

REQUEST **16332**

1. Can you please provide me with the electronic link to the most recent version of your public health funerals list.
2. If the public health funeral list that you maintain is not up to date please provide details of public health funerals conducted up to the 31st December 2023 or up to the latest date available.
3. If you do not maintain an online list please can you provide details of the public health funerals carried out by your authority from January 2015 to the latest date available confirming the name of the deceased, date of birth and date of death and location.
4. Further please provide confirmation as to whether or not you have identified a next of kin for each person for whom you conducted a public health funeral.

RESPONSE

1. There isn't an electronic link to public health funeral lists, please see below to clarify number of funerals which have taken place.
2. Information from 2015 to December 2023 is stated below.

3.
 - 2015 - 26
 - 2016 - 9
 - 2017 - 23
 - 2018 -17
 - 2019 -29
 - 2020 - 23
 - 2021 - 23
 - 2022 - 27
 - 2023 – 26

Under FOI the Authority has a right to refuse to release information if an exemption applies. In this case the exemption is Section 31(1)(a) of the FOI Act. Which states "Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—(a)the prevention or detection of crime,"

It is our view that disclosure of the name, DOB, DOD and location is likely to prejudice the prevention of crime. It is our view that disclosure of the information would enable someone to target empty properties. This is supported by decision notices FS50584670, FS50583220 and FS50586033. This exemption is subject to a "public interest test".

Our public interest argument is as follows:

Public interest arguments in favour of disclosure:

Disclosure may enable living relatives to identify themselves which could speed up the probate process and enable the council to reclaim money.

Public interest arguments in favour of maintaining the exemption:

Any information provided in responses to the questions could identify the deceased and their former home which could lead to theft or vandalism.

Balance of the public interest arguments:

There is an inherently strong public interest in avoiding likely prejudice to the prevention of crime and tackling issues that would arise as a result of individuals being identified would involve significant public expense. There is also a strong public interest in avoiding distress to the direct victims of crime related to empty properties including neighbours and the wider community. We are therefore of the view that the exemption should be maintained.

4. Where there is a NOK, they are involved in making funeral arrangements if they wish too. There are some cases where there is no NOK