# Norfolk Police Federation NORFOLK NEWS

Autumn 2025



### **Exhausted Officers Quit Service**

olice officers are exhausted, undervalued and are leaving in record numbers, Norfolk Police Federation has said, as new figures show the county only has 205 officers per Andy Symonds, Chair of Norfolk Police Federation, said: "Norfolk has 1,911 officers for a population of 932,000 – which means there are 205 officers per 100,000 population. Is it any wonder

in Norwich pretty much every weekend of the summer, and this continues.

"People don't see the personal impact that policing these additional incidents has on my

### "Is it any wonder officers in Norfolk are exhausted?"

100,000 population.

This is lower than the average for England and Wales, which is 219 officers per 100,000 population, according to The Home Office Police Workforce Open Data Tables.

London has the most officers per 100,000 population, at 383, while the West Midlands sits at the lowest end, with just 88 per 100,000.

officers here in Norfolk are exhausted?

"This summer has been relentless for them. They have suffered short-notice changes to their duties, and precious rest days that they should be spending with their families have been cancelled. But they've responded admirably, as they always do.

"We've seen officers deployed to protests

colleagues. They are already busy policing the business-as-usual incidents, which is demanding as it is. They are working so hard that they're like a car that's constantly being revved in the red at 8000rpm – it will eventually blow up and need fixing.

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"These stark realities are why our communities say they hardly ever see a bobby on the beat.

"No, they don't, as they are so stretched dealing with the plethora of incidents that somehow, over many years, have become police business – even though much of it has nothing to do with crime."

Policing has become the catch-all service for all of society's issues, Andy said.

He continued: "We need far better funding from the Government to properly invest in policing. Not being drip-fed small amounts that don't allow us to even stand still, let alone make progress. We also require stronger leadership to breathe new life into policing, by giving confidence back to police officers to make strong, sensible and pragmatic decisions out on the

street. To act without fear or favour. To not become embroiled in people's lives when we have no business to do so.

"Is it any wonder that we are seeing the highest number of resignations since records began? Nearly 5,000 officers left voluntarily in the past year. And over 70% of these with less than five years' of service. Those officers leaving can see very early on in their careers that the service is broken."

### **Stress Absences Increase**

n Norfolk Constabulary, 182 officers were signed off work in 2024-25 due to stress, depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder, a Freedom of Information request has revealed.

This is 46% higher than the previous year, when 125 Norfolk officers were signed off work for mental health reasons.

Across the UK, more than 17,700 police officers were signed off for mental health reasons in the financial year 2024-25, which is 22% up on last year and a huge 182% higher than when *Police Oracle* first ran the survey 12 years ago.

Of the 45 forces that provided figures both this year and last year, 33 reported an increased number of officers being signed off for mental ill health.

The highest number of absences were, unsurprisingly, reported by the UK's largest

Police Covenant, which has no budget. We're trying our best with police forces, which have no budget.

"The impact of the Spending Review means that this will get worse. Forces just cannot afford to provide welfare practices for police officers when they cannot even fund the service and have to make cuts."

Andy Rhodes, Director of the National Police Wellbeing Service, said: "Catching mental illness before it escalates and addressing the issues that are causing things like work-related stress is of paramount importance."

Policing is a high-stress profession, he said, with high levels of trauma exposure, demand and pressure, and the fact that so many officers are reporting sick means "we all must do more to prioritise and invest in prevention".

But Andy also welcomed the fact that increasing numbers of officers felt able to speak

### "We all must do more to prioritise and invest in prevention"

police forces: the Metropolitan Police (2,054), Police Scotland (1,203), Greater Manchester Police (1,050) and West Midlands Police (1,162).

PFEW's Wellbeing Lead, Paul Williams, said that the national figures were "very worrying".

He said: "Behind each mental health condition, you've got an individual who's going through incredible trauma, which has a significant impact not just on them, but on their family, marriage and career. It can be devastating."

Paul said it was "a demonstration of the complexities of policing, a demonstration of the budget cuts over the past 15 years, and the lack of increase in pay for police officers".

He continued: "All this has contributed to an extreme rise in mental ill health within the police, and it's only going to keep rising if there's no intervention."

There was "absolutely not enough being done" about officers' mental ill health, said Paul. He added: "We are trying our best via the

up about their mental health, as he said that "traditionally, policing has suffered from a 'be strong' culture".

He said: "Every force is working hard to invest in good-quality, timely support, and new standards and guidance are in place to drive consistency in areas like occupational health, suicide prevention, fatigue and trauma support – which is included in the inspection process.

"The National Police Wellbeing Service is now a well-established national capability providing physical assets, training courses and advice to thousands of officers and staff every year – and this year we have launched a police-only mental health crisis hotline.

"We recognise that it is not only the nature of police work that affects mental health; it is also affected by things such as insufficient resource, high demand and constant change, which needs to be addressed as an urgent priority at a local and national level."



Norfolk Police Federation has been supporting our members with a smile and a breakfast bap/burger, hot/cold drinks and some sweeties, while they have been stepping up and working hard policing the continued protests in the county for the past seven weekends, predominantly on a Sunday. It's been a pleasure to support our hardworking members in this small way.





**Uniforms 'Not Fit For Purpose'** 

olice officers and staff in England and Wales are frustrated with their uniforms, which they say are unfit for purpose, restrictive and contribute to major health issues, a new survey has found.

More than 60% of men and 85% of women who responded to the survey reported a physical health condition they believed was caused by or made worse through wearing uniform.

The survey, carried out in 2024, includes 20,838 respondents.

It found that 68% of respondents from Norfolk Constabulary reported that wearing police uniform was a negative experience.

And 72% reported at least one health issue believed to be caused or made worse by uniform.

A PFEW spokesperson said: "Our officers put their lives on the line day in and day out to provide the highest standards of service which the public rightly expects from them.

"Yet, 7 in 10 officers find their uniform restricts their movement thereby reducing their effectiveness, while more than 5 in 10 officers find their current body armour uncomfortable.

"These factors significantly heighten risk to officer safety and impact their ability to keep

their communities safe.

"How can it be right that on one hand our employers (Chief Constables) and the Government are adopting modern technology and costly artificial intelligence assisted equipment such as drones, and on the other hand they refuse to invest in basic day-to-day equipment such as new age uniform and body armour for our officers and staff?

"We ardently appeal to our employers and the Government to wake up and take cognisance of the independent evidence obtained by this pioneering study to immediately devote resources to provide our officers with uniform that is fit for purpose and fit for all."

UK Uniform Portfolio Lead for the National Police Chiefs' Council Melissa Russhard said: "The findings can now inform our progress to eliminating the postcode lottery around uniform safety and standards and help us define and introduce the highest minimum standards for everyone."

The research was led by Dr Camilla De Camargo and Dr Stephanie Wallace, from Lancaster University Law School, working in collaboration with the Police Federation of England & Wales's Senior Researcher Sahrish Khan, and the National Police Chiefs' Council.



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### **Sgt Jack Fry**

When tragedy struck on Sgt Jack Fry's team, he knew he wanted to do more to help his colleagues. Now in post as a Fed Rep, Jack tells us what he is keen to focus on.

#### Tell us a little about your career so far.

I joined in 2013 and have always been a police officer. I worked for a bit as an authorised firearms officer up at Sandringham with the royal family, before getting promoted to sergeant in 2021

#### Why did you decide to become a Fed Rep?

When I was a sergeant on a previous team, I had a lot of welfare issues with my staff. Sadly, one of them took his own life. For me it was about being that face that represents people from a wellbeing point of view.

I just want to make sure that everyone gets treated how they should be, and the support and help is there for them if they need it.



Why is it important for members to have serving officers as Reps?

I think it's good because we've been there and we've done it. We do the same job they do and we know what the job is like, what they face and



the issues that they have. It's good for them to be able to approach someone who they potentially know and is a friendly face.

### Is there anything you would like to focus on in your role?

I would like to get involved in both wellbeing and conduct, representing people who are going through the worst point of their career.

#### And finally, tell us something about yourself.

Well I've got two kids and I do this for them, to make them proud.

"I want to make sure that everyone gets treated how they should be, and the support and help is there for them if they need it"

### **PC Chris Crittenden**

PC Chris Crittenden's policing journey has taken him from firearms to the roads. Now a Federation Rep, he outlines why he feels the role is important.

#### Tell us about your policing career so far.

I joined at the beginning of 2017, starting off in response at Thetford, which I did for about five-and-a-half years. I spent some time as an authorised firearms officer up at Sandringham, before becoming an ARV officer. That was at Wyndham, before we moved to Broadland, and now I'm on roads policing.

#### So why did you decide to become a Fed Rep?

It was actually after my colleagues asked if I'd be willing to represent them. So yeah, it was more down to the requests of my colleagues that I put myself forward.

Do you plan to have a particular focus in the Federation?



Well actually, I've just been voted in to be the lead for roads policing.



### Do you think it's important for members to have fellow officers as Reps?

I think so, yes, because at the end of the day we're there to support our members and I think it will be good to have that friendly face.

We know what it is that we go through and, ultimately, we're the ones that put ourselves in to represent them.

### And finally, what is an interesting fact about vou?

I spend a lot of my time outside of work as a cadet forces volunteer.

"We're there to support our members and I think it will be good to have that friendly face"



# Remembering Fallen Friends

olice officers who have died on duty were remembered by their family and friends at the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) Annual Service of Remembrance.

Surviving family members and serving police officers gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum on Sunday 3 August to pay their respects to officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

More than 1,000 people attended the service in Staffordshire – where the rain thankfully held off.

Events took place all weekend for surviving family members.

During the one-hour service on Sunday, survivors recalled their loss and how the charity had helped them in their time of need.

Two daughters of fallen police officers and a sister of a colleague who died on duty spoke with emotion and humour recalling their loved ones.

The Roll of Honour for police officers who have died on duty during the past 12 months was read out.

Those remembered this year were Acting Sgt Reece Buckenham, of Hertfordshire Police; DC Karen Smith, of Humberside Police; PC Rosie Prior, of North Yorkshire Police; PC Michael Bruce, of the Metropolitan Police; and PC Ian Minett, of Gloucestershire Constabulary.



The Police Unity Tour arrived before the Service of Remembrance – more than 500 cyclists who had ridden from across the country to the Arboretum in memory of fallen officers.

The cyclists raise money for the COPS charity – and this year raised in excess of £230,000.

Also attending were the Blue Knights motorcyclists.



etective Constable Joanne Hill, of Norfolk Constabulary, sadly lost her husband Nicholas in 2002 when their son was just nine weeks old. Joanne received support from Care of Police Survivors.

She now takes part in the Unity Tour in his memory.

Remembering fallen colleagues. Supporting the surviving family members left behind.

The ride concludes at the annual COPS Service of Remembrance.

Joanne, pictured WHO IS SHE said: "It was another really, really good, successful Unity Tour... the Friday though was incredibly wet.

"The big thing for me about the entire weekend is the sense of team that comes from it and the sense of belonging – everybody's united together for the same reason. And everybody just understands it and gets it.

"It's really positive and it gives you such a good feeling to have that camaraderie, and that's what gets you through. But then riding into Drayton Manor on Saturday afternoon, being welcomed in by all the survivors, is always really emotional.

"And then again, riding into the Arboretum



on Sunday and seeing all those people and the enormity of it, and then riding as part of the big peloton and just realising why... It's really sad why you're doing it and sad that COPS is growing."

More than 500 cyclists, each wearing a Unity Band engraved with the name of a fallen officer, completed their cross-country journey as part of the Unity Tour.

These bands were presented to the officers' families, symbolising remembrance and solidarity.

The tour's motto is 'We Ride For Those Who Died'. Now in its 13th year, the Police Unity Tour continues to raise essential funds for COPS, with the 2025 tour alone raising £235,000.

Joanne added: "To be able to give something to others who have been in that situation and are in that situation now means a lot as well.

"How do I train? I train indoors, which is not always the best way.

"Finding the time to go out on my bike, you know, take two, three, four hours out of my day to go for a ride on the road is quite difficult because I've got young children.

"So for me, at least if I can train at home I'm there with them still.

"I started sort of earlier in the year doing some hill climb rides nd mountain series rides on my Peloton. And that's generally what I do most years."

And what about the Unity Tour 2026...?

Joanne said: "It would be really nice to see more people from Norfolk joining us next year, because it was going to be my last year but by Friday morning they persuaded me to do it again, because I've done it every single year.

"I've already started booking the hotels!"

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## **More Cops Taking Second Jobs**

he number of officers in Norfolk who have taken a second job to make ends meet has risen by 45%, new figures show.

Statistics from the Police Federation of England and Wales show that thousands of officers are working second jobs simply to cover their living costs.

Nationally, more than 4,000 officers secured approval for secondary employment in 2024 – double the number recorded in 2019, data obtained under the Freedom of Information

has fallen. Brian Booth, PFEW Acting Deputy National Chair, said officers were "overworked, underpaid and under threat" and that that no one should finish a demanding shift protecting the public only to head straight to another job in order to afford basic bills.

He added: "The impact on their family life or rest and recovery time is scary to think about... We need pay restoration now, and we need Chief Constables to get off the fence on pay and support their officers."

Since 2010, police pay has fallen by 21% in

have lost our house. If I didn't have this second income, it would be very tight. I've had to increase my work on the side to make up for the degradation of my police pay over the years. Having a second job has affected my sleep, my diet and my fitness levels, but I've had to do it."

The PFEW is calling on the Government to outline urgent plans to restore the 21% lost in real-terms pay since 2010. It argues that without meaningful action, officer welfare and public safety will continue to suffer.

### "Having a second job has affected my sleep, my diet and my fitness levels, but I've had to do it"

Act revealed.

In Norfolk, there was a 45.7% increase – up from 70 in 2019 to 102 in 2024.

The highest individual figure came in Merseyside Police, where 372 officers reported having a second job. In Dyfed-Powys, approvals rose from nine officers in 2019 to 287 last year, an increase of over 3,000%.

There was a 503% increase in South Wales; Essex saw a five-fold rise; Cleveland recorded a 421% increase and Hampshire a 348% jump.

The PFEW has described this trend as a "damning indictment" of how far police pay

real terms. New recruits start on £29,000 a year, and after six years' service are earning up to £10,000 less than teachers or nurses with equivalent experience.

With inflation and rising interest rates pushing living costs ever higher, many officers feel they have no choice but to seek additional income.

One officer serving in Wales, who spoke on condition of anonymity, described the personal impact of the crisis.

He said: "There was a time when, had I not had other employment, my wife and I would

Brian expressed frustration that nine forces, including the Metropolitan Police, refused to provide data or claimed it took too long to collect.

Calling on forces to publish this data quarterly, he added: "I'm particularly annoyed that some forces told us it would take more than 18 hours to find this data.

"This information should be at Chief Constables' fingertips, because it highlights financial stress directly linked to officer welfare. Don't make us drag [this information] out of you."



### **Dynamic Duo At Bravery Awards**



It was an incredible day and night at the National Police Bravery Awards in July. Congratulations again to our Norfolk Police nominees PC Samantha Anderson and PC Sally Nairn, who put themselves at extreme risk of serious injury to protect a vulnerable person.





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### **Norfolk Police Federation**

Pre-Retirement Seminar Programme 2025

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Click here if you are viewing this digitally to find out more about our specialist team.

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- Preparing for retirement
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- Personal Taxation

- Police pension schemes and 'the remedy'
- Estate Planning and wills (inc 'power of attorney' and long-term care\*)
- Group Insurance Scheme

\*Will writing and Powers of Attorney involve the referral to a service that is separate and distinct to those offered by St. James's Place and are not regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

### Where and when?

Running from 9:00am - 4:30pm, the seminars will take place at Hethersett Old Hall Training Centre, Norwich Road, Hethersett, NR9 3DW on the following dates:

- 4th March
- 14th October

### How do I register?

Our seminars are completely free to attend. <u>To reserve your place at an upcoming session, simply click here if you're viewing this digitally.</u>

Alternatively, email our team on: policeseminars@reflectfp.co.uk. Please include your full name, rank, collar number, date of intended retirement, and mobile phone number.



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Norfolk Police Federation are now in partnership with Oakwood Risk and Resilience. Oakwood run a range of professional training courses at Hethel Engineering Centre. Many of their courses focus on operational resilience, crisis management, security risk management, and investigations, areas that can be highly relevant to officers looking to transition into new careers.

Oakwood have offered a free place on any of their in-person courses to any Police officer who is being medically retired, or who is having to leave the service in similarly difficult circumstances and wishes to re-train. They also offer distance learning versions of most of their courses if that would be more suitable to people. In addition, they offer a 10% discount on all of our training courses to both serving officers and blue light leavers more generally.

For more information, contact Luke Blake, Managing Director.

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