



Date: 10/12/2024
Our ref: 01/FOI/24/013698/D

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/013698/D

I write in connection with your request for information dated 23/11/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 concerning the unsolved murder of Clare Brown, who was found strangled in her home on Exford Close, Miles Platting, Manchester, in October 2008. Specifically, I seek details on the following:

Current investigation status

1. *Is Clare Brown's case currently classified as active, inactive, or cold?*
2. *Have there been any recent reviews, developments, or advancements in forensic technology applied to the case?*

Evidence and leads

3. *A summary of evidence collected during the initial investigation, such as forensic or physical evidence and witness statements.*
4. *Were any forensic materials, including DNA samples, reanalysed using newer technology?*
5. *Have links to other crimes or suspects been explored?*

Cold case review

6. *Does Greater Manchester Police have a dedicated cold case unit?*
7. *How often has Clare Brown's case been re-examined by this unit since the initial investigation?*
8. *What criteria determine whether a case, such as Clare's, is reopened or receives renewed investigative attention?*

Collaboration and public engagement

9. *Has this case involved collaboration with other police forces or agencies?*

10. *Records of any public appeals, media campaigns, or community engagement related to the case*

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate information relevant to your request. I can confirm that the information you have requested is held by GMP.

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information and I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP. However, I am not obliged to provide all the information requested as exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires GMP, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The information you have requested in questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 is exempt under **Section 30(1)(2)(a) – Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities**.

Section 30 is a class-based, qualified exemption. There is a requirement to carry out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

To disclose the information requested into the public domain would show GMP's accountability and satisfy the public that investigations into this incident are being conducted. It would also show GMP's use of public funds in investigating incidents of this nature.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

We accept that there is a legitimate and important public interest in publishing information about the investigation however, conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release information that is related to investigations that remain ongoing may seriously undermine GMP's ability to complete the investigations to a full and correct conclusion.

Whilst these investigations might be seen as high profile by some, to disclose any details may still hinder the process needed to be followed.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest test GMP must consider whether the information should be released into the public domain, therefore arguments need to be weighed against each other. The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be the fact that disclosure would encourage transparency. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure, which in this case is the impact on GMP's ability to complete investigations to a full and correct conclusion. Therefore, having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is the decision at this time to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure.

Additionally, the information you have requested in question 10 is exempt under **Section 21 – Information accessible to applicant by other means**. GMP have not made any proactive press releases in relation to this case, but we have issued a statement in response to a media enquiry in 2015. The statement is quoted in this Manchester Evening News article [Girl, 12, makes emotional plea for justice for murdered mum, seven years on - Manchester Evening News](#).

The rest of the information you have requested is not exempt and is as follows:

6. Yes.

8. There is no set criteria, this is done on a case-by-case basis.