| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 23-0548Responded to: 20 March 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

Please note the questions have been reordered for ease of response.

## Please could you provide us with a list of all female victims of homicide killed between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022 (inclusive) which your authority has been responsible for investigating and, for each victim;

## 1. The date of the homicide;

## 2. The age of the victim;

## 3. The ethnicity/race of the victim;

## 4. The sex of the accused / perpetrator;

## 5. The ethnicity/race of the perpetrator;

## For clarification purposes I would ask that you first note the following information:

Unresolved Homicides:

Unresolved homicides are considered those where:

(a) No suspect has been identified

(b) A suspect has been identified but not charged (no proceedings)

(c) A suspect has been identified and charged but not placed on petition (no proceedings)

(d) A suspect has appeared on petition but no indictment served due to there being considered an insufficiency of evidence at that time (no proceedings)

(e) A suspect has been indicted and a trial concluded which has resulted in an acquittal (Not Guilty/Not Proven)

(f) A suspect has been convicted but acquitted on appeal and no fresh prosecution has been authorised by the Appeal Court (Not Guilty)

(g) A suspect has committed suicide prior to trial and no other person is being sought in connection with the case.

Furthermore many homicides (particularly those committed during the last few years during the Covid 19 pandemic) are still awaiting court proceedings to bring them to a legal conclusion. In this regard Police Scotland categorise and record these homicides as **unresolved**.

Undetected Homicides:

Undetected Homicides are those cases where no person has been **formally identified as an accused** or **charged** with the offence.

On that basis I can advise you that there were 11 female victims of homicide in 2022 and the following table provides the information requested at Q1 – Q6 above;

| **DATE** |  **FEMALE VICTIM** | **PERPETRATOR** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **AGE** | **ETHNICITY/RACE**  | **ETHNICITY/RACE**  | **SEX**  |
| 11/01/2022 | 56 | White Scottish | White English | Female |
| 15/02/2022 | 64 | White Scottish | White Scottish | Male |
| 03/04/2022 | 58 | White British | Southeast Asian  | Male |
| 01/04/2022 | 26 | White Scottish | White Scottish | Male |
| 21/02/2022 | 45 | White British | White British | Male |
| 06/05/2022 | 26 | White Scottish | White Scottish | Male |
| 08/05/2022 | 50 | White British | White Scottish | Male |
| 23/07/2022 | 41 | White Scottish | White Scottish | Female & Male |
| 28/08/2022 | 84 | White Scottish | White Scottish | Male |
| 17/09/2022 | 47 | White British | White English | Male |
| 20/12/2022 | 51 | White American | White Scottish | Male |

## 6. If identified, the way in which the victim was killed;

**7. The names of the victims and the accused / perpetrator;**

**8. The relationship between the accused and the victim;**

In terms of the information requested at Q6, Q7 and Q8 I must advise you that it has always been the case that limited information regarding homicides may be disclosed as part of an investigative strategy and decisions to disclose this information are taken by the Senior Investigating Officer in consultation with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

It is however considered that disclosure of the requested information under the Act would be detrimental to any ongoing investigations as it is essential that information is disclosed in the correct manner to ensure that neither the investigations nor the potential for any new proceedings to be brought against an individual are put at risk.

Taking all of the above into account, in terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with the information sought.

Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, to provide you with a notice which:

(a) states that it holds the information,

(b) states that it is claiming an exemption,

(c) specifies the exemption in question and

(d) states, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information that you have requested.

The exemptions that I consider to be applicable to the information requested by you are as follows:

Section 34(1)(b) - Investigations

Section 35(1)(a)&(b) - Law enforcement

Section 39(1) - Health & Safety

Such information is exempt if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

**Public Interest Test**

Whilst I appreciate that there is a degree of interest in the release of such information, what is of interest to the public is not necessarily in the public interest. The investigation of serious crimes such as homicide and ultimately, bringing those offenders to justice must always take precedence.

Accountability and transparency may favour disclosure of the information but conversely would be detrimental to ongoing investigations, and ultimately to the public at large.

It is essential that information pertaining to certain investigations is disclosed at the correct time, and only where appropriate, to ensure that neither the investigation nor the potential for proceedings to be brought against an individual are put at risk.

Homicides are, by their very nature, extensively covered in the media and you may be able to gather much of the information you have requested by searching local media reports.

Equally, if it is of interest we publish information/ appeals regarding ongoing investigations on our website (although you should note that these will not all relate to homicides) at:

[What's Happening - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/)

In summary, the call for transparency cannot outweigh the importance of the police maintaining confidentiality while an investigation is still ongoing. Therefore, the balance lies in withholding the information requested and accordingly, I have decided to maintain the exemption.

**9. Whether there were any previous reports from the victim (or any third party) regarding the accused / perpetrator;**

**10. Whether there were any previous reports and / or convictions of any other offences related to violence against women perpetrated by the accused / perpetrator.**

In consideration of Q9 and Q10 I must advise you that if held, any such information would be contained within numerous reporting databases. Every potential report would have to be read to obtain details to ascertain if the person reported for the murder was the same person detailed on the record for any previous offending. Police systems such as iVPD, Storm, SID and crime management would need to be accessed to cross reference the details in each case.

Given the potential timeframe for such reports, I am also conscious that any such reporting may predate the inception of Police Scotland on 1 April 2013, and consequently it would be extremely problematic to revisit any dataset which was a consolidation of records held by legacy divisions.

Accordingly I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations. As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

If you require any further assistance please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by email or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by email or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.