# The Hack uncovers links between police corruption, media scandals, and the unresolved Daniel Morgan case



The ITV drama series *The Hack* brings to the screen a gripping and unsettling weave of two of Britain's most notorious scandals: the unsolved murder of Daniel Morgan and the phone hacking crisis that rocked the media landscape. Featuring an impressive cast including Robert Carlyle, David Tennant, Toby Jones, and Eve Myles, the series delves into the dark intersections of police corruption, tabloid journalism, and private investigation.

Daniel Morgan, a private detective from Llanfrechfa in Cwmbran, was found brutally murdered in a car park of a south-east London pub in 1987, with an axe embedded in his skull. Despite five investigations over several decades, no one has ever been convicted of the crime. The enduring suspicion, underscored by the 2021 Daniel Morgan Independent Panel report, is that elements within the Metropolitan Police obstructed the investigation, not merely through ineptitude but via deliberate concealment. The report went further to label the Met as "institutionally corrupt" in its handling of the case, although it stopped short of alleging a conspiracy to murder.

*The Hack* interlaces Morgan’s story with the phone hacking scandal that engulfed Rupert Murdoch’s News of the World. David Tennant plays journalist Nick Davies, whose investigative reporting helped expose the illegal surveillance of public figures and vulnerable individuals, including the family of murdered teenager Milly Dowler. Robert Carlyle takes on the role of Dave Cook, a former Met detective who revived the inquiry into Morgan’s death and faced intimidation for pursuing justice. Toby Jones portrays Alan Rusbridger, a former editor of The Guardian who played a pivotal role in uncovering the phone hacking scandal, while Eve Myles appears as Jacqui Hames, a former police officer and broadcaster who was also a target of phone hacking.

Morgan’s investigation provides a troubling backdrop that suggests systemic corruption involving not just the police but also the media. His business partner, Jonathan Rees, was later heavily involved with News of the World, raising troubling questions about the overlap between tabloid journalism, private investigators, and compromised police personnel. The ITV drama hints that the same institutional failures and malfeasance that enabled phone hacking may also have shielded those responsible for Morgan’s murder.

The Daniel Morgan Independent Panel’s 2021 report was damning in its critique of the Metropolitan Police’s initial investigation. It pointed to failures such as the crime scene not being secured, suspects not being properly interviewed, and a focus on protecting the force’s reputation at the expense of transparency and justice. The panel’s findings triggered calls for systemic reform, including the introduction of a statutory duty of candour for law enforcement agencies, ensuring they are legally obliged to be open about failings. The Met has accepted the report’s findings but has denied being institutionally corrupt, acknowledging instead that corruption was a significant factor in the investigation’s failures.

Subsequent journalistic investigations and documentaries, such as the 2020 Channel 4 series *Murder in the Car Park*, have explored how Morgan’s murder is emblematic of institutional failure. The programme contended that Morgan was likely killed because of his proximity to exposing police corruption. It highlighted conflicts of interest that compromised investigations, with key suspects—some of whom had extensive ties to the police and the press—evading justice. The extraordinary scale of the failure is underscored by the fact that, despite multiple inquiries and millions spent, the case remains unresolved.

The drama and reports together paint a sobering picture of a justice system where corruption and cover-up may have prevailed over truth and accountability. In 2023, the Metropolitan Police made a payment in damages to Morgan’s family and admitted to serious failings, but full justice and closure remain elusive. For viewers locally in Cwmbran and across the UK, *The Hack* offers not just compelling television but a long-overdue reckoning with a case that refuses to be forgotten—a stark reminder of the cost of institutional corruption in public life.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450045.daniel-morgan-murder-itv-drama-explores-police-media-corruption/?ref=rss)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450045.daniel-morgan-murder-itv-drama-explores-police-media-corruption/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.itv.com/news/2021-06-15/daniel-morgan-what-are-the-key-findings-from-the-report-into-police-failings), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/daniel-morgan-met-police-corruption-b1866193.html), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-60796569)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450045.daniel-morgan-murder-itv-drama-explores-police-media-corruption/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.itv.com/news/2021-06-15/daniel-morgan-what-are-the-key-findings-from-the-report-into-police-failings), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/15/daniel-morgan-met-chief-censured-for-hampering-corruption-inquiry), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/daniel-morgan-report-met-police-unsolved-murder-institutional-corruption-b940714.html), [[7]](https://www.sky.com/story/daniel-morgan-met-police-accused-of-institutional-corruption-in-1987-unsolved-axe-murder-of-private-detective-12332406?src=ilaw)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450045.daniel-morgan-murder-itv-drama-explores-police-media-corruption/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.itv.com/news/2021-06-15/daniel-morgan-what-are-the-key-findings-from-the-report-into-police-failings), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/daniel-morgan-met-police-corruption-b1866193.html), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-60796569), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/15/daniel-morgan-met-chief-censured-for-hampering-corruption-inquiry)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450045.daniel-morgan-murder-itv-drama-explores-police-media-corruption/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.itv.com/news/2021-06-15/daniel-morgan-what-are-the-key-findings-from-the-report-into-police-failings), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/daniel-morgan-met-police-corruption-b1866193.html), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-60796569), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/daniel-morgan-report-met-police-unsolved-murder-institutional-corruption-b940714.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450045.daniel-morgan-murder-itv-drama-explores-police-media-corruption/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.itv.com/news/2021-06-15/daniel-morgan-what-are-the-key-findings-from-the-report-into-police-failings), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/daniel-morgan-met-police-corruption-b1866193.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450045.daniel-morgan-murder-itv-drama-explores-police-media-corruption/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.itv.com/news/2021-06-15/daniel-morgan-what-are-the-key-findings-from-the-report-into-police-failings> - An independent panel's report into the 1987 murder of private investigator Daniel Morgan found evidence of 'institutional corruption' within the Metropolitan Police. The panel criticised the initial investigation for failing to secure the crime scene and properly interview suspects, leading to the loss of potential evidence. The report also highlighted the force's lack of candour and its focus on protecting its reputation over acknowledging failings. The Met accepted that corruption was a major factor in the initial investigation's failure but denied being institutionally corrupt. The panel recommended reforms, including a statutory duty of candour for law enforcement agencies.
3. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/daniel-morgan-met-police-corruption-b1866193.html> - The Independent reports on the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel's findings, which accuse the Metropolitan Police of 'institutional corruption' in the handling of Morgan's 1987 murder. The panel criticised the initial investigation for severe failings, including not searching the crime scene and not properly interviewing suspects. It also condemned the Met's lack of honesty with Morgan's family and the public. The report calls for a statutory 'duty of candour' for all law enforcement agencies and highlights the need for systemic change within the police force.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-60796569> - BBC News reports on the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel's conclusion that the Metropolitan Police was 'institutionally corrupt' in its handling of Morgan's 1987 murder. The panel found that the force concealed its failings to protect itself and criticised the initial investigation for not securing the crime scene and failing to properly interview suspects. The Met accepted that corruption was a major factor in the investigation's failure but denied being institutionally corrupt. The panel's findings have led to calls for reforms within the police force.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/15/daniel-morgan-met-chief-censured-for-hampering-corruption-inquiry> - The Guardian reports on the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel's findings, which accuse the Metropolitan Police of 'institutional corruption' in the handling of Morgan's 1987 murder. The panel criticised the force for placing concerns about its reputation above properly confronting corruption and for misleading the public and Morgan's family. The report also censured former Met Commissioner Cressida Dick for obstructing the inquiry by delaying access to necessary records and computer systems. The panel's findings have led to calls for systemic change within the police force.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/daniel-morgan-report-met-police-unsolved-murder-institutional-corruption-b940714.html> - The Evening Standard reports on the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel's findings, which accuse the Metropolitan Police of 'institutional corruption' in the handling of Morgan's 1987 murder. The panel criticised the force for failing to acknowledge its systemic failings and for misleading Morgan's family and the public. The report also highlighted the need for systemic change within the police force to address corruption and improve accountability. The Met has accepted the report's findings and is considering its recommendations.
7. <https://www.sky.com/story/daniel-morgan-met-police-accused-of-institutional-corruption-in-1987-unsolved-axe-murder-of-private-detective-12332406?src=ilaw> - Sky News reports on the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel's findings, which accuse the Metropolitan Police of 'institutional corruption' in the handling of Morgan's 1987 murder. The panel found evidence of a culture within the Met that allowed close associations between police officers and individuals linked to crime. The report also criticised the force for concealing or denying failings to protect its reputation. The Met has accepted the report's findings and is considering its recommendations.