| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-1265  Responded to: 9th June 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## Please provide a list of murders which have occurred within the past one whole year from 12 May 2022 to 12 May 2023, with the following details:

## - The name and date of birth of the deceased (or age)

## - The nearest Town or City where the incident happened

## - A brief circumstance of the murder/MO (The victim was stabbed to death/The victim received gunshot wounds). If the cause of death is unknown, please provide a brief circumstance of how the deceased may have been found.

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 from the 12th May 2022 to the 12th May 2023, there were 44 victims of murder and 2 victims of culpable homicide, however, these cases are categorised as ‘unresolved’ at this time due to the circumstances outlined above.

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 level of detail are taken by the Senior Investigating Officer in consultation with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

It is however considered that disclosure of some 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 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 information relating to the circumstances of the homicide/MO. 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 further information 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 or legal proceedings are still ongoing.

Therefore, the balance lies in withholding the information requested and accordingly, I have decided to maintain the exemption.

Table 1 below provides the name and age of the deceased and the location of murder committed from 12th May 2022 to 12th May 2023.

| **Name** | **Age** | **Location** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Samuel Hamilton | 56 | Bellshill |
| Robert Docherty | 41 | Johnstone |
| Gary David Handling | 33 | Stranraer |
| William Robert Fraser | 21 | Orkney |
| John Thomson | 69 | Lanark |
| Peter Kirkwood | 25 | Lanark |
| Mairi Doherty | 41 | Glasgow |
| John Alasdair MacKinnon | 47 | Saasaig |
| Wayne Harold Elliott | 53 | Edinburgh |
| Peter Frank Coshan | 75 | Edinburgh |
| Allan West | 67 | Grangemouth |
| Patricia Bitters | 84 | Aberdeen |
| Douglas Struthers | 63 | Bo’ness |
| Jill Louise Barclay | 47 | Aberdeen |
| Alan Jamieson | 39 | Kilmarnock |
| Kevin John Kennedy | 36 | Glasgow |
| Kevan Matthew Doyle | 43 | Wishaw |
| Desmond Rowlings | 66 | Edinburgh |
| Derek Hugh Harold Johnston | 37 | Edinburgh |
| Paul Berry | 48 | Glasgow |
| Bernard Evans | 47 | Wishaw |
| William Yule | 90 | Forfar |
| Gavin McLean | 44 | Glasgow |
| Stacey Warnock | 51 | Airdrie |
| Jacqueline Kerr | 54 | Aberdeen |
| Andrew Ross | 52 | Aberdeen |
| Alexander Allan | 42 | East Kilbride |
| Lewis McCartney | 18 | Edinburgh |
| Allan Dorris | 43 | Glasgow |
| Darrel Buchanan | 37 | Hamilton |
| Thomas O’Rouke | 21 | Wishaw |
| Neil Canney | 37 | Greenock |
| Michelle Rutherford | 54 | Stirling |
| Craig William McNaught | 49 | Tillicoultry |
| Steven Johnson | 50 | Aberdeen |
| Catherine Pryde | 74 | Clackmannanshire |
| Henry White | 57 | Oakley |
| Charles Ian Wilson | 40 | Dumbarton |
| Charles Paul | 69 | Edinburgh |
| Susan Turner | 41 | Ayr |
| Cameron Scott Rae | 21 | Perth |
| Thomas Bowers | 33 | Glasgow |
| Marelle Sturrock | 35 | Glasgow |
| Kayden Frank | 4 | Paisley |

Table 2 below provides the name and age of the deceased and the location of culpable homicides committed from 12th May 2022 to 12th May 2023.

| **Name** | **Age** | **Location** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Brian Kowbel | 40 | Galashiels |
| William David Ireland | 62 | Kirkcaldy |

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](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) 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](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) 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.