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AUTUMN 2026



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- see Pages 8 and 9

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MAKING CHANGE TOGETHER



By Trystan Bevan, chair of North Wales Police Federation

As always, there is plenty to reflect on, but there is also a great deal to look forward to. Across the following pages, you will see some excellent examples of the dedication, professionalism and commitment of our colleagues, as well as the importance of supporting one another through the challenges that come with a career in policing.

The last few weeks have provided some particularly powerful reminders of what it means to be part of the policing family.

National Police Memorial Day in Belfast was a poignant occasion and an important opportunity to remember those officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. It is also a time to stand alongside their families, who continue to live with that loss. You can read more about the event on Pages 8 and 9.

We have also seen what we can achieve when that policing family comes together. The campaign to prevent the early release of the killers of PC Andrew Harper demonstrated the strength of a

collective voice. Officers, Federation branches and members of the public all played their part, showing that when we stand together behind an issue that matters, we can make sure our concerns are heard.

But supporting our colleagues is about much more than standing together during the most high-profile moments. It is also about looking after each other every day.

World Mental Health Day on 10 October provides an important opportunity to have that conversation. Policing is a demanding profession. Officers routinely deal with traumatic incidents, difficult circumstances and situations that most members of the public will never experience. Often, the expectation is that we simply deal with it and move on to the next job.

But we are human beings first and police officers second.

There should be no stigma attached to recognising when you are struggling or asking for support. Looking after our mental health is just as important as looking after our physical health, and sometimes the most important thing we can do for a colleague is simply ask how they are and genuinely listen to the answer.

That culture of support is something we must continue to build. It means making sure officers feel able to speak openly, access appropriate support and seek help without fear of judgement. It also means recognising that wellbeing is not simply about responding when someone reaches crisis point. It is about creating workplaces where people feel valued, respected and supported

throughout their careers.

This edition includes excellent examples of that approach, including work on inclusion, neurodiversity, menopause and welfare. These issues are fundamental to creating a healthy and supportive working environment for everyone.

Looking ahead, the PFEW National Conference later this month will provide another important opportunity for representatives from across the country to come together and discuss the issues affecting our members and the future of policing.

The National Conference gives us the chance to share experiences, challenge where necessary, and ensure officers' experiences are reflected in the national conversation. While the pressures may differ between forces and departments, many of the challenges facing our members are shared.

It is important, therefore, that we continue to use our collective voice.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and take the opportunity to recognise the achievements of your colleagues, reflect on the stories of those we have lost, and perhaps find something that resonates with your own experiences.

Most importantly, as we mark World Mental Health Day, please remember that you do not have to face things alone. We ask a great deal of our officers and staff, and we must remain equally committed to looking after the people who carry out this vital work.

Thank you, as always, for everything you do.

Stay safe and take care.

Diolch am eich Gwaith caled.

As we mark World Mental Health Day, please remember that you do not have to face things alone. We ask a great deal of our officers and staff, and we must remain equally committed to looking after the people who carry out this vital work.

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FED WELCOMES DECISION TO BLOCK EARLY RELEASE OF PC HARPER'S KILLERS

A successful campaign to block the early release of PC Andrew Harper's killers demonstrates the power of policing's collective voice, says the chair of North Wales Federation.

Trystan Bevan thanked Federation members and the public for supporting the campaign to ensure two of PC Harper's killers remain behind bars.

Led by Thames Valley Police Federation and its chair Aileen O'Connor, the campaign has helped secure changes to the early release rules so that those convicted of unlawful killing, including manslaughter, will be excluded from the scheme.

A petition calling for PC Harper's killers to serve their full sentences attracted more than one million signatures, while officers and the public were urged to contact their MPs and make clear their opposition to any early release of the offenders.

The change means two of PC Harper's killers, who had previously been eligible for consideration for early release, will remain in prison and will serve the remainder of



PC Andrew Harper.

their sentences.

Trystan said: "I want to say a huge thank you to our members and to the public for supporting this campaign.

"Those who signed the petition, contacted their MPs and encouraged others to get behind it all played their part.

"Police officers, Federation branches and members of the public all came together and made their feelings known. It was a

very strong message and one that was impossible to ignore.

"What has been achieved is a powerful demonstration of what is possible when we use our collective voice."

Trystan also praised Thames Valley Police Federation for its determination in leading the campaign.

He said: "Aileen and her Thames Valley Police Federation colleagues have been relentless.

"They have co-ordinated a national campaign, kept up the pressure, and provided a platform for our collective voices to be heard.

"It underlines what can be achieved with a strong and united Police Federation."

PC Harper, a Thames Valley Police officer, was killed in August 2019 after being dragged behind a car while attempting to stop a group stealing a quad bike in Berkshire.

Two of those involved, both aged 17 at the time, were convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 13 years in prison.

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STRONGER TOGETHER: BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE IN NORTH WALES POLICE



By Gavin Gilmore, North Wales Police Federation workplace representative

Policing across the UK continues to operate in an increasingly challenging environment. Public expectations are high, scrutiny is greater than ever, and building trust and confidence within our communities remains a priority. Against this backdrop, creating a police service that is representative, inclusive and supportive of its workforce has never been more important.

One of the strongest examples of this commitment can be seen in the working relationship between the Police Federation and the networks. One such network is the strong working relationship with the Black Police Association (BPA). While both organisations have distinct responsibilities, they share a common goal: ensuring that officers and staff are supported, valued and able to achieve their full potential regardless of their background.

As both a Federation representative and a member of the BPA within North Wales Police, I have seen first-hand the positive impact that this partnership can have. Together, we provide support, guidance, challenge and advocacy for colleagues while helping to create an environment where people feel confident in bringing their authentic selves to work.

The Police Race Action Plan has provided policing with a clear framework for change. Its ambition is simple but also

powerful, even in the face of the current political climate: to create a police service that is anti-racist, trusted by ethnic communities and fair to everyone who works within it. The plan recognises that improving representation is not enough on its own. Lasting change requires organisations to examine their culture, address barriers to progression, challenge inappropriate behaviour and ensure that all officers and staff feel respected and included.

Culture is often described as 'the way we do things around here', but it is much more than that. It influences how people feel when they come to work, whether they believe their voices are heard and whether they feel supported when challenges arise. A positive working culture promotes wellbeing, encourages professional development and enables individuals to perform at their best. Equally, a poor culture can undermine confidence, engagement and trust.

This is why the commitment of North Wales Chief Officer team to improve organisational culture is so important. They have recognised that cultural change is not a one-off initiative but a continuous journey. Through engagement with staff associations, listening to the experiences of officers and staff, and supporting the objectives of the Police Race Action plan, they have demonstrated a clear determination to create a workplace where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Importantly, this commitment extends beyond words. Meaningful cultural change requires visible leadership, accountability and a willingness to listen. It requires leaders to create an environment where difficult conversations can take place, where challenges are welcomed and where people feel safe to speak up when something is not right. These are the foundations upon which trust is built.

The Police Federation and BPA both play a crucial role in supporting this work. The BPA offers mentoring, support networks and valuable insight into the lived experiences of colleagues.

The Federation complements this by providing representation, welfare support, legal assistance and guidance throughout an officer's career. Together, these organisations help ensure that officers have access to both practical support and trusted networks when they need them most.

This partnership is particularly relevant in today's political and social climate. Discussions around race, inclusion, fairness and public confidence continue to shape the national conversation about policing. Communities rightly expect police services to reflect the people they serve and to demonstrate fairness both externally and internally. By working together, the Federation and the BPA can help ensure that these expectations are met while supporting colleagues through periods of change and reform.

North Wales Police continues to evolve, recognising that a modern police service must be built upon fairness, inclusion and respect. The journey towards cultural change will always continue, but significant progress is being made through strong leadership, meaningful engagement and genuine partnership working. Ultimately, the relationship between the Federation and the BPA and other staff networks demonstrates what can be achieved when organisations work together with a shared purpose.

By supporting our people, championing equality and helping to shape a positive culture, we are not only strengthening our workforce but also building a police service that is better equipped to serve the communities of North Wales both now and in the future.

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GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE NEW T10 TASER



By Luke Patteson, North Wales Police Federation workplace representative

One of my roles as a trainer is delivering Taser courses to officers across North Wales Police. With the launch of the new T10 earlier this year, I thought it was a good opportunity to look at the latest addition to the Taser family and what it means for those who carry it.

When I was on response, I was first trained on the X26. Back then, you had one shot. One opportunity.

If that shot wasn't effective, you had to remove the used cartridge, reload with another and do all of that while dealing with the situation that had prompted you to draw the Taser.

We've come a long way since then.

More recently, officers have been using the two-shot X2. But technology moves on, and those still carrying the X2 should soon have the opportunity to attend an upskill course and get to grips with the latest model: the T10.

Ten shots, one barb at a time

As the name suggests, you get ten shots. Unlike the X2, each shot fires a single barb, meaning the officer has to consider where that barb is going and where it needs to make contact to achieve neuromuscular incapacitation.

The additional shots do provide greater flexibility when dealing with missed or ineffective shots, particularly during a fast-moving confrontation.

The T10 also has a 45-foot range, significantly more than the X2's 25 feet. That extra distance allows officers to create

more space between themselves and the subject while retaining the option to use the device.

On the qualification shoot, shots can be taken from as far away as 10 metres, so getting your stance and aim right is important. You'll get plenty of instruction and practice, and it's worth making the most of that time. The T10 behaves differently from the models many officers know, and confidence comes through handling and repetition.

The increased range and power also bring another consequence. At the moment, we can't put a person in the blue training suit because of National College of Policing rules, even with the Velcro HALT cartridges. Instead, we've had to find other ways of demonstrating what happens when the probes are fired.

The result is a rather hilarious moving target. It gives a good appreciation of the force behind those probes.

about learning how to operate the device; it's about developing the wider skills, judgement and confidence needed to use it as part of policing.

Don't overthink the assessment

Both initial and upskill courses remain pass or fail. The trainers are there to help you develop. We'll provide instruction, opportunities to practise and feedback to help you improve. If someone isn't successful the first time, they can often be invited back to continue their development.

So don't overthink it. Listen, practise, take the feedback and concentrate on what you're doing.

More capability, more confidence

The introduction of the T10 couldn't come at a more important time. Assaults on police officers are, sadly, commonplace, while the confrontations officers face continue to grow in scope and complexity. Threats can change rapidly, and equipment that provides greater flexibility and capability can make a real



The new Taser T10.

A new muscle memory

The T10 also changes the way officers interact with the device. The controls have now been incorporated into the safety switch, including warning alerts, stealth mode, re-energise, extend and the daily function check.

For officers moving from the X2, this means a little rewiring of muscle memory. Under pressure, you don't want to think consciously about where a control is; you want the action to feel familiar.

If you're attending an initial course, you'll be starting with the latest Taser we've had so far. The three-day course isn't simply

difference.

For me, that's ultimately what the T10 is about. It's not simply about having more shots or being able to engage from a greater distance. It's about giving officers another option in challenging and potentially dangerous situations, and giving them the confidence and capability to use it effectively.

Technology will keep developing, and policing will adapt with it. For trainers, that means keeping up with those changes and making sure officers are prepared.

And for those about to start your T10 journey, enjoy the course.

'MOVING' 2026 NATIONAL POLICE MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVED IN BELFAST



North Wales Police Federation chair Trystan Bevan was among thousands of attendees at the 23rd National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) to commemorate the lives of police officers who have died in the line of duty.

The 2026 edition of NPMD was held on Sunday 27 September at Belfast's Waterfront Hall, which housed guests

including senior police leaders, religious leaders, politicians and the loved ones of fallen officers.

"I think National Police Memorial Day is a time that we, as police forces across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, all come together in memory of our fallen colleagues – the officers who have lost their lives in the course of their duties,"

Trystan said.

"Also, we stand together with their families in respect of that, who continue to feel the losses of the people who meant the world to them. It's a time for us to join them by mourning and remembering our friends and colleagues who served alongside us."

Trystan elaborated on the importance of supporting these individuals in their grief,

adding: "I think it's crucial that we are always prepared to stand together with them, and for them to see that."

"And by seeing that, they know they're part of the wider policing family, because at the end of the day, we are one big family who should look after each other. That means in day-to-day working life, but also on moving occasions like this, where remembering those no longer with us is very meaningful but can be equally difficult and painful."

"Every year, there is such a huge outpouring of emotion for these officers by such a huge amount of people, and it is always a privilege to witness. It's a reminder of the strength of love and appreciation for policing, even if it is not always there for us to see."

This year's NPMD service was a poignant tribute to the eight officers who had died on duty during the previous 12 months.

They were:

Police Constable Matthew Blades, Cleveland Police, aged 37

Police Constable Tom Clough, Cleveland Police, aged 38

Police Constable Alice Slominska, Bedfordshire Police, aged 19

Police Constable Jess Turnbull, Northumbria Police, aged 19

Police Constable Mark Chester, Ministry of Defence Police, aged 35

Police Constable Mathew Parker, Essex Police, aged 43

Police Constable Bradley Corke, Kent Police, aged 27

Police Constable Faizaan Najeeb, Northamptonshire Police, aged 24.

Commemorations were opened with a processional march featuring flag bearers from forces across England and Wales, followed by music from the Police Service of



Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood.

Northern Ireland.

National Police Chaplain the Reverend Matt Hopley opened the service before Dame Fionnuala Jay-O'Boyle DBE DStJ, Lord-Lieutenant of Belfast, welcomed the congregation.

The next part of the service saw touching readings delivered by Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood and Lady Ruth Hamilton, Patron of the RUC GC Widows' Association.

Music was provided by the Police Service of Northern Ireland Male Voice Choir and Police Service of Northern Ireland Ladies Choir.

Police hats representing England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were carried to the front of the hall and laid beside candles, before relatives representing each nation lit a candle.

The Northern Ireland candle was lit by Jackie Gorman, mother of Police Constable Kevin Declan Gorman, who died aged 24 on

23 November 2008 alongside three colleagues while responding to a call for assistance.

The Welsh candle was lit by Dorothy Ellis, mother of Police Constable Adrian Bryn Ellis, who died aged 29 on 27 September 1989 after being killed in a motorcycle accident while travelling to report for duty.

The Scottish candle was lit by Christine Fulton MBE, wife of Police Constable Lewis George Fulton, who died aged 28 on 17 June 1994 after being stabbed during a violent struggle while protecting members of the public.

The English candle was lit by Chris Prior, husband of Police Constable Rosie Prior, who died aged 45 on 11 January 2025 after being struck by a lorry while assisting at the scene of a collision.

The congregation stood for The Last Post as petals fell in remembrance of lives lost.

The lights were then dimmed, with members of the congregation holding flameless candles as a spotlight illuminated the Book of Remembrance, which contains the names of all officers who have died on duty. A lone piper was also illuminated as part of the ceremony.

Eight red flameless candles were placed on the altar table in tribute to the officers who had died during the previous 12 months.

The service concluded with the Act of Commitment, led by Police Service of Northern Ireland Chief Constable Jon Boutcher QPM, followed by the Benediction and National Anthem.

The next National Police Memorial Day will be held in Wales on Sunday 26 September 2027, with the venue to be confirmed.



BAWP AWARD WINNER HONOURS FEMALE COLLEAGUES AFTER RECOGNITION

The winner of a 2026 British Association for Women in Policing (BAWP) Award has marked her achievement by paying tribute to all female officers - including her mum, who inspired her to join the profession five years ago.

DC Victoria Griffiths received the 'Excellence in Performance' Award for her exceptional handling of a domestic child abuse case dating back to 2024 and involving a prolonged investigation which eventually led to 26 individual charges against the perpetrator.

The 34-year-old attended the ceremony with her husband, George, although she kept another loved one close in mind as she accepted her accolade on the night.

"I was absolutely honoured to be at the awards, let alone to win one and be recognised in such a way by my female colleagues in the police," Victoria said.

"It was one of the proudest moments of my career in North Wales Police, which began in 2021 after I started on the detective direct entry programme.

I was absolutely honoured to be at the awards, let alone to win one and be recognised in such a way by my female colleagues in the police.

"I have followed in the footsteps of my mum, Vanessa, who was an officer in the Force for 30 years and, naturally, has always been such a huge influence on me. Through her, I saw what was possible for a woman in policing from a young age through hard work and self-belief, so it is little wonder I was inspired to pursue something similar.

"Now, I wear the same collar number she had, 213, and it is a great feeling to be doing her proud in my daily duties, which I give everything to for the safety of the public."

The investigation at the centre of Victoria's acknowledgement originated from a safeguarding referral she took charge of as part of her role in the Force's Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) department.

The referral was for a child who was suspected of being abused, prompting Victoria to launch a series of interviews and an extensive digital investigation.

"Obviously, the nature of the case was



DC Victoria Griffiths.

very serious, and it was clear from the start this child was extremely vulnerable," she continued.

"After some difficult conversations, we started making inroads as to the full extent of what was going on, and after involving digital forensics, we discovered child abuse on the perpetrator's phone.

"It was tough to take, in terms of intense material - I'd never worked that closely with digital forensics before - but I knew the only thing that mattered was seeing it through so we could get the child to safety."

Another element of the case which was unprecedented in Victoria's half-decade of policing was the young age of the victim, making matters even more emotionally taxing.

But while this may have posed significant challenges in one respect, Victoria says the investigative side 'wasn't necessarily the most complex' and instead was simply about 'doing things the right way'.

"If we hadn't asked the right questions, we could've ended up just giving some straightforward words of advice and never finding out what was truly going on.

"It was about being sensitive and understanding but being thorough at the

same time, which are all the makings of a job well done."

The work of Victoria and her colleagues in the digital forensic unit led to the identification of further victims of the same abuser, who went on to be found guilty of 26 separate charges in court.

"This result wasn't just down to me - it was absolutely a team effort from start to finish," she added.

"Plus, the ones who deserve the real credit are the victims and their families themselves. They were the ones who had to find the strength to discuss what they went through - we just helped them along the way."

Victoria ended by praising her fellow officers, honouring 'all the women I share this profession with' as well as the ones who came before her.

"Attending the BAWP awards was a chance for me to stop and reflect. On the night, I was surrounded by other guests who had done such incredible things, and it was a privilege to be there with them.

"And just like my mum, there are so many more women who have done and continue to do incredible things every day in this job. They are all an inspiration to me, and I am very grateful for that."



POLICE CADET PROGRAMME 'HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE REACH THEIR POTENTIAL'

The North Wales Police Cadet programme is helping young people develop skills and a sense of civic duty that will stay with them for life, its leaders said.

The cadets are learning about a range of topics, from policing to the roles of other emergency services, and taking part in community events and remembrance parades.

And while some cadets go on to become police officers or special constables, cadet leaders John Morris and Gary Leighton-Jones said the programme was about more than recruitment.

They said the greatest reward for them was watching young people grow in confidence and discover their potential.

John, a retired North Wales Police officer, has been volunteering with the force for a decade.

The former roads traffic officer, who also works part-time for the Force in Community Speed Watch, became involved with the cadets six years ago.

He said: "I was doing something in headquarters and one of the lads I know asked if I fancied helping out for a few weeks in Wrexham with the cadets.

"He said they were struggling for staff, and it was just a temporary thing. That was in 2020."

Now the leader of the Eastern Division Cadets, John helps deliver a varied programme that includes traffic legislation and crime prevention, as well as presentations from assistant leaders, including university lecturers, student police officers, and partner organisations.

The aim was to provide an enriching

experience for young people, he said.

"It's not a recruiting service for the police force," he said. "We want to give them life experience as much as anything, build their confidence, and help them to see different opportunities."

John has seen that confidence-building on a number of occasions.

One cadet joined as a quiet and reserved young person. During the unit's annual awards ceremony, he revealed publicly for the first time that he was neurodiverse and had previously struggled to speak to people he did not know.

John, who was the Force Volunteer of the Year in 2024, said: "Before he joined the cadets, he couldn't speak to people he didn't know.

"His parents said they had never seen such a change in him. His mum joked that we'd set free something in him because he'd grown so much in confidence. It's lovely to see."

Another cadet was once too nervous to speak in front of a group. Just 12 months later, she confidently delivered a five-minute presentation on her own to fellow cadets, parents, and guests.

John continued: "We just give them opportunities to show their best, and in fairness, they do. They discover they can do things they never thought they could do."

The cadets also experience a wide range of policing and community activities. Recent visits have included a trip to the air support base to see police helicopters up close, as well as training sessions delivered by organisations such as St John Ambulance.

John said: "It's important they understand that keeping communities safe

isn't just about the police. Lots of organisations work together."

Gary, leader of the Central Division cadets, said that seeing that personal development is what keeps him volunteering.

Gary spent 21 years as a police staff member, largely in operational planning, before retiring in 2021.

Since then, he has continued supporting North Wales Police through several volunteer roles, including critical incident debriefing and promoting the Force lottery.

Like John, he believes the cadet programme gives young people experiences they may not encounter elsewhere.

He said his group's weekly sessions cover topics such as stop and search, public order, dementia awareness, first aid, online safety, mental health and safeguarding. Community engagement is also a major part of being a cadet.

Recent events have included local dog shows, football club community days and a large road safety event involving police, fire and rescue, ambulance services, and forensic collision investigators.

The visibility of cadets at community events helps strengthen links between the public and the Force, said Gary.

He said: "It raises the profile of the cadets and of policing generally.

"People come and ask questions about joining, and it gives young people a chance to represent the organisation in their communities."

John and Gary, who have dedicated countless hours to supporting young people, said the Cadet programme was richly rewarding for all involved.

FEDERATION WELCOMES CRISIS HELPLINE EXTENSION TO FORMER OFFICERS

North Wales Police Federation has welcomed the independent and confidential Mental Health Crisis Line being extended to former officers.

Developed by Oscar Kilo - The National Police Wellbeing Service (NPWS) - the Crisis Line was launched for officers and staff in England and Wales last year.

Since then, it has received more than 440 calls, providing in-the-moment crisis support.

Now it has been extended to anyone who has left policing, regardless of whether they retired, resigned or were dismissed.

Sergeant Sarah Hughes-Jones, North Wales Police Federation wellbeing lead and deputy equality lead, said: "The Mental Health Crisis Line is an absolute lifeline that has already helped hundreds of people over the past year.

"The extension to former officers and staff is welcome, particularly given the lasting impact a policing career can have.

"It is a challenging but rewarding

career, but it can take its toll on your wellbeing, even after you've left policing, so anything that supports people's mental health is to be welcomed.

"And I'd remind our members that the Crisis Line is for serving officers too.

"No one should feel ashamed or afraid to speak up if they are struggling, and no one has to go through it alone. The helpline is there for you."

It provides in-the-moment support to people experiencing a mental health crisis or suicidal thoughts.

Callers speak to qualified counsellors trained in suicide prevention who understand the pressures and experiences associated with policing.

The service is completely independent



and confidential, with information from calls not shared with Force line managers.

Sarah is also encouraging members to use World Mental Health Day on 10 October as an opportunity to think about their own wellbeing.

She said: "World Mental Health Day is a good opportunity for officers to stop and concentrate on their own wellbeing and whether they are giving it the attention it deserves.

"Looking after your mental health is just as important as looking after your physical health.

"It is not a sign of weakness to ask for help, and you do not have to wait until you are struggling to take action.

"Whether that means talking to someone you trust, making time for yourself, accessing the support available through the Force or Federation, or simply recognising that you need to make your wellbeing more of a priority."

The Oscar Kilo Mental Health Crisis Line is available on **0300 131 2789**.



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CHANGING SEASONS BRING A CHANGE IN FOCUS FOR RURAL CRIME TEAM

As the record-breaking heat of the summer gives way to longer nights, North Wales Police's Rural Crime Team is preparing for changes in the demands upon it.

PC Dave Allen, rural crime officer, says the team's priorities will shift to offences such as poaching and hare coursing, as well as continuing to support farmers and the rural communities.

One such issue is fox hunting, which remains an emotive and often divisive subject.

Dave said officers are rightly required to enforce the law on both sides of the debate while ensuring they are there for the wider rural community who might be impacted by hunt activity in the area.

"Everybody thinks about the people who are involved in that day's meet, whether they are pro or anti-hunt," he said.

"But few people think about the wider community where these activities are taking place.

"By that I mean the small rural villages, that all of a sudden will have all these people descend upon them, creating parking issues, blocked highways, mud on the road, animals loose, livestock worried and masked people on their private property.

"You may have had a kid's party organised and may not know anything about it, you may have your pets out in the garden, an urgent appointment to get to or feeling isolated in a poor mobile phone reception area.

"Often they don't get thought about, so you're helping those isolated rural communities by being a visible presence and having officers who understand the law and the structure of a day's meet."

Dave said that hare coursing was replacing lamping rabbits as an issue as the rabbit population has declined and the numbers of hares had increased in areas of North Wales.

Hare coursing is illegal and can bring with it other offences such as criminal damage, dangerous driving, and intimidation, he said.

Dave said: "Coursers will be driving in poor condition 4x4 vehicles, which are often



Rural crime officer PC Dave Allen.

unregistered or insured.

"They'll be driving over fields, pursuing the hare and the chasing dogs in the dark. The noise, damage, high power spotlights in the window of an isolated property is pretty frightening for rural communities.

"The community plays its part though by reporting these incidents. As the nights draw in we'll be out late or the early hours of the morning going after them."

Dave said that the darker months also bring a sense of isolation for some living and working in rural areas, and so engagement remains an important part of their work.

The team will attend community events organised with farming unions and is also looking at workshops aimed at easing feelings of isolation, but also to address issues.

An area of particular concern is young people who can operate tractors before they are old enough to drive a car.

The team is working with colleagues in roads policing and farming organisations to educate young people on the dangers of using mobile phones or becoming distracted while operating large agricultural machinery.

Dave said that the hot summer had brought its own challenges.

The issue of heritage crime sits with the

team. North Wales has numerous historic areas under the protection of CADW and Wales its own law (Historic Environment Wales Act 2023) to protect these assets.

One incident involved the ruins of a Norman castle at Erdigg Hall, Wrexham being used as a BMX track.

Dave said: "They were kids who thought it was bumps to ride their bikes on.

"The remains of the castle are designated by CADW for their historical value and to protect them for future generations, so we had some education around that.

"We also had people parking on burial mounds in Denbighshire."

The heat has also affected wildlife. The team received reports of dead birds and other animals which were often natural deaths due to a lack of food and water rather than criminal activity.

In one case, contractors were unaware their activities were damaging the habitat of water voles.

He said: "We did some good partnership work with Natural Resources Wales to ensure it didn't happen again."

During investigations into illegal waste tipping, officers discovered tens of thousands of pounds worth of stolen plant machinery on one site, including equipment which had been hired from companies in the south east of England and never returned.

Dave said: "It's unsorted rubbish. There could be chemicals in there, asbestos, all sorts.

"When you go on there you check the plant machinery, and one we did in Wrexham we found stolen plant from London and Essex worth about £75,000. That was a good result."

Coursers will be driving in poor condition 4x4 vehicles, which are often unregistered or insured. They'll be driving over fields, pursuing the hare and the chasing dogs in the dark. The noise, damage, high power spotlights in the window of a isolated property is pretty frightening for rural communities.



Sergeant Sarah Hughes-Jones and Sergeant Kelly Lewis.

WREXHAM'S RISE THROUGH THE LEAGUES BRINGS NEW ERA OF MATCHDAY POLICING

The rapid rise of Wrexham AFC has brought new challenges for the North Wales Police officers responsible for matchday policing.

Federation Representative, Sergeant Sarah Hughes-Jones, a neighbourhood policing sergeant covering Wrexham city centre, has been at the heart of that evolving operation.

Alongside her neighbourhood policing responsibilities, Sarah is one of North Wales Police's operational football officers, working closely with Wrexham AFC, stewards, security staff and supporters at home and away fixtures.

She is also one of the Force's four female football officers and works alongside Sergeant Kelly Lewis, who was runner-up for the operational football officer of the year at last

year's UK Football Policing Unit awards.

Kelly developed and implemented the community policing approach used at Wrexham AFC home matches.

The model has received national recognition and is being considered by other forces due to its success.

Sarah said the scale and complexity of matchday policing has changed dramatically as the club has progressed from non-league football to the Championship.

She said: "Five years ago, you were lucky if you could get 3,000 people at a game.

"We've seen Wrexham evolve from Wrexham Town to Wrexham City, and the football club, along with owners Rob McElhenney and Ryan Reynolds, have given it an international platform.

"It's allowed businesses and individuals to thrive. It's brought investment, hope and a fantastic sense of community.

"We now have around 12,000 people attending matches every other weekend.

"We are playing different teams with different dynamics, and we've had to adapt to meet those challenges."

The club's remarkable progress has seen Wrexham face opposition that supporters could scarcely have imagined a few years ago, including clubs with larger and potentially higher-risk fanbases.

"Never in their wildest dreams would Wrexham supporters have thought five years ago that they would be playing against Premier League teams," said Sarah.

"However, with that comes a heightened

level of risk and a different set of policing considerations associated with some of those clubs and their supporters.

"It's changed massively."

At home matches, operational football officers work alongside the dedicated football officer, Wrexham City Neighbourhood Policing Team and public order officers.

Their role involves monitoring known individuals, responding to emerging incidents, providing reassurance and safeguarding, and supporting Operation Virtue, North Wales Police's Violence Against Women and Girls initiative.

This work is carried out while ensuring fans attending and supporting football enjoy the best possible experience when visiting Wrexham.

Away fixtures require North Wales Police officers to work alongside other forces and in unfamiliar environments. Sarah says this has provided valuable development opportunities for football officers.

"For many years, Wrexham played against the same teams, so you became familiar with the supporters, locations and policing style," she said.

"You'd often have the same officers attending and the same groups of supporters, so you could draw on previous experience.

"Over the last few years, it's been different forces, different supporters and different locations.

"The dynamic has changed, and everyone has had to evolve with it, which has been a great experience."

A key part of the evolution has been building strong relationships with supporters and ensuring matchday policing isn't focused only on enforcement.

Sarah says the Wrexham City Neighbourhood Policing Team has worked hard to build trust and confidence in the football community, with officers becoming a familiar, regular and approachable presence around matches.

That approach has helped foster self-policing among supporters, with fans often challenging inappropriate behaviour within their own groups. Where necessary, however, robust enforcement and Football Banning Orders provide an effective deterrent.

Sarah said it was important not to lose sight of the fact that the overwhelming majority of supporters simply want to enjoy the game.

She said: "We must remember that the vast majority of people come to enjoy football, have a good day out, and leave Wrexham with a positive impression of the club and the city."



Sergeant Sarah Hughes-Jones and Sergeant Kelly Lewis.

Sarah said she always wanted to become a police officer, despite spending around 12 years working in banking after leaving school.

Following redundancy, she joined North Wales Police as a Police Community Support Officer before becoming a Police Constable and later progressing to Sergeant.

She believes her previous career provided valuable skills in communication, problem-solving and working with people, which have transferred into policing.

Those skills have also proved invaluable in her role as a North Wales Police Federation representative.

Sarah has been a Fed rep for around four years after being encouraged to consider the role while dealing with an unrelated matter.

Initially unsure whether she could balance the additional responsibility, she saw it as an opportunity to develop new skills while supporting her colleagues.

"We all joined this job because we want to help people," she said.

"I saw it as a development opportunity, a chance to learn different things and to support and protect officers as best I could within my remit."

Much of her Federation work has focused

on equality, wellbeing and welfare, particularly around menopause and neurodiversity.

She has helped raise awareness of menopause across the Force, reducing stigma and creating positive working environments.

This has included supporting conversations around flexible working, reasonable adjustments, workplace passports, uniform considerations and practical measures tailored to individual needs.

Menopause-related absences are now recorded separately rather than being categorised as sickness, helping the Force better understand its impact on the workforce.

Sarah has also supported neurodiversity initiatives, including the development of an ADHD support group and encouraging officers to feel comfortable discussing workplace adjustments.

Most recently, she attended a specialist course alongside Federation colleague Gemma Poulton, exploring how best to support officers who find themselves as victims within misconduct or conduct proceedings.

The course brought together representatives from across the country, including colleagues from the Metropolitan Police and Greater Manchester Police.

"It was really valuable to hear about the challenges, themes and experiences being faced elsewhere," she said.

"Bringing that knowledge back helps you become a better voice for officers and provide reassurance and support when they need it most."



We must remember that the vast majority of people come to enjoy football, have a good day out, and leave Wrexham with a positive impression of the club and the city.





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'I TRULY BELIEVE IT SAVED MY WIFE'S LIFE'

NORTH WALES INSPECTOR PRAISES NATIONAL POLICE HEALTHCARE SCHEME

It turned out that joining the National Police Healthcare Scheme was one of the best decisions North Wales Police Inspector Darren Jones ever made.

Darren joined the scheme in 2023 after seeing it advertised and took out the optional membership for his wife Nicola too.

They had no idea at the time just how important that extended membership would become.

Just two months after joining – and shortly before the couple were finally married after 18 years together – Nicola suffered a seemingly innocuous fall while walking upstairs, landing on her breast area.

"She was still in pain after the wedding and we thought, this isn't right," said Darren. "We decided to get it checked out because we felt it was something a bit untoward."

Using their NPHS membership, Nicola was referred for specialist assessment almost immediately.

"Within seven days, we got to see a lead oncologist for an initial examination," said Darren. "Within eight days, she'd had two tests, a biopsy and the results, which showed there were aggressive cancerous cells there – a type that usually affects younger women."

The speed of the diagnosis meant treatment could begin without delay.

Nicola underwent a mastectomy and, after completing further treatment, received the all-clear in April this year.

Looking back, Darren believes the rapid access to investigations and specialist care made a profound difference.

"We were told that the same process could have taken much longer through the NHS," he said. "But this all happened so quickly and we got the treatment she needed in a hurry."

For Darren, the experience highlighted



Inspector Darren Jones and his wife Nicola.

the biggest benefits of NPHS membership – fast access to consultations, investigations and treatment – especially when an issue is time sensitive.

While supporting Nicola through her cancer journey, Darren also found himself needing medical help.

"I developed a frozen shoulder and used the scheme to sort that out," he explained. "I got to see a specialist, had an MRI scan and received an injection. It was all done in less

than four weeks."

Without that rapid intervention, he believes everyday life and work would have become much more difficult.

"I would probably have been waiting between six and 12 months on the NHS and I would have been struggling in the meantime because I couldn't lift my arm."

Now, Darren regularly encourages colleagues and friends to consider joining the National Police Healthcare Scheme.

"The NPHS has been absolutely brilliant and I would recommend it to anyone," he said. "I truly believe it saved my wife's life and I've been advising people I know to join ever since, especially those with a family."

"You get the results and your treatment so quickly."

We were told that the same process could have taken much longer through the NHS. But this all happened so quickly and we got the treatment she needed in a hurry.



NO SUCH THING AS A ROUTINE SHIFT IN RURAL NORTH WALES

For Inspector Joe Dunn there is no such thing as a routine shift in rural North Wales.

Policing in Conwy and Denbighshire, he says, is about being prepared for almost anything while making sure officers have the support they need to deliver for their communities.

For those officers, a shift can involve anything from responding to crime in a small village to dealing with a major incident in the mountains, supporting a vulnerable person in crisis or managing the challenges that come with thousands of visitors to the region's tourist areas.

Joe said that variety helps make the job so rewarding.

"It's a really varied area to police," he said.

"We've got a huge geographical area, remote communities, busy tourist locations and some challenging terrain. You can never quite predict what the next shift is going to bring.

"That can be demanding for our officers, but it's also one of the things that makes rural policing so interesting."

This summer has brought its share of challenges, with periods of extreme heat alongside a number of tragic incidents in

the region's mountains, rivers and quarries.

They can require significant numbers of officers and last for many hours, often in difficult conditions.

As a district inspector, Joe said one of his most important responsibilities was making sure officers were properly supported when those demands arise.

"When you've got officers working long hours in difficult conditions, welfare has to be part of the operational plan," he said.

"That means making sure people have access to water, appropriate rest breaks and somewhere they can get out of the heat when they need to.

"It's about looking after our people so they can continue to look after the public."

Joe's interest in officer welfare and equipment began well before his current role.

During previous Force-wide work he was involved in projects looking at uniform and equipment, including improvements to warm-weather and winter clothing and changes to trousers to give officers options that were functional and professional.

"We're a professional organisation and how we present ourselves matters," he said.

"But officers also need clothing and equipment that allows them to do the job properly.

"Whether you're standing outside for hours in the rain, working in extreme heat or dealing with an incident in the middle of winter, you need to be able to concentrate on the job rather than worrying about whether you're warm, dry or comfortable.

"It's about getting that balance right."

Joe recalls a recent incident where officers spent several hours at a remote quarry during the night supporting a vulnerable man in crisis.

"Those incidents can be incredibly challenging for everyone involved," he said.

"You're potentially standing outside for hours in the dark and rain, so having the right equipment and somewhere warm and dry to return to really matters.

"But ultimately it's about being there for that person and doing everything we can to keep them safe."

The geography of rural North Wales brings its own operational challenges. Officers can cover considerable distances, while winter weather can make some of the area's roads and more remote communities difficult to reach.

"People living in rural communities deserve the same quality of policing as anybody else," Joe said.

"Whether you're in a town centre or a remote rural village, our job is to provide that service and respond when people need us.

"That means thinking carefully about how we use our resources and making sure our vehicles, equipment and people are prepared for the conditions they're likely to face."

As district inspector, Joe is responsible for uniformed local policing across a large rural area, including response and neighbourhood policing teams.

A large part of his focus is ensuring officers are able to provide a good service to victims and communities, while tackling the crimes that cause the greatest harm.

Domestic abuse, burglary and hate crime are particular priorities.

"If harm is caused to you by someone you trust, in what should be your safe

space, the impact can be enormous," he said.

"The same is true of burglary, where someone has invaded your home, or hate crime, where somebody is targeted because of who they are.

"These are areas where good policing can make a real difference to people's lives."

Joe said that measuring that difference is important too.

"Outcomes matter," he said. "If somebody has been a victim of crime, they quite reasonably want to know that we've investigated it properly and, where possible, that we've identified the person responsible and held them to account.

"So we should absolutely care about our outcomes and about whether we're getting better at what we do.

"But an outcome figure on its own doesn't tell you whether you've delivered a good service.

"You've also got to ask whether we treated the victim properly, whether we investigated proportionately and thoroughly, whether we've reduced harm and whether the community has confidence in us.



People living in rural communities deserve the same quality of policing as anybody else. Whether you're in a town centre or a remote rural village, our job is to provide that service and respond when people need us.

"Good performance is about bringing all of those things together."

That balance is particularly important in rural policing, where officers can be covering large geographical areas and dealing with competing demands.

The challenge, Joe said, was to give officers the support and clarity they need to focus their efforts where they can make the greatest difference.

"If our officers feel supported, equipped and valued, they're in a much better position to provide a really good service to the public."

That approach has developed over a ten-year career in North Wales Police which Joe admitted was not necessarily part of his original plan.

Joe said that after a variety of jobs he

did not feel he was doing something with any real meaning.

"A friend was a Special Constable and that got me thinking about policing."

Ten years later, Joe has worked in a number of police roles, and says that policing is ultimately about people.

"You remember the jobs, but you also remember the people you worked with," he said.

"I've been fortunate to work with some really good teams throughout my career.

"People move on, roles change and stations change, but the important thing is the people who are alongside you doing the job."

One example was policing the visit of His Majesty King Charles III to St Asaph for the Royal Maundy service.

Joe said the operation demonstrated many of the things he values about local policing including preparation, professionalism and teamwork.

"Major events like that take a lot of planning," he said.

"You've got officers coming together from different roles, you've got a responsibility to keep people safe, and you've got to make sure you provide a professional service to the community and everyone attending.

"But underneath all the planning and the operation, it's still about having good people working together and supporting each other."

His previous experience working in Force-wide roles has also given him a broad perspective on policing.

He has worked on rural and wildlife crime, uniform and equipment, and public order, including mutual aid deployments to London for major demonstrations and large-scale operations.

Those experiences reinforced the importance of preparation and teamwork.

"You can't plan for every eventuality, but you can make sure your people are prepared and that you've got a team who know what they're doing and trust each other.

"That's just as important in everyday local policing as it is in a major public order operation."

Joe said that the variety of policing has been one of its greatest attractions.

"I've been lucky to experience some very different areas of policing, and I've learned something from every one of them.

"But wherever the career takes me, the important thing is still doing the best job we can for the people of North Wales and making sure our officers have the support they need to do it."

He added: "I really enjoy the job.

"Every day is different, and ultimately you're doing something that matters to people."

PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS

By James Reilly and Farhanah Ismail – Ralli directors who run the personal injury department

Did you know that pursuing your claim through the Police Federation could save you up to 30 per cent of any compensation that you are entitled to?

If you suffer an injury on or off duty PFEW will assist you to pursue a claim through its appointed solicitors - Ralli.

The scheme also extends to claims for family and dependants. Claims can range from on and off duty RTAs, accidents in the workplace, injuries resulting from occupiers' and public liability, holiday accidents (home

and abroad) and injuries arising from clinical negligence.

All claims are funded on the basis that there must be reasonable prospects of success and the legal expenditure must be proportionate to the likely compensation payable at conclusion of the claim.

In many instances it is necessary to submit a claim to the alleged negligent third party before a full assessment of prospects can be made. That might include consideration of detailed document disclosure.

The claims process requires that if a defendant denies liability, they must serve any documents that they intend to rely upon in connection with that denial.

Ralli have been working with the PFEW for many years and have unrivalled experience of representing members.

Ralli's experience is invaluable in terms



of ensuring that your claim is fully explored and the compensation received adequately reflects the extent to which the injury has affected you.

As well as compensation for the injury, you are also entitled to claim for any additional out of pocket losses, loss of earnings, over-time etc. If you use a high street solicitor, the likelihood is that they will act on a conditional fee basis (no win, no fee) and then seek to deduct up to 30 per cent of the compensation received at the conclusion of the claim and also deduct a legal expense premium.

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We understand that behind every uniform, lies a person

TRIBUTE TO FORMER NORTH WALES POLICE FEDERATION REP

Tributes have been paid to 'formidable' former North Wales Police officer and Federation representative Helen Lloyd-Jones

Branch treasurer and assistant secretary Sam Roberts described her close friend Helen as feisty, determined and caring.

Helen died in July this year aged 66 after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer three-and-a-half years ago.

She was a North Wales Police officer for 30 years and joined the NorthWales Police Federation board in 2001 as the representative for female constables and remained in the role for seven years.

Sam said that although Helen had initially been elected to represent female constables, she quickly became known for supporting anyone who needed her help.

She said: "Helen was a formidable woman, without a doubt.

"She was a feisty, well-liked officer and was just what we wanted on the Federation.

"At the time she joined the Fed, she represented all the female constables, but she didn't just represent them, she represented anybody that was in trouble, anybody that needed help.

"She was a really valued member of the board and our friendship grew as a result of the work that we did in our roles on the Federation."

Sam says she admired how Helen combined the demands of being a police officer and Federation representative with bringing up her daughter Ellis as a single parent.

And she said that Helen was always there to help and support people, whether that was as a police constable, a school liaison officer, a Federation rep, or as a mum, a friend, or a teammate on the sports field.

"I totally admired the way she brought up her daughter single-handedly while working as a full-on police officer and volunteering in her role as a Fed rep," Sam said.

"I think she was a bit of a trailblazer in the force in relation to being a single parent and managing bringing up her daughter on her own while working shifts and holding down a full time career."

Helen worked in uniform, child protection and in CID, and in 2004 the pair found themselves working together as part of a new all-Wales team of school liaison officers, with Sam managing them.

The officers visited schools to educate children and young people, from primary school through to sixth form, about a wide



Helen's daughter Ellis and granddaughter Ophir, along with Helen.

range of dangers and issues.

Helen covered schools in the Flintshire area and quickly became a familiar and much-loved figure.

"She was very much known as PC Helen," said Sam. "She absolutely adored that role.

"She really loved it and she excelled in it."

Away from policing, Helen was equally committed to things she loved, particularly golf and hockey.

She played hockey for many years, representing and organising hockey for North Wales Police. She also played for Burtonwood, Wrexham and Buckley.

When her knees would not allow any more hockey she turned to golf, which quickly became another major part of her life.

She played at Mold Golf Club and was team manager with Flintshire and Denbigh County Golf.

Even while undergoing chemotherapy, Helen refused to give up the sport she loved.

Sam said: "All through her illness, she carried on playing golf. She was playing the month before she died

"She just took to a buggy rather than having to walk everywhere to manage her condition.

"But she carried on playing golf and that was her love. She was a farmer's daughter and just loved being out in the fresh air."

Helen's commitment to helping others continued after she retired from the police. She became the first female chair of the Flintshire branch of the National Association of Retired Police Officers and held the role for several years before stepping down because of her illness.

She also continued to contribute to her community as a teaching assistant in Mold primary schools Ysgol Bryn Coch and Ysgol Glanrafon, and as a family court magistrate.

Helen leaves her daughter Ellis, granddaughter Ophir, sister Emily Pennington and brother Dewi Lloyd-Jones, nephew Garry and niece Sandra.

Sam said: "Helen was really caring, always happy, always pleased to see you with the biggest smile on her face.

"She was very family orientated and would help anybody at all.

"She was just a good, nice all-round person."

Sam said that was reflected in Helen's large circle of friends, from school and policing to hockey and golf.

This created a network of people who rallied around her during her illness, Sam said.

"She had a massive network of friends who all pulled together, particularly towards the end to enable her to stay in her home," Sam said.

"She will always be Helen 318 to those of us lucky enough to have known and worked with her – never to be forgotten."



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NORTH WALES OFFICERS RIDE 180 MILES IN MEMORY OF FALLEN COLLEAGUES

North Wales Police officers have cycled around 180 miles in memory of fallen colleagues and to raise vital funds for families who have lost loved ones in the line of duty.

Members of North Wales Police Federation took part in this year's annual Police Unity Tour, joining officers and supporters from across England and Wales in support of Care of Police Survivors (COPS).

The challenge began at HQ in Colwyn Bay before the team headed to Aberystwyth. From there, they cycled into Shropshire before continuing to Tamworth in Staffordshire on day three.

The North Wales Police and Welsh chapter riders then joined fellow cyclists for the ride into Drayton Manor, where they were met by the families and loved ones of fallen officers attending the annual COPS Survivors' Weekend.

The tour culminated at the National Memorial Arboretum on Sunday, where riders took part in the COPS Service of Remembrance.

For those taking part, the Police Unity Tour is about much more than the physical challenge.

Each cyclist and support member wears a wristband engraved with the name of a fallen colleague throughout the tour, then presents it to their loved ones at the end.

For Inspector Mike Andrew, taking part in the tour for the fourth time has a particularly personal significance.

Mike previously served with Norfolk Police and chose to wear the wristband of Detective Constable Terence Glister, who died on duty in 1987.

Although Mike never knew DC Glister personally, he remains connected to his family through the Police Unity Tour.

"I used to be in Norfolk Police before I came here, and one of my mates, who I still keep in touch with, his father, DC Terence Glister, died on duty in 1987 before I knew him," he said.

"I always ask if I can wear his wristband, which I have for the last few years."

On one occasion, Mike handed the wristband directly to DC Glister's family.

"The other year, his daughter and his



wife came up, and I handed it over to them," he said.

For Mike, it is moments like that which demonstrate why the tour matters.

After hundreds of miles in the saddle, riders arrive at the National Memorial Arboretum to be welcomed by families and supporters lining the route.

"When you arrive at the arboretum, the families and dignitaries are lining the road and clapping you in," Mike said.

"It's quite emotional when you get there and has quite a big impact.

"And then you hear the speeches at the arboretum and you know how important the support of COPS is."

The charity provides long-term support to families who have lost a police officer or staff member through death on duty, helping them remain part of the policing family during what can be an incredibly difficult time.

North Wales Police Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman KPM, who attended the COPS service said the event had a special place within policing and praised everyone who had supported the North Wales team.

"Care of Police Survivors is a charity that holds a very special place within the

policing family, and one that is particularly close to my heart," she said.

"The support it provides to families who have lost a loved one in the line of duty is invaluable and helps ensure they continue to feel part of the police family during the most difficult of times.

"The Police Unity Tour is a fitting tribute to those officers and staff who made the ultimate sacrifice, while also raising awareness and funds for a cause that makes such a real difference.

"Thank you to all those who have donated and helped support the team. Your generosity will help COPS continue its vital work for police families across the UK."

The Police Unity Tour brings together officers from across the country in a show of solidarity with the families of fallen colleagues.

For the North Wales riders, the 180-mile journey was therefore both a physical challenge and an opportunity to carry the names and memories of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Donations to support the North Wales Police team and COPS can still be made via the [North Wales Police Unity Tour fundraising page](#).



When you arrive at the arboretum, the families and dignitaries are lining the road and clapping you in.

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POLICE TEAMS HEAD TO NORTH WALES FOR GRUELLING MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE

Officers and staff from across the UK came to North Wales to take on the Snowdonia Seven (Saith Eryri), one of policing's toughest sporting challenges.

This year's race also provided an opportunity to remember the North Wales Police officer who founded the event more than 50 years ago.

A total of 39 teams of four took part, including two from North Wales Police.

Open to serving and retired officers, staff and volunteers of UK police forces, the race sees teams take on seven of the highest mountain peaks in the Eryri National Park in under 10 hours. It totals 22 miles with a total ascent of 8,000ft.

The event is organised by the Snowdonia Seven Committee, with the support of the North Wales Police Sports Association.

Race director Mark Owen MBE, retired North Wales Police officer and the Force's former Special Chief Officer and citizens in policing manager, said it was a real test of teamwork.

He said: "It's a fell race of sorts, but it's more than that. It's an orienteering-type event and it's very much team-based.

"Where it differs from traditional fell races is that you can only enter as part of a team.

"Teams of four go into different categories, but even if you're the fastest runner in the world or the slowest, if you don't get your team of four across the finish line, your result doesn't count.

"It's that policing ethos of teamwork."

The race was the first to be held since the death of retired Inspector Cynan Davies, who created the Snowdonia Seven in 1974 while working in North Wales Police's training department.



Runners take on the Snowdonia Seven.

Cynan's original idea was to give police cadets an opportunity to undertake adventure training in the mountains and develop their fitness and outdoor skills.

It has since evolved to include serving and retired officers and staff.

Mark said: "The event has changed a lot but it remains as popular as ever.

"The other organisers and I, we see ourselves as custodians of this event.

"We do our very best to keep with the spirit of what Cynan intended in the first place."

Participants compete in a number of categories, including open, female, mixed, 40-plus and 50-plus, with this year's overall winners coming from Cumbria.

Mark said the introduction of older age categories reflected the changing make-up of the event, with competitors who first took part as younger officers continuing to return to the mountains.

He said experience often proved as valuable as fitness when it came to tackling the demanding course.

"Most of the people who are particularly good at the race are 40-plus-year-olds because they've got the experience and the guile to know when to reserve their energy and when to run faster," he said.

Safety is a major consideration, with around 40 marshals positioned across the mountains.

The North East Wales Search and Rescue Team supports the race, using it as a valuable training opportunity.

Technology has also been introduced to improve safety and add to the spectator experience.

For the first time this year, every competitor was equipped with a tracking device, rather than one per team.

This meant organisers could monitor individual runners from race headquarters in Llanberis, while friends, relatives and fellow competitors could also follow their progress.

Mark, who has been race director for around 12 years, said the event was a significant undertaking for the small organising team of six or seven, from arranging the race headquarters and accommodation to entries, publicity, medals, T-shirts, marshals and safety arrangements.

The event is also self-funded with those taking part paying to enter. Mark said that aside from their being no cost to local tax payers, the event generated tourism income.

Next year's event is due to be held on Saturday 26th June, and entries will open on 1 January.

See the [Snowdonia Seven website](#) for more details.





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