

REGULATION 28: REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS

	<p>REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS</p> <p>THIS REPORT IS BEING SENT TO: Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police</p>
1	<p>CORONER</p> <p>I am Andrew Bridgman, Assistant Coroner, for the Coroner area of South Manchester</p>
2	<p>CORONER'S LEGAL POWERS</p> <p>I make this report under paragraph 7, Schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013</p>
3	<p>INVESTIGATION and INQUEST</p> <p>On 12th February 2018 an investigation was commenced into the death of Alfred Sykes, born 29.08.1937, who died on 11.02.18. The investigation concluded with a final hearing on 04.04.19, resumed from an adjourned hearing on 14.08.18. The medical cause of death was;</p> <p>1a. Hypothermia</p> <p>2. Ischaemic heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease</p> <p>The conclusion was;</p> <p>Narrative: Died as a consequence of becoming lost and unable to find his way home.</p>
4	<p><u>CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEATH</u></p> <p>On the afternoon of 7th February 2018, Alfred Sykes left his granddaughter's house to make his way home to Longmead Avenue, Hazel Grove on the bus. A journey he had made many times before. Alfred Sykes did not catch the bus. He became lost and was knowingly last seen at about 4.00pm on Egerton Road, Great Moor asking directions to Longmead Avenue, and if there was a football field nearby, as his house backed onto a football field. Alfred Sykes was directed towards the various playing fields on Woodsmoor Road, one of which is</p>

	<p>St Georgian's Cricket Club. Alfred was reported to GMP as a missing person. On 11th February 2018, Alfred Sykes' body was found by two members of the public beneath the undergrowth and bushes in a corner of St Georgian's Cricket Club. On the evidence Alfred Sykes had made his way to that corner of the field on the evening of 7th February 2018 and had lain where he was found from that time, but he would not have survived through the first night.</p>
5	<p><u>CORONER'S CONCERNS</u></p> <p>During the course of the inquest the evidence revealed matters giving rise to concern. In my opinion there is a risk that future deaths will occur unless action is taken. In the circumstances it is my statutory duty to report to you.</p> <p>The MATTERS OF CONCERN are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GMP were informed that Mr Sykes was missing at around 8.00pm on 7th February. He was treated as a high risk missing person from the outset; 2. At approximately 4.00am on 8th February a member of the public called in to report that he has seen and spoken to a gentleman of Alfred Sykes description at about 4pm on 7th February on Egerton Road asking for directions for Longmead Avenue. When the caller could not help him he then asked if there were any football fields nearby. The caller pointed him in the direction of the sports fields at Woodsmoor, at the end of Egerton Road, including St Georgian's Cricket Club. Alfred Sykes was seen by the caller speaking to other people further along Egerton Road, closer to the sports fields; 3. At about 8.00am two police officers, with no allocated tasks at that time, took it upon themselves to conduct a search of the sports fields. The above report had been mentioned at the morning briefing but there was no plan to carry out any search of the fields. It was apparently more than 300m from the spot where the caller spoke to Alfred Sykes. The two officers attended and walked a route around the fields which did not include all of the periphery. They reported a negative result. In my opinion that search was inadequate to report a negative result, as agreed by ██████████ in her evidence; 4. On 11th February two members of the public (one of whom knew of Alfred Sykes) and who had heard he was missing also took it upon themselves to search the fields, finding him as above. <p>My concern is that the report from the member of the public at 4.00am on 8th February of Alfred Sykes's last sighting was given any or any adequate consideration and action, seemingly because it was more than 300m radius from ██████████. However the significance of the sighting and the information was not lost on two police officers who on</p>

	<p>their own initiative looked around the playing fields. In evidence, [REDACTED] advised that just two police officers for such a large area was insufficient. I agree.</p> <p>Had there been a greater number of officers deployed on the morning of 8th February to search the fields to which Alfred Sykes had been directed and was last seen walking towards, it is likely he would have been found that morning.</p> <p>The evidence is that Alfred Sykes would not have been found alive, in combination his frailties and the weather but in different circumstance (particularly the weather) the outcome might have been different for him and for others in the future.</p> <p>Further, earlier discovery would have;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. lessened the anguish for the family; 2. saved resources in the continued search over the following 3 days.
6	<p>ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN</p> <p>In my opinion action should be taken to prevent future deaths and I believe you have the power to take such action.</p>
7	<p>YOUR RESPONSE</p> <p>You are under a duty to respond to this report within 56 days of the date of this report, namely by 13th August 2019. I, the coroner, may extend the period.</p> <p>Your response must contain details of action taken or proposed to be taken, setting out the timetable for action. Otherwise you must explain why no action is proposed.</p>
8	<p>COPIES and PUBLICATION</p> <p>I have sent a copy of my report to the Chief Coroner and to the following Interested Persons namely [REDACTED] daughter of Alfred Sykes, who may find it useful or of interest.</p> <p>I am also under a duty to send the Chief Coroner a copy of your response.</p> <p>The Chief Coroner may publish either or both in a complete or redacted or summary form. He may send a copy of this report to any person who he believes may find it useful or of interest. You may make representations to me, the coroner, at the time of your response, about the release or the publication of your response by the Chief Coroner.</p>

9	Andrew Bridgman HM Assistant Coroner 18/06/2019 
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