



**Branch chair retires:  
a final farewell from  
Tony Wetton**

# A FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM 'PROUD AND PRIVILEGED' RETIRING CHAIR

**T**ony Wetton says he feels proud and privileged to have been a police officer in Derbyshire and to have spent the final years of his service helping look after colleagues as chair of Derbyshire Police Federation.

He retires from the Force in a few weeks' time and admits there have been very few low times during his service, saying 'in many ways, I have led a charmed life'.

But he believes he is leaving at a time when the police service is in crisis, pointing to the results of the latest Federation pay and morale survey which revealed that 73 per cent of Derbyshire Police Federation members would not recommend becoming a police officer to others.

"This is a shocking figure," says Tony. "It shows that policing is no longer regarded as the profession it used to be by many of those working in it. Morale is low with officers feeling undervalued by the Government and the public and they do not feel they are treated or paid fairly for the stresses and strains of the role, the responsibilities they hold or the dangers they face.

"There are also considerable concerns that changes to vetting processes and efforts to make it easier to dismiss officers are leaving them with fewer and fewer protections when they go about their duties.

"And, of course, while the Police Uplift Programme has brought an increase in officer numbers, we now have a considerable percentage of our total workforce who have very little service, creating a very real and significant experience deficit on the frontline."

It's all a far cry from the pre-austerity days when Tony joined the Force at the age of 32, after 13 years working in retail.

Having completed his A-levels at



**By Tony Wetton, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation**

Eastwood Comprehensive, Tony embarked on a career with Sainsbury's, initially on a trainee manager's programme.

Four years into his time with the supermarket, he applied to join Nottinghamshire Police but then, persuaded by a promotion, stayed put and withdrew his application.

When, around nine years later, he was offered a voluntary redundancy package, he decided to fulfil his ambition to help people through a job in public service and applied instead to join Derbyshire Constabulary.

"From the minute I joined on 31 January 2000, I just loved being a police officer," says Tony.

His initial training - an intensive 15-week course - took him to the Pannal Ash police

training centre near Harrogate in Yorkshire where his cohort included fellow Derbyshire officers Adam Shipley, Dan Houareau, Phil and Nicky Bateman, Adam Galley, Lisa Salt, Stuart Kelly and Paul Trussell. It was also there that he first met his wife, Sandra.

His initial posting was to Clay Cross where after 18 months he became beat manager working alongside Barrie Howard, dealing largely with anti-social behaviour and the prolific drugs issues.

In May 2004, he moved into his dream job as part of Uniform Task Force on Ops Division.

"It really was the best job in the Force," he explains. "We were involved in many of the big jobs, high profile searches, putting doors in for major arrests and warrants. You were in the Task Force van going from job to job with colleagues who were your mates. Training hundreds of cops in the art and science of method of entry was also a fantastic experience. It was a great time in my career - 13 years that I look back on fondly."

But the Federation was calling to him. In 2011 Lord Hutton published his report on public service pensions prompting the Government to embark on what was to become a controversial overhaul of the police scheme, the impact of which is being felt to this day.

Seeing the way in which colleagues were likely to be affected, and wanting to support them in other ways, Tony decided to put himself forward as a workplace representative for the Derbyshire Federation branch in 2010. He was elected and, like other reps, carried out this role while still working in his frontline position which for Tony was still within Task Force.

The Hutton report was only part of the

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Details for the branch officials and workplace reps can be found on our [Meet the team page](#).



picture, however. Part 1 of the Winsor report was published in 2011, with the second and final part being produced the following year.

The Government had tasked Tom Winsor – who was to go on to head the inspectorate as Sir Tom Winsor – with carrying out an independent review of police officer and staff pay and conditions.

“It was a challenging time,” Tony recalls. “There were significant changes to our pay and conditions as a result of the Winsor reports and, of course, officers were concerned, particularly when you consider that the pension scheme was also about to be changed too.”

But, these reforms were also set against the backdrop of the austerity years during which police officer numbers plummeted and the nature of crime changed, putting those left under strain as they tried to do more with less.

**“ Training hundreds of cops in the art and science of method of entry was also a fantastic experience. It was a great time in my career – 13 years that I look back on fondly.**

“It was really tough for officers, and impacted on many people’s mental wellbeing,” says Tony who, as the Fed rep for Operations Division, was keen to make the most of the training opportunities offered by the Federation in terms of conduct, equality, and health and safety.

“Coupled with dealing with the fall-outs of the Hutton and Winsor reports and the impact of budget cuts due to the austerity measures, being a Fed rep at the time was both rewarding and challenging. Fed reps are constantly involved in day to day work of doing their ‘day job’ while supporting members going through conduct procedures, which would possibly be the most stressful times of their lives, helping injured cops, making sure officers are treated fairly and looked after, or simply trying to explain the intricacies of Police Regulations to colleagues or more senior officers. Fed reps often deal with their mates and colleagues when they are at their very lowest and that can be particularly challenging. Anyone who has stepped up to do that over the years has my respect and my thanks.”

Having gained a good grounding in his first four years as a workplace rep, in 2014 Tony stepped up to become the branch health and safety lead and also chaired the Derbyshire Constables’ Branch Board before



*Tony representing Derbyshire Police Federation at National Police Memorial Day 2023.*

Sir David Normington’s independent review of the Police Federation of England and Wales led to the abolition of separate rank boards.

A few weeks later he was elected as the branch’s vice-chair, while Mark Pickard served as chair. Then, on Mark’s retirement in 2017, became branch chair following the first chair’s election process in the country to involve all the Force’s Federation members.

“It was an interesting progression, given that when I first became a workplace representative that was all I had set my sights on – helping my mates on Ops Division. But the more involved I became, the more involved I wanted to be. I was particularly delighted and proud to have been voted into the position of branch chair by all our members, and to have been re-elected by them twice since then has been equally humbling.” says Tony, a career-long PC.

The following year Kirsty Bunn was

appointed branch secretary and Tony is full of praise for the way in which she has helped drive the branch forward.

“I am deeply indebted to Kirsty. She was an amazing Fed rep and is an impressive and highly effective branch secretary. It has been a privilege to work alongside her and I want to put on record my thanks to her for the support she has given me,” he explains.

Jo Johnson and Pete Roberts, the staff in the Federation office, have also been very important and Tony says: “Jo and Pete have been a constant support during my time as chair. They work tirelessly making sure things are in place for us as workplace reps or full-time officials to support the officers who need us to be there for them. I want to pass on my sincere thanks and best wishes to both of them.”

Tony says he has been hugely fortunate to work with two Chief Constables who have been very supportive of the Federation -

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The families of fallen officers, Police Unity Tour riders with Tony Wetton (far left), the DCC (second from left) and ACC to his left at the Derbyshire tree at The Beat, at the annual Care of Police Survivors Service of Remembrance, National Arboretum in Staffordshire, July 2023.

praising both Peter Goodman and the current Chief Constable, Rachel Swann.

He explains: "It has been a very challenging time in policing, particularly the past couple of years, and it has been a privilege serving under CC Rachel Swann, firstly as Deputy Chief and later as Chief. She has always been approachable, receptive and supportive and I have the utmost respect for her."

So what does he see as his biggest achievements during his 24 and a half years as a police officer?

He replies: "I am just proud to have been a police officer, proud to have been a Derbyshire police officer and proud to have been in a position where I have been able to look after Federation members and seek to improve things for them."

"My approach to the job of Fed chair has always been to build positive and productive relationships with stakeholders and with anyone who could have an impact on the police officers who have trusted me to represent them. I hope that I leave a Derbyshire Police Federation that is credible, visible, influential and trusted by the Force. That is what enables us to get involved when difficult decisions are being made, as policies are developed and when changes are being made to the way in which we work or in terms of Force governance. We have been welcomed to our seat at the table and that has enabled us to make a difference for members."

"When something has not been right, we have been able to challenge it and influence those in a position to make it better."

Tony believes the austerity years have been defining for policing, with officer numbers slashed and the level, breadth and complexity of demand changing beyond recognition. But he is most frustrated that the criminal behaviour of a vanishingly small number of officers has tainted the whole of the police force.

"The names of Couzens and Carrick damage the reputation of police officers in a way that Shipman and Letby do not tarnish

the reputations of GPs and neo-natal nurses or how they are viewed and treated by the press and public," he points out.

"There just seems to be a constant negative narrative in the press now and that is really damaging for the vast majority of cops who just want to serve and protect their communities, often putting their lives on the line in the process."

"All that negative coverage has led to a push from the Home Office, the College of Policing and a number of influential chief officers to make it much easier to dismiss police officers. We are told by some chief officers that they need and want the final decision on who is fit to hold the Office of Constable – the right to hire and fire as they see fit."

"That is a clear move away from the learning and development culture that had started to be adopted in terms of our conduct and performance processes and a return to chief officers rather than independent qualified chairs having the power to dismiss officers – a power that has already been delegated from chief constables to less senior officers and staff. Where we should be encouraging our officers to recognise and acknowledge when they have made a

mistake, and learn from it and improve, the onus is now on dismissing them. That can only be a step backwards and will not improve public trust and confidence in policing over time.

"Coupled with changes to vetting which could see officers having their vetting status removed and subsequently dismissed from policing on the say so of a report from an unnamed individual, without the opportunity for them to counter and disprove any allegations, it's easy to see why officers are feeling vulnerable and perhaps reluctant to use the powers they have been given."

"I am leaving behind a police service which is in crisis but I still wouldn't change a thing in terms of my own career."

Tony is now looking forward to his retirement but first wants to thank Sandra and his children Dara, Eleanor and Alfie for their support during his policing career.

**I am leaving behind a police service which is in crisis but I still wouldn't change a thing in terms of my own career.**

"It can be hard for police officers' families, so it is important to acknowledge their support," he says, "For all police officers, there will be missed family events, birthdays and anniversaries due to shift working and the very nature of policing. It's part of the job, everyone knows that, but families feel that absence."

"To my friends and colleagues in Derbyshire Constabulary, I wish you all the very best for the future. I hope that I was of some help when people needed it and that I leave Derbyshire Police Federation in a position to go from strength to strength supporting the police officers I am so proud to have served alongside for 24 years."

## DCC SENDS BEST WISHES TO RETIRING BRANCH CHAIR

Deputy Chief Constable Simon Blatchly has formally wished Tony Wetton the very best of luck as the chair of Derbyshire Police Federation's retirement fast approaches.

Simon recalls that Tony was one of the first to welcome him to the Constabulary when he joined Derbyshire 18 months ago.

Since then, the pair have continued to work closely together, with Simon heaping praise on Tony for regularly liaising with him about the Federation's concerns.

Simon said: "Tony and I have worked closely together in that time and I really appreciated that fact he has always kept me informed on a regular basis, on all the

Federation's concerns and developments.

"As both an officer and chair of the Federation, he has been a great colleague to have worked alongside."

"I have valued our honest and open conversations, which admittedly, have been difficult at times, but being able to have those, is a credit to the professional relationship we have formed."

"I would like to thank Tony for his service and wish him all the very best for his retirement."

Simon has said he looks forward to working with Tony's replacement and hopes the solid relationship between the Force and Federation remains.



# BRAVERY AWARDS: TEAM NOMINATED FOLLOWING FOOTBALL VIOLENCE



This year's national Police Bravery Awards will take place in July.

**A**n experienced Derbyshire Police inspector says he's humbled his team has been nominated for a national bravery award after policing the worst public order violence he has seen in his career.

Inspector Nick Booth described how the officers were faced with serious disorder ahead of Aston Villa's home European game with Legia Warsaw.

Nick, a Derbyshire Police Federation member, has worked in public order for more than 20 years and is a public order trainer.

He said: "In the run-up, the commander who gave us the briefing warned this could be the worst violence we've seen in our careers – and he wasn't wrong."

Nick was working alongside Derbyshire Police colleagues PC Ryan McGrath, PC Christopher Harrold, PC Tammy Careless, PC Adam Podam, PC Rebecca Callan, PC Matthew Copestake and an officer who doesn't want to be named.

Deployed on mutual aid, they were working closely with colleagues from Nottinghamshire and West Midlands when they came under a sustained assault close to Villa Park stadium in Birmingham in November.

The officers were attacked with flares and missiles, including bottles, bricks and hammers. They were even attacked with street signs and tree branches.

Nick said: "Initially, we were in a close cordon blocking off a road and preventing the Warsaw fans mixing with the Aston Villa fans, who were legitimately going to the ground.

"They started masking up, pulling on face coverings, putting their hoods up, scarves around their heads, and it was at that point we realised it was going to start to get a bit tasty.

"And then the missiles started coming down.

"They were throwing the flares at us, throwing bricks, bottles, street signs, cones, anything they could get their hands on.

"There were some small sheds nearby and they were ripping the doors off and they were being thrown at us.

**“They were throwing the flares at us, throwing bricks, bottles, street signs, cones, anything they could get their hands on.**

"They were going through the sheds for anything they could find. Hammers were being thrown.

"They were using sticks and branches as weapons and smashing the shields."

Nick said at least two of his colleagues' shields splintered under the ferocious assault.

Indeed, PC Copestake received an injury to his hand due to the level of violence directed at his shield which required hospital treatment, but has since recovered.

"That's the most sustained violence I've ever encountered," Nick said.

"From when they started throwing the

missiles and flares until we managed to push them down some streets so there was less sustained pressure, it was about 45 minutes.

"It doesn't sound a lot but when you're getting it constantly for that time it is."

Now the Derbyshire Police officers have been nominated for a Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) Bravery Award.

Nick said: "It's really humbling. At the time you don't think anything about it, you're dealing with your public order duties as you do normally.

"When we went out that night, we weren't expecting anything like it and after the event, we came away thinking we did a good job there.

"There were a lot of other officers there from other forces and everyone did a brilliant job. We were just one small part of a big team who performed brilliantly on the night, so to be nominated was completely out of the blue.

"It's really humbling and a privilege to be thought of that way."

Derbyshire Police Chief Superintendent Steve Wilson, of Derbyshire Police, said: "This mutual aid deployment differs considerably from almost all that have gone before in terms of the levels of violence intentionally directed at the police by a very large group of foreign national risk supporters armed with potentially lethal weapons.

"The bravery of officers was clearly critical in successfully preventing the aggressive and determined hostile crowd from reaching the local fans, thus potentially preventing further serious injury and disorder.

"The disorder was so intense and widespread that it attracted national and international media reporting the following day, with harrowing images of what the officers were faced with.

"Inspector Nick Booth, the serial commander, is a very experienced public officer with more than 20 years in the role and describes this as the worst violence he has ever seen.

"He provides a disturbing first-hand account of the hostile group, identically dressed akin to a uniform, with livery in the form of badges, being organised, disciplined with clear leadership to achieve their aim of attacking the police."

Organised by the PFEW, this year's national Police Bravery Awards will be taking place on 11 July, in London.

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# CHAIR CONGRATULATES NEW PCC

**D**erbyshire's new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will need to quickly get to grip with the crisis in policing, says the chair of Derbyshire Police Federation.

Tony Wetton was commenting after Labour & Co-operative candidate Nicolle Ndiweni topped the polls in this year's PCC elections, which took place on 2 May.

Nicolle received 93,260 votes while Conservative Angelique Foster, who had been PCC since 2021, secured 65,293 to come second in the election.

"We congratulate Nicolle on her election as our PCC and look forward to working with her to help shape the future of policing in Derbyshire," said Tony.

"Hopefully, we will be able to sit down with her soon to discuss the concerns of our members, with many issues having been highlighted by our recent pay and morale survey.

"While many of these are beyond the control of the PCC, there are areas where



*New Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner Nicolle Ndiweni.*

she can make a difference to the working lives of police officers, and their police staff colleagues, so it will be interesting to hear her plans.

"I think she will need to quickly get to grips with the crisis in policing so that she

can then put in place strategies for bringing about improvements."

While campaigning for election, Nicolle, who has a background in criminology and international relations and has experience in the public and private sectors, pledged to increase police officer and staff numbers.

"My passion lies in ensuring that individuals are protected from harm and have the necessary support when they need it. I am dedicated to creating positive and transformative changes in our area," she explained in her campaigning materials.

"Collaboration is key to achieving our goals. By working together with residents, the police force, partnership organisations, political and community leaders, we can build a safer and stronger community. My hope is that through a strategic, fair and holistic approach, we can reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, promote preventative initiatives, and provide support to victims and those impacted by crime."

# FORCE UNIFORM REVIEW HAS BEEN 'LEARNING CURVE'

**A** Derbyshire Police Federation member has spoken about the work that is being done to review and improve the Force's uniform.

PC Mick Maugham, who is a core trainer, said the review was initially instigated following complaints about the fit and finish on trousers for female officers.

But it has since evolved into 'a wholesale review' to improve the standards and to ensure the uniform is fit for purpose wherever officers are working in the county.

Mick said: "We're trying to smarten the uniform up and bring standards back a little bit.

"The chiefs have said they want to smarten how we look as we've had issues with the quality of uniform and the finish of it.

"We're doing a wholesale review of everything to try to raise the standards and improve the public perception of what we should look like.

"Initially it came from a lot of complaints about the fit and finish on female trousers, which was terrible.

"During the Uplift Programme, we were having a lot of female students with issues around the trousers. I took it on board to try to alter that."

A committee was set up to look at the issue, but it evolved into examining the uniform as a whole, what is worn, how it's

worn and how it's seen by the public.

Mick said: "The problem in Derbyshire is we've got such a massive difference in climate and conditions across the county.

"You've got the Peak District, where it's a totally different climate to working in Derby city centre.

"We have to take into account that the uniform issue is fit for purpose wherever you work in the county."



**We have to take into account that the uniform issue is fit for purpose wherever you work in the county.**

With funding at a premium, Mick said that one of the main considerations was ensuring value for money - but that included more than just the cost.

"Money is a massive consideration," he said. "But I think in the past some things have been bought purely on cost, not on practicality or whether the fit or finish is comfortable.

"We have to be pragmatic in what we provide people, and it needs to be comfortable and practical and do the job."

Mick admitted he initially underestimated

the size of the project.

"It's been a massive learning curve for me," he added.

"I thought we could just pick up the phone and order 4,000 pairs of trousers but when you take in timescales, procurement, and everything into account it's not as quick or as easy as you think just to go out and buy uniform.

"If we're looking at new coats they have to be compliant with health and safety regulations.

"We've got to consider what might be right to wear in Derby in the winter might not be warm enough to wear in Buxton or on top of the Peak District.

"It's getting the balance right.

"A lot of people need kit uniform and you're not going to please everybody.

When you've got to kit out 2,500 people there's always going to be somebody who isn't happy."

The project is now 18 months in and Mick said it was hoped it would be completed in the summer.

"We're getting positive feedback from officers," he said.

"Chief Superintendent Emma Aldred is leading it with Inspector Matt Haslam.

"We've got a core nucleus of about eight or 10 of us. It's an open forum, so if someone wants to get involved they can."



# RACE ACTION PLAN NEEDS TO BE BACKED UP

The Police Race Action Plan is a chance to build trust and confidence in policing, says a Derbyshire Police Federation member.

However, PC Harpreet Singh Sidhu says the plan needs to be backed up if it is to work.

The Police Race Action Plan is the biggest coordinated effort ever across every police force in England and Wales to improve trust and confidence in policing among Black communities. [Derbyshire Police is currently working on its plan.](#)

Harpreet said: "The plan is trying to make sure that we police fairly and properly, and are seen to be as transparent as possible.

"There's the national plan and then the localised plan. Having a plan is great as long as it's actioned on.

"If it's just going to be words and reads like a political manifesto, that we propose to do this and that and not follow through with anything, we may as well not bother.

"In the 18 and a half years I've been in the job, my issue with these is that they are great on paper, but at times, as police officers, we have to make difficult decisions,

especially when you're arresting someone.

"It's great to have these plans in place and I'm all for having transparency, however, my concern comes when we have to deal with an incident that requires some robust action and may upset some people but it's the right thing to do.



**We do have to respect people's values, but we still have a job to do.**

"We do have to respect people's values, but we still have a job to do.

"The law and the legislation sets out certain things we have to do, and the lack of explanation and understanding of that has caused some issues."

Earlier this year, Derbyshire Police's Black Heritage Independent Advisory Group [met with members of the county's Black communities](#) to listen to their experiences of policing and identify where change is required as part of the Force's work on its plan.

The event was held at the Derby West Indian Community Association Community

and Cultural Centre in Derby and was attended by more than 35 members of our Black community.

The Force said that one of the key themes raised included, a lack of representation of the Black community in the constabulary, particularly police officers – and Harpreet also identified it as an issue.

"In years gone by, Derbyshire was an ethnically diverse Force throughout all ranks," said Harpreet, who has worked for Derbyshire Police for the past 18 years.

"We had ethnic officers up to Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) rank recently. We had ethnic officers pretty much from the boots on the ground to the top corridor.

"In the past five years or so, our highest ranking officer has been ACC Mehmet, followed by a Superintendent and then the next highest ranking ethnic officer is an inspector from memory – however, there are not many BAME officers in these ranks.

"As our communities have grown so has their ethnic diversity, but the majority of officers policing it don't have a full understanding of the nuances.

"A force needs to reflect the community it serves," he added.

# FED MEMBER PRAISES 'FIRST-RATE' PTC CARE

Derbyshire Police Federation member says he will 'forever be grateful' for the treatment he received from the Police Treatment Centre (PTC) in Harrogate following his stay in April.

Inspector Matthew (Mat) Haslam spent a fortnight at the centre to rehabilitate his right arm, having had a history of complications with it - including four surgeries.

The PTC is a registered charity which provides treatment and support for injured and ill serving and retired officers, including intensive police-specific physiotherapy.

Knowing he needed to take action in order to manage the arm better, Mat headed to Harrogate with hopeful expectations.

"I'd heard good things about the physio there. I certainly needed something extra beyond what the NHS could provide, and going private wasn't financially feasible," Mat said.

"I can honestly say, your treatment starts the moment you walk through the door. Straight away, you feel your needs are being looked after."

After an initial screening conversation with a nurse, Mat began his bespoke course of physiotherapy, attending daily



The Police Treatment Centres

appointments throughout his two-week residence.

The 40-year-old was also recommended rehabilitation classes to support his main treatment and took part in multiple sessions of Pilates, hydrotherapy and gym work.

"The structure I had of treatment and classes, plus time to myself to do things I enjoy, meant I came away massively mentally rejuvenated," added Mat, who has been in the Force for nearly 22 years.

"In terms of my arm, the Centre gave it the best possible chance of recovery – they couldn't have done anything more for it. If I had gone earlier in my life, I may not have been required to undergo the further surgery I had," he added.

"The level of care was first-rate."

Off the back of his successful stay, the inspector has now become an ambassador for the PTC. Explaining he wanted to

something back to the centre, he said: "I want the brilliant facilities to become more widely known, and make sure people know it is not just available to current police officers, but all police staff, as well as those who have retired.

"I also want officers to know that it is well worth paying into and contributing towards financially. The PTC is there for a very good reason – we work hard in the demands of our profession and any one of us might need their support one day," he ended.

Earlier this month (8 June), staff from the PTC in Harrogate took on the Knaresborough Bed Race to raise funds for the Centre. Federation members are still able to donate to their [JustGiving page](#).

More information on the PTC, including how to sign up, is available on the [Derbyshire Police Federation website](#).



# 'PROTECT THE POLICE' URGES ASSAULTED FED REP

**'More needs to be done to protect the officers from assault' says a Derbyshire Police Federation rep who suffered horrific injuries in a brutal knife attack.**

PC Steve Reid was slashed twice in the face as he tackled a man under the influence of drugs when he was called to a robbery back in 2019.

He received a seven-inch and eight-inch scar down the side of his face in the attack, and more than four years on, he still suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Now he's calling for better protection for officers after figures revealed that, on average, there were 11 attacks a week on Derbyshire Police officers.

Data from the Office for National Statistics showed there were 584 assaults on Derbyshire Police officers in the year to 31 March 2023. Of those, 148 resulted in injury.

In England and Wales, the figures showed there was a total of 40,330 attacks on officers in that year, with 11,022 resulting in an injury to an officer.

Steve, Derbyshire Police Federation's health and safety lead, described the figures as 'appalling'.

"Officers are doing their jobs and being assaulted while protecting people," he said. "It's appalling."

Steve urged members to report all assaults on officers to give the Force a clear picture of what they are facing.

"Officers should have the confidence in reporting all assaults so the Force is aware of what's happening on the street," he said.

"From that, we can put support in place, and we can signpost to help and support, should that be needed.

"And if an officer is assaulted, we should receive the same level of service as any victim of crime."

His comments were echoed by branch chair Tony Wetton, who said there was a concern officers were not reporting assaults because it's seen by them as being 'part of the job'.



**Derbyshire Police Federation's health and safety lead Steve Reid.**

"It absolutely isn't," said Tony. "Nobody should be physically attacked while doing their job - a job which the public needs police officers to do to keep them safe.

"Officers should report and record all assaults on them so we have an accurate picture of the level and circumstances of the violence they face at work."

Tony added: "Assaulted officers must be treated like any other victim of violence, with offences investigated to a high standard and their welfare looked after as a priority."

Steve also called for tougher sentences for offenders who attack officers.

The 2022 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act saw the maximum sentence for

assaults on a blue light worker, including police officer, increase from 12 months to two years after lobbying by the Federation through its Protect the Protectors campaign.

Steve said: "Possibly because of the pressures on the prisons, it's not being dealt with as strongly as many would like.

"There should be more pressure to look at attacks on emergency workers and push for the full sentencing powers to be used.

"As a Force, we should be pushing for those outcomes at court."

**There should be more pressure to look at attacks on emergency workers and push for the full sentencing powers to be used. As a Force, we should be pushing for those outcomes at court.**

Tony added: "The only way to reduce the number and severity of attacks on officers is for the criminal justice system to provide a deterrent by properly punishing offenders.

"The CPS must prosecute offenders where appropriate, and the courts must hand out meaningful sentences to convicted offenders."

Steve said that officers who want to should have training in the use of Taser.

**PFEW figures** suggest that in 85 per cent of cases where Taser is drawn it is not actually fired. The presence of Taser was enough to diffuse the situation, protect officers from assault and safeguard the public.

Steve said he did not have access to Taser when he was attacked in 2019.

"I have spoken to officers who have Taser, and just by having a hand on it has diffused a situation," he said.

"People they've been dealing with said they might have attacked the officer if they didn't have Taser.

"It can have that effect, even if it's not used."

# MEMBERS ENCOURAGED TO TAKE PART IN FREE SPORT EVENT

The founder of an organisation set up to allow police officers to play adaptive or disabled sports is encouraging Derbyshire Police Federation members to see what it has to offer.

Gary Callier set up Police UK Disability Sport (PUKDS) last year after finding there was no disability sports program in policing.

Now he's organising a FREE multi-sport event later this summer in Nottingham and is inviting Derbyshire Police Federation members to try out what PUKDS has to offer.

The event will be held at David Ross Sports Village at the University of Nottingham on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 August (10am to 6pm).

Supported by [Metfriendly](#), [Lightweight Mobility and Seating](#), and [Recipero](#), it is the first event of its kind in the policing community with coaching sessions in badminton, sitting volleyball, table tennis, wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby.

Gary said: "We're using the weekend to showcase all of the sports we have to offer.

"It's an open door for everyone. It's fully inclusive and everyone is welcome.

"Whether you're serving, retired, staff, officer, it doesn't matter, we'd love for you to come along and try it out."

Gary, who plays for the Northampton Saints Wheelchair Rugby team, has spoken about the transformative power of adaptive sports as he encouraged officers to take part in a taster event he's organising.

He was a former lance corporal with the Royal Engineers in the British Army until he was medically discharged in 2015.

He had a degenerative spinal condition, as well as hip problems, sciatica, PTSD, anxiety, and fibromyalgia.

Gary underwent spinal surgery in 2018, almost five years to the day after his



condition was discovered.

"I was wheeled in for the procedure and walked out later that day," he said. "They cauterised the nerve endings in the base of my spine.

"What I've got isn't corrective, you can't fix it, there's no reconstructive element to it.

"It's pain management so stripping the nerve endings allowed me to not feel any pain associated with my lower back.

"It was like a switch had been flipped and I was back on the track sprinting. I wanted to get back to who I was pre-condition."

Gary joined the police in 2019 and currently works for the British Transport Police out of King's Cross Station in London.

He was selected for the Invictus Games, which inspire recovery through sport, esports, and adventurous challenge, which took place in 2022 in the Hague.

However, competing in multiple sprint events over three days left Gary barely able to walk forcing him to pull out of the 100m and 200m races to focus on the 400m.

"My back and both legs went on the final bend of the 400m," he recalled.

"I finished the race but crawled over the line.

"That was my lightbulb moment. I could no longer compete or train at that level."

Instead, Gary turned to adaptive sports and recalled the influence on him of Joe

Dillnutt, an athletics coach and now PUKDS ambassador.

"I don't really remember going to the first event," Gary said. "I was standing there with my back against the wall and Joe got me to engage.

"I wouldn't speak to anyone and he got me involved. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't be doing any of this."

Gary said that he had to overcome feelings of being 'a fraud' when he started to play wheelchair sports and train towards last year's Invictus Games in Dusseldorf.

"I had to break down my own barriers," he explained. "I thought I'm not a wheelchair user anymore, so why am I playing wheelchair sports?"

"But you don't have to be severely disabled to play wheelchair sports, and going to Dusseldorf was about promoting adaptive sports and the inclusivity of it."

Gary competed in wheelchair rugby, wheelchair basketball, as well as athletics and returned with three gold medals, three silver and a bronze.

Gary launched PUKDS in November to give police officers the chance to play adaptive sports and aid their recovery.

It is funded through grants, and Gary launched a petition before the dissolution of parliament for the general election calling for the Government to allocate 10 per cent from the proceeds of crime seizures each year to help police charities and not-for-profit organisations, such as PUKDS.

"More than £339 million was seized last year and just 10 per cent of that for charities, which currently get nothing, would be a game-changer," he said. "It would be established under the Police Covenant."

[Register for the FREE multi-sport event by clicking here.](#)



**We're using the weekend to showcase all of the sports we have to offer. It's an open door for everyone. It's fully inclusive and everyone is welcome. Whether you're serving, retired, staff, officer, it doesn't matter, we'd love for you to come along and try it out.**



# FED MEMBERS READY TO REMEMBER FALLEN OFFICERS AHEAD OF 2024 POLICE UNITY TOUR

**D**erbyshire Police Federation members are gearing up for the annual Police Unity Tour (PUT) next month in the memory of policing colleagues who have lost their lives on while on duty.

Seven Derbyshire Constabulary staff will take part in the 180-mile bike ride from Friday 26 June to Sunday 28 June, aiming to raise funds and awareness for charity Care of Police Survivors (COPS), who provide care and support for bereaved families of police officers who have passed away.

The Tour has been held for each of the last 12 years in support of COPS and is completed by officers from across the country.

Team Derbyshire are taking part after previous successful rides and are doing so in partnership with neighbouring forces Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, the latter of whom are entering for the first time.

Detective Constable Emma Corby says she is riding for a much-loved colleague who died two years ago.

“Losing a fellow officer in our department reminded me that tomorrow is never promised to any of us,” said Emma. “We spend so much time at work, colleagues become friends and some even friends of the family, and the way COPS acknowledges this with their support of families proves that policing is never just a ‘job’.

“I feel grateful and excited to be representing Derbyshire in the Police Unity Tour and I will be holding my colleague and friend close to my heart, especially when those miles get tough.”

Traditionally, the Tour concludes at the



Detective Constable Emma Corby.

National Memorial Arboretum in Lichfield, Staffordshire, to coincide with COPS' Annual Service of Remembrance. The memorial park is a national site of remembrance and provides officers a chance to pay their respects to fallen colleagues at the end of their ride.

After attending last year's service at the Arboretum in support of participating friends, Assistant Chief Constable Michelle Shooter has been inspired to join the bike ride herself this time around.

Michelle said: “Last year was incredibly emotional to witness – what an event and what a sight it was seeing all those figures from policing around the UK in one place. It's made me want to get involved and do the Tour myself.

“I know the ride won't be easy but I have been assured it is not a race, only a time for people of all ages and abilities to come together, side-by-side, in remembrance of those we have lost. It's that sense of being part of a team for the same brilliant cause that I hope will see me through.”

COPS was founded in 2003 by the late

Jim McNulty, a detective from Strathclyde Police, and Christine Fulton MBE, whose police officer husband died on duty in 1994. After losing a friend who worked as a police lieutenant in the US, Jim was moved by a national memorial service in Washington DC and subsequently began efforts to hold a similar event in the UK.

The organisation care for survivor relatives in a variety of ways, including by bringing them together with other grieving families through peer support opportunities and by offering access to counselling and specialist bereavement services.

Another member of Derbyshire's upcoming Unity Tour team has paid tribute to the charity's continuous work.

“It's that sense of being part of a team for the same brilliant cause that I hope will see me through.”

Detective Constable Graham Barrett said: “COPS provide a network between families of police officers who have died on duty, which is so important in such lonely and painful times. They are ensuring that the Police is one big family and no officer will ever be forgotten, nor will their loved ones. If you can, please donate to this charity, as you never know who will next be needing their support.”

Detective Sergeant Simon Swanborough, who first took part in the Tour last year, added it is ‘180 miles of determination’ where ‘each pedal stroke’ is made in memory of colleagues who have passed.

Other Derbyshire officers set to complete the ride are DC Andy MacAlister and DI Maria Pleace. Ahead of this, the team are hosting a static spin bike ride on Monday 22 July to raise funds for COPS. The event will take place in the atrium area of Derbyshire Constabulary HQ and will also feature a samosa and cake sale, with all staff welcome to attend.

The officers will depart from HQ at 9am on 26 July and have encouraged staff to wave them off as they embark on day one of the Tour.

Federation members can also show their support by visiting and donating to the team's [JustGivingPage](#).



Police Unity Tour (PUT) medal.



# Understanding the law around surrogacy

Surrogacy has become increasingly popular as a way for people otherwise unable to conceive a child to build their family.

The current surrogacy law in the UK can make the process of surrogacy difficult. Domestic surrogacy arrangements are unenforceable, which means those involved can change their minds until a Parental Order, which transfers legal parenthood from the surrogate to the intended parents, is made by the court. This is often a concern for those involved, but the reality is that there have been very few cases where this has happened. Many of those campaigning for surrogacy reform believe that surrogates should be permitted to receive payments beyond reasonable expenses. Due to a UK surrogate shortage, many choose to go overseas and enter commercial arrangements which offer greater certainty.

The Law Commission's 2023 report, "Building Families through Surrogacy: A New Law", proposes a new surrogacy law, emphasising clarity, safeguards, and support. Key recommendations include an administrative pathway for domestic surrogacy, granting legal parentage from birth under certain conditions without requiring a court order. The surrogate retains autonomy during pregnancy and birth

and can withdraw consent up to six weeks post-birth. Clearer rules on surrogate payments are recommended. Whilst surrogates should not benefit from the arrangement, they should also not be left financially worse off because of it. It is recommended intended parents should be allowed to reimburse surrogates for specific costs arising from the pregnancy, and the surrogate should be able to recover those costs from the intended parents. It is also suggested there should be a surrogacy register so people born through surrogacy can find out about their gestational and genetic origins.

Anyone planning to enter a surrogacy arrangement should seek specialist independent legal advice before conception takes place to ensure they are aware of the legal position and everyone's rights, responsibilities, and expectations.

The team at Slater and Gordon offer legal services to Police Federation members catered to modern families, offering advice to same-sex and opposite-sex couples, married and unmarried couples on adoption (including international adoption), surrogacy, fertility treatment and donor conception.

If you would like to discuss surrogacy or any other family law matter, please contact:

**Hannah Saxe**  
hannah.saxe@slatergordon.uk  
0330 995 5859

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# LACK OF SOCIAL SPACES IMPACTS OFFICERS' WELLBEING

The lack of social spaces for officers to decompress between jobs has had a big effect on their welfare, according to the chair of Derbyshire Police Federation.

Tony Wetton said the absence of police canteens and other areas for members to talk to colleagues or to take time for themselves continues to have an impact.

"Cops are not robots and are allowed to eat and drink on their shift," he argued.

"Canteens used to give them a space to have a proper break without being judged by the public.

"They were also a space to decompress after a job and perhaps talk a job through with a colleague.

"Along with police social clubs, they gave officers somewhere at the end of a shift to wind down and to get support from colleagues.

"Having a staff canteen with reasonably priced, or even subsidised, nutritious food would make a huge difference to morale and wellbeing.

"The value of having somewhere like that can't be underestimated and they've been a huge loss to policing that, I have no doubt, has and is impacting the morale and wellbeing of members.

"However, during austerity, the cost was considered more important than the value."

Tony said the loss of social spaces, added to cuts in pay, made it more difficult to recruit and retain officers.

"People wonder why our recent survey found morale was low and officers were thinking about leaving," he said. "It's not rocket science.

**“ People wonder why our recent survey found morale was low and officers were thinking about leaving. It's not rocket science.**

"When we talk about cuts to pay and conditions, the loss of social spaces and canteens have to be seen in that context.

"Not only have members not really got anywhere to go, they're not afforded the time to debrief or chat to each other, and that's bound to impact morale."

Tony acknowledged that the Force has provided a number of wellbeing rooms, and this is something the Federation has supported.

He continued: "We are also aware of discussions around potential options for providing refreshments and meals around the Force, but these discussions are in the early stages and we don't know what they will lead to.

"We continue to encourage the Force to consider the welfare and wellbeing of officers and staff, both in existing premises and as part of the estate plan for future buildings."

Tony said that this is one of the main things the Government should be considering when funding levels are decided.

He ended: "Forces should be able to make plans with confidence in the financial position they will be in – at least for the medium term."

Tony was commenting after the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) launched a study into the role canteens and shared spaces play in policing and police wellbeing.

The survey is now closed and the results will be revealed in due course.

## NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

A new drive to highlight the importance of members looking after their own mental health and checking in on each other has been launched by the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Derbyshire Police Federation members are being encouraged to ask how their colleagues are and, if they are not convinced by the answer, to ask twice.

It's part of PFEW's #AskTwice campaign, which aims to develop a culture that positively addresses mental health and wellbeing in the police service.

Paul Williams, PFEW wellbeing co-lead, said: "The difficulty with mental health is that no one can see it.

"You can see a physical injury, but you can't see a mental injury until the physical effects take place, which could either be ill health or behavioural symptoms.

"By the time those symptoms come on it's often too late and the person is broken.

"Through the #AskTwice campaign we're trying to highlight early intervention, that by asking somebody twice you can potentially identify early signs of mental ill-health and hopefully intervene and prevent any further damage.

**#ASKTWICE**

IT MAY SAVE A LIFE

"We've all got responsibility to each other and ourselves to speak to our colleagues to spot early signs of mental ill-health and intervene where necessary."

The #AskTwice campaign was launched during Mental Health Awareness Week.

It commits to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where people feel valued, heard, and empowered to seek help when needed.

The campaign is also a resource and [brings together assets to offer support and guidance](#) in areas such as bereavement, financial wellbeing, and suicide.

The online resource will grow over time as new information and advice is added to it.

Paul said: "There are so many strands of wellbeing in policing, such as Police Treatment Centres, credit unions, counselling, Police Care UK.

"We've brought them all together with toolkits on a single site for both members,

as well as Fed reps."

The campaign was launched with a webinar, which included a presentation by guest speaker Mel Lynch, an ex-British Army physical trainer, on positive mental health in the workplace through exercise.

Paul said: "For those who are restricted or have office jobs and are sat in front of a desk for a number of hours a day, various simple exercises can stimulate the endorphins that are released through movement and can improve your mental health, your sleep and your overall work performance.

"Taking screen breaks and using this time to stretch and even practice some light exercises in the office can be the difference between good and poor mental health," he added.

Find out more about [#AskTwice](#), and [watch the campaign launch](#).

# COP PRAISES PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE RAMS AND FORCE

**A** Federation member who helped initiate a partnership between Derby County Football Club and the Force has told how effective backing from such an influential organisation can be.

Temporary Inspector Ben Frearson's comments come after the Rams threw their support behind Operation Sceptre, an anti-knife crime initiative that was founded by the National Police Chiefs' Council, which aims to remove knives from local communities.

Via the club's charitable arm, the Derby County Community Trust, graphics highlighting the campaign were displayed on digital billboards at the Pride Park Stadium.

“To know that so many people will have seen our logo and our key messages just by passing the billboards is very pleasing.”

“We are so grateful for our partnership with Derby County and their Community Trust because it means our mission can be taken further. It means that many members of the public, particularly young people, will be listening to what we have to say, such is the club's standing within Derbyshire,” said Ben, who was responsible for striking up the collaboration.

“To know that so many people will have seen our logo and our key messages just by passing the billboards is very pleasing.”

As part of an ongoing relationship with the Force, the Community Trust will continue to hold engagement sessions, which will address key themes such as knife crime and reiterate Operation Sceptre's advice all year round.

And last November, t-shirts displaying the tagline, 'Knives Shatter Lives' were worn

“We want to educate the public on the dangers and consequences of carrying a knife. Through our emphasis on prevention, we aim to stop people from making the kinds of decisions that can eventually lead to knife crime.”



by Derby County players in the warm-up to a home match. At the same time, videos produced by the club's in-house media channel, RamsTV, and featuring player interviews surrounding knife crime were broadcast to supporters at Pride Park.

Ben added: “The partnership has been established for a few years now, and it is a very equal one where the club are more than happy to take the initiative to help us in whatever way they can. Everyone connected to Operation Sceptre at Derbyshire Constabulary appreciates their brilliant support.”

Ben became involved with the campaign after he began as a safer neighbourhood sergeant in 2019. Upon starting the role, he determined engagement work needed to be done to address the increasing number of knife incidents in Derbyshire and identified Derby County as the ‘perfect route to explore’ in the pursuit of reaching audiences.

Summarising the key messages of Operation Sceptre, he continued: “We want

to educate the public on the dangers and consequences of carrying a knife. Through our emphasis on prevention, we aim to stop people from making the kinds of decisions that can eventually lead to knife crime.

“We also tackle misconceptions of knives. For example, we want to make it clear that if you carry a knife, you are more likely to be harmed with it yourself than harm someone else.”

More information can be found on Operation Sceptre on the [National Police Chiefs' Council website](#).





# ‘ELIMINATING ALCOHOL TURNED MY LIFE AROUND’

**Four years ago, facing burnout and her mental health at breaking point, Chief Superintendent Maria Fox decided it was time for a drastic change. As part of an overall health reset, she decided to eliminate alcohol from her life. Here, we take a look at how Maria is using her own wellbeing journey to support emergency service peers up and down the country.**

It was 2020, Maria had been in policing for around 26 years. She was working at West Midlands Police Force at the time. Looking back, she admits to being obese and having a high BMI (Body Mass Index), as well as being on the brink of having an emotional breakdown.

“Drinking alcohol had increasingly become my coping mechanism the longer I served. I never drank before the job but I would drink after shifts, and at weekends. I wasn’t listening to my body at all - in fact, I was doing the complete opposite of what my body needed me to do,” says Maria, who was 50 at the time.

In October of that year, Maria was signed off sick with acute perimenopausal stress and burnout. This prompted her to change.

“I decided to eliminate alcohol, take control of my diet and prioritise my sleep and that was the start of me getting better, and getting stronger,” continued Maria, now 53, who - inspired by Annie Grace’s ‘This Naked Mind’ - embarked on a 30-day experiment, which involved her taking a complete break from alcohol.

She returned to work the following spring with a completely different mindset and lived for the next two years alcohol-free.

“I can’t believe how much of an impact quitting alcohol had. I completely turned my life around. I’m physically healthier, less stressed and my mental focus is now second-to-none,” added Maria.

“I’ve never felt so mentally head clear.” In 2022, Maria became a ‘This Naked Mind’ coach before piloting her first initiative for policing, in which 150 participants from a few police forces alongside West Midlands



*Superintendent Maria Fox prior to taking part in the alcohol experiment....*

Police took part.

Soon after she moved across to Derbyshire Police Force and in January of this year, having developed original content with her peer This Naked Mind coaches and experts, based on Annie Grace’s 30-day experiment, she implemented the initiative on a wider scale for all emergency service colleagues from across the UK.

“In January, I launched another ‘experiment’ and I found hundreds of people wanted to get involved, not just police officers but from all emergency services,” Maria explained.

Maria used a closed Facebook community platform to host the initiative with colleague coaches and to develop a support network for those who wanted to take part.

This provided participants with daily pre-recorded content released at 5am every day and ‘Facebook Live’ Q&A sessions following up the theme for the day every evening, hosted by two coaches/experts. The content incorporated wide-ranging topics concerning alcohol from the substance itself, its impact on our physical and mental health to the social and cultural expectations surrounding its place in society.



*...and after.*

From nutrition advice to support with stress and sleep, Maria says that the experiment ‘gets people to think about their relationship with alcohol’.

“It’s not about telling people they should never drink alcohol again but instead to pull back the layers, so they can think about what alcohol is doing for them,” she said.

“They start to think about why they drink and why they might want to drink less.

“In most cases, those taking part can start to feel a difference physically and mentally in about two weeks but for others, it takes a bit longer - it really depends on how much and how frequently people are drinking before they start the experiment.

“This works for several reasons: not only do we provide a non-judgemental setting - but we are here to empower people to take back control of their relationship with alcohol. Plus, I’m a cop who has experienced this - I can relate to every single person who takes part in the experiment.

“To be honest, I felt incredibly alone when I was at rock bottom and I don’t want anyone else to feel like that. I don’t want anyone else to ever be in the same position that I was.”

If you would like to join ‘the 30-day alcohol-free experiment’ then visit the [Facebook group](#), which is for serving and retired emergency service workers. You will have to answer the pre-screen questions to help protect the integrity of the group.



**It’s not about telling people they should never drink alcohol again but instead to pull back the layers, so they can think about what alcohol is doing for them.**