



News & views

WINTER 2024 News and views from Derbyshire Police Federation

The background of the lower two-thirds of the page is a photograph of a Christmas tree. The focus is on several large, shiny, metallic red ornaments hanging from a branch. The background is filled with soft, out-of-focus bokeh lights in warm white and yellow tones, creating a festive and cozy atmosphere.

**Season's greetings
from Derbyshire
Police Federation**

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



By Keith Chambers, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation

As the year draws to a close, it's a time for reflection, gratitude, and looking forward to the year ahead. 2024 has brought its fair share of change, challenges and triumphs, but one thing for sure is that our members have continued to show resilience and strength, demonstrating exceptional commitment in the face of evolving demands.

Policing has never been an easy job, and it seems to be getting more complex year on year. Whether officers are out responding to critical incidents on the frontline or supporting vulnerable members of the community, the expectations placed on you are immense. And yet, time and again, you rise to the occasion, showing a dedication to service that is nothing short of extraordinary.

Looking back on the past 12 months, a lot has happened. Long hours, missed family occasions, and the emotional toll of dealing with difficult situations are part of the day-to-day reality for police officers. These

quiet sacrifices that the public may not always see form the backbone of effective policing. Your courage, professionalism, and compassion do not go unnoticed, and I want to take this opportunity to say thank you.

At the Federation, we are acutely aware of the pressures you face. These issues remain at the forefront of our priorities, from growing workloads and recruitment challenges to concerns about resources and officer safety. Our mission is to ensure that your voices are heard and that we continue to fight for fair treatment, better support, and the recognition you deserve. Whether it's lobbying for changes in national policy, providing practical support during difficult times, or simply being there as a trusted contact, the Federation is here for you.

“As we close out the year, I want to encourage you to take pride in what you've accomplished. Your work matters, and it makes a difference every single day.”

As we approach Christmas, this is also a time to acknowledge the invaluable support of your families and loved ones. Behind every police officer is a network of people who sacrifice alongside them, offering understanding, encouragement, and love despite the unique challenges of this career. To your families, I extend my heartfelt gratitude.

For some, Christmas will be a time spent with family and friends, a well-earned opportunity to relax and recharge. For others, it will mean being on duty, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our communities while the rest of the country celebrates.

For me, personally, this Christmas will undoubtedly be full of mixed emotions. It will be the first festive season without my

wife, Jenny, who sadly died in January following a three-year battle with bowel cancer. Jenny was brave, courageous and beautiful - and she inspires me every day. Even though she is no longer here physically, Jenny remains my rock.

Whatever your circumstances this festive season, I hope you manage to find moments of joy and peace. More than anything, please take the time to look after yourselves and each other. It's so important to prioritise your own wellbeing, both physically and mentally.

One of the first policing events I attended as branch chair was this year's COPS Memorial Service. I felt much pride in seeing so many colleagues and families coming together as one, remembering and honouring those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. That pride remains with me and is what drives me when I fight to improve policing for our members.

As we look forward to 2025, the Federation will continue to focus on several key priorities. Officer wellbeing remains at the top of the agenda. Policing is an inherently stressful profession, and ensuring that proper mental health support and resources are in place is critical.

Another key area is officer safety. Every year, hundreds of Derbyshire officers get assaulted. This is not right, and it should definitely not be accepted. Every one of you deserves to feel safe, protected and equipped to handle the challenges you face on the job. We will continue to press for better training, equipment, and policies that put officer safety at the forefront.

As we close out the year, I want to encourage you to take pride in what you've accomplished. Your work matters, and it makes a difference every single day.

On behalf of the Derbyshire Police Federation, I extend my warmest wishes to you and your families this Christmas. Stay safe, take care of one another, and know that the Federation is here for you - always.

Contact the Federation office

Derbyshire Police Federation, Unit 104 Coney Green Business Park, Wingfield View, Clay Cross, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S45 9JW.
Telephone: 01246 252329

The administration team - Jo Johnson, who works Monday to Wednesday - can be contacted in usual office hours as follows: **07583 002 298**

You can also contact Jo by emailing derbyshire@polfed.org

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

CHAIR REACTS TO NEW HOME OFFICE UNIT

The Government's decision to create a new Home Office unit to monitor police performance has been criticised by Keith Chambers, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation.

Keith argued that the move is 'unnecessary' and has questioned whether it is 'the best use of Government funding', given the existing oversight mechanisms and pressing needs within policing.

His comments come after Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, announced that the new unit will be used to monitor police performance directly.

Ms Cooper told of the unit during her speech at the annual conference in November, hosted by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and Association for Police and Crime Commissioners.

"Police performance is already rigorously scrutinised," said Keith.

"I'd seriously question whether adding another layer of monitoring addresses the real challenges facing the police or improves outcomes for the public."

Keith believes that the Government's resources would be better spent on

initiatives directly supporting officers and their ability to perform effectively.

"The Government must start prioritising officer pay, recruitment and retention," he continued.

"If the money is there to fund this additional unit, I'd question why hasn't that funding been spent on improving working conditions for our officers or making policing a more attractive job, keeping cops in the Force.

"Better investment in mental health services and working on the overall policing system to ensure manageable workloads for officers, I think, would have a far greater impact on performance than introducing more police bureaucracy."

The unit will harness national data to monitor performance and direct improvements, building on the existing work of the College of Policing, policing inspectorate (HMICFRS), NPCC and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).

Officer time spent on the frontline will also be monitored as part of the intelligence drive, drawing on local police data.

However, with mechanisms like

HMICFRS conducting regular reviews and the IOPC addressing misconduct allegations, Keith questioned the need for the new unit. He added: "Performance isn't being ignored. I feel that the focus should be addressing the root causes of any challenges rather than once again putting officers in the firing line.

"And please don't think this is about resisting accountability. It's about recognising where money is best spent in policing.

"Supporting our officers is the most effective way to enhance policing and build public trust. After all, real change starts with properly investing in those who serve."

The Government hopes that the unit, which is the first of its kind in more than a decade, will help rebuild relationships between the public and policing.

In her speech, the Home Secretary said: "We have a huge opportunity ahead of us to reset the relationship between government and the police, to regain the trust and support of the people we all serve.

"Strong and consistent performance is critical to commanding public confidence."



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FEDERATION ELECTIONS: COULD YOU BE A WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVE?

Members are being encouraged to take a full part in the Police Federation elections by putting themselves forward for election as a workplace representative or by voting for their preferred candidates, and eventually the national chair.

The nationwide election process starts on 30 December when nominations open for workplace representatives and will be complete by 1 October 2025 when the new National Board will be in place.

Keith Chambers, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation, said: "I really hope all members will take an interest in the elections and take part. It is all too easy to stand on the outside looking in with a critical eye, but if you want to drive forward change in the Federation, consider putting yourself forward for elections as a workplace rep or, at the very least, make sure you vote."

"Policing is facing some enormous challenges right now and the Federation has a critical role to play in representing its members' views and making sure their voices are heard."

"It also plays an invaluable role in helping and supporting members at their time of need, through conduct proceedings or other issues in the workplace."

"Being a Federation rep can be demanding, but it is also very rewarding. If any member wants to find out more about what the role entails contact a current workplace representative or the office team."

The Force's constables, sergeants and inspecting ranks, as well as Specials, can stand in the local workplace representative elections. Workplace reps undertake their Federation duties alongside their policing role. [Find out more about the role.](#)

Information on the first round of elections for workplace reps, including how to self-nominate and how to vote, will be emailed to all members.

As well as being able to vote for their local workplace reps, all members can vote for their local chair and, next year, the national chair through an electronic voting system.

The structure of the Police Federation

Each of the 43 police forces in England and Wales has a Federation Branch Council made up of all the workplace reps for that force.

From the Branch Council, an executive - the Branch Board - is elected, including a secretary and treasurer. Other lead roles include equality, health and safety, and

conduct and performance.

Local reps also have the chance to put themselves forward for the national body whenever opportunities arise.

The Police Federation of England and Wales, which has 139,000 subscribing members, was established in 1919 and has represented the interests of officers from the ranks of constable to chief inspector ever since. Specials have been able to subscribe to the Federation since 2022.

The elections

Any subscribing Federation member can nominate themselves for election as a workplace rep. Successful candidates become part of their local Branch Council. From there, they can stand to be on the local Branch Board, then stand for a regional or a national role if they wish.

“Policing is facing some enormous challenges right now and the Federation has a critical role to play in representing its members' views and making sure their voices are heard.”

Federation branches across the country are making a special plea to members from under-represented groups to consider putting themselves forward to become reps to help better reflect the diversity of the membership.

The election process:

- Members vote for workplace reps (Branch Council)
- The Branch Council votes for the Branch Board members
- Members elect the local branch chair
- The Branch Board elects the local branch secretary
- The chairs and secretaries from branches across England and Wales make up the National Council
- The National Council votes to elect the National Board
- All members vote to elect the national chair
- The National Board selects the general secretary
- The National Board votes in remaining principal officers.

Reps@Work

How do I stand for election?

Any member wishing to stand for election can self-nominate via an online portal during the nomination period - a link will be provided to all members via email. They will need to fill in the online nomination form and sign the Standards and Performance agreement.

Who can vote?

Any member can vote so long as they were a member of the Federation two months before nominations opened on 30 December 2024.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Federation office.



Elections timetable

LOCAL BRANCHES

Workplace representatives

- 30 December 2024 - Nominations open
- 24 January 2025 - Nominations close
- 3 to 23 February 2025 - Voting takes place
- 27 February - Results are announced.

Branch Boards

- 17 March - Nominations open
- 6 April - Nominations close
- 14 to 28 April - Voting takes place
- 30 April - Results are announced.

Branch chairs

- 2 May - Nominations open
- 9 May - Nominations close
- 13 to 27 May - Voting takes place
- 28 May - Results are announced
- 1 June - Branch chair and other officials take office.

PETE RETIRES – FINALLY!

When Pete Roberts told his tool fitter father he wanted to be a police officer he was instead advised to learn a trade.

But Pete was not to be put off and, having joined the Cadets at 16, he is finally leaving the Force, retiring with a total of 54 years' service under his belt, most recently providing essential administration support for the Derbyshire Police Federation branch.

He admits that there have been very few low times in his career, explaining: "I have been very, very lucky during my time with the Force. I am going to miss it."

Nevertheless, he feels it's time for him to head off into retirement.

In his latest role, he has job shared with Jo Johnson, with each working 24 hours a week, Jo Monday to Wednesday and Pete Wednesday to Friday. Pete first joined the Fed office when he retired from the Force in 2008 and initially worked alongside Sue Fergusson who oversaw the Federation's move into its current office in Coney Green from its previous base in South Normanton before retiring herself.

“ I have been very, very lucky during my time with the Force. I am going to miss it.

Pete joined the Derbyshire Police Cadets in 1970 when he was 16½ and was slightly delayed in joining as a regular when he had to go back to college to re-sit his English O-Level exam.

But once he had made it into the Force he never looked back. He did his initial training at Pannal Ash in Harrogate, travelling there on 1 January 1973 and getting paid double time for the Bank Holiday before starting his training that same afternoon. He was stationed at St Mary's Gate, the old Derby West, some of which now forms part of Derbyshire Dales, which he said was a real 'old-fashioned' police base.

"We would have four shifts, and each shift would have an inspector, two sergeants, around 10 PCs and that didn't include the beat officers or detectives," Pete recalls.

Then, in 1980, he moved onto the newly formed PSU shifts, still based at St Mary's Gate, working 8am to 4pm or 4pm to midnight during the week and 6pm to 2am shifts on Fridays and Saturday with two



sergeants and an inspector. The PSU call-out would involve three transit vans, with three sergeants and 30 PCs.

"We got involved in a huge variety of jobs, covering the weekend city transits, football matches, raids and the like and the fully resourced PSU capability meant the Force had officers available to deal with incidents without having to take people off section."

From PSU, he then spent some time working in custody at Full Street, the

forerunner of St Mary's Wharf as a gaoler, as it was before the Force had custody sergeants and confesses that, after two years there, he then almost had to be taken 'kicking and screaming' when he was transferred to Chaddesden (Chad) in 1984.

"I didn't want to go at all, I had really enjoyed my time working in custody and Chad just didn't appeal," Pete says.

However, he soon grew to love the posting. Working under Inspector Ivor Colpus, who was setting up a new response/

neighbourhood team and worked on a shift, led by the late Sergeant Kevin Wilson. In 1988 he passed his advanced driving course and worked the Chaddesden response car.

Towards the end of his time at Chad, he embarked on his Federation career.

Pete, a career-long PC, explains: "Sergeant Martin Critchley identified that I might make a good Federation workplace representative so initially I was the deputy to the fifth rep who had county-wide cover. Then when the Derby rep John Dutton retired I became the D Division rep."

In 2000, he moved to the new St Mary's Wharf HQ where, on the request of the then Divisional Commander, Tony Hurrell, he visited all shifts at all stations within D Division, to discuss and gather views on the proposed changes to the format of the division.

“ We got involved in a huge variety of jobs, covering the weekend city transits, football matches, raids and the like and the fully resourced PSU capability meant the Force had officers available to deal with incidents without having to take people off section.

Pete was then tasked by Inspector Ray Gibson and Chief Supt Hurrell, with setting up the Process Unit, at St Mary's Wharf. The unit, made up of very experienced officers all with 20 years' service or more, was formed to deal with the hand-over prisoners, charging and submitting the files, among other tasks that came their way, taking the strain off the response teams.

At the same time, his Federation role was developing too. He became deputy branch secretary in 2004 moving to the South Normanton Federation office and then secretary in September 2007.

"It never crossed my mind when I came to retire as a police officer that I would get a job in the Federation office but, with the demands of running the Group Insurance Scheme and other pressures, extra admin support was needed and the then chair, Duncan Davis, and the new secretary, Ian Godfrey, asked if I was interested. You could say the rest is history," says Pete.

In his time in the Federation office he has worked with six chairs - Duncan, Dennis Murphy, Mandy Trotman, Mark Pickard, Tony Wetton and now Keith



Joanne Johnson, branch secretary Kirsty Bunn, chair Keith Chambers, CAPLO lead Helen Gallear and Pete Roberts.

Chambers. He also worked alongside the secretaries Ian, Adam Galley and Kirsty Bunn

He has seen huge changes in policing throughout his career, citing some of the data protection provisions as being a hindrance to officers but the emergence of new technology as a positive development.

"Sadly, though, I think there have been more negatives than positives. It's hard for officers to police properly these days; there are just too many restrictions on them and something's got to give. We are suffering

due to a lack of experienced officers, we are a very bottom heavy service right now and some sergeants who are still young in service themselves. To me, policing needs to get back to basics. We have a lot of people in specialist squads and that leaves us with very few officers to fall back on. I feel quite sorry for some of the younger generation of officers coming in to policing now," Pete said.

That aside, he says the one thing he will really miss is the camaraderie: "It really is one big family; I shall miss that."

“ It never crossed my mind when I came to retire as a police officer that I would get a job in the Federation office but, with the demands of running the Group Insurance Scheme and other pressures, extra admin support was needed and the then chair, Duncan Davis, and the new secretary, Ian Godfrey, asked if I was interested. You could say the rest is history,



REMEDYING PENSION MATERNITY ISSUES: COULD YOU BE AFFECTED?

Police Officer Katie Rayner is urging members to check their pensions for any inaccuracies.

Katie, who took maternity leave in 2008 and 2011, along with a career break in 2014, before changing her hours to part-time until 2022, has recently discovered there might be discrepancies in her pension records.

Having investigated concerns around her own pension and spoken to others who might be in a similar situation, Katie has identified the following issues:

- **Contributions made during maternity leave might not be recorded**
- **Forces failing to keep records of part-time hours beyond seven years**
- **Incorrectly documented absences or career breaks**
- **Errors in dates and durations of maternity and paternity leave**
- **A lack of communication regarding the option to buy back missed pension contributions.**

Katie, who started her policing career in the Met, said that she had discovered that these problems 'might be even more complex' for officers who have transferred between Forces.

"I first became aware of these issues while following the 'Police Pension Q&A' Facebook group. Until then, I had no idea there might be discrepancies in my own pension records," said Katie, adding: "However, reading posts from other officers with experiences that echoed my own prompted me to dig deeper.

"Like many others, I'd previously found the complexities of pensions daunting and had either ignored them or assumed the system would resolve itself."

Katie, who transferred to Derbyshire Police in 2019, says her case has 'become complicated for pension providers'.

"My current pension provider doesn't have all the data needed to produce my RSS (Remediable Service Statement). When I log in to my pensions portal, I see gaps, discrepancies and no clear timeline for resolution. By my own calculation, I have around eight-and-a-half years remaining in service, but without these accurate figures, I cannot plan for retirement with confidence.

"Sadly, I'm far from alone in this situation. Unfortunately, many officers may be unaware that such discrepancies exist and instead assume their pension provider's records are correct."

Members who might be impacted include those who:

- **Is a member of the 1987 or 2006 Police Pension Scheme**
- **Took maternity leave before 2015**
- **Are still waiting for their Remediable Service Statement (RSS)**
- **Have clear gaps in their pension contributions on the ones received**
- **Have taken a career break, worked part-time, or transferred to another force at any point during their career.**

Katie is now encouraging her peers to 'thoroughly review' their pension records are accurate.

She says she is now on a mission to not only raise awareness of potential inaccuracies but also highlight the efforts being made by a group of serving and retired officers who are working hard to address these issues.

"These officers have formed a network of 'pension experts' who document their

findings and provide advice through the 'Police Pension Q&A' Facebook group," Katie explained.

Some of the key topics discussed on the page include:

- **Immediate detriment calculations.**
- **Commutation factors.**
- **Updates for retired members.**
- **The McCloud Remedy and its implications.**

The group has also created an online survey to gather data from affected officers. To date, over 630 officers have completed it, but many more are likely affected. The information collected will be used to advocate for change with the Home Office, pension providers, and chief constables.

"If you'd like to contribute, completing the survey is a straightforward process, and updates are sent to participants via their preferred email," Katie said.

"The ultimate goal is to achieve accurate and fair resolutions for all affected officers. However, this effort requires collective action and input from those impacted."

For Derbyshire officers, additional resources can be found on the Pension Hub on Connect. While efforts are underway to ensure the issues highlighted here are included on the hub, this is still a work in progress.

Katie ended by reaching out to colleagues: "I am happy to discuss my experiences further and point others toward helpful resources. However, please note that I am not an expert - just someone navigating these challenges like many others.

"My hope is that by sharing my story, more officers will check their records, become informed, and join the effort to resolve these longstanding issues.

"Together, we can push for a more equitable and transparent system, ensuring our retirement plans reflect the dedication and service we've given throughout our careers."

“ My hope is that by sharing my story, more officers will check their records, become informed, and join the effort to resolve these longstanding issues.

INSPECTOR'S PRAISE FOR POLICE TREATMENT CENTRES

An inspector has heaped praise on the 'amazing' care received from the Police Treatment Centres (PTC).

Amerjit (Amer) Thandi says he fully appreciates the importance of staying on top of your health as a police officer after spending three 'invaluable weeks' at the PTC's Harrogate centre, which provides bespoke support to serving and retired cops.

Having picked up a shoulder problem through exercising in the gym, Amer initially hoped the injury would eventually heal through rest. However, it became apparent he had a long-term issue that was not going to go away without treatment.

He applied for an occupational health referral through the Force and also went down the NHS route, only to find delays and complications with both.

Amer then explored what the PTC offered, although he doubted his eligibility due to sustaining the injury outside of his Force duties.

"It was a stressful time. I had gone on for a few months with the injury but it wasn't getting any better and was starting to impact me operationally," Amer said.

"I looked at different avenues to resolve it, but nothing was really forthcoming in terms of help I could get straightaway or in the near future."

Having regularly contributed towards the PTC throughout his 22-year career, Amer contacted the PTC, which led to a two-week residential stay at the Harrogate-based charity in 2022.

He immediately began daily



Amer Thandi.

appointments with his physiotherapist, who determined he had damaged his rotator cuff.

Amer, 54, also enjoyed the PTC gym classes, including Pilates, yoga and hydrotherapy, which he credits for providing an instant improvement to his shoulder.

He continued: "I was taken aback by the attention paid to me by staff. After I was booked, I was directed to the in-house nurse, and so much time was taken to really listen to me and understand the problem."

For Amer, he admits the second week was 'a lot more chilled'.

"When you go somewhere new, you want to try out all the facilities on offer but once I'd done all that, I took the opportunity to unwind," he said.

"You're staying in a lovely room in what could pass as a stately home, with amazing views of greenery and a lake. Physically, I needed to get my shoulder sorted, but I didn't realise how I would benefit from some mental therapeutic time, too."

Not completely satisfied with the progress of his injury, staff invited Amer back for a further week once they had capacity.

Amer completed this extra stint just over a month later, in January 2023, and came away firmly on the road to recovery. Another month on, he says his shoulder was essentially free from any pain or discomfort.

Now, he is encouraging fellow Fed members to take advantage of the charity – and reminding them that the only way of doing so is by paying into it each month.

"Even after I had left for good, my physio told me to keep in touch, in case my shoulder gave me any more trouble further down the line," he explained.

"I cannot recommend the PTC highly enough. I would urge every single officer to pay into it. Once you do that, don't be afraid to reach out to them as soon as you have any serious concerns with your health.

Amer also urged police officers everywhere to look after themselves, both physically and mentally: "The public will never realise everything we put ourselves through, and everything we see and do for their safety.

"Whatever kind of help we might need, from whatever organisation, we deserve it and we owe it to ourselves to seek it."



Photo courtesy of Anderson Photography

2024: A YEAR IN REVIEW

JANUARY

24 - Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton said the results of the largest integrity screening project undertaken in policing will help to build trust in the service. The results, published by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) found that in Derbyshire 2,167 officers, 1,806 members of staff, and 141 volunteers were screened using the Police National Database, with all 4,114 people having no concerns against them.

26 - Derbyshire Police Federation members living with addiction were given access to free support at the touch of a button through a partnership involving the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) and [Help 4 Addiction](#) and [Rehubs](#) which offer 24/7 confidential, bespoke advice and guidance for police officers.

FEBRUARY

9 - Federation branch secretary Kirsty Bunn praised the Force for giving new mums the opportunity to have a funded post-birth physical health check. It teamed up with Lizzie Smith, a Midlands-based pelvic health physiotherapist, to provide a 'Mummy MOT' to both officers and staff, who have recently had a baby.



12 - Tony Wetton, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation, said more investment is needed in roads policing to bring down the 'shocking' numbers of deaths on the UK's roads. Tony was speaking after the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) Roads Policing Seminar was told that five people were killed every day in road traffic collisions across the country.

26 - Derbyshire Detective Inspector John Murphy said a Derbyshire Police Federation retirement seminar, hosted at intervals during the year by Reflect Financial, gave him far more confidence ahead of his retirement in October. The seminars cover various topics including managing your finances, developing a financial plan, wills and estate planning, personal taxation and the police pension schemes.

MARCH

8 - The Federation branch's new full-time conduct and performance liaison officer (CAPLO) and wellbeing lead, Helen Galliar,

said she felt like the luckiest woman in the organisation having taken on her new role since it would give her the opportunity to be there for members and give them the support they deserve. Helen hopes to also educate line managers, to prevent mental health issues arising. (pic of Helen, which hopefully you have)

11 - The families of police officers who die in service will now be awarded an Elizabeth Emblem recognising their sacrifice. Conferred by the King, the emblem will incorporate a rosemary wreath, traditionally symbolising remembrance, surrounding the Tudor Crown. It will also be available to commemorate firefighters and other public service workers.



22 - The Force's Neurodiversity Working Group, set up to support neurodiverse officers and staff, is making a difference to people's lives, said the group's lead, Temporary Chief Inspector Clare Preston-Davies who explained she was proud of the group's work and the positive impact it was having.

27 - Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton said it was 'an absolute disgrace' that almost one in five officers say they don't have enough money to cover their essentials. A staggering 18 per cent of respondents to the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) Pay and Morale Survey reported 'never' or 'almost never' having enough money for their essentials. In Derbyshire more than half of respondents (55 per cent) felt their morale was low or very low. This is compared to the national average of 58 per cent, but it was a marked improvement on two years earlier when 67 per cent of Derbyshire respondents said their morale was low or very low, the lowest in the country.

APRIL

14 - The work of Derbyshire Police Federation on behalf of its members during 2023 was put under the spotlight as it published its [latest annual review](#).



26 - Derbyshire PC Mick Maugham, who is a core trainer, said a review of police uniform was initially instigated following complaints about the fit and finish on trousers for female officers but it had 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.

MAY

2 - Federation branch chair Tony Wetton said the lack of social spaces for officers to decompress between jobs has had a big effect on their welfare. Tony said the absence of police canteens and other areas for members to talk to colleagues or to take time for themselves continued to have an impact.

7 - Derbyshire's new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) would need to quickly get to grip with the crisis in policing, according to Derbyshire Police Federation. Labour & Co-operative candidate Nicolle Ndiweni topped the polls in the PCC elections.



15 - Inspector Nick Booth, who has worked in public order policing for 20 years and is now a public order trainer, said he was humbled his team had been put forward as Derbyshire Police Federation's nominee for the national Police Bravery Awards. The officers were faced with serious disorder ahead of Aston Villa's home European game with Legia Warsaw with Nick describing it as the worst public order violence he has seen in his career.

Nick was working alongside PCs Ryan McGrath, Christopher Harrold, Tammy Careless, Adam Podam, Rebecca Callan, Matthew Copestake and Oliver Bates with all eight officers nominated for the annual awards to be held in July.

21 – The Police Race Action Plan is a chance to build trust and confidence in policing but has to be backed up if it is to work, said Derbyshire PC Harpreet Singh Sidhu. 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.

JUNE

17 – Deputy Chief Constable Simon Blatchly formally wished Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton the very best of luck as his retirement fast approached.



17 – Derbyshire Police Federation workplace representative and health and safety lead Steve Reid who suffered horrific injuries in a brutal knife attack said more needs to be done to protect officers from assaults after new statistics showed that, on average, there were 11 attacks a week on Derbyshire police officers.

25 – Gary Callier, who set up Police UK Disability Sport (PUKDS) to allow police officers to play adaptive or disabled sports, encouraged Derbyshire Police Federation members to see what it has to offer.

JULY

9 – Members called on the Police Federation to campaign for industrial rights after a nationwide poll.

11 – A group of Derbyshire Police Federation members who faced serious crowd disorder at a Europa Conference League football match were among those recognised at this year's national Police Bravery Awards which included a Downing Street reception and a glittering awards ceremony.

Led by Inspector Nick Booth, the unit consisted of PCs Ryan McGrath, Christopher Harrold, Tammy Careless, Adam Podam, Rebecca Callan, Matthew Copestake and Oliver Bates.

28 – Six days after taking up his role as Derbyshire Police Federation chair Keith Chambers joined the families of fallen officers at the annual Care of Police Survivors (COPS) Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. A number of Derbyshire Police officers and staff also took part in the Police Unity Tour, a cycle ride undertaken by riders from forces across England and Wales to raise awareness of fallen officers and support the COPS charity.

30 – Officers continue to suffer a drop in their pay – despite the announcement of a 4.75 per cent increase, according to Derbyshire Police Federation chair Keith Chambers.

He cautiously welcomed the pay rise, but said it was disappointing when compared to the pay awards offered to millions of other public sector workers.

AUGUST

2 – Home Office figures showed the number of officers in Derbyshire Police fell by 0.8 per cent (18 officers) to 2,122 officers in the past year. Derbyshire Police Federation chair Keith Chambers said retention was a 'big challenge' with pay, morale and unfair treatment by the former government key factors.

12 – Derbyshire PC Ryan McGrath was preparing to travel to France to act as a general patrol officer throughout the 2024 Summer Paralympic Games in Paris, which were set to start on 28 August following the conclusion of the Olympics.

19 – Derbyshire Police Federation paid its respects to two Force detectives who died on this day 30 years ago.

DCs Anthony Thornley, 31, and Gary Freeman, 36, died when the car they were travelling in was in collision with a lorry as they travelled between Marehay and Denby Pottery on 19 August 1994.

SEPTEMBER

10 – Sergeant Matt Peters talks about the work he is looking forward to doing in Canada next year. Matt will be collaborating with law enforcement agencies, learning about the work they do to prevent suicide. He had been deeply affected 'personally and professionally' by the death of his friend and shift colleague PC Anthony Ingham, known as Ingers, in July 2022.

20 – The Police Federation of England and Wales launched its annual Pay and Morale Survey to gather 'crucial evidence' to support its fight for fair pay and better working conditions.

29 – The National Police Memorial Day was held in Glasgow with Derbyshire Police Federation chair Keith Chambers representing the branch and Deputy Chief Constable Simon Blatchly attending for the Force. PC Tim Dugard was the Force's standard bearer at the service.



OCTOBER

7 – Helen Gallear said frontline officers are repeatedly being exposed to trauma which is having a detrimental effect on their mental health. The Derbyshire Police Federation wellbeing lead said more officers than ever were contacting the branch for support with their emotional and mental wellbeing.



18 – Derbyshire PC Dan Bird competed at the Transplant Games representing the Nottingham Transplant Team at golf, darts and seven-a-side football. Dan had received a liver transplant in December after being diagnosed with an illness aged 13.

24 – Speaking out as part of Black History Month, which is celebrated each October, Keith Chambers said he hoped being the first black elected chair of Derbyshire Police Federation will inspire his colleagues - whatever their race or background - to be the best version of themselves possible.

NOVEMBER

11 – The 2025 dates for the Derbyshire Police Federation pre-retirement seminars were announced. Organised in partnership with Reflect Financial, they will be held at the Federation offices at the Coney Green Business Park in Clay Cross, on 4 February, 2 July and 8 October and are aimed at officers in the last 18 months of their service.

14 – Six months into her role as the Derbyshire Police Federation wellbeing lead and complaints and discipline liaison officer (CAPLO) Helen Gallear said the full-time position was a dream come true and reaffirmed her commitment to supporting members and ensuring they were treated fairly.

14 – Maz Ahmad, chair of Derbyshire Police's Race Equality Network (REN), was seeking to strengthen the network and encouraged Federation members to get involved. REN aims to support its members and improve their working environment, acting as a critical friend to the Force and helping it identify and resolve issues which may affect BAME colleagues and the communities it serves.

RACE EQUALITY NETWORK OFFERS LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

The chair of Derbyshire Police's Race Equality Network (REN) is seeking to strengthen the network and is encouraging Federation members to get involved.

REN aims to support its members and improve their working environment, acting as a critical friend to the Force and helping it identify and resolve issues which may affect black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) colleagues and the communities of Derbyshire.

Maz Ahmad, REN chair, is looking for people from different backgrounds, in varying roles and with different experiences in the organisation to help with its work.

He said: "Over the past couple of years a lot of people on our exec have retired and left the organisation and we haven't had the opportunity to replace them.

"We've got to rebuild our exec team and our membership so that we are able to provide support to both our members and the Force. There are a lot of opportunities for people to get involved.

"It's great to have a group of people who are available and willing to support others. As a police staff member I don't always fully understand the issues around what police officers experience, which is why we need people from a variety of roles and with different experiences in the REN."

Maz cited a recent example as to why it was important the network was diverse in its make up.

"I had an officer call me the other day who was upset, wasn't happy about their experiences and wanted to leave," said Maz.

"When I talked to them I understood a lot of the issues, but there were some issues particular to policing I did not have first-hand experience of so I put them in touch with a sergeant who has been through something similar.

"That sergeant is now going to mentor and support the officer and hopefully prevent him from leaving the organisation."

Maz has been involved in the REN for the past six years and was elected as its chair in November last year.

The REN aims to put fairness at the heart of the Force by taking forward initiatives for the progression of people from BAME backgrounds.

These include mentoring schemes, leadership programmes, development opportunities and positive action initiatives.

Maz Ahmad, REN chair.



Maz said: "We are passionate about working together with the Force to actively promote cultural change and organisational learning.

"Our view is that in order to affect change you have to be part of the solution and be prepared to play your part, leading by example to support colleagues and the wider organisation to understand and celebrate difference."

He continued: "First and foremost, we are there as a support network for our members.

"That could be from a wellbeing point of view, or they want someone to attend a meeting with them and be a source of support, or it could be supporting them through promotion and development.

"But it doesn't stop us challenging the organisation if we feel that something is unfair, or a process hasn't been followed, or some discrimination has occurred.

"The REN work is voluntary and it can be really rewarding, particularly when you make a difference to someone."

The REN is affiliated with the National

Black Police Association (NBPA) and Maz currently sits as the treasurer on the association's cabinet.

The network and network members have access to:

- **Training and development**
- **Strategic representation with policing organisations including the Home Office, National Police Chiefs' Council, the College of Policing, the Independent Office for Police Conduct, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the Police Superintendents' Association and the Police Federation**
- **Regional development days**
- **Provision of NBPA cabinet members to speak at local events, meetings and lectures**
- **Regular up to date policing information**
- **Support and advice for career promotion and development**
- **Support with grievances and disciplinarys for individuals.**

To find out more about the network and how you can get involved, please [email REN](#).

MEN'S HEALTH FORUM: A SAFE SPACE TO OPEN UP

Emotional and wellbeing issues can impact anyone, says Detective Inspector Dan Phillips, as he highlights the work of the Force's Men's Health Forum.

He believes the forum provides a support network for men and a space for them to discuss their worries and concerns.

Dan explains: "The Men's Health Forum has been set up to create a space where we can talk things through.

"We're trying to end the mentality that men don't feel emotion and don't talk about things. The feeling that you have to crack on with it yourself. We've looked at topics such as money, physical health, new parenting.

"It's been really quite positive. We've had a good uptake. Having a peer group to talk to is often really helpful in changing attitudes."

“We're trying to end the mentality that men don't feel emotion and don't talk about things. The feeling that you have to crack on with it yourself. We've looked at topics such as money, physical health, new parenting.”

Dan highlighted the forum, which meets in person and online every two months and gives officers a chance to talk about physical and mental health issues, for Men's Health Awareness Month (November).



Detective Inspector Dan Phillips.

Dan opened up about his own issues, and said having a space to talk helped his emotions and wellbeing.

He said: "I've had a bit of a bad time over the past three years. I had issues in my personal and family life. I had my own health issues.

"I was working myself into the ground doing 50 to 60-hour weeks. And it came to a head. I'm ex-forces and have always been really robust and cracked on with stuff.

"I got to a point where I found myself spiralling and thought 'I need some help here'. I needed to chat to someone. I tackle things head on but it was nice to talk other

people and realise you're not on your own.

"The things you go through are the things that pretty much everybody goes through.

"Everybody has money worries at times, worries about work, worries about decisions they've made, worries about health and relationships and family members.

"One of my staff members was a new dad. Nobody teaches you how to be a dad. No one teaches you how to look after and bring up kids. We're all experiencing similar things, but you don't really talk about it.

"So it was really nice to get a few things off the chest and chat to like-minded people."

He added: "I've got a lot better but three or four years ago I just didn't talk about my emotions. I just used to deal with them, or think I was dealing with them, but it would sometimes make me angry internally.

"Now I find if I chat with someone, it lifts and I can get back on with my life. I think that is still a real barrier for men. It's like a pressure valve. You let a bit of steam out and off you go."

Dan, who has been a police officer for 18 years, said that the feedback from people has been very positive.

He said: "Does it help? I think so. I wouldn't have supported the group if I thought it was a waste of time. It helped me, and I can only comment on my own experience.

"The reaction from people when we've done these meetings has been really positive. We're not going through the motions, we're really trying to help people."

Derbyshire Police Federation members can find out about the bi-monthly Men's Health Forums and sign up to them on the Force intranet.



FRED'S FUNDRAISING SUCCESS FOR MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY

To mark Men's Health Awareness Month (November), we caught up with Three Peaks conqueror PC Fred Bray who talked about the power of exercise in boosting mental wellness.

Having been with the Force for 22 years, Fred is currently working in the crime management unit at Force Headquarters in Ripley.

Ensuring that crime reports are correctly administered and allocated to the appropriate department, Fred stepped into this role last year.

In 2017, he was put onto light duties after spending most of his career on response across the county.

This change was made on mental health grounds, after living with depression and anxiety meant Fred had reached a point where he was struggling to cope with the demands of frontline policing.

Despite being diagnosed and given medication for both illnesses years earlier, he says he did not fully appreciate the impact they had on his mind until around the time it came to such a drastic decision.

“I can say without doubt that this money will be put to good use, and when people in the office became aware of what we were doing and why, they were nothing but fantastic about it.”

“I knew something was wrong when I started having panic attacks and mini-blackouts while on duty - that was when I went to see a doctor,” Fred said.

“When I look back, I know this was down to my workload and the lack of support I felt I had from the Force.

“For a long while, I found it impossible to talk about it at work - even when I knew I had been formally diagnosed with mental health disorders. There were days and weeks when I wouldn't want to see or talk to anyone.

“Only when I started being more open about it did I start to realise how much it truly weighed me down. And then my role changed completely, which in itself improved my mental health and gave me the space to



continue being open about it.”

Fred now actively raises awareness at work by wearing a lanyard in the office to indicate invisible illness.

This, together with other additions to his life - including going out on regular walks and hikes - has allowed him to better manage his wellbeing.

Earlier this year, Fred was inspired to attempt the Three Peaks Challenge - conquering the three highest mountains of England, Scotland and Wales in 24 hours - to raise funds for two charities close to his heart.

He recruited eight other Derbyshire officers and one member of police staff to join him, some of them had also experienced mental illness.

Fred chose to raise money for Rethink Mental Illness, which has had a hand in Force mental health training in the past, alongside Derbyshire Autistic Services, in honour of his two autistic children.

The challenge, which started on 28 September, was a resounding success, he revealed: “We all came together as a team, and it was absolutely incredible, with eight of us finishing within twenty-four hours and me and another officer finishing not long afterwards.”

They started at Scotland's Ben Nevis before heading onto England's Scafell Pike, which was an overnight climb.

“This was the toughest part of the challenge,” Fred recalled, adding: “As visibility got down to barely two metres in front - you had to keep touching the person ahead of you

to keep reference of where you were.

“Finally, we got to Wales' Snowdonia, where fatigue was really setting in, and ferocious winds didn't help matters either. But, in the end, we did it, and we're all extremely proud.

“At the end, I said to everyone, ‘who was worried about their mental health during that?’

“It was obviously tongue-in-cheek because you have no time to be weighed down by your mind - and that is what exercise can do for you, mentally. I'm so happy that we all completed such an amazing challenge together.”

The team raised more than £2,000, and Fred has since thanked fellow Federation members for their support, both through donations and words of encouragement.

He said: “I can say without doubt that this money will be put to good use, and when people in the office became aware of what we were doing and why, they were nothing but fantastic about it.”

Looking forward, Fred underlined the importance of kindness among colleagues for the sake of everyone's mental wellbeing.

“In my experience, I think some can still be quite derogatory about general low moods and quietness at work, even if they have no bad intentions - all it takes is to sincerely ask someone if they are okay,” he said.

“As police officers, I think it's huge that we remember it's only us who can truly appreciate the things we go through in this profession, and to be there for each other - we can never lose sight of that.”