

# YOUR VOICE

Ffederasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru /  
North Wales Police Federation



JUNE 2024



**BRAVE OFFICERS IN  
LINE FOR NATIONAL  
AWARD**

Pages 8 and 9

Federasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru



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50

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North Wales Police Federation

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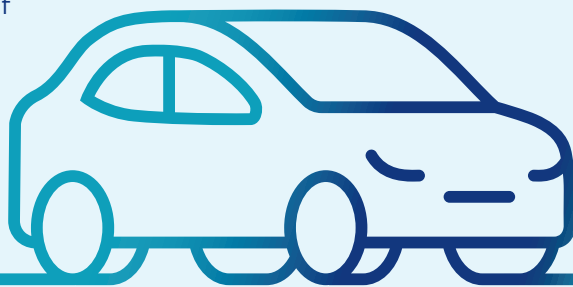
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# WORKING HARD TO MAKE YOUR VOICES HEARD



By Vinny Jones, chair of North Wales Police Federation

Welcome to this early summer edition of *Your Voice*. As you will see there is much work being undertaken which often goes unnoticed behind the scenes. There are a wide range of topics contained within this edition which I hope you find interesting. There are also guides, advice and supporting partnerships which I hope you will find useful.

With a General Election having been called for 4 July 2024, there will no doubt be some busy times ahead with the possibility of significant changes within UK Government.

Just like our MPs and Members of the Senedd, your Federation representatives are elected too. You, the members, elect us to represent you, which is why we always welcome your views on matters which have an effect on your working conditions, fairness and welfare to name a few.

It is important to me that we are acting with the overall views of you - the membership - so please speak to your

Federation representatives and if you don't know who they are just ask or find them via our website – [polfed.org/northwales](http://polfed.org/northwales).

One of the ways in which we proactively seek the views of the membership is through surveys. Now, I know everyone hates a survey and they take up time, valuable time, time that could be spent on very important case work or time spent making a brew, but it's about you and your feelings, your views, your thoughts and ideas.

One of the main surveys we conduct is the Police Federation of England and Wales Pay and Morale Survey. This is one of the most important surveys in my opinion as it reflects your morale and your views on pay and conditions. I wish to express my gratitude and thanks to everyone who completed this survey.

The results locally generally matched those throughout England and Wales. Despite the response rate being low, the messages were clear: you feel undervalued by the Government.

During a North Wales Police Branch Council meeting in April, a paper was submitted for a decision to be made on a 'vote of no confidence' in the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW). Following a lengthy discussion, the majority of the Branch Council members present

voted in favour of the paper and it was decided an open letter be sent to the National Council expressing the branch's position on the matter.

I am a big believer in recognising and appreciating the amazing work you all do as police officers. Sometimes it's the smallest of kind gestures which go a long way, a simple "thank you" said face to face, an e-mail of thanks or a handwritten note.

There are times, however, when a bit more is required to recognise and appreciate when officers go above and beyond the call of duty or act with selflessness, courage and bravery. The North Wales Police Bravery Award nominees for 2024 have done just that, acted with such bravery and selflessness, and I truly believe they are all worthy of an award.

There are also three North Wales Police officers in the running for recognition for this year's Response Policing Officer of the Year Awards, organised by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), all are worthy candidates and I wish them all the best of luck.

Despite some very unsettling and difficult times within the Federation locally and nationally, I'm confident that we, as your local representatives, are working hard to ensure your views are heard and listened to and promoting the excellent work you do.

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# BRANCH TABLES VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN NATIONAL FEDERATION

**O**n 23 April 2024, the North Wales Police Federation Branch Council took the difficult decision to motion, and pass, a vote of no confidence in the leadership (elected and non-elected) of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW).

You should have received a copy of the letter that was sent to Leatherhead, and a copy is on the opposite page.

As you may be aware, our branch secretary, Mark Jones, was very suddenly suspended from his post by PFEW in late January. This came as a complete shock and the details of the circumstances have, at the time of writing this, still not been shared with this branch by PFEW.

However, Mark's suspension was not the reason for the vote of no confidence. While people have their own opinions of the situation, the Branch Council took the decision that PFEW processes should be followed, and not commented on until a decision is reached and the full details are known.

The reasoning behind the motion began at the Branch Council meeting on 30

January 2024, where several questions and queries were asked about the general management and running of PFEW which the branch chair, Vinny Jones, was unable to answer.

Concerningly and frustratingly, none of the regional representatives, who might have been able to answer the queries, attended the meeting which was on Microsoft Teams.

Principally, the queries centred around the recent PFEW 'Culture Survey' which had included Federation reps and staff.

The initial findings, in our opinion, paint a devastating picture for PFEW. Of the questions asked, the 'lowest scoring questions' were:

- "The Federation has a culture of openness and transparency" where 50 per cent of all respondents had an unfavourable response to that and 27 per cent were neutral
- "Conflicts are managed well if they arise at the Police Federation" where 28 per cent of respondents had an unfavourable response to that and 45 per cent were neutral

- "Different parts of the Police Federation work well together" where 39 per cent of respondents had an unfavourable response to that and 33 per cent were neutral
- "Everyone at the Police Federation acts with integrity and professionalism" where 38 per cent of respondents had an unfavourable response to that and 25 per cent were neutral
- "I have confidence in the senior leadership team to manage and lead the Police Federation well" where 32 per cent of respondents had an unfavourable response to that and 29 per cent were neutral.

Additionally, a significant number of Freedom of Information requests have been submitted to PFEW in the last year, the responses to which have caused significant concern to this branch about the financial management in PFEW.

The branch felt very strongly that PFEW appears to be very much in turmoil and rudderless with an ineffective, chaotic and self-serving National Board. Constant firefighting, knee-jerking from one crisis to the next is always to the detriment of the members who pay their subscriptions.

We felt that, in the absence of answers coming from the PFEW headquarters in Leatherhead, we had no option but to send a clear message to the decision-makers and national representatives that we expect better from them and the members most definitely demand this too.

**The branch felt very strongly that PFEW appears to be very much in turmoil and rudderless with an ineffective, chaotic and self-serving National Board. Constant firefighting, knee-jerking from one crisis to the next is always to the detriment of the members who pay their subscriptions.**



25th April 2024

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 @NWalesPoliceFed  
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On 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 Ffederasiwn Heddlu Gogledd Cymru/North Wales Police Federation Branch Council voted in favour of a Vote of No Confidence in the Leadership (elected and non-elected) of The Police Federation of England and Wales.

The Branch Council now require:

- A full explanation of the decision making involved in handing over significant powers to an unelected CEO without full consultation with all members.
- Full rationale as to why was it felt that PFEW need a CEO, when other, comparable organisation do not have one.
- Full rationale why the CEO repeatedly refuses to reveal his pay/remuneration despite multiple requests, and how can this stance be justified in light of his repeated assertions about openness and transparency.
- The pay/remuneration package of the CEO.
- Confirmation of exactly what prior personal or professional relationship the CEO has had with any of his new appointees since coming into post.
- Confirmation of the remuneration packages of the persons in all new posts and the period of time they are currently contracted for.
- Confirmation of the selection process undertaken for these appointees.
- Confirmation on what the formal process is for the creation of any new non-elected (civilian employed) posts with PFEW. This to include what assessment process has taken place to confirm the need for the posts, the recruitment process for the posts, the model used to decide the remuneration packages for posts, and whether such packages are or can be adjusted to attract particular candidates.
- A commitment that the National Executive will ensure that in future there will be no attempts to block information on remuneration packages, terms and conditions and contract details from being released upon request.
- A commitment that policy will be promptly put in place to ensure that any and all civilian employees of PFEW, particularly those in leadership positions, will be bound by rules which mirror the current Code of Ethics (or any later equivalent), and will undergo vetting processes which reflect those for police officers.

The Branch Council of North Wales Police Federation also requires the leadership of PFEW to provide full details as to what they intend to do, in addition to answering the above, to try and rebuild the Trust and Confidence of the North Wales Branch.

North Wales Police Branch Council

# 'WE MUST BE OPEN AND TRANSPARENT'

By Sergeant Kim Owen, North Wales Police Federation workplace representative

**A**fter a long year and a half of consideration, at the beginning of 2024 I had finally decided to stand down as a representative of the Police Federation of England and Wales after 12 years.

I felt I no longer wished to be associated or linked to a national staff association that, it appears to me, wishes to stop people challenging or voicing opinions when they believe or disagree with something and have concerns about decisions being made.

I joined the Federation to be a voice for the members to stand up for what is right. To ensure that members are treated fairly and that the code of ethics is adhered to. All with an open and transparent practice.

The replacement of conference in person with an online format where all questions are submitted and scrutinised prior to the event, is clearly a way of preventing reps speaking up for the members as national Federation members (officials/representatives) do not want to hear or be challenged on decisions being made by them. It also seems to me that they do not want reps and different branch boards meeting up and having those important discussions.

For the past year and a half I have continually been disappointed to see the actions of the national Federation and the decisions being made there, which are impacting significantly on members.

Daily I hear and see the disdain and concerns of members on how the Federation seems to be no longer there to support and look after police officers at a national level. The matter over pensions, funding of cases for members and now the expenditure on members of staff in the national Federation seem to be constant, and never transparent.

I have tried to remain positive and hopeful that the national Federation would change but this has, as far as I can see, not happened. If anything, in the last year it has appeared to become worse. We now have a CEO in place who seemingly has no policing experience beyond his limited time at Leatherhead after starting to work with the national Federation in 2014 as part of

Accenture, a company used to advise the Federation on how to reform after the Normington review which, without doubt, brought about some really needed changes to the Federation. Then in 2021 the role of COO was created and OUR current CEO seemingly walked into the position with no advertising of the position or recruitment process and thereafter the role of CEO was quickly created in 2023 and again with no advertising/consultation of the position or process for recruiting the best person for the job. This should surely be an open, fair and transparent procedure to recruit the best person for it.

Where was the fair transparent process in this? On the basis, of questioning at conference, and the numerous FOI requests on the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) website, he is not willing to disclose how much he is earning in his role to those members who pay his salary - which I find unbelievable when we are meant to be open and transparent with our members and the public.

 **National Board members appear to forget the reasons they were appointed.**

As police officers, up to and including the Chief Constable, our salaries are all out in the open for every person to see. How, as a Federation, can someone hide what they are earning? As a Federation, we MUST be open and transparent with our members around everything, this includes on where members money is being utilised.

How, as a Federation, have we appointed a CEO with no consultation, no advertising and no interviews for the best person for the position and no consultation or voting from our members or National Council and given him full powers of finances and general running of PFEW?

Within months it seems that he has now appointed a finance director and apparently

intends to appoint an operations manager, a member's manager and a chief staff officer. Who is paying for all these roles and how much will they be paid?

We have several National Board members in Leatherhead, which include a national chair and a national secretary - what is their role now? Do we need a National Board?

This does not sit right, morally, with me.

I agree change was needed in the national Federation, and believe that has been the case for many years. National Board members, in my opinion, appear to forget the reasons they were appointed into their roles and quickly forget that they are answerable to the National Council and its members throughout the country. It appears some want to look after themselves and, again in my opinion, in doing so lose their voice and morals.

BUT there are also several people who are elected into the role who are very good and will speak up when they don't agree, however, all too often these people appear to be quickly taken down and removed in one way or another. This behaviour needs to be called out and removed from the National Board, and more scrutiny, not less, is required. People should be allowed to speak up and challenge when needed.

I personally have real concerns that the Federation, that is and should be there for its members, is being destroyed and I do believe that a full independent review is needed sooner rather than later.

We are all accountable for our behaviour and decisions and as police officers we must ensure we always act within the Code of Ethics. I do not believe this is happening in the national Federation.

So why did I not resign? The recent decision by the national Federation to suspend a North Wales rep, where there is no suggestion of any performance issues, with no support or concern for their welfare has made me realise the importance of continuing to stand up for what I believe is right and proper, and I will remain a Federation rep, supporting our members, until this injustice is rectified, and the Federation reps that you, the members, vote for are allowed to continue with the valuable job that they perform for you in North Wales Police.

# PCC URGED TO HELP TACKLE LOW MORALE IN POLICING

**N**orth Wales Police Federation chair Vinny Jones has urged the newly re-elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to work with the Federation and the Force to help boost officers' low morale.

Andrew (Andy) Dunbobbin secured a second term of office after the PCC elections at the start of May.

"We congratulate the PCC on his election success," says Vinny, "We look forward to continuing to work with him as we have found him to be very supportive of police officers and understanding of the challenges they are facing.

"The PCC elections were held just weeks after the findings of the Federation's latest pay and morale survey finds were published so I hope that he has had time to read these and that he will do all he can to help address some of the issues highlighted – including low officer morale.

"Police officers carry out a unique role in society and yet they feel they are not fairly paid for the dangers they face or the stresses and strains of policing with almost one in five saying they never or almost never had enough money to pay for all their essentials.

"Shockingly, 97 per cent of respondents felt the police are not valued by the Government which should never be the case.

"While some of these issues are outside the PCC's remit, I hope that he will speak up for officers whenever he can and do his bit to support them."



**PCC Andy Dunbobbin.**

Andy secured a sizeable majority in the elections on 2 May. Standing as the Labour and Co-operative Party candidate, he

received 31,950 votes,, with Brian Jones, the Welsh Conservative Party candidate, receiving 26,281. Ann Griffith of Plaid Cymru came third with 23,466 votes and Richard Marbrow of the Welsh Liberal Democrats received 7,129 votes.

Andy was initially elected as the North Wales PCC on 6 May 2021. He was re-elected on 2 May 2024 and will serve for four years.

He is from Connah's Quay where he lives with his wife, son and daughter. He was previously a county councillor on Flintshire County Council for the Connah's Quay Golftyn ward but continues to be a member of Connah's Quay Town Council.

Prior to his election, he set out four strategic pillars: a local neighbourhood policing presence; supporting victims, communities and businesses; a fair and effective criminal justice system; and a visible and responsive PCC.

After the election, he said: "I feel immensely honoured to have been re-elected by the people of North Wales. It shows that they are happy with the work I have been doing over the last three years to make policing more effective, efficient and accountable.

"There is always more work we can do and I can't wait to get stuck back into serving all the people of North Wales, whether they voted for me or not. I would like to thank all who helped contribute to my campaign, my family, and the people of North Wales for the trust that have shown in me once again."

The PCC has four main duties, which are to:

- **Set out the priorities for policing in North Wales**
- **Decide the budget for North Wales Police**
- **Hold the Chief Constable to account, and to**
- **Listen and respond to public views on policing.**

*Read more about the Police Federation's Pay and Morale Survey on Page 15.*

**I feel immensely honoured to have been re-elected by the people of North Wales. It shows that they are happy with the work I have been doing over the last three years to make policing more effective, efficient and accountable.**

North Wales Police Federation's nominees for the Police Bravery Awards 2024 (left to right): PCs Rob Williamson, Rob Burgess, Rachael Roberts and Dion Hughes, and Sergeant Dylan Thomas.



# POLICE BRAVERY AWARDS: UNARMED OFFICERS TACKLED MAN ARMED WITH RIFLE



**N**orth Wales Police Bravery Award nominees for 2024 have been announced as Sergeant Dylan Thomas, PC Rachael Roberts, PC Rob Burgess, PC Dion Hughes and PC Rob Williamson

The team, based in Llangefni, were nominated for their courageous and swift actions during an incident in April 2023. The unarmed officers were faced with an aggressive man with a loaded gun who was putting his vulnerable mother's life at risk.

At around midnight on 7 April 2023, a 999 call was received from a distressed woman reporting an ongoing verbal argument with her adult son at their home address in Holyhead. During the call, the woman described how her son had experienced a "massive blow-out".

Not long after, the woman's daughter also contacted Cheshire Police to report the same concerns for her brother, who was also causing damage within the house.

She was on the phone with her mother at the time the events were unfolding, and reported being very concerned for her mother who she described as "disabled and vulnerable".

Sergeant Thomas and PCs Roberts, Burgess, Hughes and Williamson were sent to the house having been informed by the Force Control Centre there had been a mention of a gun during the 999 call.

The woman told officers her son was inside and was highly aggressive. Almost immediately, he was shouting at them to back off as he had a gun.

Sgt Thomas soon found himself looking down the barrel of a gun, aimed directly towards him by the man who was standing at the top of the stairs.

The officers, who were in his line of sight, deemed the threat of violence to be extremely high and so Sgt Thomas, PC Roberts and PC Hughes all deployed their Tasers simultaneously. The Taser discharge was partly effective causing Hughes to fall onto his front, resulting in the rifle falling down the stairs.

The man managed to crawl and return to his bedroom which was on the right at the top of the stairs.

Unaware at the time that the man no longer had the rifle, PC Hughes repeatedly ordered the man to drop the gun and come out from where he was hiding.

Suddenly, he appeared directly in front of the officers. PC Williamson entered the bedroom with his colleagues and the man was detained, arrested and subsequently charged with possession of an air rifle with intent to cause fear of violence.

Firearms officers examined the rifle and noted it had been cocked ready for use and there was a pellet within the chamber which

**“They were faced with a situation which could have potentially ended their life and, instead of taking cover, their instinct was to neutralise the threat thus preventing any harm to anyone. Interestingly, they all made the same decision in their actions.**

was ready to be fired.

On 3 August 2023, the man was handed a two-year suspended prison sentence.

Looking back at the entire incident, Sgt Thomas said he has "a family to go home to and a community to carry on policing", and questioned what the outcome could have been for him, his colleagues and their families had they not taken that split-second action to intervene.

Vinny Jones, North Wales Police Federation chair, said: "I am extremely proud of my colleagues involved in this incident and highlight their bravery and courage in dealing with this incident with true selflessness.

"They were faced with a situation which could have potentially ended their life and, instead of taking cover, their instinct was to neutralise the threat thus preventing any harm to anyone. Interestingly, they all made the same decision in their actions.

"They all have different policing backgrounds and experience, yet they all acted in the same way. I'm often asked what it takes to be a police officer - this is a prime example of the answer, having to make quick decisions when faced with an immediate threat while doing our duty to protect and uphold our oath.

"This incident should be a reminder to everyone just how valuable our police officers are as we are the ones who run towards danger when the time comes."

Chief Superintendent Sian Beck, the Force's head of local policing services, said:

"The officers in this incident responded to the report of a violent domestic incident between a mother and her son who had several warning markers indicating mental health, weapons, drugs and being suicidal.

"His mother, a vulnerable lady, gave conflicting and confusing information about her son being in possession of a gun. The report came into NWP during night-time hours in Holyhead which is at the extremity of the Force with limited scope for assistance and the nearest armed assets being some distance away.

"The officers responded to the incident without delay, putting the victim's safety ahead of their own. At the address, they were faced with the threat from the weapon and acted decisively, professionally and with excellent communication, safely detaining the male and ensuring the safety of his mother. When faced with the immediate threat, they acted with outstanding bravery."

Deputy Chief Constable Nigel Harrison said: "This is incredibly impactful as officers only in possession of a Taser moved forward to protect the occupant from an individual making threats with a firearm. I commend all the officers for their bravery and selflessness."

The Police Bravery Awards, which are organised by the Police Federation, will be held in London in July. Nominees from across England and Wales will go forward for regional awards and the overall national title.

**“The officers responded to the incident without delay, putting the victim's safety ahead of their own. At the address, they were faced with the threat from the weapon and acted decisively, professionally and with excellent communication, safely detaining the male and ensuring the safety of his mother. When faced with the immediate threat, they acted with outstanding bravery.**



# GROUP INSURANCE SCHEME: BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE COST



By North Wales Police Federation  
workplace representative Trystan Bevan

**W**hy the hurdles, I hear you ask? Before I start my article, please let me assure you that this isn't a sales pitch by any means. The intention, and hopefully result, of my article will make you all sit up and consider your own wellbeing both financially and emotionally on a professional and personal level.

Over the last 12 months I have represented a number of officers in respect of misconduct matters relating to their actions in the workplace but also off duty. I know of other officers who have been supported in the process of taking legal action in an employment tribunal (ET) due to them having been treated unfairly in some way or other.

As you would imagine, legal advice in respect of criminal investigations, misconduct proceedings or ET matters does not come cheap. I know from speaking to a number of you that you see being a member of the Police Federation as a form of insurance should something go wrong in the workplace and you are under investigation by the professional standards department (PSD) or the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). I understand that fully. The Federation can, and does, offer its members a lot more than the legal cover, but I won't go into that now.

What a number of officers don't realise is what exactly is covered in respect of

legal support from the Federation alone. We as Federation representatives will seek financial support for officers who are under investigation, but the legal funding will only be provided for officers who are under investigation due to matters directly linked to their policing duties. On a number of occasions now I have seen the funding not being supported due to matters under investigation not being directly linked to the policing role.

Let's explain my hurdles analogy in a bit of detail. This is how I break down the investigation process for officers who I am supporting.

First hurdle is that of criminal investigation.

Second hurdle is that of gross misconduct/misconduct.

Third hurdle is vetting.

Fourth hurdle is the Suitability Policy which is in the process of being approved.

Let's put this into a hypothetical scenario. You, as a police officer, are under investigation for a matter that is determined to be a criminal investigation. The matter occurred when you were off duty at a retirement function.

#### **First hurdle - criminal investigation.**

You are arrested and interviewed for the matter concerned. As a member, you ask for the Federation to be informed and the Federation arranges for a solicitor to attend. The funding for the solicitor will be covered due to the matter being a criminal one under the Legal Aid provisions. But it is still vitally important the Federation arranges this for you and uses legal advisers who are well versed in police misconduct regimes. No funding application is required by the Federation at this time. You will, as a result of being under investigation for a criminal matter, very likely be issued with a notice from PSD outlining that you are also under investigation for gross misconduct. The criminal investigation is fully investigated and, possibly due to no evidence or the matter not reaching the threshold test, no charges are bought.

Legal expenses have been covered

## **“ Many officers never think they would be under investigation as they didn't think they were doing anything wrong in respect of the law or the Code of Ethics.**

under the Legal Aid scheme until this time as no criminal charges are bought. Due to this matter having taken place off duty, if you are a member of the North Wales Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme (GIS) you apply for this to now cover your legal costs as you approach the second hurdle. If you're not a member of the GIS you will have to pay the legal fees if you want legal assistance as you are approaching that second hurdle.

**Second hurdle – gross misconduct/ misconduct.** The investigation is now progressed by the local PSD or the IOPC in respect of your conduct. If the matter progresses to a misconduct hearing at Force Headquarters you will be represented by the legal adviser or even a barrister. If there is a 51 per cent or more prospect of success, then the GIS will cover the legal cost on virtually all occasions. If you haven't got the GIS, then you would be represented by one of the Federation representatives alone.

**Third hurdle – vetting.** As police officers, we have our vetting review in line with Authorised Professional Practice (APP). APP also states that vetting “should” be reviewed after a finding in a misconduct process. As a Force, a decision has been made that vetting “must” be reviewed after misconduct is found. If an officer failed vetting or restrictions are placed on them then an appeals process can take place. Again, legal advice and assistance would benefit officers in respect of this but most likely would not be funded by the Federation. The GIS though would assist with legal cover if there was a 51 per cent

prospect of success with the appeal. If you're not in the GIS then it will be down to you and your Federation representative to prepare the appeal and present your case.

**Fourth hurdle – Suitability Policy.** This is very much new and not yet published but will, in my opinion, be published in one form or another in the near future. The Federation has made representations in respect of the policy and content. Solicitors that the Federation use and the Group Insurance claims team are of the opinion that any legal challenge in respect of the Suitability Policy would be covered if there is a 51 per cent prospect of success.

By now you will hopefully understand my hurdle analogy. Some officers who I have supported weren't aware of the process when under investigation and in the words of one officer: “How can the job have so many bites of the cake when I've done nothing wrong?” Many officers never think they would be under investigation as they didn't think they were doing anything wrong in respect of the law or the Code of Ethics.

The GIS covers a lot of things from vehicle breakdown cover, mobile phone cover, holiday insurance cover and emergency medical advice 24/7. But it also includes the legal cover for incidents that occur that are not directly linked to your policing duties. The cost of the GIS per month is £29.05. Yes, it may seem a lot of money, but the benefits outweigh the cost in my opinion.

As stated earlier on, this isn't a sales pitch, but highlighting to you how vulnerable you are as police officers. Malicious and false accusations are made against police officers on a regular basis, and they need to be investigated in line with the Regulations, but do you want to walk that line alone with your Federation Friend alone or would you rather have legal representation advising and accompanying you on that journey?

For further information in respect of the Group Insurance Scheme please contact Jayne Humphreys at the Federation office - [Jayne.Humphreys@northwales.police.uk](mailto:Jayne.Humphreys@northwales.police.uk).

**“ The GIS covers a lot of things from vehicle breakdown cover, mobile phone cover, holiday insurance cover and emergency medical advice 24/7. But it also includes the legal cover for incidents that occur that are not directly linked to your policing duties.**

# STEPHEN'S MARATHON EFFORT PAYS OFF FOR CHARITY



Stephen Hughes running past Big Ben during the marathon.



**A**fter months of training, Stephen Hughes, CEO of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, has completed the London Marathon.

Stephen was diagnosed with a rare form of leukaemia in April 2017. He's been generally fit and healthy but began severe back pain in November 2016. Fortunately, he was given the all clear a few months later after numerous chemotherapy sessions and blood transfusions.

"I was incredibly lucky. If my GP hadn't first spotted the changes in my blood the outcome would have been very different. I received fantastic care and treatment for which I will always be grateful," said Stephen.

"It is for that reason I was proud to be running and raising funds on behalf of Leukaemia UK. Until recently I had never ran more than 5km so this was a monumental challenge for me. As part of my training I ran the Conwy Half Marathon in November, the Anglesey Half Marathon at the start of March and the Conwy Metric Marathon later that month."

We caught up with Stephen after he had completed the marathon on Sunday 21 April, to find out how it went:

#### **Where did you start the marathon from?**

I caught the train to Blackheath then it was a short walk to Greenwich Park. I was in the Blue Start Area, Wave 16, starting at 11.15am.

#### **What was the atmosphere like?**

Truly incredible. As soon as we crossed the start line there were crowds every step of the way for all 26.2 miles. The support made such a difference. I had followed a training plan which went up to 21 miles and everyone said don't worry about the final few miles, the crowd will get you over the line. That was very true. Tens of thousands of people cheering on total strangers, it was wonderful.

#### **How was the run?**

I loved every second of it. I made the classic mistake of setting off too fast, I completed the first half 12 minutes quicker than my usual half marathon pace and I paid the price later on when the pain started in my feet and legs. I finished in 5 hours 28 minutes which I was quite pleased with, but the main thing was finishing.

#### **High points?**

So many high points, but Tower Bridge stands out. It marks the halfway point and that's where I saw my family for a quick hug and words of encouragement. All the charities are placed along the bridge – the noise was just incredible and will live with me for a long time.

#### **Low points?**

Canary Wharf! After crossing Tower Bridge you head right for Canary Wharf in a big loop before ending up next to Tower Bridge

again. I underestimated how long that section would take – it just seemed to go on forever and that's when a lot of people started pulling out and I started struggling with pain in my legs.

#### **How did it feel when you finished?**

I saw so many runners along the way who couldn't complete the marathon that the overriding feeling when I finished was relief. A female volunteer saw me struggling to walk and asked me if I needed a medic or a hug. I went for the hug and then the tears came and didn't stop for a while, especially when I met up with my family after collecting the medal. It was a very emotional day as that Sunday marked three years to the day since I lost my Dad so he was in my thoughts and I also reflected on how far I had come since my leukaemia diagnosis in 2017. During treatment I could barely walk and had no energy whatsoever and now I had just completed the London Marathon, so there was definitely a sense of pride too.

#### **Did you make friends/buddy up with anyone along the route?**

I ran alongside the comedian Romesh Ranganathan for a while. Fair to say neither of us were in the mood for chit chat.

#### **Any hints, tips or recommendations for anyone considering doing it in the future?**

Firstly, do it. It's a fantastic experience and one of the most memorable days of my life. Find a good training plan that suits you and stick to it – it will pay off on the day. Don't underestimate the importance of hydration and nutrition, both in training and on the big day. Get your name printed on your t-shirt. Hearing hundreds of people scream your name and encouraging you makes such a difference when the going gets tough.



**Stephen Hughes with his medal for completing the 26.2 miles.**

#### **Anything else you'd like to add?**

It was a privilege to take part in such an iconic event as the London Marathon but to do so on behalf of Leukaemia UK made it even more special. I was set a fundraising target of £2,000 and I raised more than £4,500. I am so grateful to everyone who donated, including many officers and staff of North Wales Police, for their kindness, generosity and support.

We'd like to thank Stephen for speaking to us, and congratulate him on an amazing achievement.

If you'd like to support Stephen and Leukaemia UK, his fundraising page is still open and can be found at [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Stephen-Hughes026](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Stephen-Hughes026)

## **BAKERS SUPPORT FUNDRAISING CYCLISTS**

A Cake and Bake Sale held in the canteen at Force Headquarters raised £200 for the North Wales Chapter of the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) Police Unity Tour 2024.

COPS is a fantastic charity which supports families after a police officer has died on duty, providing support opportunities and access to counselling services to help surviving family members ('survivors') rebuild their shattered lives.

"Your loss is a part of who you are but COPS helps you realise that it doesn't define you. We are all one big family," says one survivor.

Since its foundation in 2003, COPS

has helped hundreds of police families devastated by the loss of a loved one who died on duty.

The cakes, which were on sale on 8 May, were fantastic.

If you would like to donate to the North Wales Chapter of the COPS UK Police Unity Tour 2024, you can do so at: <https://www.justgiving.com/team/teamwpp>

Or use the QR code opposite.

See Page 19 for more information about this year's Police Unity Tour.



# OUTSTANDING OFFICERS PUT FORWARD FOR NATIONAL AWARD

**T**hree North Wales Police officers are in the running to be put forward for this year's Response Policing Officer of the Year Awards.

The awards, organised by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), are part of Response Policing Week of Action which will take place between 24 and 28 June this year.

Our nominees are:

**PC 2822 Darrell Andrews who works from Rhos Police Station.**

He's described by his district inspector as a hard-working and reliable team player, with a phenomenally high work rate – outperforming and outworking officers with far less service and a lot younger than him.

One of the physically fittest members of Eastern who actively encourages and supports others in keeping fit, he plays for Wrexham Police Football Club playing in most of their games and contributing to raising thousands of pounds for local charities.

He's worked in a number of frontline roles and his knowledge of repeat offenders and locations means that his proactive work is always productive. He supports each rota/team and those young in service in learning how to work efficiently but ensuring a high quality of service.

Darrell has been nominated for his level of professional work and standards over a prolonged period and keeping those standards consistent and also for his ability to work consistently over a prolonged period of service to North Wales Police, exclusively in frontline policing. Many, if not all, of his supervisors would highlight him as one of their best officers.

His continuous ability to keep such a high level of work over a 15-year career is a credit to the organisation.

**PC 3358 Lisa Thomas, who works in West Conwy.**

Lisa is described as an exceptional officer, a credit to North Wales Police and a role model to all officers not just those on her rota. She is an experienced officer, who can turn her hand to a variety of incidents.

She is well regarded by her colleagues



and senior management. Lisa is able to remain calm and make fast, appropriate decisions and will often be asked for advice from her colleagues.

She supports a positive culture within North Wales Police, while working hard. She creates an environment whereby her colleagues enjoy work, is always enthusiastic with a smile on her face and goes above and beyond with everything she deals with.

Very much a team player, she has a strength in being victim focussed, wanting to do the right thing and achieve positive results for victims of crime.

Lisa often steps up to support her colleagues, and volunteers to assist colleagues and maximise victim satisfaction, and has taken ownership on her rota to help probationers. She has received several Superintendent Commendations including awards for her work on locating and arresting wanted offenders and more recently on a series of robbery offences.

She is regarded as a cool-headed and highly competent officer by her colleagues and managers. Lisa is an all-rounder in that she is excellent as an operational frontline officer and she also submits high quality files and reports. She is determined to undertake her role to the best of her ability but is not the type of character who seeks the recognition she is so deserving of.

**PC 3138 Gwion Jones of Bangor Police Station.**

Western district feel extremely proud and privileged to have Gwion as part of their

local policing team. He has served within the organisation for 10 years as a PC and is considered by others within the district and the policing team as being the 'font of all knowledge'.

Gwion is bright, enthusiastic and is always looking to use his own initiative to problem solve in creative ways. He sets high professional standards for himself and acts as a role model to his peers. Gwion is extremely motivated to do the best he can and leads from the front; no task is ever too much, and he thrives on being able to make a positive difference to members of our communities.

Gwion's passion, motivation and commitment for response policing shines through, as does the 'determination' to get on with the job and be ready whatever the circumstances to serve his community.

He is a real role model to his colleagues who is always on hand to provide sound advice, guidance and support. Gwion often goes above and beyond his role by performing the role of a unofficial tutor, identifying those officers in the team that may be struggling and providing them with the benefit of his experience, skills and abilities.

He's extremely welfare orientated and is always the one person who can be relied upon to provide reassurance and support to rota members.

The winner of the North Wales award will go to the NPCC Response Policing Response Officer of the Year Awards. The winner will be announced in June.

# SURVEY REVEALS LOW MORALE

**F**indings from the 2024 Police Federation of England and Wales Pay and Morale Survey reveal low morale is increasingly impacting the service with 57 per cent of respondents saying their morale is currently low or very low.

In North Wales three quarters of respondents (76 per cent) are 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their overall remuneration (including basic pay and allowances), and at least 89 per cent of officers reported facing a substantial increased cost of living in the month preceding the survey.

Furthermore, 19 per cent of North Wales respondents reported 'never' or 'almost never' having enough money to cover all their essentials.

Nine out of ten said they don't feel fairly paid for the stresses and strains of the job, and 85 per cent said that they are not paid fairly for the hazards of their role. However, while high, it is worth noting that both of these figures are a reduction from 2022.

Almost three quarters (71 per cent) of respondents from North Wales Police said their overall physical health is good or very good, however, 76 per cent indicated they have experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing in the last 12 months. This is, however, a reduction from 86 per cent in 2022, and is lower than the national average.

Of particular note, is that 97 per cent of respondents from North Wales felt the police are not valued by the Government – a figure that is higher than the national average of 94 per cent. And 85 per cent said they do not feel respected by the public, an increase from 84 per cent in 2022.

The survey also found rates of physical and verbal abuse from the public remain high. Sadly, being spat on by citizens has seen an increase, and 31 per cent of North Wales respondents revealed they have suffered verbal insults at least once per week over the past 12 months. Only 18 per cent of respondents reported having access to double crewing 'at all times'.

Almost a quarter (22 per cent) of North Wales respondents said they intended to leave the Force in the next two years.

The Police Federation of England and Wales is insisting the Government take into account the restrictions and limitations put

## FACTORS NEGATIVELY IMPACTING MORALE

	North Wales Police %	England and Wales %
Pay and benefits	81	81
Workload and responsibilities	59	66
How the police are treated by the Government	96	95
How the police are treated by the public	84	86
Your pension	67	64
Opportunities for development and promotion	35	41
Work-life balance	46	61

## ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORKING IN THE POLICE

	2023 %	2022 %
I would not recommend joining the police to others	76	68
I do not feel valued in the police	66	64

## OFFICERS' TREATMENT IN THE POLICE

	2023		2022	
	'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' %	'Disagree' or 'Strongly disagree' %	'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' %	'Disagree' or 'Strongly disagree' %
I am respected by the Government	2	97	1	95
I am respected by the public	5	85	8	84
I am treated fairly	31	46	32	39

on police officers, the risks they face on a day-to-day basis and for pay to compensate this as part of their ongoing fair pay campaign.

North Wales Police Federation chair Vinny Jones said: "I thank our members for completing this survey. The results reflect the very real struggles that our members are experiencing on a daily basis. Police officers in our Force are suffering the very real consequences of underfunding and neglect perpetrated by successive governments over the past 10 years.

"The impact on their wellbeing, financial stability and ability to carry out the duties expected of them is colossal, as reflected in the findings of the survey. The prospect of losing 22 per cent of officers to resignation over the next two years is a terrifying

prospect and should absolutely focus the minds of those who control the budgets and pay awards.

"The survey findings ultimately demonstrate the need for committed action, and a vote for the members to make a decision around whether they want to seek greater industrial rights, specifically collective bargaining and binding arbitration in relation to pay and conditions, will be held as soon as is practicable this year."

The PFEW Pay and Morale Survey obtains Federated rank members' views on their pay and conditions, as well as their attitudes to their work and the police service in general. It is one of the largest annual surveys of police officers conducted within England and Wales and has been conducted every year since 2014.

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# STEPPING OUT

Inspector Matt Subacchi and two friends took on an epic challenge to raise funds for a great cause.

They walked 130 miles from the Principality Stadium Cardiff to the Cae Ras Stadium Wrexham. They set off on 22 April, getting back in time for the Wrexham v Stockport game on 27 April.

"It was a tough, tough challenge, mentally hard as well as physical. I'm glad I did it, I'll never do it again, but we've already raised £9,800," said Matt.

They were raising money for Dynamic Wrexham, which is a centre for children and young people with disabilities.

This centre means a lot to many children and families in the Wrexham area with activities and groups put on by staff and volunteers on a daily basis.

It's a fantastic place and as with many charities, fundraising is paramount to be able to sustain the good work they do.

Matt added: "We would love to raise as much as possible, please donate if you can, any amount will be greatly received. Thank you for your support!"

If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, you can do so at: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/wrexhamramblers>



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## FREE BESPOKE ADVICE SERVICE ON WILLS, TRUSTS AND POWERS OF ATTORNEY FOR NORTH WALES POLICE FEDERATION

Harvey Howell Solicitors are working with North Wales Police Federation to help you and your family settle your private affairs . This is done in a FREE face to face meeting or in a confidential telephone or virtual consultation.

### WHAT DO YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT?

- // Many homes and therefore planned inheritances for children and grandchildren are being lost to pay for care – can you do anything about this? We can help guide you through this complex area of law.
- // Have you remarried leaving children from a previous relationship? You may have stopped those children from receiving an inheritance from you – we can fix that.
- // What if your children divorce after your death? Do their ex-spouses receive money your children inherited from you? This can be prevented.
- // Estranged children or other relatives can make claims against an estate even if you have made a Will – we can help prevent that.
- // What if you or a member of your family, perhaps your parent, loses the ability to make decisions for themselves due to an accident, stroke or dementia? No-one can access their bank accounts, pay bills or even decide on their medical treatment, including where and how they are treated and whether or not they have to live in a care home. These decisions are taken out of your family's hands – we can help your family have the final say through Lasting Powers of Attorney.
- // Don't leave your estate to disabled children who will lose their benefits or those who are vulnerable perhaps with drugs, gambling or alcohol problems who might lose it – put it in trust for them.
- // Don't give your house away, for example, to your children whilst you are alive – what if they die, go bankrupt, divorce or fall out with you? You are homeless. We can sort that out.

- // Are you unmarried with a partner? Dying without a Will distributes your estate in accordance with very old law which dictates how much family members receive. Unmarried partners receive nothing and, beware, your children's inheritance is administered by their surviving parent with whom you may no longer have a good relationship.

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**FOR WILLS, PROBATE, TRUSTS AND POWERS OF ATTORNEY CONSULT HARVEY HOWELL**

# POLICE UNITY TOUR HONOURS FALLEN OFFICERS



A pit stop during the 2023 Police Unity Tour.



The North Wales Chapter en route to the arboretum last year.

The Police Unity Tour is a long-distance cycle ride undertaken by hundreds of police officers and staff across the UK in aid of the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) charity.

In 2024, the UK Police Unity Tour enters its 12th year. The main aim of the event is to increase awareness of officers who have died in the line of duty and honour their memory.

The secondary purpose of the UK tour is to raise funds for COPS which is dedicated

to helping the families of fallen police officers rebuild their lives.

Every year a team of officers and staff from North Wales Police (NWP) participate in the COPS Police Unity Tour. It consists of a three-day bike ride from Aberystwyth to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire and supports fundraising efforts for the COPS charity, which undertakes some amazing work to support families who have lost loved ones in the course of their police duties.

The event has always been extremely popular, with most riders returning to take part each year. This year, as part of the Welsh Chapter, we have managed to secure some extra spaces for NWP entrants and are excited to be able to welcome new riders to join the team.

Superintendent Owain Llewelyn, a long-time supporter of the tour and rider, said: "It has been one of the highlights of my career

being able to join colleagues from across Wales on the ride, particularly on Day 2 when you ride into Drayton Manor to meet survivor families, and Day 3, riding into the arboretum. While a certain level of cycling fitness is required, the event attracts riders of varying abilities and the pace of the ride is amended accordingly, with plenty of breaks. Day 1 ordinarily consists of a 100-mile ride, Days 2 and 3 being significantly shorter."

Each year, the Police Unity Tour concludes at the arboretum, a national site of remembrance in Alrewas, Staffordshire, to coincide with the Care of Police Survivors Annual Service of Remembrance.

The arboretum hosts the UK Police Memorial honouring those who lost their lives serving and protecting communities across the UK. There is also an avenue of chestnut trees, paying homage to the original wooden police truncheon made of this variety of wood. Each tree represents an individual police force.

The memorial service is widely attended by representatives of the UK police service, staff associations, the wider police family and the families of fallen officers but all are welcome to pay their respects.

The 2024 ride will take place between the 26 and 28 July.

**It has been one of the highlights of my career being able to join colleagues from across Wales on the ride, particularly on Day 2 when you ride into Drayton Manor to meet survivor families, and Day 3, riding into the arboretum.**

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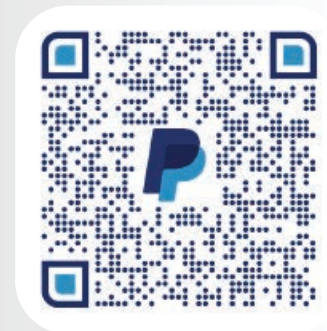


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# FUNDAMENTAL DISHONESTY IN PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS

By Jonathan Belcham of Ralli



There are an increasing number of claims where insurance companies that represent the negligent person or company that we are suing raise an allegation of fundamental dishonesty.

The allegations can range from making up the accident in its entirety to claiming for injury where none was sustained or exaggerating the effects of the ensuing pain and suffering.

Even a claimant who has suffered a serious life-changing injury has to be very careful that they give an accurate picture of their disability and day to day restrictions. As soon as medical evidence, statements or schedules of loss are

disclosed, with a statement of truth, the insurers will stop at nothing to discredit a claimant.

Trawls of social media often bring up discrepancies between disability alleged and apparent activities undertaken. Surveillance operatives will often be engaged to catch out claimants going about their daily life in ways that they allege they cannot. Medical records, employment records and records held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) are also routinely trawled to identify any discrepancies suggestive that a claimant is being less than truthful.

The consequences of any finding of fundamental dishonesty can be catastrophic to the outcome of a claim. In most instances the claim will be struck out in its entirety even if the dishonesty

related to only a modest part of the claim. Costs can be awarded against the claimant personally and the judge is entitled to recommend a criminal prosecution for contempt of court/perjury.

However, an insurer that alleges fundamental dishonesty that is not proven does not face any sanction whatsoever. Often the allegations are a blatant attempt to merely scare a claimant into settling their claim below its true value.

I will continue to lobby for change for as long as the Insurance Industry determines that it is appropriate to allege, with little or no foundation, that a claimant is bringing a fundamentally dishonest claim. Often the allegations are raised immediately upon receipt of a claim and before the full facts are known.

Allegations that a failure to pursue a claim sooner might be raised as evidence of an attempt to deceive. This is despite the law providing for a three-year limitation period! A road traffic collision can be immediately asserted as a low velocity impact insufficient to cause injury, despite no corroborative evidence. An entirely innocent victim of negligence is immediately put through the fear that their claim could fail or worse still they could lose their career and, at the very worst, their liberty.

It is easy to see how a claimant, seeking compensation for their injuries, might be inclined or even coerced by a medical examiner to portray a greater disability than is actually the case. They may have good days and bad days but, as soon as a medical report states an inability to do something that they are later witnessed doing, the wheels are quickly starting to leave the track.

At Ralli we have experienced lawyers who will guide you through all the potential pitfalls of bringing a personal injury claim. You should not be deterred from pursuing such claims but, at all times, you must ensure that accidents and injuries are accurately reported. You should also ensure that reports, statements and schedules of loss that you sign do not portray inaccurate accounts.

**Jonathan Belcham has been advising members of the Police Federation for more than 30 years – if you have concerns, or a possible claim that you would like to discuss first, just contact the Federation office or contact Ralli directly on 0161 207 2020.**



With over 30 years of experience dealing with claims for police officers, we at Ralli Solicitors have the knowledge and determination to assist you with all your personal injury needs.

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We understand that behind every uniform, lies a person

# DOUBLE SUCCESS FOR FORCE FOOTBALLERS

North Wales Police Football has been going for many years but the team stopped for a couple of years due to Covid and other reasons.

Communications operator supervisor Adam Bailey was involved as a player for a few years but, when the idea of the team possibly starting back up again, he volunteered to manage the team alongside Gareth Parry and Gary Cooper.

The first game back for the team was a Welsh Police semi-final in May 2022 against Gwent Police where they had a lot of new players. They won that game 4-1 and then went on to the final against South Wales Police where they were crowned Welsh police champions after a 5-4 win.

For the 2022/2023 season, they entered the Emergency Services Football League (ESFL) and also the Police Sport UK (PSUK) Championships. After qualifying in both group stages, they unfortunately were knocked out of the championships in the last 16 stage where they were defeated 3-2 away to Devon & Cornwall.

They reached the final of the ESFL in their first season playing Thames Valley Police in the final in Manchester and coming away with the trophy after a 1-0



win. The Welsh Police Force Championships were not played this season.

For the 2023/2024 season, they entered all three competitions again. They again qualified from both the group stages for the PSUK and ESFL. Unfortunately, in the last 32, they were knocked out at home by Northumbria Police 4-1.

In the PSUK, they qualified for the final after beating PSNI, Hampshire Police and Devon & Cornwall Police in the knock-out rounds. They faced South Yorkshire Police in the final which was played at South Shields in Newcastle and, yet again, came

away victorious with a 2-0 win with both goals coming from Jamie Mcdaid.

They still have the Welsh Police Force Championships final to play against South Wales Police.

In the two full seasons the team has been together, they have won two UK competitions and also the Welsh championships. For a force with very few officers and staff compared to other forces in the UK, the achievement should not be underestimated.

Well done to the team, and we wish them continued success!

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## Legal Services for North Wales Police

With over 20 years' experience of working with police, Gorvins have been a leading provider of legal services in all matters arising from relationship breakdowns and disputes concerning children. We understand the importance of family and the impact that a family breakdown can have upon all of those closely concerned and that is why our service (with discounted fees) is offered not just to serving and retired police officers and police staff, but also to their partners and immediate family members.

Part of **our commitment** to supporting those whose vital work supports us all includes a prompt **initial consultation - free of charge**.

We also supply our legal advice to you at a discounted rate and are able to offer a **fixed-fee divorce process**.

Our family and divorce law specialists understand the aspects that particularly impact upon the police with reference to pensions in divorce cases and shift patterns in relation to arrangement for children.

### Other Legal Services

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- Insolvency
- Dispute Resolution and Civil Litigation
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As a Senior Partner Practice of St. James's Place Wealth Management, Spillane & Co. Wealth Management Ltd can provide you with the advice you need, so you can enjoy the finer elements of life and give you that all important peace of mind for the future.

Please contact us to arrange a no obligation consultation.

"The care and professionalism used to assess our individual needs was outstanding in comparison to other financial advisers. Detailed plans were developed to plan for our future based on our circumstances, not just a sale of simple products pursued by other advisers"

**Brian Robinson, Mold**

"In the four years since I asked Chris Spillane to provide financial advice to myself, I have found him to be extremely knowledgeable, trustworthy and reliable. I consider the advice he provides is always in my best interests and he is always available if I need advice. I would recommend his services wholeheartedly."

**Anthony Duffy, Retired, Pwllheli**

"I was a trustee of a workplace colleague's funds and was so impressed with Chris Spillane's sound advice. Chris is very good at explaining the types of investments and their pros and cons. I have no hesitation in recommending Chris to friends and family."

**Mark Davies, Retired, Mold**

## St. James's Place



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