

Bradford murderer has sentence increased

A man who murdered a woman and buried her body has had his sentence increased following intervention from the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP.

Dale Tarbox, 40, had known the victim, Susan Howells, 51, for a number of years before the murder took place. Susan, who was physically disabled and used a Zimmer frame, went to stay with Tarbox and his partner in January 2019.

Following an argument, Tarbox murdered Susan at his home in Bradford on 19 February 2019. He attempted to burn her body, before hiding it in a wheelie bin in his cellar.

Tarbox made sure the property was secure and then moved with his partner to a caravan site in Doncaster. He later returned to the Bradford address with an accomplice, transported the body to Doncaster and buried it behind his caravan.

Susan Howells was declared missing in August 2019, but police found that Tarbox and his partner had been collecting her benefit money. When officers attended the caravan site they found Susan's remains in a shallow grave behind Tarbox's caravan. They also found the wheelie bin in Tarbox's caravan, which contained an incinerator and human hair.

Tarbox was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 16 years on 10 December 2020 at Leeds Crown Court. Following a referral to the Court of Appeal by the Solicitor General, on 18 February the sentence was found to be unduly lenient and has been increased to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 18 years.

Commenting on the increase, the Solicitor General said:

Tarbox murdered a vulnerable victim and showed no remorse for his despicable actions. No sentence can repair the damage he caused, but I hope the Court of Appeal's decision today gives some closure to the victim's family.