215	3,866	No Data	15,672	17,282	No Data	608	23,377
Apr-20	17,012	20,299	No Data	4,934	3,921	No Data	16,378	12,078	No Data	- 3,967	19,409
May-20	22,313	17,464	No Data	6,772	3,878	No Data	13,586	15,541	No Data	3,956	23,366
Jun-20	24,697	18,597	7.50	8,950	4,631	No Data	13,966	15,747	No Data	5,112	28,478
Jul-20	28,641	25,212	7.00	8,916	8,072	No Data	17,140	19,725	No Data	2,283	30,761
Aug-20	23,738	24,251	6.70	7,558	8,986	No Data	15,265	16,180	No Data	- 1,463	29,299
Sep-20	22,385	23,085	7.50	7,659	7,533	No Data	15,552	147,526	No Data	- 1,595	27,703
Oct-20	26,996	22,576	7.60	8,661	7,268	No Data	15,308	18,335	No Data	3,340	31,043
Nov-20	23,815	25,029	7.60	9,795	9,357	No Data	15,672	14,020	No Data	- 2,167	28,877
Dec-20	17,052	18,356	7.90	10,011	7,915	No Data	10,441	7,041	No Data	- 1,986	26,891
Jan-21	22,241	24,228	8.90	14,920	10,114	No Data	14,114	7,321	No Data	- 2,877	24,014
Feb-21	24,112	23,699	8.20	17,289	13,138	6.8	6,823	10,561	10	- 551	23,463
Mar-21	29,111	25,698	7.30	20,133	16,975	6.4	8,978	8,723	9	2,249	25,711
Apr-21	27,258	21,861	7.40	17,683	14,875	6.4	9,575	6,986	10	4,307	30,018
May-21	26,255	22,740	6.90	17,123	15,783	6.2	9,132	6,957	8	2,465	32,483
Jun-21	24,949	21,784	8.00	17,152	15,244	7.0	7,797	6,540	10	2,167	34,650
Jul-21	23,171	22,386	8.50	16,197	15,687	7.9	6,974	6,699	10	- 142	34,508
Aug-21	21,244	25,732	8.90	14,674	18,513	8.2	6,570	7,219	11	- 5,338	29,170
Sep-21	21,784	23,699	10.40	15,283	17,787	9.4	6,501	5,912	13	- 2,786	26,384
Oct-21	21,447	20,128	9.30	15,308	14,855	7.8	6,139	5,273	14	461	26,845
Nov-21	22,980	22,370	8.70	16,586	16,572	7.2	6,394	5,798	13	- 309	26,536
Dec-21	19,083	19,202	9.00	13,554	13,928	7.4	5,529	5,274	14	- 882	25,653
Jan-22	24,343	22,758	8.80	18,271	16,696	7.3	6,072	6,062	13	611	26,265
Feb-22	23,862	21,185	9.20	17,873	15,436	7.9	5,989	5,749	13	1,723	27,987
Mar-22	27,782	24,986	8.40	21,375	19,089	7.0	6,407	5,897	13	1,685	29,672
Apr-22	23,325	21,879	8.00	18,033	17,372	6.7	5,292	4,507	13	513	30,185
May-22	26,299	25,096	8.10	20,181	19,537	6.6	6,118	5,559	13	151	30,336
Jun-22	24,541	23,180	8.40	18,701	18,380	7.0	5,840	4,800	14	379	30,715
Jul-22	25,634	21,933	7.90	18,944	17,875	6.3	6,690	4,058	15	2,676	33,391
Aug-22	25,373	22,443	8.80	19,418	18,253	6.9	5,955	4,190	17	1,915	35,306
Sep-22	23,465	21,780	9.30	18,285	17,908	7.2	5,180	3,872	19	746	36,052
Oct-22	24,142	24,142	9.30	18,915	19,428	7.4	5,227	4,714	17	- 966	35,087
Nov-22	25,046	23,720	9.40	19,714	19,316	6.9	5,332	4,404	20	324	35,411
Dec-22	18,190	16,700	10.20	14,568	12,989	7.6	3,622	3,711	20	762	36,173
Jan-23	27,611	19,834	10.96	22,510	15,502	8.4	5,101	4,332	20	6,673	42,846
Feb-23	26,619	20,088	10.64	21,615	15,884	7.5	5,004	4,204	23	5,466	48,312
Mar-23	30,980	26,637	10.82	23,866	21,232	8.2	7,114	5,405	21	3,104	51,416
Apr-23	23,726	18,351	15.45	19,189	13,605	13.2	4,537	4,746	22	4,426	55,842
May-23	25,935	20,175	15.43	20,733	15,463	13.3	5,202	4,712	22	4,723	60,564
Jun-23	25,809	23,361	13.94	20,669	18,747	12.1	5,140	4,614	21	1,416	61,980
Jul-23	26,868	22,922	14.00	20,394	18,841	12.2	6,474	4,081	23	2,871	64,851
Aug-23	25,591	21,706	15.50	19,546	17,054	13.7	6,045	4,652	22	2,861	67,713
Sep-23	Data released circa November 12th			Data released circa November 12th			Data released circa November 12th				
Oct-23	Data released circa December 12th			Data released circa December 12th			Data released circa December 12th				
Nov-23	Data released circa January 12th			Data released circa January 12th			Data released circa January 12th				
Dec-23	Data released circa February 12th			Data released circa February 12th			Data released circa February 12th				



Data sources

Probate Monthly reconciled returns from CCD

Footnotes

- 1) The management information presented in this table reflects what is recorded on relevant case-management systems on the date of extraction. The case management systems are continually updated and so the information presented will differ from previously published information.
- 2) The management information presented is different from the quarterly MOJ official statistics published due to timing and definitional reasons. The Official Statistics go through a more comprehensive quality assurance and analysis process to ensure quality and coherence.
- 3) A probate application can be stopped for several reasons: a caveat can be entered when there's a dispute about either who can apply for probate or issues with a will or proposed will, or if an error is identified and a request for further information is made.
- 4) Document receipt occurs after payment has been made and all accompanying paperwork has been received by HMCTS
- 5) The most recent set of timeliness estimates now include "Document upload to Grant issue for all Probate Applications (Digital and Paper), for completeness
- 6) The most recent figures for paper applications for Probate are more subject to revision between each edition of our MI. There is an extended lag in these applications being processed through bulk scanning and being registered on CCD.
- 7) Timeliness figures exclude draft cases (i.e. those cases that have not yet been submitted).

Quarterly - Output

Year	Quarter	Applications made <sup>4,5</sup>					Grants issued <sup>6</sup>					Other <sup>7</sup>			Backlog	Movement in Backlog
		Grant of Probate	Grant of Admin with Will annexed	Grant of Admin	Grants resealed	All grant types	Grant of Probate	Grant of Admin with Will annexed	Grant of Admin	Grants resealed	All grant types	Grants revoked	Standing search	Contested probate <sup>8</sup>		
2019	Q2														42,232	
	Q3	47,881	3,006	9,642	137	60,666	53,403	3,413	9,884	123	66,823	114	708	-	33,648	- 8,583.64
	Q4	45,779	2,681	8,770	89	57,319	54,384	3,283	10,218	57	67,942	185	1,164	-	20,733	- 12,915.76
2020	Q1	53,910	2,966	10,110	67	67,053	49,764	2,775	9,300	47	61,886	105	957	-	23,217	- 2,484.88
	Q2	52,137	2,557	9,201	66	63,961	45,494	2,439	8,428	26	56,387	96	526	-	28,233	- 5,015.56
	Q3	60,782	3,225	10,609	72	74,688	60,213	2,533	9,801	46	72,593	98	785	-	27,341	- 892.52
	Q4	54,452	2,911	10,368	73	67,804	54,466	2,335	9,159	36	65,996	83	632	-	26,436	- 904.16
2021	Q1	61,054	2,858	11,323	70	75,305	57,613	3,995	11,989	56	73,653	135	641	-	25,076	- 1,360.20
	Q2	61,634	3,581	12,995	66	78,276	54,038	2,816	9,501	29	66,384	92	739	-	33,837	- 8,760.96
	Q3	52,029	2,991	10,955	51	66,026	58,643	3,050	10,091	33	71,817	69	849	-	25,405	- 8,432.04
	Q4	50,037	2,886	10,481	24	63,428	49,733	2,600	9,352	15	61,700	77	722	-	24,596	- 809.12
2022	Q1	61,067	3,137	11,927	35	76,166	55,477	2,806	10,656	0	68,939	112	728	-	28,776	- 4,180.36
	Q2	59,233	2,970	11,961	20	74,184	58,230	2,425	9,504	0	70,159	104	996	-	29,834	- 1,057.64
	Q3	59,027	3,071	12,345	22	74,465	55,297	2,272	8,586	1	66,156	108	624	-	35,164	- 5,330.40
	Q4	54,018	2,416	10,916	19	67,369	52,811	2,251	9,492	0	64,554	78	515	-	35,285	- 120.24
2023	Q1	69,114	2,232	13,715	27	85,088	50,318	2,717	13,524	0	66,559	104	756	-	50,410	- 15,125.48
	Q2	62,220	959	11,608	26	74,813	49,647	2,761	9,475	0	61,883	112	884	-	60,348	- 9,937.48

Source:

HMCTS ProbateMan system to Q1 2019, HMCTS Core Case Data from Q2 2019, HMCTS Pentaho system (contested cases only)

R- Please note that have been two changes to this table: 1) The number of reseals are now available in this table (previously unpublished data) and 2) any application without an application type have been identified as draft cases and have now been removed from the total number of applications

Notes:

1) Grants are awarded in the following circumstances:

Probate - when the deceased person left a valid will and an executor is acting;  
 Letters of administration with will annexed - when a person has left a valid will but no executor is acting;  
 Letters of administration - usually when there is no valid will.

2) Data for grants split by registry type to Q4 2019 is available in Family Courts Statistics Quarterly: Oct to Dec 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-court-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2019>

3) Digital applications were introduced from Q2 2019. All applications and grants before this date are paper.

4) Before 2019 the breakdown of applications by application type is not available, denoted by '-'.  
 5) Note that total applications do not include where the grant type is not specified/missing.

6) Due to quality issues in the transition between data systems during Q2 2019, the breakdown by type of grants of representation by application type and by digital/paper cases for 2019 has not been provided here, indicated by '-'.  
 7) The digital system cannot be used to apply for standing searches or revocations. The applicant type is also not available for standing searches, revocations and contested probate cases. Data previously published on grant reseals are no longer collected by HMCTS and we are working to collect this data moving forward.

8) Where a probate case is contested, the Chancery Division of the High Court deals with the matter. Figures for contentious probate are not available quarterly and so '-' is shown. The breakdown by digital and paper applications, and by applicant is also unavailable.

9) '-' indicates data not available due to changes in data collection and recording procedures.

10) '-' denotes data not available - please refer to the 'Data Quality issues' section of the accompanying bulletin for further details.

Quarterly - Timeliness

Year	Quarter	Probate					Letter of Administration with will annexed					Letter of Administration					All grants				
		Application submission to grant issue			Document receipt to grant issue <sup>5</sup>		Application submission to grant issue			Document receipt to grant issue <sup>5</sup>		Application submission to grant issue			Document receipt to grant issue <sup>5</sup>		Application submission to grant issue			Document receipt to grant issue <sup>5</sup>	
		Grants issued	Mean weeks	Median weeks	Mean weeks	Median weeks	Grants issued	Mean weeks	Median weeks	Mean weeks	Median weeks	Grants issued	Mean weeks	Median weeks	Mean weeks	Median weeks	Grants issued	Mean weeks	Median weeks	Mean weeks	Median weeks
2020	Q3	53,403	9.5	8	9.5	8	3,413	11.8	8.9	11.8	8.9	9,884	10.7	8.4	10.7	8.4	66,700	9.8	8.1	9.8	8.1
	Q4	54,384	7.8	5.6	7.6	5.4	3,283	10.9	7	10.9	7	10,218	9.5	6.4	9.5	6.4	67,885	8.2	5.7	8.1	5.6
	Q1	49,764	6.7	4.3	6.5	4.1	2,775	10.8	6.3	10.8	6.3	9,300	8.2	4.9	8.2	4.9	61,839	7.1	4.4	6.9	4.3
	Q2	45,494	6.6	4.6	6.3	4.4	2,439	10.8	6.7	10.7	6.7	8,428	8.3	5.3	8.3	5.3	56,361	7.1	4.7	6.8	4.6
2021	Q3	60,213	6.7	4.9	6	4.4	2,533	11.5	6.6	11.4	6.6	9,801	8	5.3	8	5.3	72,547	7.1	5	6.4	4.7
	Q4	54,466	7.2	5.3	6.2	4.9	2,335	14	9.6	13.7	9.4	9,159	8.7	5.9	8.7	5.9	65,960	7.7	5.6	6.8	5.1
	Q1	57,613	7.7	4.4	5.3	0.9	3,995	13.9	10.1	13.3	9.6	11,989	8.3	4	8.3	4	73,597	8.1	4.6	6.2	1.7
	Q2	54,038	7.1	4.4	4.6	1.4	2,816	12.6	6	12	5.9	9,501	7.8	4.1	7.8	4.1	66,355	7.4	4.4	5.4	2
2022	Q3	58,643	8.9	6.4	7.4	5.4	3,050	12.2	7.1	11.6	7	10,091	10.3	6.4	10.3	6.4	71,784	9.3	6.6	8	5.9
	Q4	49,733	8.2	5.4	7	4.4	2,600	14.4	9.3	13.8	9.1	9,352	12.2	8.6	12.2	8.6	61,685	9	6	8.1	5
	Q1	55,477	7.9	5.4	6.7	4.3	2,806	15.2	10.1	14.8	10	10,656	11.9	9.1	11.9	9.1	68,939	8.8	6	7.8	5.1
	Q2	58,230	7.2	5.1	5.3	3	2,425	16.4	10.3	16	10.3	9,504	11.7	9.4	11.7	9.4	70,159	8.2	6.1	6.6	4.1
2023	Q3	55,297	7.2	5	5.5	2.9	2,272	19	14	18.1	13.6	8,586	14.9	11.9	14.9	11.9	66,155	8.6	6	7.1	4
	Q4	52,811	8	4.7	6.5	3.1	2,251	21.5	18.7	20.8	18.6	9,492	15.7	13	15.7	13	64,554	9.6	6.7	8.4	5
	Q1	50,318	9.2	4.7	7.2	2.6	2,717	25.2	21.3	24.8	21.1	13,524	14	11.3	14	11.3	66,559	10.8	5.9	9.3	3.9
	Q2	49,647	13.9	11.1	11.5	8.6	2,761	23.5	20.4	22.5	20	9,475	17.5	15	17.5	15	61,883	14.9	11.4	12.9	9.4

Source:

HMCTS Core Case Data

Notes:

- 1) HMCTS Core Case Data came into effect at the end of March 2019, following a transition between data systems recording information regarding The Probate Service.
- 2) The average timeliness figures are produced by calculating the time from application/document receipt (which may be from an earlier period) to the grant issued made in that period. Currently grants being issued on the same day as the application submission/document receipt are being calculated as 0 days. This is being reviewed as to whether it is an accurate reflection of workload and may be adjusted in future.
- 3) Some averages presented here may be based on a small number of grants. Where this occurs, any conclusion drawn from these will be limited.
- 4) Please note that for some grant types, the time from application to submission to grant issue will be the same as the time from document receipt to grant issue. This is mainly due to the document receipt functionality (see footnote 5) is only applicable for where the application is submitted online and post the Will later. If you send the application and Will together, there is delayed receipt, and if there's no Will, the process doesn't apply.
- 5) Document receipt occurs after payment has been made and all accompanying paperwork has been received by HMCTS. As such, it does not reflect the entire case journey from when an application is submitted by the user to when a grant is received. Instead these figures reflect the timeliness from when HMCTS staff are able to start working on the case. The aspects not included in these timeliness measures include (but are not limited to); time taken to scan and upload documents to the management system (for paper items), and check that these items are of good enough quality to proceed. For the timeliness figures for stopped cases, the figures will further exclude time taken to resolve those issues mentioned in footnote 6 below.
- 6) Due to quality issues in the transition between data systems, the breakdown by type of grant has not been published for Q2 2019
- 7) A probate application can be stopped for several reasons: a caveat can be entered when there's a dispute about either who can apply for probate or issues with a will or proposed will, or if an error is identified and a request for further information is made.
- 8) '-' denotes data not available - please refer to the 'Data Quality issues' section of the accompanying bulletin for further details.