

Date: 23/01/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/016161/H

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/016161/H

I write in connection with your request for information dated 13/01/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please confirm whether Greater Manchester Police has conducted any comparison(s) between:

- the DNA profile(s) recovered in the investigation into the murder of Dorothy Leyden (1971), and

- the DNA profile(s) recovered in the investigation commonly referred to as the "Angel of the Meadow" case.

If such comparisons have been conducted, please provide:

A) whether the comparison result was assessed as (i) consistent with the same donor, (ii) not consistent / excluded, or (iii) inconclusive / insufficient for comparison; and

B) the month and year when the comparison was first conducted (or, if multiple, the month/year of each), without disclosing any genetic markers, lab methodology, database identifiers, exhibit IDs, or any operationally sensitive detail.

If no comparison has been conducted, please state whether GMP intends to conduct one, or whether there is a recorded rationale for not doing so (a brief summary is sufficient).

Additionally, please confirm whether GMP has:

C) formally ruled out a common offender between the two cases, or

D) recorded the possibility of a common offender as an active line of enquiry.

Please answer in general terms only and redact any information that would identify living individuals or disclose operational tactics.

If any part of this request is exempt, please provide any information that can be released, and cite the specific FOIA exemption(s) relied upon for any refusal/redaction.

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information.

However, I am not obliged to supply any information held as an exemption applies. The request is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 30(1) – Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities Section 38(1)(a)(b) Health and Safety.

Section 30 is a class based qualified exemption; there is a requirement to carry out a public interest test.

Section 38(1)(a)(b) is a prejudice based qualified exemption; there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing such information as well as carrying out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Section 30 - Factors Favouring Disclosure

To disclose any details regarding information relating to both cases, into the public domain, would show GMP's accountability, and satisfy the public, that investigations into such incidents are being conducted correctly. It would also show GMP's use of public funds in apprehending suspects of crimes.

Section 30 - Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release any data that is related to investigations that remain open may seriously undermine GMP's ability to complete those investigations to a full and correct conclusion.

Harm as per Section 38

This Act provides the public with a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities. However, information disclosed under this Act is effectively released into the public domain, or to the 'wider world', and not only to the person making the request.

The pain and suffering caused to the victims' surviving families and friends is unquestionably as profound now as it was when the crimes took place.

To disclose the exempt information into the public domain would undoubtedly have an impact on the health and safety of the surviving family members of the victims.

Disclosing such information could cause further distress and hurt to grieving families, many of whom would no doubt still be greatly traumatised by the events. Such information being disclosed could resurface these traumatic experiences and cause the victim's families to again revisit this most terrible period of their lives.

Protecting the safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and information that would compromise such health, and safety would not be disclosed within a response to a Freedom of Information request.

Section 38 - Factors favouring disclosure

There may be occasions when it is appropriate to disclose information that would have an impact on the health and safety of an individual or the public in general. In this particular case, I cannot identify any benefit to the wider public (in terms of health and safety) to disclose such sensitive details.

There are, however, more general arguments that must be considered such as openness and transparency, which would lead to a more informed public.

Section 38 - Factors favouring non-disclosure

Although some information may already be in the public domain and that information relates to deceased persons, due to the nature of the crimes committed, and that disclosure under Freedom of Information Act is disclosure to the world at large with no specific controls, disclosure carries the potential risk of causing significant mental and physical harm and distress to the loved ones and friends of his/her victims.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police has to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Arguments need to be weighed against each other.

The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be openness. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure which is concerns for the health and safety, both mental and physical, of family and friends of the victims alongside protecting GMP's ability to conduct investigations to the full without any prejudice.

Having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is my belief that in this case, the reason against disclosure outweighs the reason for disclosure and so the decision at this time to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure

In addition, Greater Manchester Police neither confirms nor denies that it holds information on *whether Greater Manchester Police has conducted any comparison/s* between the two cases by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 30(3) Investigations

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for S30

Confirming or denying whether information exists regarding whether Greater Manchester Police has conducted any comparison/s between the two cases would lead to a better-informed general public. This fact alone may encourage individuals to provide intelligence in order to assist with investigations and would also promote public trust in providing transparency and demonstrating openness and accountability into where the police are currently focusing their investigations.

The public are also entitled to know how public funds are spent.

Factors against confirmation or denial for S30

To confirm or deny the information does or does not exist, would prejudice these parts of the investigations. Greater Manchester Police need to be allowed to carry out investigations effectively away from public scrutiny until such times as the details need to be made public, otherwise it will be difficult for accurate, thorough and objective investigations to be carried out.

Balance Test

The points above highlight the merits of confirming or denying whether information pertinent to this request exists. Whilst there is public interest in the transparency of policing operations and investigations, providing assurance that the GMP is appropriately and effectively carrying out all lines of enquiries at the police's disposal, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of policing tactics in these situations.

Any confirmation or denial that may affect GMP's ability to carry out their investigations would not be in the public's best interests and would undermine any trust or confidence individuals have in us.

Therefore, at this moment in time, it is our opinion that for these issues the balance test favours neither confirming nor denying that information exists for this section of your request.