

Daniel Morgan Murder - The Timeline...

Last chance for family in Britain's most-investigated, unsolved murder

By Sanchia Berg - BBC News

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image copyright - Family handout

The final report into the death of Daniel Morgan - Britain's most-investigated, unsolved murder - will be published on Tuesday. In 1987, the private investigator was found dead in the car park of the Golden Lion pub in south London, with an axe in his head. Despite five separate police inquiries, spanning more than two decades, no-one has been convicted of his murder.

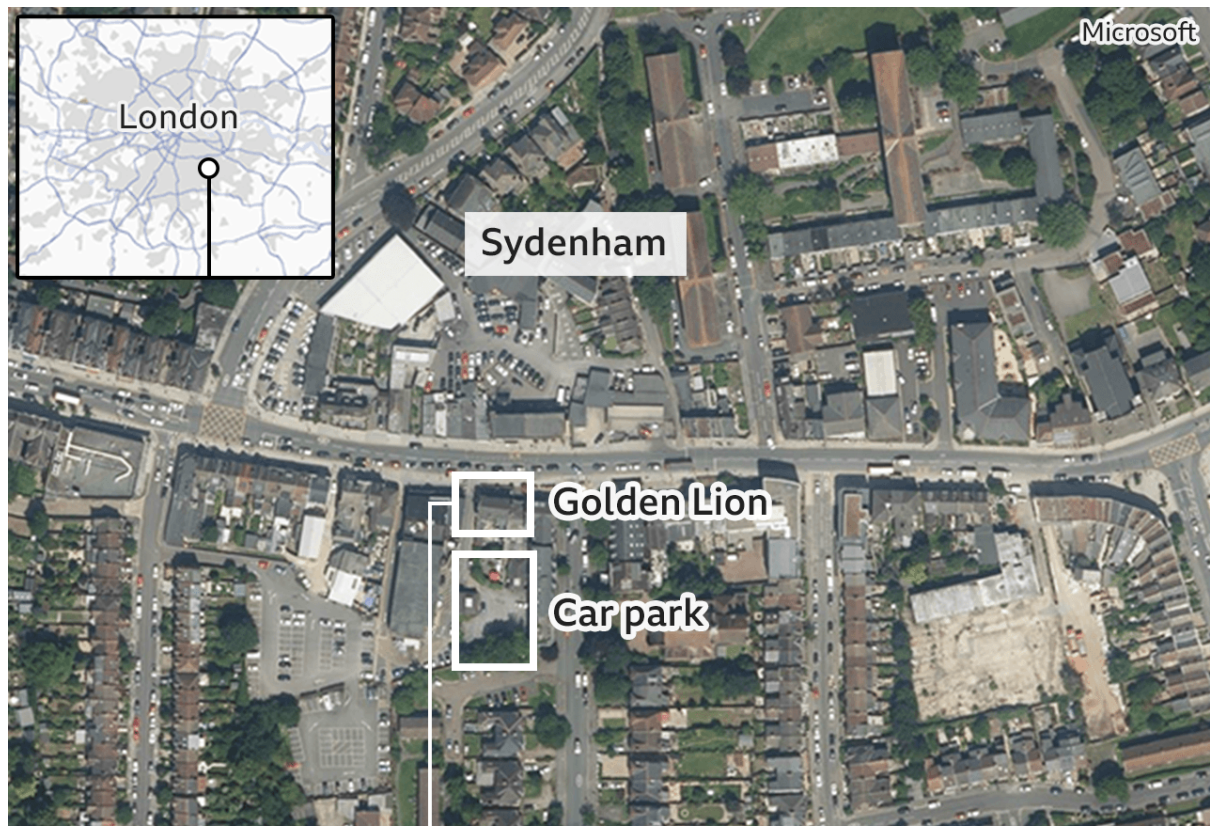
The family believe police corruption, and reluctance to confront it, could explain the murder and the failed investigations.

The murder

10 March 1987

Private investigator Daniel Morgan, 38, and his business partner at Southern Investigations, Jonathan Rees, meet for a drink in the Golden Lion pub in Sydenham, south-east London. Both leave the pub about 21:00.

By 21:30, Rees meets another man, professional bodyguard Paul Goodridge, in the Beulah Spa pub, three miles away in Crystal Palace



Golden Lion in 1987



BBC

At 21:40, a BBC sound producer pulls into the car park of the Golden Lion and finds Daniel Morgan's body. He is lying face up with an axe embedded in his head.



image copyrightJonathan Buckmaster

image captionDaniel Morgan's body was found in the Golden Lion pub car park

The first police investigation

Daniel's brother Alastair Morgan travels from his Hampshire home to London - to offer help and observe the investigation.

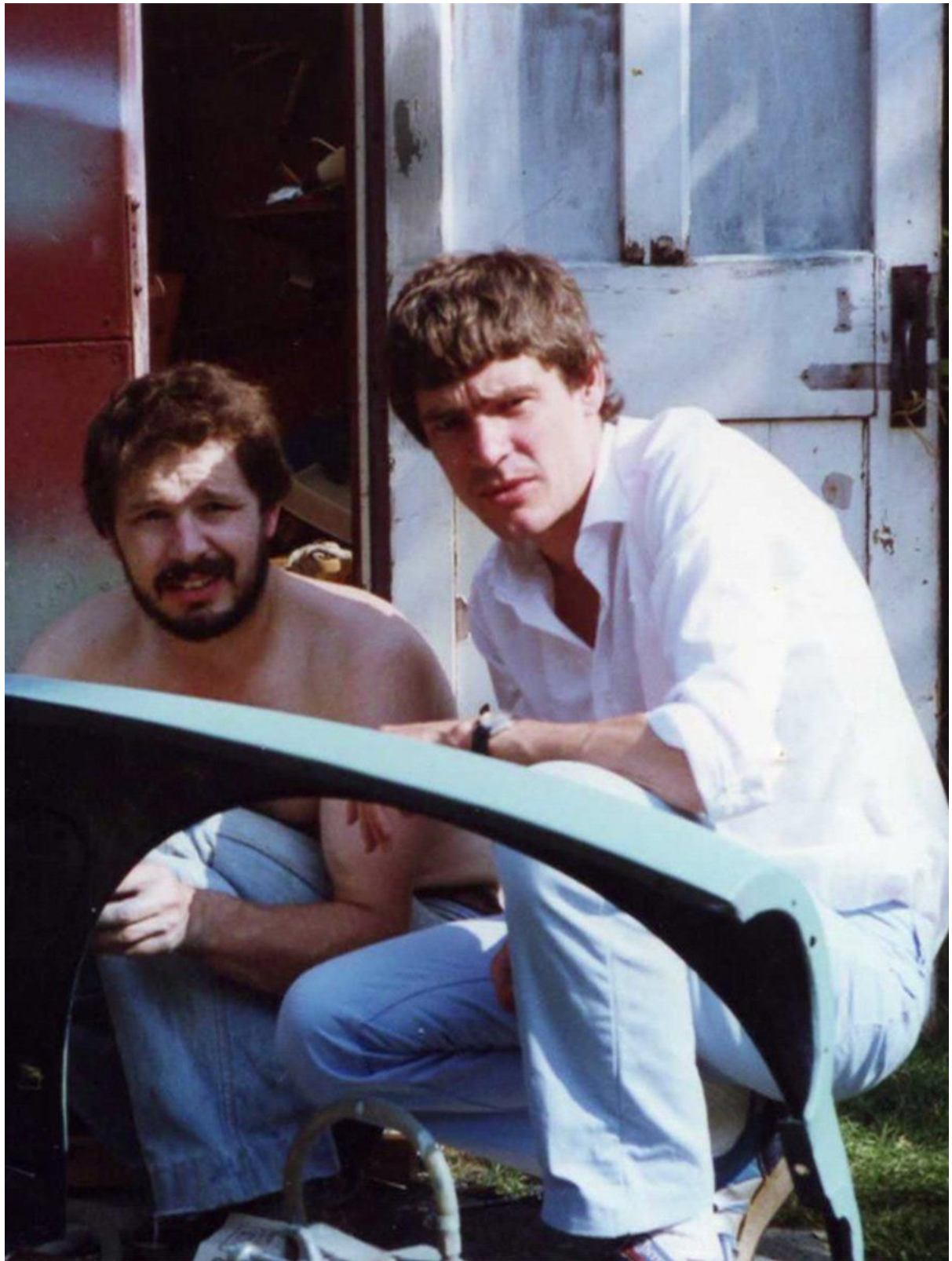


image copyright Family handout
image caption Daniel and Alastair Morgan

March 1987

Det Sgt Sid Fillery, who knows Rees and has moonlighted in the past for Southern Investigations, is initially assigned to the murder investigation. He is taken off the case after several days.

April 1987

Six people are arrested on suspicion of Daniel Morgan's murder - including Jonathan Rees, Sid Fillery and Rees's brothers-in-law Glenn and Garry Vian. All are later released without charge.

media caption BBC News 3 April 1987

May 1987

Bryan Madagan, Daniel's former employer, tells police he believes Daniel was trying to sell a story about police corruption to a newspaper. Later, others tell the family similar accounts. The family begin to suspect this may have been part of the reason Daniel was killed.

The inquest

April 1988

Kevin Lennon, the accountant at Southern Investigations, tells the inquest that Morgan and Rees had fallen out. He believes Rees was "determined" to have Morgan killed with the help of his friends in the police.

Rees denies murder. Lennon's testimony is undermined when it emerges he has been convicted of tax fraud.

The inquest returns a verdict of unlawful killing, and the family begin raising the case with their local MPs.



image copyright Getty Images

image caption Alastair Morgan arriving at Southwark Coroner's Court, 11 April 1988

1988

Fillery leaves the Metropolitan Police and starts to work for Southern Investigations with Rees.

The second police investigation

Hampshire Police are called in to look at the handling of the first murder inquiry, and allegations that Met Police officers could have been involved in Daniel Morgan's death.

July 1988

Under the supervision of the Police Complaints Authority, Hampshire Police are appointed to investigate allegations that police were involved in Morgan's murder.

February 1989

Three arrests are made, and Rees and bodyguard Goodridge are charged with murder.

Jean Wisden, Goodridge's girlfriend, is charged with perverting the course of justice.

In May, all charges are dropped.

March 1990

The Police Complaints Authority reports the findings of the Hampshire inquiry into the Met Police.

"No evidence of involvement by any police officer in the murder," is the conclusion, with "no evidence to support [Kevin] Lennon's allegations," made at the 1988 inquest.

Hampshire Police also find "no evidence to suggest any member of the murder investigation team took deliberate action to prevent the murder being properly detected".

There are "no grounds for disciplinary action against any officer [found moonlighting for Southern Investigations] other than strict admonishment".



image copyright Britt-Marie Pettersson

image caption Daniel Morgan, his wife Iris, Justin McCarthy, Jane Morgan and Alastair Morgan

1990

Rees and Fillery start working regularly for tabloid newspapers, including the News of the World.

The third police investigation

In November 1997, Alastair Morgan and his local MP, the then culture secretary Chris Smith, are assured by senior Met officers, including Commissioner Sir Paul Condon, that Daniel's case will be reviewed.

What happens next will lead to convictions, but not for murder.

Met teams gather evidence - some of it covertly by bugging the south London office of Southern Investigations.



image copyright PA Media

image caption Alastair Morgan and his mother Isobel Hulsmann arriving at Scotland Yard for a meeting with Met police commissioner Sir Paul Condon

April 1999

A police bug picks up a conversation between Rees and a client. The men discuss planting drugs on the client's wife so he would get custody of their son.

Nearly six months later, several people - including Rees - are charged with conspiracy to supply Class A and B drugs, and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

Four people are later convicted, including Rees, who is sentenced to seven years.

The fourth police investigation

The Morgan family keep up the pressure on the Met, and a new investigation - Operation Abelard - begins in the summer of 2001.

Police buy the house next door to suspect Glenn Vian, so they can conduct surveillance.

June 2002

A reward of £50,000 is offered for information leading to the killer - and a reconstruction of the murder is featured on the BBC's Crimewatch.

media caption Crimewatch revisited the Daniel Morgan case in 2002

Det Ch Supt David Cook fronts the appeal. He will later become the case's senior investigating officer (SIO).



image copyright PA Media

image caption Det Ch Supt David Cook

He and his wife, police officer and Crimewatch presenter Jacqui Hames, are put under surveillance by the News of the World. Jacqui Hames later gave evidence to the Leveson inquiry - the public inquiry into the practices of the British press following the phone hacking scandal. She said there was "in some way some collusion between people at the News of the World, and people who are suspected of committing the murder of Daniel Morgan".



image caption Jacqui Hames, (third from the left) presenting Crimewatch UK with Fiona Bruce, Jeremy Paine and Nick Ross

October 2002

James Cook and the Vian brothers are arrested on suspicion of murder. In December, Rees is questioned in prison.

September 2003

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) says there is insufficient evidence for a murder prosecution.

October 2004

Frustrated yet again, the Morgan family secure a meeting with the minister responsible for policing, Hazel Blears, to call for a public inquiry into Daniel's case. Their request is refused.

October 2005

Daniel's murder is discussed by the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) - the body at that time responsible for scrutinising the work of the Met.

It tells the Met Commissioner Ian Blair to produce a new report on the case. He admits the first murder inquiry in 1987 was "compromised".



image copyright Getty Images

image caption Sir Ian Blair speaking in London, November 2005

January 2006

Assistant Commissioner John Yates writes in a report that the investigation had unearthed some new evidence and information:

"This was presented to Treasury Counsel for review. His conclusion was that he was satisfied that we now know the identity of those responsible for Daniel Morgan's murder but that the evidence available did not meet the threshold to enable a prosecution to be commenced."

The fifth police investigation

Nearly 20 years after Daniel Morgan was killed, a new police investigation begins. It would nearly lead to a full criminal trial.

March 2006

Police work with three supergrass witnesses - criminals who are giving information. The process is complex and requires an independent team to handle these witnesses.

November 2006

Daniel Morgan's murder features on Crimewatch again.

April 2008

Four suspects are charged with murder - Rees, Glenn and Garry Vian, and another man, James Cook.

Sid Fillery is charged with attempting to pervert the course of justice.



image copyright PA Media

image caption Isobel Hulsman, Alastair Morgan and Jane McCarthy outside Westminster Magistrates Court

February 2009

Met deputy assistant commissioner John Yates tells then Mayor of London Boris Johnson that Daniel Morgan's case "is one of the most deplorable episodes in the entire history of the Metropolitan Police Service. This family has been treated disgracefully."

September 2009

Legal arguments for the trial of the suspects begin at the Old Bailey.

March 2011

The case collapses before the start of the trial, and all four men are acquitted.

The judge rules the three supergrasses cannot stand as witnesses.

Acting Met commissioner Timothy Godwin acknowledges "the repeated failure of the MPS [Metropolitan Police Service] over the years to confront the role played by police corruption in protecting those responsible for the murder from being brought to justice".



image copyright PA Media

image caption Jonathan Rees, Glenn Vian and Garry Vian leave the Old Bailey in 2011

After the investigations

August 2011

The Morgan family meet Home Secretary Theresa May to ask for a public judicial inquiry.

May 2013

The Daniel Morgan Independent Panel (DMIP) is formally announced - with Baroness Nuala O'Loan appointed chair the following year.

Its remit is to "[shine a light on the circumstances of Daniel Morgan's murder](#), its background and the handling of the case over the period since 1987".

February 2017

First judgment is made in a claim for malicious prosecution and misfeasance in public office - brought by Fillery, Rees and the Vian brothers against the commissioner of the Met.

Fillery wins damages. The other claims are initially dismissed.

July 2018

Rees and the Vian brothers win their claim on appeal.

July 2019

Rees and the Vian brothers are awarded total of £414,000 in damages. The judge awards the sum to "highlight and condemn the egregious and shameful behaviour of a senior and experienced police officer" - referring to Det Ch Supt David Cook, who oversaw the investigation.

The evidence of a man called Gary Eaton had been excluded from the potential trial because the officer was found to have compromised Eaton's interview.

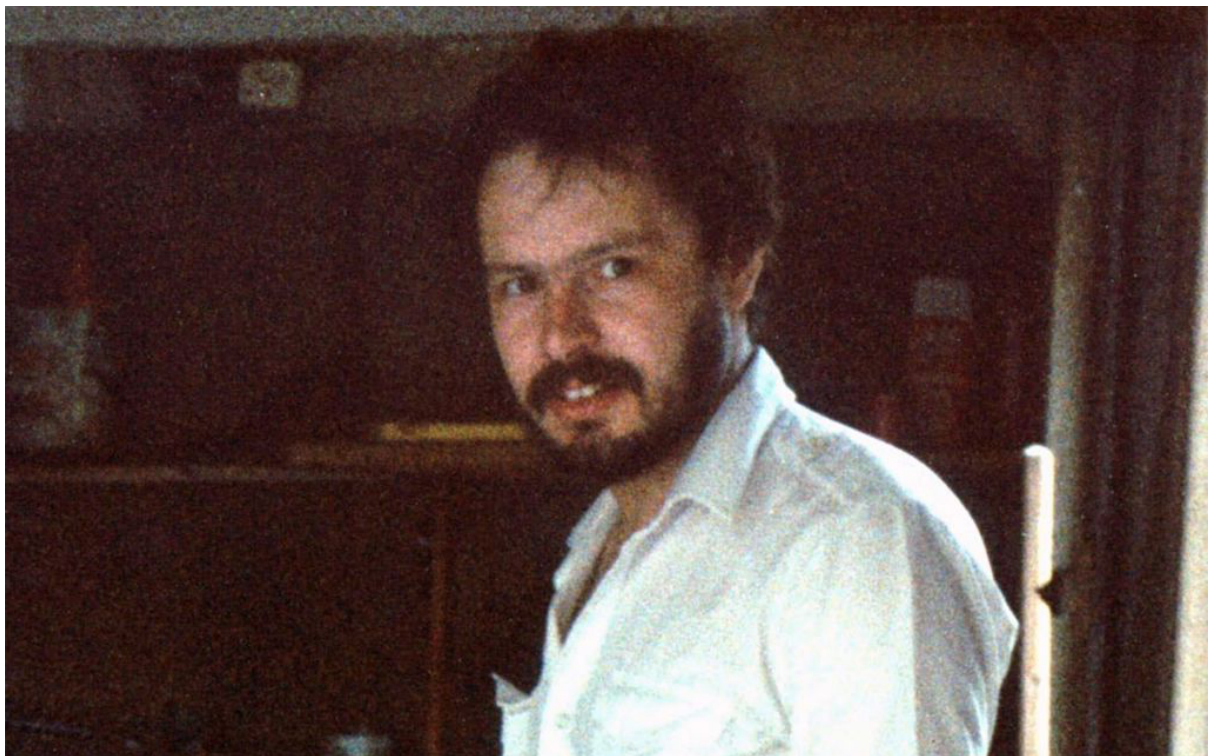


image copyright PA Media

Since the collapse of the case, Det Ch Supt David Cook has been repeatedly investigated over his conduct in the investigation, although the CPS has found insufficient evidence to prosecute. Because of this, he was unable to give evidence to the panel before 2020.

media caption Alastair Morgan speaks to BBC News in 2021

The panel completed its report this spring and was expecting to send it to the Home Office on 14 May, with its publication in Parliament the following Monday. After an initial delay, Home Secretary Priti Patel told the panel she needed more time to assess the report for national security, and to ensure it was in alignment with the Human Rights Act. On 8 June, the Home Office said the report would be published to Parliament on 15 June, and nothing would be blanked out.

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