

# Norfolk Police Federation

# NORFOLK NEWS

Winter 2025



## We Must Record Officer Suicides

**T**he Police Federation of England and Wales' 2025 Annual Conference had a strong message about the unacceptably high numbers of police suicides, and the Chair of Norfolk Police Federation said he was committed to making a difference in his force.

Norfolk Police Federation Chair Andy Symonds (pictured) attended the PFEW Conference on 18-

officer who had died by suicide. Speaking on the panel were PFEW national Health & Wellbeing Leads Richie Murray and Paul Williams, and Hampshire Police Federation Chair Spencer Wragg, who spearheads the STEP (Suicide Trauma Education Prevention) campaign.

Andy said: "The key theme from Conference this year is that we've got to have some positivity

tions that can have a huge impact on officers' mental health.

"So my key takeaway – both nationally and locally, for my members in Norfolk – is that forces need to record the number of officer suicides, as well as finding out how many officers have considered suicide.

"I'm going to take that back to the Chief

**"We must push the Chief Constable for proper suicide recording, and be aware that many more officers may be at risk of suicide"**

19 November. He said his key takeaway was that forces need to step up to record the numbers of police suicides and provide welfare support to officers, particularly those under investigation, who are more likely to take their own lives.

In the session 'Code Zero: Policing's Suicide Crisis', delegates heard from the widow of an

back in policing and we've got to see a future. And we're part of the leadership of that, by being in the Federation.

"That links straight in with the difficult subject of officer suicides. It's a clear and present danger to all cops, because of the number of traumatic incidents we attend and the difficult investiga-

Constable and push for proper suicide recording, as well as being aware that many more officers may be fragile and at risk of suicide. I want us to have a big impact on our officers on this issue, because it could save someone's life."

■ More Conference coverage on pages 4 and 5



# An Assaults Crisis

**T**here were a staggering 48,888 assaults on UK police officers over the past year, new figures reveal. That's an average of 134 every day. An officer assaulted on average every 10 minutes.

New Government statistics show that, in the year to 31 March 2025, there were 39,099 assaults on police officers in England and Wales, 7,159 in Scotland and 2,630 in Northern Ireland.

The Police Federation of England and Wales' Deputy Chair, Brian Booth, said: "These alarming statistics on police use of force confirm what frontline officers tell us every day: polic-

ed to run towards danger with no adequate protection and recognition of their sacrifice.

"Real-terms pay cuts of 21% since 2010 have left officers struggling to afford food, rent and heating, while facing unprecedented violence.

"This simply cannot continue. Recruitment and retention in the police service has collapsed because officers are underpaid, overworked and undervalued. We risk losing close to 10,000 experienced officers every year, squandering £9.9 billion on replacements and making our communities vulnerable. No amount of legislation protects the protectors if

**"Officers are expected to run towards danger with no adequate protection"**

ing is becoming increasingly dangerous.

"With an officer assaulted every 10 minutes across the UK, the threat to our members has reached a crisis point. Nearly two thirds of use-of-force incidents involve officers protecting themselves from violence, which is a damning indictment of the epidemic facing our profession.

"Through our Copped Enough campaign, we are demanding urgent action on the issues driving this crisis. Officers are pushed to breaking point by stagnant pay, mounting workloads and declining morale, yet they remain expect-

we fail to support them properly.

"We call on the Government to act decisively: deliver fair pay recognising policing's unique demands, provide robust mental health and trauma support, make chief officers accountable for the wellbeing of our members, and commit to proper equipment and training.

"Officers deserve to work in safe conditions without accepting assault as an occupational hazard. When we value and protect our police, we protect our communities. Copped Enough means urgent change, and it must happen now."

## Fairer Compensation For Injury

**P**olice officers who are injured in the line of duty will now get fairer treatment when it comes to compensation, new guidance has said.

It follows successful work by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) and the National Police Wellbeing Service to force changes to Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority guidance.

In the previous guidance, many police officers were effectively excluded from compensation claims despite the clear danger involved in their work, as many injuries sustained while detaining or restraining violent offenders were not recognised as resulting from a "crime of violence," nor as involving "exceptional risk".

The updated rules now make clear that when an emergency worker is injured by someone violently resisting arrest or restraint, decision-makers must fully consider whether the offender's actions amount to a crime of vio-

lence – including cases involving recklessness.

This clearer interpretation gives officers injured through violent or reckless behaviour a stronger and fairer basis for claiming compensation.



## Change To Use Of Force Rules

**O**fficers who use force in the course of their duty should only face future misconduct charges if their actions meet the threshold for criminal proceedings, the Government has announced.

A recent report says the legal test for use of force in misconduct cases should be raised to the criminal standard of beyond reasonable doubt. Currently, officers face misconduct proceedings if their actions meet the civil law test of 'on the balance of probabilities'.

However, any use of force will still need to be considered necessary, reasonable and proportionate.

A review also looked at the threshold for determining a short-form conclusion of unlawful killing in inquests, and recommended further consultation on this issue.



# How The Budget Affects Officers

New analysis by the Police Federation of England and Wales has revealed that the Government's decision in the Autumn Budget to freeze income tax and National Insurance thresholds until 2031 will pull virtually the entire police workforce into the 40% tax band within six years.

The change comes despite more a decade of below-inflation pay rewards. Even though they are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet, officers – even those at the lowest ranks – now face having to pay 40% income tax on some of their salary instead of 20%.

ernment policy, that figure is projected to reach 97.8% – meaning almost every full-time officer in England and Wales will be pushed above the £50,270 threshold.

## PCs Are Being Hit Hardest

For the first time in modern history, higher-rate tax will apply to the average PC. The Federation's analysis shows that average PC pay will cross the higher-rate threshold in 2027-28. By 2030-31, 99.8% of full-time PCs are expected to be paying the higher rate – something previously confined to senior ranks. 'Pay progression' no

pay rises immediately absorbed by tax rather than reflected in their bank account.

## Taxation Will Wipe Out Pay Awards

Average officer pay includes overtime, allowances and specialist payments – because that is what they are taxed on. With the Government's freeze locked in until 2031, fiscal drag, not real earnings growth, is driving officers into higher tax brackets.

The result: every pay award is worth less the moment it is announced. This is a structural shift, not a temporary squeeze. Over the next

**“Freezing income tax and National Insurance thresholds will pull most of the police workforce into higher-rate tax within six years”**

So-called 'fiscal drag' has created a stealth-tax spiral that will swallow future pay awards and accelerate the financial pressures already driving the Police Federation's Copped Enough campaign, which calls for officers to be properly compensated for the toll that protecting society takes on them.

## Key Findings From Budget Analysis

- Almost every officer will be a higher-rate taxpayer by 2030-31.
- Before the threshold freeze, fewer than one in five full-time Federated officers (around 19%) paid higher-rate tax. By 2024-25, the figure had already surged to over half of all officers.
- By 2030-31, under current Gov-

longer means taking home more pay.

Under the Government's policy, any PC currently serving in 2025 and progressing normally through the pay scale will automatically fall into the higher-rate band by 2031.

This means almost all mid-career officers will see

five years, higher-rate tax becomes the default, not the exception, across every Federated rank.



## Nearly 19,000 Working Days Lost To Sickness

Nearly 19,000 officer working days were lost to sickness in Norfolk Constabulary last year, which the Chair of Norfolk Police Federation blamed on the huge demands being placed on officers.

Home Office figures show that, nationally, 1.63 million police working days were lost to illness or injury in the year to March, the highest level since records began. This is the equivalent of more than 40,000 officers off work every day across the country and 5% of all police working days being lost to sickness.

Andy Symonds, Chair of Norfolk Police Federation, said: "That 18,918 police days were lost in Norfolk in the past financial year is no surprise to those who work within policing, but will be a shock to the public. Officers face such a huge demand that they need to work at pace for their



entire shift. There is no let up, no chance to catch a break, to decompress from the last job before dealing with the next stressful, mentally and physically demanding job.

"Norfolk officers have also suffered an exceptionally demanding summer, having to police protest after protest. Officers' shifts were constantly changed, and their rest days were

cancelled or moved, mostly to weekends.

"Officers are running at 9,000 revs as soon as they walk through the police station door to the moment they leave, which is never on time, always late. They then get to the point where they fail either mentally or physically, and are in desperate need of rest and repair."

Andy called on the Government to invest more in policing so there would be enough police officers and staff to deal with the massive demand.

He added that officers dealt with hundreds of traumatic incidents over their careers. He said: "Much more investment is needed in workplace health and wellbeing, to deal with this trauma in a timely and efficient way. An investment in the people who deliver policing on a daily basis will reduce figures like the 19,000 days lost to sickness in Norfolk."



# Looking After Fed Reps' Welfare

**T**he Chief Executive of the Police Federation of England and Wales outlined 'Three Commitments for the Future' at the PFEW Conference, including a welfare programme for Federation Representatives.

Mukund Krishna told delegates: "Today, I commit to three initiatives to deliver by the end of 2026: 1) The Real State of Policing: We will produce a report reflecting the true views of our members on kit, leadership, culture, shift patterns and welfare – challenging the HMIC-

FRS' top-down perspective. 2) Restoring Dignity: Starting next year, we will roll out a Victim and Witness Support Programme, because we have a moral responsibility to treat each other with dignity. 3) Welfare for Reps: Next year, we will introduce a welfare programme for Federation Representatives, because supporting our Reps means better support for our members."

Speaking earlier in the session, Mukund said: "Let's reflect on the past three years. We faced potential financial liabilities of over £100 million,

with significantly lower sums in the bank.

"Fast-forward to today: we've settled for less than a third of that amount, paid out the largest group litigation in our Federation's history, possibly in policing history, and we're on track to resolve the remaining case by year-end.

"This achievement was possible because of your leadership – branch Chairs, Secretaries, regional Reps and the tireless work of our staff and management team. You should be immensely proud."

## Progress In DG6

**S**ignificant progress has been made since the launch of the #SimplifyDG6 campaign, the conference heard.

Police Federation National Detectives' Forum Chair Ben Hudson said the Federation had "listened to members' concerns, acted on what they told us, and helped bring about reform" that would not only improve officers' working lives but also support wider force efficiency.

The campaign began after the 2022 Attorney General's Annual Review of Disclosure, which acknowledged shortcomings that left officers spending "at least four hours more on each case due to the redaction requirements".

Ben said there had been successful proportionate file-building trials in Cheshire, Merseyside and Kent. Results have been striking in Cheshire: compliance hit 97.2% within two months, saving 5,000 policing hours, with one sergeant calling the trial "an absolute dream." In Kent, nearly 400 files were submitted in five weeks, delivering 37% time savings.

## Police Pay Awards Are 'Unfair'

**P**olicing risks becoming an unaffordable profession and potential recruits are being priced out of the job, as the cost of living goes up and pay and conditions continue to stagnate, National Secretary John Partington told the PFEW Conference.

He said that equal percentage pay rises were unfair, as higher ranks end up taking home more than those on the frontline because of their higher baseline salary. He argued that lower earners – who spend almost their entire income on essential costs – need higher awards to maintain real-terms pay.

John said: "Equal percentage pay awards might look fair on paper, but they're not fair in practice. When everyone gets the same percentage rise, those on higher salaries keep far more of their income after the bills are paid, while those on the frontline see their disposable income vanish.

"Federated rank members today spend almost everything they earn just on living. Housing, energy and fuel have risen far faster than pay, and what used to be a modest but secure income has become a financial struggle.

"This isn't about generosity – it's about fairness. A superintendent and a constable face



the same inflation, but not the same pressure. Identical percentages create real-terms inequality, not parity. Without correction, policing risks becoming unaffordable to those who deliver it."

John argued that police conditions should also be improved – to mandate sufficient rest, recovery and resilience because of the unique demands of the job.

He also highlighted the urgent need to reform police recruitment, calling for mandatory psychological and psychometric testing for every applicant and throughout initial training.

He said: "This is about safeguarding the integrity of policing."



# Protecting Officers

## PFEW CONFERENCE

**F**orces need to record figures of suicides and attempted suicides and if they won't, the law needs to change to make them.

That was the message from PFEW Chair Tiff Lynch, as she delivered a keynote speech to the Federation Conference.

Tiff began by sending a firm message about the unacceptably high numbers of police officers and staff dying by suicide, often when they are in the isolated position of being under investigation.

"There is no excuse for any force not to bring in the STEP (Suicide Trauma Education Prevention) programme," she said. "Especially when so many of the tools are free or easy to adopt. It should not take an officer dying by suicide to make change happen."

Forces need to acknowledge the link between



the police misconduct regime and suicide, and break that link by carrying out risk assessments, making proper welfare checks and treating people with dignity, she said.

Tiff added: "We're not waiting for the law to change or for someone to grow a conscience: we're pushing politicians to change it. Following a series of meetings with Lords, our amendment

to the Policing

and Crime Bill, making it the law to report suicide and attempted suicide, has been tabled. It is supported by peers from all parties and will be debated in Parliament early in the new year."

Tiff also said the Federation will push for better protection for officers from assaults, and continue the Copped Enough campaign, which calls for pay restoration, industrial rights, and dignity and fairness in modern workplaces.

She said that officers on the frontline and in the Federation should be drivers of change. She continued: "If police reform is consistent and listens to those officers, truly listens, there's every reason to be hopeful. Because no one understands what needs fixing better than the people doing the job."

## Policing Charter Of Change

**A** policing 'charter for change' to properly support police officers has been launched.

Mel Warnes, Deputy National Federation Secretary, said the service should introduce a risk assessment for officers who have dealt with serious issues in their personal lives to ensure they are well and ready to go back to duty.

Mel called for a number of changes: full pay for family-related leave for bereavement; carers' leave; neonatal care leave for parents of unwell babies; safe leave for officers experiencing domestic abuse; full pay after the death of a partner or child; and paid leave for miscarriage or baby loss.

She criticised the National Police Chiefs' Council for not taking up these issues due to cost, pointing out that the cost of officers leaving the job is actually much higher.

Mel added that officers subject to misconduct



allegations were often assumed to be guilty and left to deal with the stresses of the investigation alone – even when a significant percentage of these cases lead to no further action. She said: "Leadership means holding people to account without abandoning them. The conduct process can leave people demoralised and broken, with shattered morale."

She added: "Every year, officers quietly juggle caring for parents and children while balancing the demands of police work. It's an impossible situation."

## Talking About Suicide

**T**here have been at least 10 suicides of police officers and staff around the country this year, delegates were told in the conference session, 'Code Zero: Policing's Suicide Crisis'.

In addition, PFEW figures show that between 2022 and 2024, at least 55 officers took their own lives, of whom 34 were under investigation. In addition, 120 reported attempting to take their own lives, 71 of whom were under investigation.

The panel said that investigations into officers were "taking too long".

Forces should carry out a documented basic risk assessment on misconduct investigations and provide the officer with wraparound care, they said: "Allocating a welfare officer is sometimes just not good enough."

Another proactive step is for forces to put the free Stay Alive app from Grassroots Suicide Prevention on all officers' work phones. Spencer Wragg from the STEP campaign has already succeeded in getting the app onto 8,000 officers' phones in Hampshire and Thames Valley Police.

PFEW's Co-Health & Wellbeing Lead, Richie Murray, added that Chief Constables had a responsibility to look at officers' workloads, stress levels and cancelled rest days, which all led to poor mental health.

It is important for officers who are struggling to know they are not alone, and that there are people there to help. This includes, for immediacy, the Mental Health Crisis Line from Oscar Kilo, on 0300 131 2789.

## A Federation Rep's View

**T**his was the first PFEW Conference Norfolk Federation Rep Stu Barnard had attended. He shares his highlights...

### What did you think of Conference 2025?

I took confidence in the acknowledgement of



Rep welfare, and I was also impressed with how honest our CEO Mukund Krishna was in with regards to the financial status of the Federation, and with the two motions

that will assist in the future of the Federation.

### There was a focus on mental health – what can be done to better care for our cops?

I was moved by the presentation on suicide prevention, which brought home the stresses and pressures policing can have on all members of our policing family. It is so important to raise awareness in order to get support, which is sometimes hard to find in periods of despair.

### What was your key takeaway?

It's important to standardise what we do and share our experiences with others.



## Norfolk Police Federation

### Pre-Retirement Seminar Programme 2026

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- Preparing for retirement
- CV Preparation
- Personal Taxation
- Police pension schemes and 'the remedy'
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\*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 the Force HQ Wroxham Room, OCC, Wymondham, NR18 0WW and Hethersett Old Hall Training Centre, Norwich Road, Hethersett, NR9 3DW on the following dates:

- **Wed 4<sup>th</sup> March** (At Force HQ)
- **Wed 4<sup>th</sup> November** (At Hethersett Hall)

#### How do I register?

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

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





# The Police Family Comes Together

**A**round 5,000 police officers who have died on duty over the years were honoured at the 22nd annual National Police Memorial Day, held in Coventry on Sunday 28 September.

The names of those officers who have died in the past year were read out. They are PC Ian Minett, of Gloucestershire Constabulary; PC Michael Bruce and PC Frank Hawkins, both of the Metropolitan Police; PC Marcus Bennett, of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary; PC Rosie Prior, of North Yorkshire Police; and DC Karen Smith, of Humberside Police. Also remembered was PC Faizaan Najeeb, of Northamptonshire Police, who

died from injuries sustained on duty just two days before the Memorial Day.

Chris Hobbs, Secretary of Norfolk Police Federation, said: "Every death on duty should be remembered, and it still matters. I was reminded of this recently. We put up a social media post about PC Robert McLaren, who died on 31 August 1981, and his brother got in touch and said: 'Thank you very much for remembering my brother.' That shows why it still matters: their families still remember them, and it's very important for us to, as well.

"National Police Memorial Day is a time to pause for reflection and remember that some-

times policing can feel quite isolating.

"Here today, everybody is in a similar position, and that's why the police family is important. You're doing the same job, no matter where you are in the country."

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood gave a reading at the service, as did Shadow Home Secretary Chris Philp and PFEW Chair Tiff Lynch.

During the service, candles were lit for officers in each of the four nations.

The families of six officers who have died in the line of duty were awarded the Elizabeth Emblem. At the end of the service, the Last Post was sounded.

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**Avoiding Government Process:** Without a will, your estate will be distributed according to Government laws, which may not align with your personal preferences.

**Support for Charitable Causes:** A will allows you to leave gifts to charities or causes that are important to you.

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Oakwood has offered a free place on any of its 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. It also offers distance learning versions of most of its courses, if that would be more suitable for people. In addition, it offers a 10% discount on all training courses to both serving officers and Blue Light leavers generally.

For more information, contact Luke Blake, Managing Director.

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40-44	£30	£60	£76	£46
45-49	£36	£72	£88	£52
50-54	£40	£80	£96	£56
55-59	£49	£98	£118	£69
60-64	£52	£104	£124	£72
65-69	£62	£124	£154	£92
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