

North Wales Police Federation

Annual Report 2024

Welcome to the North Wales Police Federation annual report for 2024.

The report provides an overview of the work undertaken locally by your branch in 2024 and highlights how the North Wales Police Federation serves the members, provides welfare support, helps the Force work effectively, which in turn provides value to the communities that we serve. It's been a very challenging year, and I am extremely proud of our hard-working office staff and representatives who have worked tirelessly to ensure we provide our members with the assistance they deserve without any apparent change in service.

One of our aims is to ensure that we represent members in discipline matters, ensuring that the very best level of representation is provided to our members in their hour of need. With this in mind we also need to ensure that discipline matters are handled efficiently, which is beneficial not only to our members, but also to the Force and to the public. However, we must not forget our responsibility to serve those members who are victims or witnesses in cases. To that end, we have produced a leaflet which clearly sets out our responsibilities, and the service that all victims and witnesses can expect from us.

Our commitment to Equality, Welfare and Wellbeing continues to be hugely important, and you can read more about the work we have undertaken within this document.

The Police Federation's work, whether local or national covers a multitude of topics and hopefully this report will highlight the diverse range of subjects we cover for the benefit of our members.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. I hope you find it informative and interesting, and as always, we welcome all feedback you may have.

Trystan Bevan

Branch Chair

Welcome to the North Wales Police Federation Annual Report for 2024.

North Wales Police Federation supports officers from Constable to Chief Inspector and, since 2022, Special Constabulary officers. Our role is to negotiate and influence on your behalf across the various roles in policing. We influence and negotiate on a number of issues and our involvement in Force meetings makes sure you have a voice. We obtain outcomes that support and underpin the core values of your policing.

The Federation Office is staffed by a small but dedicated team who will always do their utmost to help members with queries. I want to thank the staff in the Federation Office for everything they have done to ensure that we continue to provide a service to our members and the force, particularly during a challenging year. Their hard work has ensured that our members have continued to receive the high level of service that they, rightly, expect.

We continue to see increases in demand from members for Federation support. This saw a mixture of dealing with misconduct investigations, both internally and with the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), right through to supporting members who are victims or witnesses. These investigations can often take a significant amount of time to investigate and throughout, the Federation 'Friend' will be there to arrange the necessary legal and welfare support.

In addition, within the Federation Office we also deal with the whole suite of issues which affect our membership including, but not limited to, grievances, appeals, medically restricted and recuperating officers, ill health retirement, health & safety and equality matters.

I hope that this report conveys to you the commitment the Federation makes to ensuring your voice is heard internally and externally. We attend Force meetings on your behalf to ensure we convey the best interests of our members. We also feed into the national policing picture to make sure north Wales police officer's views are heard loud and clear.

Our local Federation reps are the backbone of the organisation and they do this role on top of their 'day job'. It's a challenging role at times and it's invaluable that our approach is always one to seek resolution not retribution, so it is always key that both parties come to the 'table' with an open mind. Sometimes this is sometimes easier said than done.

Looking ahead, our commitment to our members, here in north Wales, will be to continue to work constructively with the Chief Officers and the force. With the election process taking place early in 2025, we will enter a period of inevitable change, as Fed reps change. However we will continue to challenge and speak out when it is necessary, whilst striving to work with the Force to make North Wales Police the very best it can be for our brave, hardworking and dedicated police officers who we are proud to represent.

Lewis Davies

North Wales Police Federation General Secretary

2024 Roundup

2024 has been a particularly challenging year for North Wales Police Federation. Every year since the events of 2020 we've said that we've been looking forward to a more settled year, but as with previous years it definitely wasn't. In many ways, 2024 was no different to usual years in that it was another busy year for your local Federation, representing, influencing and negotiating on the behalf of all our members, from those who are new in service, right through to those who are retiring. In others it was, of course, very different. Deputy Secretary/Treasurer Mel Jones retired in November 2023, and wasn't replaced until February 2024; and as you will be aware, we were without a Secretary/Treasurer from mid-January until September. The existing members of the team really came together to ensure that members experienced a limited impact, and we now have Lewis Davies in post as the Secretary/Treasurer, and Sam Roberts as the Deputy Secretary/Treasurer. We've also had Police Bravery Awards, the National Police Memorial Day, and this year Conference was not held.

Recruitment continued apace in 2024 and we spoke to five new intakes of student officers, advising them what the Federation does for officers, highlighting the special nature of student constables and Regulation 13, raising awareness of the Group Insurance Scheme, highlighting the features for all members, and providing details and benefits of the Police Treatment Centres, The Ben Fund, The National Police Healthcare Scheme and our other member services. Each intake is made up of students who are on different entry routes – some have the Professional Policing Degree, some are doing the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship, others have a degree and are on the Degree Holder Entry Programme, and the new Police Constable Entry programme (no degree) was introduced in 2024. We congratulate all of our new colleagues for their dedication and tenacity in undertaking their different learning. We have continued to keep in touch with cohorts, attending their passing out ceremony's, allowing us to continue to understand the huge amount of work that we are asking our new officers to undertake. Additionally, we spoke to groups of new PCSO's and Police Staff, to let them know about the benefits of the Group Insurance.

The Force, including its most senior management, has continued to recognise the importance of having the Federation involved and consulted on major policy and procedural changes. This important relationship with the Force ensures that decisions taken by the organisation are subject to intense scrutiny by the Federation to safeguard officer's wellbeing and welfare. Last year the Federation attended meetings both at a National and Force strategic level. These included (not an exhaustive list!): Promotions Board; Leadership and Culture; Wellbeing; Screening Panels; Force Executive Board; Financial Savings; Misconduct; Grievance; Welsh; Tactical Citizens in Policing; PSD meetings; Employment Tribunals; Member Services; Redeployment and Recruitments Board. More so than ever, it's vital that your voice is represented to the organisation.

We've continued to run a schedule of surgeries for the police family. We've changed how we let you know about some of these surgeries, and also how you can book an appointment, which has been hugely successful, allowing more members and staff to

speak to the right people to meet their needs. In association with the Force, we introduced MetFriendly as a member service, which brought back to the officers and staff the facility to save by way of the hugely popular 10 year plans, with all monthly payments being by payroll deduction. If you'd like to know more, visit https://www.metfriendly.org.uk/?src=north_wales_Fed_banner. We've still been pushing to achieve the best deal for you – from equipment to member services, particularly important in these very challenging cost of living crisis times. We've continued our relationship with Perkjam, an exclusive customer perks platform which offers hundreds of discounts and offers to the North Wales Police family. Our member services also include equipment, cars, holidays, days out, shopping, legal and financial services, welfare and health services. Visit www.polfed.org/northwales/member-services/ and see what you can save, and make sure you sign up to the 'MSG Federation' email group to keep up to date with the latest offers.

We've continued to get great use out of our welfare van, and it remains a well used and popular addition to our welfare offering. The van, which has a toilet, wash area, seating, hot water, sink and microwave, supports officers predominantly deployed to incidents where there are no facilities, such as scene preservation, major incidents etc., to allow officers to take a break somewhere dry and warm, have a hot drink and to have bathroom facilities.

2024 was a much quieter year as far as Mutual Aid is concerned, however we continued a successful partnership with the Force in supporting our members during the Wrexham home matches, providing much needed hot drinks, snacks and support during these busy events. We've been delighted to provide support during this exciting time for the town.

With welfare in mind, we continued to support the valuable PSA testing events across the force. The PSA test is a blood test that measures the amount of prostate specific antigen (PSA) in your blood. PSA is a protein produced by normal cells in the prostate and also by prostate cancer cells. It's normal to have a small amount of PSA in blood, and the amount rises slightly as men get older and the prostate gets bigger. A raised PSA level may suggest the person has a problem with their prostate, but not necessarily cancer. Since 2019 the events have seen a total of 1433 men tested. So far we are aware that there have been 38 Red and 47 Amber results which flags concern over their prostate health. North Wales continue to be a leading force in offering PSA testing, and the results show what an amazing success it has been.

National Police Memorial Day was held in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on Sunday 29 September and was attended by over 1,000 people, made up of families, friends and colleagues of fallen officers as well as police chiefs and officers. One of the focuses for this year's gathering was to remember those killed in air disasters. 2024 is the anniversary of the Chinook helicopter tragedy on the Mull of Kintyre, and a wreath was laid to commemorate lives lost in air disasters, many of which have happened on Scottish soil.

75 North Wales Police officers/PCSO's and Police Staff attended the Police Treatment Centres in 2024, 76% accessing the muscular-skeletal programme and 24% the psychological wellbeing programme. 1062 of North Wales officers donated

to the PTC in 2024, and it's worth pointing out that this number does not include the 2024 police officer and PCSO new recruits, who were eligible to 12 months free cover. This highlights just how valuable the officer of North Wales Police view the services offered by the PTC. 2024 also saw the opening of the PTC to police staff, who can now enjoy the same benefits as serving officers and PCSO's. It's an amazing facility, ensuring injured officers, PCSO's and police staff have the best possible chance of recovery from injuries sustained both on and off duty.

In 2021, North Wales Police officers became eligible to join The Ben Fund. The Ben Fund is an independent charity dedicated to supporting and caring for the police from recruitment into retirement. From their centre in the Ribble Valley, the Ben Fund is dedicated to supporting your physical and mental health and wellbeing, and with its financial hardship assistance, via grants it provides a unique care package that compliments the PTC. In 2024, 358 officers were members of The Ben Fund, and 22 accessed the physiotherapy, wellbeing or counselling facilities. Since mid-2024 North Wales Police Ben Fund members have been able to access physiotherapy services within the North Wales area, which has allowed even more members to access The Ben Fund services.

Attendance at the PTC and The Ben Fund is classed as duty time, and if you don't currently donate to the PTC and/or The Ben Fund, please get in touch with the Federation Office for more details.

In December 2022 we launched membership of the National Police Healthcare Scheme. We have been looking for a cost-effective private healthcare scheme to offer as a member service for some time, and NPHS, providing not for profit private healthcare, was significantly cheaper than other options, whilst offering the same levels of cover as equivalent high street providers. The scheme is administered by Northumbria Police Federation, and pays private expenses for treatment designed to cure or alleviate acute medical conditions or ailments and provides this private medical care to members. Plus, membership of the scheme also includes Police Treatment Centre membership for officers, PCSO's and police staff. And, scheme members also have the opportunity to rent The National Police Healthcare Scheme barn conversions in Wandylaw, Northumberland at vastly discounted prices. If you'd like to find out more, or submit an application to join the scheme, visit <https://www.polfed.org/northwales/member-services/health-services/national-police-healthcare-scheme/>

Our Group Insurance Scheme had over 2,000 police officer, police staff and retired (officers and staff) members at December 2024. If you're not currently a member why not take a look at the scheme benefits on our website? It's much more than just a life insurance policy, and 2024 saw the addition of Sick Pay, Mobile Phone and Home Emergency cover. To give you an idea of how our members benefitted from the scheme, in 2024 members called out the motor breakdown service over 250 times, there were claims for life insurance, critical illness, court compensation and over 40 members claimed convalescent benefit (for assistance with travel to and from the Police Treatment Centres). 99 members utilised the GP24 service between January and the end of the December 2024; this access to a UK based GP has been an

increasingly utilised aspect of the Scheme since it was introduced in 2019. Membership of the Group Insurance is open to all police officers and police staff, and if you'd like to join please contact the Federation office.

We've continued providing the popular and important pre-retirement seminars to officers and staff. Retirement is one of the biggest lifestyle changes any of us will face. Due to rising longevity, it is becoming increasingly important that staff are able to make informed decisions to prepare effectively for retirement, both financially and in terms of lifestyle provision. These courses, with guest speakers, ensured that officers and staff approaching retirement had the best possible advice for when that last shift had finished.

In the summer of 2022 Special Constables became eligible to join the Police Federation of England and Wales. This significant change finally enables Special Constables to have the same support and representation that their full-time colleagues benefit from. PFEW have long argued that our valued volunteering colleagues, who are subject to the same risks and conditions as full-time members, should have equity of access to the same protection and support. After all, a special constable is required to undertake a minimum of 200 hours of operational duty every year, spread over a minimum of 16 hours per month. This means that 9,174 Special Constables of England and Wales devoted more than 1.76 million hours over a year supporting the police in the protection of the public. We were delighted that PCC Andy Dunbobbin upheld his election commitment to fund Federation membership for Special Constables, one of the first in England and Wales to do so, and we are pleased that 84% of Special Constables in North Wales Police have joined the Federation. If you are a Special Constable, and not yet a member of the Police Federation, you can find out more, including how to join, at <https://www.polfed.org/northwales/about-us/special-constables/>

You can keep up to date with progress via our Facebook and X pages and don't forget to join our MSG Federation email group.

<https://www.polfed.org/northwales/>

<https://www.facebook.com/NWalesPoliceFed/>

<https://twitter.com/NWalesPoliceFed>

Conduct and Performance

North Wales Police Federation Misconduct Leads are the General Secretary, Lewis Davies, and Case Worker, Liz Owen.

Due to changes during the year, the branch is looking to further increase resilience in this area, so the Branch have a number of misconduct trained workplace representatives who can support members facing misconduct allegations or performance related issues.

Branch officials work closely with both the force based Professional Standards Department and the Wales and West region of the IOPC to ensure that cases are dealt with in a fair and proportionate manner.

The Police Conduct and Performance Regulations 2020 prescribe that if an officer has committed a minor misdemeanour or it is evident from an early stage that their action was a mistake, they can work with their line manager to reflect on what could have been done differently. They can take learning points and grow as an Officer. This process, known as Reflective Practise, can also draw out possible learning points for the Force.

Custody

2024 saw a busy year in custody.

Continuing from last year, redaction still is an issue with regards to the Bail Act and the limitations it places on the ABP. At the Fed Connect Conference there was a lot of talk about the introduction of AI tools to assist and automate, but as with the #simplifyDG6, despite the Federation pushing, there is, to date, no significant progress on this at this time. Hopefully with the new government, we may see this hot topic start to gain some traction and the bureaucratic burden on officers start to be addressed.

The NWP File building team has been a success with a noticeable difference to domestic cases, with a number of successful charges being returned, achieving justice for our domestic abuse survivors.

Bail management has shown an improvement since last year, with the number of persons showing as having failed to answer their bail being, at the time of this report, 20 (16% less) Central, 37 (38% less) Eastern and 1 (80% less) Western Detainees

The New RMS UA has been integrated into custody and has been bedded in well and whilst slow and the new risk assessment questions are allowing for better safeguarding through the custody process and the management of bail conditions has been simplified to reduce the risk of bail conditions being missed when bail is extended.

As per last year, budget-wise, we are already significantly overspending. This is due to custody carrying a high number of officers and staff on restricted duties or long-term illnesses. Whilst this has not impacted the day-to-day functioning of the suite, constantly plugging gaps with overtime is not the ideal and will inevitably lead to staff burnout from working the extra hours and leave being refused. SMT are well aware and are working with HR and OHU in efforts help staff back into the workplace.

That being said, when compared to other custody Suites of a similar size and throughput, we have nowhere near the staffing numbers in the first place. So whilst the overspend is palpable, I do wonder if overall, we are still run for a lot less than other comparable forces.

Looking forward to the year to ahead, work is ongoing in a number of areas, including the standardisation of training for CDO's – which is different in each force, and the training officers receive during their custody awareness days to ensure they are able to fulfil the role of CDO when they are required to back fill.

There are imminent changes to the Mental Health Act where Custody will no longer be deemed a place of Safety. This is a significant grey area that the College Of Policing (COP) are aware of, and whilst NWP's legal team believe we are covered to use the PACE clock, then s136 to effectively extend this, as a Federation Representative and as someone who has an interest in the management of persons with Mental Health, I personally have significant ethical concerns over this as we are in essence deliberately delaying someone's medical treatment purely because our partner agencies cannot find a bed. Think of it, that if someone had a broken arm,

but A&E was full, would you keep them in custody for over 24 hours knowing that a doctor has been to see them and stated they need admitting for medical treatment? You wouldn't. So why are we still looking to treat Mental Health differently to Physical Health and not pay it as much credence?

This also calls into question the power to detain. If you are detaining someone for the purpose of obtaining evidence through questioning, but the AMPH and s12 Doctor have told you they need admitting to a mental health ward and are not fit to be interviewed, then what exactly are you still detaining them for?

If Custody was to remain a place of safety, then I would suggest there would need to be a legislative change to stop the situations where assessments are in essence paused until a bed is available.

Finally, the detention of youths continues to cause contention. The COP is very clear in its guidance that detention must always be a last resort and not because it's convenient.

As custody Sergeants, we need to be very aware of this and make an objective assessment of the facts presented to us when making the decision to detain or not detain.

Kris Hunt

Equality Liaison Officer

At the end of a what has been a challenging year for everyone I am pleased to be able to report on some of the excellent work in the area of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).

Work has continued to ensure that our neurodivergent members are fully supported by the Force. A survey has been conducted which will, for the first time, provide a true understanding of the numbers of neurodivergent officers in the force as well as the challenges they face. Publication of the results is imminent and will inform the ongoing approach.

The Worker Protection Act 2023 (WPA) came into force in October. This legislation has introduced a new preventative duty on employers requiring them to take positive and proactive reasonable steps to prevent the sexual harassment of their workers. This is a really positive move for our members and we will continue to monitor the force's implementation of this legislation.

The JRFT continues to be a focus as the level requirement for specialist roles has not been reviewed in the light of the reduction of the standard JRFT to 3.7. There is an argument that this should be reviewed in light of the new preventative duty in the WPA as well as the fact that a proper review of what is necessary has still not taken place. This will no doubt continue to be a focus moving forwards.

The results of the internal Menopause Survey carried out mid 2024 have been published and a number of recommendations covering mandatory training, availability of information, and provision of support have been made which should have a positive impact for our members. Nationally the Federation also continues to represent our members in this area with the PolFed 2023 Menopause Survey results and recommendations published towards the end of 2024.

Support such as PSA testing and external initiatives like Andy's Man Club help to ensure that the welfare needs of our male members continue to be a priority too, ensuring that all of our members are fully supported. Work also continues to be done in a number of other areas such as PRONTO, RMS UI, and welfare in specialist roles.

It is with regret that I will be stepping down as ELO in the new year but I look forward to supporting my replacement and our members in 2025.

Rae Ellis

Finance

Financial control of the finances of NWP Federation are managed in its entirety by PFEW at Leatherhead. The total monthly subscription of members is forwarded to Leatherhead.

All invoices from suppliers are forwarded direct to the Finance Department at Leatherhead. Expenses claims from our representatives are forwarded direct to the Finance Department at Leatherhead via a Contina IT App and are reimbursed direct to the Representative. Management Information is provided to the Branch Council from the Finance Department at Leatherhead.

Annual audited accounts are provided by KPMG and when available are posted on the national and local PFEW Websites.

Each year, every branch submits a budget, essentially what its operating costs are for the year. For 2024 we had an overspend due to re-charge from North Wales Police for the utilities etc. for the running of the office which Leatherhead were unable to apply to the correct years (due to their accounting processes). This should be resolved in 2025. We operate very prudently as a branch ensuring we scrutinize every penny spent to maximise value for money to the membership but also ensuring we continue to provide a first-class service to our members in North Wales.

We also maximise the opportunity for income generation which we reinvest into various welfare initiatives such as maintaining refreshments on the Federation Welfare Van and vouchers for officers who are assaulted / injured during the course of their duties.

Lewis Davis

Health & Safety

Well, another year gone and as a force we remain in a good position in regard to Health & Safety.

In comparison with the findings of TIAA's past divisional reviews, most recently July 2024, significant improvement was seen in how the process for reviewing accident and near-miss reports is operating in practice.

The process for administering accident and near-miss reports, including RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) was seen to have developed significantly at North Wales Police, particularly in the way Health and Safety staff seek line manager review of each individual report with a view of closing each once appropriate to do so.

The new H&S reporting system developed by Elite who supply our HS1 and A879 reporting system. Has had a few niggles however this has now been fixed and appears to be working well.

Force E-Bikes are now in use.

The training of first aiders and fire stewards within the workplace continues with more courses planned for the coming year. A review of training records identified that there was a waiting list of individuals for the fire steward training, including three Western employees, although a discussion with the Head of Learning and Development identified that the matter was in hand and being managed effectively. It was identified that a logical approach was being taken in prioritising the waiting list, and it was confirmed that the Force has a resource in-house to deliver the training.

It is accepted that identifying individuals who are willing to undertake this voluntary role of being a fire steward, especially given factors such as turnover of staff, can be a challenge for police forces. Furthermore, individuals are required to attend refresher training every three years or otherwise be newly trained if the current fire stewards do not wish to continue. It is therefore accepted that the process in respect of maintaining up-to-date training is a rolling one, with controls at North Wales Police being in place to manage the process. There were, at the time of review, a number of courses being held keeping the waiting list manageable.

The majority of our buildings however do have adequate numbers of Fire Stewards, which include PCSOs, Front Counter Staff and Logistics Operatives who monitor fire safety arrangements, conduct fire evacuation exercises and recording of fire safety equipment.

PSA testing continues again this year and continues to receive good positive feedback.

Facilities continued to receive requests for air fryers, and this was discussed at some length with the final decision being made with stake holders, members of staff can use personal air fryers in the workplace, subject to PAT testing and maintenance. The force will not purchase air fryers, and they are only to be used in suitable kitchen areas.

As ever as a force we are lucky enough to have a really strong and pro-active H&S working group and manager along with support from chief officers who understand the importance of H&S in the workplace along with the benefit to all employees and members of the public.

I look forward to what the year ahead brings.

Tony Edwards

Professional Development

We look at all matters relating to the development of police officers, from recruitment standards and entry routes, through to promotion and leadership standards. We've continued to sit on promotion boards, and to attend meetings locally, regionally and nationally to ensure that we are involved in the consultation and development of recruitment, training, development and assessment and promotion of our members.

As a Force and a Federation, whilst we continue to move on from the Covid-19 pandemic, with much more training for officers and Federation reps taking place, we're still, to some extent, 'playing catch-up' for both mandatory and other training, and so a mix of face-to-face and online training continues to take place.

We have continued liaising with both the cohorts and the PFEW Professional Development/College of Policing lead to identify and challenge issues that have arisen in the PEQF programme. Both the Force and the University have taken our constructive feedback on board, with the degree content evolving in a very positive direction. New recruits now have the choice of which programme they follow, from taking a degree, non-degree entry-route and coming in with a degree and completing a two-year conversion course. All new recruits have continued to undertake some or all of their initial training online. It's a huge challenge for all involved, but is particularly challenging for the student officers, who all have different learning environments, family structures and internet reliability. We have supported those students and congratulate them on their continued dedication and tenacity undertaking learning in challenging circumstances, and we continue to follow their development closely. We will continue to have an active role.

We have also had a role in the development of the College of Policing promotion process for Sergeant's and Inspectors, and our members played an active role in the CoP workshop. The process is still very much at a developmental stage, but we look forward to continued inclusion in the process.

We have also been closely involved in the provision of essential training within Force and will continue to do so closely ensuring our involvement when decisions have been made as to which training is rolled out and when.

Jayne Humphreys