

FEDERATION



West Midlands Police Federation

April/May 2025

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WELCOME

Welcome to the April/May 2025 edition of **Federation** - the magazine for members of West Midlands Police Federation.

We are always on the look-out for good news stories so please get in touch if you have something to share with colleagues. It does not have to relate to your policing role - though we are definitely interested in hearing about what's going on around the Force. Do you have an interesting hobby or perhaps you are involved in sport locally, as a player, a manager, a coach?

Just get in touch and let us know.

We would also be interested to hear what you would like to see featured in your magazine.

Published by:
XPR Communications Ltd

Editor:
Jess Davies, acting branch chair

Design and production:
XPR Communications Ltd

Contact us:

Guardians House
2111 Coventry Road
Sheldon, Birmingham
B26 3EA

Telephone:
0121 752 4900

Email:
westmidlandspf@polfed.org

www.polfed.org/westmids

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Officer wellbeing: it has to be a priority



By **Jess Davies**, acting deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation

Since taking on a full-time role in the Federation office, I have become even more alive to officer wellbeing.

With the pressures and demands of the new age of policing compounded by simply not having enough officers to go around, it is no surprise that officers' mental health has been impacted as they are pulled in all directions.

But I fear it is going to get worse before it gets better.

The Police Uplift Programme saw officer numbers restored to pre-austerity levels. But there are two key issues that cannot be ignored.

The officer numbers of 2010 are insufficient to meet the growth in demand we have seen. But it's not just an increase in demand officers are contending with. It's also the changing nature of crime that has to be considered and the fact that policing is the service of first and last resort, the service that can never say no.

Secondly, while the end of the Uplift Programme in March 2023 did see us hit our recruitment targets, we are already starting to see numbers drop. Recruitment in itself is not

the issue; we have an officer retention crisis that threatens to wipe out the gains we have made, and this is putting those officers left under more strain.

During the austerity years, we saw officers stretched beyond belief. The Federation warned cuts to policing budgets would have consequences and was accused of crying wolf.

But there were consequences: the service we provided to the public suffered and police officers themselves suffered as they tried to do more with less.

We also started to see investigations from the Independent Office for Police Conduct dragging on not just for weeks and months but sometimes for years. Too many officers have simply been broken by these long-drawn-out inquiries, an issue we are still raising. The Federation is also aware that it's not just the officers themselves who suffer during these cases, it's also their families, their friends and their colleagues.

The consequences of the cuts created a perfect storm in terms of officer welfare and the pandemic was to add a whole new, and unprecedented, layer of pressure.

Police officers were on the frontline throughout the pandemic, helping to uphold seemingly ever-changing lockdown rules and restrictions while also having their own concerns about coming into contact with the Covid-19 virus and possibly taking it back to their family members, some of whom were vulnerable themselves.

While the officer retention crisis can partly be attributed to the pressures of policing and the fact that officer pay does not reflect the very real, and sometimes life-threatening, challenges of the role, I am sure officers'

mental wellbeing is having an impact too.

People are now talking more openly about their mental health, admitting they are struggling and seeking out help. But there is still some stigma around mental ill-health.

As a service, we must do more to promote officer wellbeing. How can officers go about their duties, serve and protect their communities and deliver an effective policing service if they are not well, be that physically or mentally?

The Federation successfully campaigned for a Police Covenant to enshrine officer wellbeing in law.

The covenant was introduced through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and was, according to the Government website, a pledge to do more as a nation to help those who serve this country and specifically to recognise the bravery, commitment, and sacrifices of those who work or have worked in policing.

The Gov.uk website says the covenant 'aims to ensure that members or former members of the police workforce in England and Wales are not disadvantaged as a result of working in policing'.

In practical terms, the site states, the covenant will:

- Place a legal requirement on the Government to report annually to Parliament on issues relating to police welfare, wellbeing and support
- Aim to improve the working experience of people in policing
- Help smooth the transition out of policing for police leavers
- Provide support to the families of those working in policing.

“ WHILE THE OFFICER RETENTION CRISIS CAN PARTLY BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE PRESSURES OF POLICING AND THE FACT THAT OFFICER PAY DOES NOT REFLECT THE VERY REAL, AND SOMETIMES LIFE-THREATENING, CHALLENGES OF THE ROLE, I AM SURE OFFICERS' MENTAL WELLBEING IS HAVING AN IMPACT TOO.

Sadly, more than two years after the Police Covenant was introduced, I am not convinced officers could tell you they have noticed any tangible difference it has made, and some are probably unaware it even exists.

This clearly should not be the case.

However, it does not mean that there is not help and support available to officers. There are a number of organisations who specialise in helping police officers who are struggling with their wellbeing.

“WORKPLACE FEDERATION REPRESENTATIVES CAN HELP POINT MEMBERS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND THERE IS A WEALTH OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER THE SUPPORT SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE INCLUDING CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE NATIONAL POLICE WELLBEING SERVICE (OSCAR KILO) AND POLICE CARE UK.

Workplace Federation representatives can help point members in the right direction and there is a wealth of information available under the support section of our website including contact details for the National Police Wellbeing Service (Oscar Kilo) and Police Care UK.

Subscribers to the Federation Group Insurance Scheme can access support through the cover it provides and those who pay into the Police Treatment Centres can sign up for its psychological wellbeing programme.



Next month brings the annual Mental Health Awareness Week so I hope this will also highlight that help is available and make people see they do not need to suffer in silence.

But, above all, I hope officer wellbeing is given the priority it deserves.



MP calls for partnership approach to knife crime

A sustainable solution to the scourge of knife crime requires a preventive, community-led and partnership-driven approach, a West Midlands MP has told Parliament.

Paulette Hamilton, Labour MP for Erdington, speaking in the House of Commons last month, said austerity measures introduced by the previous Government had allowed knife crime to thrive in the shadows of neglect.

West Midlands Police Federation secretary Tim Rogers said it was refreshing to hear a politician recognising the fact that the police could not work in isolation to tackle knife crime.

"All too often it appears that people expect the police to be able to overcome all society's ills, but that is just not possible. We have to work in partnership with other organisations and our communities if we are to get to the heart of these issues and, as well as dealing with the crimes that are committed, we have to be able to work on prevention programmes," said Tim.

"I am pleased one of our local MPs has spoken out on this subject and I hope that at some point in the near future we can meet with Ms Hamilton to discuss knife crime and

other issues affecting the officers who police her constituency area."

Highlighting the fact that 10 people were stabbed in Birmingham every week last year, Ms Hamilton said knife crime was casting a dark shadow over communities, claiming young lives, shattering families and leaving a trail of devastation in its wake.

She told MPs: "Within my constituency covering Erdington, Kingstanding, Castle Vale and South Oscott, the B23 postcode has been particularly affected. In 2023, it recorded the highest number of knife-related incidents in the entire city, but behind those statistics are real lives, real families and real pain. When knife crime tears through families, it destroys lives and devastates entire communities."

And the MP explained that her own family had been affected with her nephew having been brutally attacked weeks before in an act of 'senseless knife violence'.

"His crime was being in the wrong place at the wrong time. While his wounds are healing, it will take months for him to fully recover. The emotional trauma inflicted on him and our family, however, is immeasurable. This is a pain no family should ever have to endure, yet it is a pain that far too many are forced to bear," Ms

Hamilton said.

"My nephew did not deserve what happened to him - nobody does. Yet too many families are still left to feel this pain, and too many young people are still becoming victims. We can no longer afford to be complacent.

Every moment of inaction puts another young life at risk. We must come together across the House and within our communities to break this cycle of violence."

She added: "I have always said that prevention is better than cure and, while the police play a vital role in tackling crime, a sustainable solution requires a preventative, community-led and partnership-driven approach."

The MP highlighted inspiring examples in organisations like Bringing Hope, which works relentlessly to tackle knife crime among children and young people and the YMCA in Erdington which supports young people.

She called for a long-term investment in communities, youth services and organisations that were already making a difference.

Tim said he fully supported the MP's views on investment and also expressed his sympathy to Ms Hamilton and her family following the attack on her nephew.



“WE CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO BE COMPLACENT. EVERY MOMENT OF INACTION PUTS ANOTHER YOUNG LIFE AT RISK.”



'PCC must be realistic about what Force can achieve'

A bid by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to secure funding for an extra 150 police officers for the Force has been welcomed by West Midlands Police Federation.

But branch secretary Tim Rogers says the PCC must ensure that his own Police and Crime Plan, setting out his aims, is realistic in terms of what the Force can achieve with the resources it has, not with the resources he would like it to have.

PCC Simon Foster has written to the Home Office to apply for the additional officers through the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, a £100 million pledge aiming to deliver 13,000 more officers nationwide.

He says the Force needs the extra officers so that he can rebuild neighbourhood policing.

Tim believes it's crucial that the bid succeeds if the Force is to be able to meet the demands placed on it and the needs of the communities it serves.

"The previous Government's Police Uplift Programme was heralded as a success in terms of increasing officer numbers but, while it brought in extra resources, we are only just catching up in terms of the infrastructure they need.

"We have also lost a lot of experienced officers so in effect we have created more demand internally as we seek to train our new recruits and our young in service officers.

"But the main flaw in this new Government policy is that neighbourhood policing team officers are every day redeployed to other areas of the Force to do other essential work, I see it being little different with the 150 now coming in."

Tim adds: "There is a retention crisis within the police service nationally and we seem to be trapped in a revolving door situation whereby as fast as we recruit and bring in officers, we are seeing others leave.

"Part of the problem is that officers feel they are not recompensed fairly when you consider the dangers and challenges of the role. They are also under huge pressure as they seek to meet ever-growing demand without a corresponding increase in the number of boots on the ground.

"Despite the Police Uplift Programme, the Force has around 700 fewer officers and 500 fewer PCSOs than it did in 2010 and yet we have seen a considerable increase in both the volume and complexity of crime. But this has been exacerbated by the fact that the police

service seems to have to pick up the gaps left by other public sector, private and charitable organisations that have been under pressure after the cuts of the austerity years."

Tim says if the bid for the funding for the 150 officers is successful the Force must ensure they are used to increase police visibility in local communities, rather than being used to boost depleted response teams.

"Fundamentally, we need a guarantee that the police service will get the all-round investment it needs in all departments so that forces can deliver for the public," he explains.

The PCC has highlighted what he calls 'the deep and inexcusable unfairness' of many other police force areas having more police officers than they have ever had in their force histories.

Mr Foster explains: "These 150 additional police officers are essential to fulfil my commitment to continue rebuilding neighbourhood policing.

"We need an accessible, reassuring and visible presence out on the streets to prevent and tackle crime, promote community safety and keep the people, families, businesses and communities of the West Midlands safe and secure."

Tim concludes: "As a Federation, we couldn't agree more, and we hope that this bid is successful. Sadly, these 150 officers will still not be enough, but they will definitely be a step in the right direction."

"FUNDAMENTALLY, WE NEED A GUARANTEE THAT THE POLICE SERVICE WILL GET THE ALL-ROUND INVESTMENT IT NEEDS IN ALL DEPARTMENTS SO THAT FORCES CAN DELIVER FOR THE PUBLIC."

Force recognised in HMICFRS report



The Force's effective use of body-worn video (BWV) technology has been recognised in a new report from the policing inspectorate.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) cited the Force in a case study for its review of how effectively the police investigate crime.

West Midlands Police was one of seven forces included in the inspectors' fieldwork.

HMICFRS highlighted that the Force's use of BWV technology allowed it to show the location of officers and staff on a digital map and enabled two-way video communication between supervisors and officers and staff at crime scenes.

The BWV meant supervisors could support officers and staff at a crime scene, and quality assure their investigation as it progresses.

During inspectors' visit to the Force, they were shown a demonstration of how BWV was used in a mock scenario of a child sexual exploitation investigation involving a search of premises, with an officer activating their body-worn camera and livestream from the crime scene. The supervisor took screenshots from the livestream and uploaded these to the Child Abuse Image Database for identification.

Jess Davies, temporary deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation, says it was good to see the Force being used as an example of good practice in the HMICFRS report.

"West Midlands Police and its officers and staff have embraced the use of new technology, such as body-worn video, in the fight against crime," says Jess.

"BWV can be an incredibly effective tool in so many aspects of modern-day policing, helping gather evidence and record officers' interactions with the public and its use has been considerably developed since it was first introduced."

“IT IS HIGH TIME THE GOVERNMENT TOOK NOTE OF WHAT WE ARE SAYING, PARTICULARLY NOW THAT WE ARE BACKED UP BY THE INSPECTORATE.”

While the Force featured as an example of good practice, the overall finding of the report, which concentrated on volume crime and was published on 27 March, was less favourable for policing in general.

It concluded that police efforts are hampered by ineffective ways of recording, assessing, allocating and investigating crime and that forces are recording how many times they update victims, rather than recording how effective the updates are at providing information and support.

Inspectors found that investigators' workloads were too high and the complexity of crimes was increasing, as was the time forces take to investigate them. Additionally, many supervisors and investigators were found to be inexperienced and lacking the necessary training.

HMICFRS puts forward 11 recommendations to help forces improve the standard of their crime investigations and achieve better outcomes for victims by:

- **Building a better understanding of their crime-related demand and the resources they need so they can meet it;**
- **Designing more effective processes for recording, assessing, allocating and investigating crime, putting victims at the heart of the process;**
- **Providing better training for investigators, their supervisors and any other officers or members of staff who have a role in an investigation; and**
- **Improving the supervision of crime investigations.**

But Jess said if these issues are to be addressed the Government must commit to the sustained long-term investment in policing the Federation has long been calling for.

"We are in the midst of a retention crisis within policing, with officers leaving in their droves due to the pressures, challenges and dangers of the role and the fact that their pay goes nowhere near reflecting the unique nature of policing," she explains.

"The HMICFRS report highlights the fact that investigators are overburdened, this impacts on their ability to solve crimes and also on their ability to provide the support victims of crime need.

"It is high time the Government took note of what we are saying, particularly now that we are backed up by the inspectorate."

Jess drew attention to a paragraph of the report, which highlights this issue.

It states: *"A long-standing challenge for forces has been to recruit enough investigators. We found that forces usually made sure they had enough officers and staff to investigate the most complex and serious crimes. However, as budgets are finite, this could often be at the expense of allocating resources to investigating volume crime. Due to the difficulty in recruiting investigators, many forces used untrained officers and staff to fill vacancies."*

The report highlights that Home Office data over the past decade shows the number of crimes recorded per police constable has increased by 32.6 per cent suggesting that workloads for investigators have increased over that period. Many investigators and their supervisors told the inspectorate they were frequently overwhelmed by the size of their workloads.

"It is true to say that many officers are feeling overwhelmed, which affects the service they can provide to the public, but also impacts on their own mental health and wellbeing. It's no surprise that many officers are looking to leave the service, their pay has declined in real terms in the last 10 years, the pressures have increased and they feel undervalued by the Government," Jess added.

'Invaluable' buddy scheme launched for new reps

West Midlands Police Federation is ensuring its new reps get the support they need so they can in turn help their colleagues

The latest influx of West Midlands Police Federation workplace representatives have become the first beneficiaries of a new 'buddy' scheme set up to ensure they have a strong support network.

The initiative was launched following this year's workplace rep elections and was designed by Martin Bonser, the branch lead for uniform and equipment and a member of the Federation's executive, the Branch Board.

Under the scheme each new rep was assigned an existing, more experienced counterpart as a buddy, creating 25 pairings for the flow of support and advice on an ad hoc basis.

Martin says the idea was born out of his own start to the role three years ago, a time when he was learning how to best handle a variety of cases.

"First of all, don't get me wrong – I found initial rep training to be very good, and the full-time officials in the Fed made it clear they were happy to help me when I needed it," he said.

"As a general sentiment, that's great, but it was still difficult knowing exactly who to ask which queries. I found it hard to know where to start with a blank canvas in a pre-existing world.

"No one was to blame – I think a lot of it is down to the nature of elections and volunteering in the sense of, because you put yourself forward, there's an expectation you must just know everything.

"But, for me at least, that wasn't the case."

His early experiences prompted him to look at a guidance system for any reps following in his footsteps.

Taking inspiration from mentoring initiatives within the Force, he settled on the

buddy scheme which has now been put into action.

Now, incoming reps – paired with buddies according to geographical area and work patterns – have a familiar colleague to talk to as they get to grips with their responsibilities.

New workplace representative Leon Allen has praised the initiative.

Leon said: "At the moment, I'm trying to lay the foundations to be a successful Fed rep for the years to come, and the buddy scheme has been brilliant for that, so far.

"While I'm still learning one step at a time, questions can pop into my head at any moment, and I don't really want to go from person to person – a point of contact has put me much more at ease.

"Having that consistent source to reassure me I'm doing the right thing, as I start out, is invaluable."

Martin echoed these sentiments: "As I've said, the sentiment around helping was always there, but now there's a structure to it.

"I opted for a buddy set-up mainly for the availability of information it would give reps – I don't think saving your questions for the next workshop would be anywhere near as beneficial.

"And sometimes, I think a lack of confidence can come from a lack of information.

"In my view, being a Fed rep can be the loneliest job in policing. People tend to come to you in negative circumstances and, from that point on, you're responsible for whatever that member is going through.

"You act as their shield while dealing with an organisation as big as a police force. That can be daunting at the best of times, let alone when you're new to it all."



PC Martin Bonser.

Acting branch chair Jess Davies, who has been assigned as Leon's buddy, believes the support network is a great way to build working relationships within the Federation.

"We were delighted to welcome our latest workplace reps into the branch recently – and I think we've been able to hit the ground running with getting to know each other in a way we hadn't before, thanks to the buddy scheme," she said.

"Fed life can get busy, and the scheme will allow new reps to get up to speed quicker, which then opens up the possibility of workloads being shared and alleviated.

"With that said, though, we're not in a rush – the best outcome of the scheme could potentially be the creation of balanced and rounded reps, and that doesn't happen overnight.

"Ideally, we want every rep to feel confident and empowered to serve our membership and the profession in every way as best as possible."

“WHILE I’M STILL LEARNING ONE STEP AT A TIME, QUESTIONS CAN POP INTO MY HEAD AT ANY MOMENT, AND I DON’T REALLY WANT TO GO FROM PERSON TO PERSON – A POINT OF CONTACT HAS PUT ME MUCH MORE AT EASE.



Need Federation support?

How to find a workplace representative

Workplace representatives carry out their Federation role advising and supporting members voluntarily while also performing their Force duties.

They work a variety of shifts, and you should always be able to find at least one on duty.

The reps are grouped by geographical location - in line with the current Local Policing Areas - so if you need help or support please try to use a rep based in your geographical area.

Chris James, deputy secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, explains: "Our workplace representatives should be the first point of contact for any member who needs help or support.

"We have links to the ['find a workplace](#)

[representative'](#) page of our website in several places including under the meet the team section and on the contact us page so it should always be straightforward for members to find the list of current reps.

"Whenever someone leaves or joins our branch council, we update the reps' list to ensure that members can easily get in touch with current reps."

Local workplace representatives can help with:

- Regulation enquiries - but please check our [regulations pages](#) in the first instance
- Absence support meetings and supporting those on long-term sick leave
- Grievances
- Regulation 12/13 initial meetings
- Flexible working applications/appeals

- Reasonable Adjustment Passports
- Advising and supporting supervisors
- Health and safety walkthroughs
- The reflective practice review process.

If the matter relates to a misconduct or criminal investigation then you will require a [conduct and performance representative](#).

If it relates to discrimination or whistleblowing, then you will require an [equality representative](#).

If it relates to health and safety or uniform and equipment then you will require a [health and safety representative](#).

[Find a workplace representative.](#)

The reps' list has recently been updated to include new reps who put themselves forward for the role as part of the Federation elections which are being carried out across all 43 Federation branches and also within the national office.

The election process started at the end of last year and will draw to a close on 1 October when the new National Board will be in place.

Members will be asked to vote for a local chair and then a national chair with details of the online voting process being sent to all members by email.

“ WE HAVE LINKS TO THE 'FIND A WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVE' PAGE OF OUR WEBSITE IN SEVERAL PLACES INCLUDING UNDER THE MEET THE TEAM SECTION AND ON THE CONTACT US PAGE SO IT SHOULD ALWAYS BE STRAIGHTFORWARD FOR MEMBERS TO FIND THE LIST OF CURRENT REPS.

Your workplace representatives

Name	Collar	Constituency	Role/department	Parade station	Fed email	Fed phone no.	Shifts	Equality	Conduct	H&S
Faiz Akhilaq	23450	Birmingham	Response	Bournville Lane	faiz.akhilaq@polfed.org		07398 516091	E/L/N		
Leon Allen	22890	Birmingham	Neighbourhood	Nechells	leon.allen@polfed.org		07535176629	E/L		
Baljit Banga	27578	Birmingham	Response	Newtown	baljit.banga@polfed.org		07931859747	E/L/N		
Ed Banks	23111	Birmingham	Offender management	Bournville Lane	ed.banks@polfed.org		07943416903	E		
Martin Bonser	4377	Birmingham	Planning	Lloyd House	Martin.Bonser@polfed.org		07976068818	E	X	
Lorayne Brown	6219	Birmingham	Offender management	Handsworth	LBrown@westmids.polfed.org		07534279659	E	X	
Winston Christie	5456	Birmingham	Peoples services	Lloyd House	WChristie@westmids.polfed.org		07535176594	E	X	
Mark Cooper	21027	Birmingham	Firearms	Park Lane	mark.cooper@polfed.org		07951751150	E/L/N		
Jess Davies	24843	Birmingham	Response	echells	Jess.Davies@polfed.org		07508898970	E/L/N	X	X
Ann Fern	9264	Birmingham	Response	Stechford	ann.fern@polfed.org		07985102954	E/L/N		
Steve Green	4575	Birmingham	Offender management	Bournville Lane	steve.green@polfed.org		07507686972	E/L	X	
Gemma Griffith	3799	Birmingham	Response	Stechford	gemma.griffith@polfed.org		07972902308	E/L/N	X	
Charlotte Hunt	0635	Birmingham	Intelligence	Park Lane	charlotte.hunt@polfed.org		07539464144	E/L/N		
Raj Kanth	8137	Birmingham	CID	Stechford	Raj.Kanth@polfed.org		07951237503	E	X	
Andrew Lavanchy	7338	Birmingham	Response	Stechford	andrew.lavanchy@polfed.org		07535176624	E/L/N	X	
Duncan McDonald	20213	Birmingham	OSU	Park Lane	duncan.mcdonald@polfed.org		07535176616	E/L		
Connor Morgan	23614	Birmingham	Traffic	CMPG	connor.morgan.polfed.org		07949281915	E/L/N		
Darren Neville	9233	Birmingham	Schools intervention/prevention	Bournville Lane	dneville@westmids.polfed.org		07972916537	E		
Robin O'Brien	8388	Birmingham	People services	Tally Ho	robin.obrien@polfed.org		07961544843	E		
Nicola Perkins	2382	Birmingham	Criminal justice	Digbeth	nicola.perkins@polfed.org		07931859761	E		
Paul Smith	4374	Birmingham	Neighbourhood	Castle Vale	paul.smith@polfed.org		07972904227	E/L		
Richard Sosan-Keyte	25028	Birmingham	Response	Newtown	richard.sosan-keyte@polfed.org		07539464230	E/L/N		
Matthew Sutton	0691	Birmingham	Intelligence	Lloyd House	matthew.sutton@polfed.org		07539464196	E		
Jason Vlahakis	0668	Birmingham	Neighbourhood	Nechells	jason.vlahakis@polfed.org		07539464042	E/L		
Simon Wheeler	6329	Birmingham	Neighbourhood	Bournville Lane	swheeler@westmids.polfed.org		07534279654	E/L	X	X
Matt Manwaring	6587	Coventry	Neighbourhood	Canley	matthew.manwaring@polfed.org		07398 971004	E/L		
Steven Mervyn	22682	Coventry	Response	Willenhall	steven.melvyn@polfed.org		07772527743	E/L/N		
Christopher Milburn	20054	Coventry	People services	Coventry Central	chris.milburn@polfed.org		07972918261	E		
Ali Rowe	22233	Coventry	PPU	Coventry Central	alistair.rowe@polfed.org		07931859739	E	X	
Carrie-Ann Lowe	5508	Dudley	People services	Halesowen	carrie-ann.lowe@polfed.org		07534279656	E	X	
James Sargeant	23258	Dudley	Response	Brierley Hill	james.sargeant@polfed.org		07398150094	E/L/N		
Gavin Stockton	20460	Dudley	Offender management	Brierley Hill	gavin.stockton@polfed.org		07807079323	E/L		
Sue Cheek	4468	Sandwell	Operations	Wednesbury	Sue.Cheek@polfed.org		07972916648	E/L/N	X	
Pamy Sandhu	0256	Sandwell	Planning	West Bromwich	pamy.sandhu@polfed.org		07972918262	E		
Michael Woods	9152	Sandwell	PPU	Oldbury	michaelwoods@westmids.polfed.org		07951751151	E/L	X	
Aaron Bell	4413	Solihull	Airport	Birmingham Airport	abell@westmids.polfed.org		07496685277	E/L/N	X	
Lee Howkins	3249	Solihull	CTU	CTU	Lee.Howkins@polfed.org		07974 401159	E/L		
Matt Maund	21328	Solihull	Response	Balsall Common	matt.maund@polfed.org		07539464212	E/L/N		
Kevin Vince	7398	Solihull	Neighbourhood	Solihull	kevin.vince@polfed.org		07972918479	E/L		
Christopher Beards	20837	Walsall	Response	Bloxwich	chris.beards@polfed.org		07399005748	E/L/N		
Nicholas Churm	0191	Walsall	Offender management	Bloxwich	nicholas.churm@polfed.org		07943416872	E/L		
Kerry Haywood	8329	Walsall	PPU	Bloxwich	kerry.haywood@polfed.org		07985100544	E/L		
Rhys McDowell	25899	Walsall	CID	Bloxwich	rhys.mcdowell@polfed.org		07972916994	E/L		
Matthew Minton	7658	Walsall	Offender management	Bloxwich	MMinton@westmids.polfed.org		07931859742	E	X	X
Ekminster Thind	23425	Walsall	CID B	loxwich	ekminster.thind@polfed.org		07972916476	E		
Lee Hayward	21287	Wolverhampton	Response	Low Hill	LHayward@westmids.polfed.org		07951236994	E/L/N	X	
Jon Morgan	7919	Wolverhampton	OCG team	Wolverhampton	jon.morgan@polfed.org		07539464051	E/L		
Sara Parish	20728	Wolverhampton	Intelligence	Wednesfield	sara.parish@polfed.org		07539464047	E		

Newly elected Fed rep makes promises to members

Like so many before him, one of the branch's newest workplace reps is using his own experiences within the Force to help others

New workplace representative Leon Allen has outlined his commitment to helping Federation members be '100 per cent themselves' as police officers.

Having started his rep role in March, Leon has already taken on branch cases after being elected earlier this year and he is busy in Force too after being promoted to sergeant.

He describes the start to his cop career as 'unusual', as from an early age his view on policing was 'not the most positive'.

"Growing up mainly in Northfield, I remember a gang and drug culture in the area, which meant the police were around a lot. I got used to seeing people take an oppositional stance towards them, and I think that probably rubbed off on me," he said.

"But, as I got older, I began wanting to question if the attitude I had was fair, and to see what the barriers really were when they had to make an unpopular decision, for instance.

"And it's fair to say I have learnt all about that and much more – it's been a real journey of discovery for me in policing, and I'm excited for that to continue."

During his seven years with the Force, Leon, 27, stepped up as an acting sergeant twice before his permanent promotion to the rank.

Internally, however, there was a period where he lost his spark, following unclear communication from the Force on promotion and temporary processes after he was restored as a constable.



Sergeant Leon Allen.

Exacerbated by Leon's autism and ADHD, this uncertainty eventually led to him taking a three-month mental health break from work. It was only when he returned that matters began to improve.

"I felt like I'd been treated unfairly because when you act up in rank, the least you expect is some clarity on where you're at with your overall progression," he continued.

"That didn't come though and, after everything I'd given as an acting sergeant, it was a massive blow.

"When I came back to work, I went directly

to the Chief Constable, which resulted in a pathway of open and honest communication with an Assistant Chief Constable – and that was exactly what I needed to feel heard.

"But, looking back, I wasn't aware of how the Federation could help with diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI). Perhaps if I'd sought this support, I wouldn't have had to make these difficult conversations on my own or even had to take my break."

Now, Leon says he wants to help colleagues going through similar situations by being as visible as possible as a rep.

He has already reached out to the Force's neurodiversity network with the aim of helping members secure reasonable adjustments according to DEI.

"I know what it's like to feel lost in this job I otherwise loved, and I want to support anyone else feeling the same," Leon explained.

"When I was in that place, I think I was too focused on the Fed only being for you when you're in trouble – but people need to know it's for much more than that.

"If something is stopping you from being 100 per cent yourself at work, that's enough of a problem. I'd like it if members with those worries could think, 'Oh, I can go to Leon – he will understand.'"

In addition to his focus on DEI matters, Leon is keen to develop his knowledge and skills to handle all types of cases as a workplace rep.

He has set out three pledges to members.

"Firstly, I can promise open and honest conversations, which I have already touched on as being so beneficial for me," he explained. "My second principle is that I will always try to be available for you and, if I can't, I will endeavour to make the time.

"And my third is around my dedication to you – if I say I will do something, I will do it. I know how important it is to have that certainty from someone you put faith and trust into.

"Back when my beliefs were still shaped by my youth, one of the first things I discovered as a new officer was that the foundation of policing is cops on the ground supporting each other.

"I want to take that same learning and apply it to the months and years ahead as Fed rep, which I am very excited about."

“ I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO FEEL LOST IN THIS JOB I OTHERWISE LOVED, AND I WANT TO SUPPORT ANYONE ELSE FEELING THE SAME. WHEN I WAS IN THAT PLACE, I THINK I WAS TOO FOCUSED ON THE FED ONLY BEING THERE FOR YOU WHEN YOU'RE IN TROUBLE – BUT PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW IT'S FOR MUCH MORE THAN THAT.

Volunteer ambassadors aim to drive professional standards

Sergeant gives an insight into initiative aiming to promote a better understanding of PSD

A team of volunteers are aiming to 'bridge the gap' between the professional standards department (PSD) and other areas of the Force.

Sergeant Scott Davies is part of a network of more than 100 standards ambassadors across the organisation.

The want to drive professional standards of behaviour in their areas, promote a better understanding of the work of PSD and feedback officers' concerns.

Scott said: "The ambassadors are a conduit between professional standards, standards managers and departments across the Force.

"It's bridging a gap that might be there between PSD and officers and staff. PSD is trying to promote a better understanding of professional standards.

"The ambassador role is part of that, to bridge that gap and take the messages back from PSD that ultimately it is there to uphold the standards and make sure we police ethically and do the right thing at the right times."

The ambassador roles have been running for around 18 months.

They offer advice on matters such as when to submit a change of circumstances document, what it means when someone is under investigation and what happens if a complaint is submitted about an officer or member of staff.

PSD is bogged down with service delivery complaints and Scott says this is another area in which the ambassadors get involved.

"There's an opportunity for us as standards ambassadors to promote service recovery at department level. I think officers should be empowered to take on that service recovery right there, at that moment in time," Scott explained.

"We need to step away from police officers



Scott Davies is pictured receiving his long service and good conduct award from West Midlands Police Chief Constable Craig Guildford (left) and Lord Lieutenant Derrick Anderson CBE.

saying that if you don't like something, then make a complaint because PSD is bogged down with complaints that could be resolved in a 20-minute conversation.

"It is going that little bit further to explain our actions and why we've taken them and preventing those minor complaints.

"PSD can then be there to deal with the stuff that we really want them to deal with and get the bad apples out of the Force."

Scott, who has been an officer for 22 years, said he wanted to become an ambassador to get a greater understanding of PSD and its processes. He also wants to be a voice for officers' concerns.

"I didn't fully understand the ins and outs of PSD, so I thought it'd be nice to know why it does things," said Scott, who has recently been promoted to response sergeant based in Bournville.

"As officers, when we go to a job we often explain to people why we've done something. I don't think we always get the same explanation from PSD, for instance as to why investigations take so long.

"Or why PSD sometimes sends an email to ask what's happened in an incident because when an email lands from PSD people immediately get defensive and ask for their Fed rep thinking they're under investigation – and that's not the case.

"So, it's a bit of learning for me."

He added: "We've seen people treated badly within investigations, so I'd like to take that message back and feedback officers' side of things to PSD.

"It's going back to them with concerns officers have, and being the voice of officers that might not want to speak out and remain anonymous.

"If people are talking about PSD, I can give a little bit more context as to why things take so long and why they do things.

"For instance, when the IOPC gets involved, PSD's hands are tied a bit until that investigation concludes and that's why sometimes things take a long time.

"I can be the voice of reason for PSD to some extent and give a good indication of why things do take a while."

Scott said PSD is an extremely busy department. Investment in the team has seen staff numbers increase by 35 to 104 people since 2021.

But Scott said: "Staff in PSD will admit they would like to be speedier in certain things. But it is a small department. I think they get around 5,000 complaints a year, which is a lot to deal with.

"And, as I've mentioned, a large percentage of that is the service recovery stuff that can be done by officers."



Photo caption.

Women in policing share their stories for International Women's Day

A celebration of women in policing organised by the West Midlands Police Sikh Association (WMPSA) has been hailed a huge success.

The association joined with the National Sikh Police Association for a day of inspiring and thought-provoking speakers for International Women's Day.

Supported by the Black and Asian Police Association and Women in Policing, those taking part in the event shared their journeys, their stories and their insights.

They included Chief Superintendent Kim Madill, a talk on the history and journey of Sergeant Ekminder Singh and an ex-chief superintendent's journey with Bhupinder Rai.

Other speakers included the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, Rajvinder Kaur Gill, Detective Chief Superintendent Sarbjit Kaur MBE who talked about leadership and challenges and DJ

Nav on the journey of a Sikh female DJ.

Detective Sergeant Jagpreet Jutla, WMPSA's lead for events and recruitment, said: "It was a really good, empowering event that is helping to drive action for gender equality."

"It was a chance to explore the unique and diverse experiences of women in policing, and hear about their journeys and insights."

"We had incredible insights from inspiring speakers, and we've had really positive feedback from people who attended."

Jess Davies, acting chair of West Midlands Police Federation, attended the event and said: "Very inspirational and heart-warming stories from the speakers made the day truly special."

"It was a powerful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women in policing and inspire future generations."



Photo caption.

'Whatever you want to do, you should go for it'

Force trailblazer encourages other women officers to follow their dreams



Elizabeth Dixon.

Ahead of West Midlands Police Museum's International Women's Day event, we spoke to special guest Elizabeth Dixon, whose remarkable career saw her become the Force's first-ever female dog handler.

For everything she gave to the profession, Elizabeth says her time in the police gave her equally as much back including, above all else, the strength to overcome adversity time and time again.

Even before she became a West Midlands Police officer as a 20-year-old in 1973, Elizabeth had to respond to a setback after being unable to join Warwickshire Police – where she had spent time as a temporary civilian officer – due to a quota of female officers already being met.

Instead, she started as a WPC in Birmingham City Police and was posted to Bromford Lane.

"It was truly a whole different world for a woman in the police back then," said Elizabeth, now 77.

"We were in a dedicated police women's department, and the only incidents we would deal with were ones involving other women and children.

"Pay was different to the men, and the hours were too. We had to wear skirts instead of trousers, which felt less practical.

"But I joined the police because I wanted to make a difference – as did other women. And although we were able to do that in part, we wanted to do more."

As the 1970s saw both the formation of West Midlands Police and the gap gradually close between men's and women's pay in policing, Elizabeth used this momentum to begin pursuing her big ambition.

Having got herself 'hooked' after watching it in action, she had set her sights on becoming a handler in the Force's police dog unit.

"It wasn't because it just looked fun to work with a dog – the hard work and discipline really appealed to me," Elizabeth continued.

"Becoming a handler was never going to be straightforward though.

"My applications were knocked back three times, and it took about a year before one actually got anywhere. Other women I knew had the same responses to the roles they were going for.

"I wasn't for giving in, and that meant I did end up becoming the first woman trained as a handler in the Force."

Coming through the other end of a demanding training course, Elizabeth officially became a dog handler in 1979, when she was assigned Czar, a German shepherd general-purpose police dog.

The pair were tasked with patrol duties, building and missing person searches and public order support, firstly based at Stechford and later Digbeth.

But Elizabeth says there was 'a lot of scepticism' around her to begin with, which only dissipated once Czar had helped make a first arrest.

Made even more impressive coming on their very first night shift together, Elizabeth and Czar entered a pitch-black scrapyard and managed to locate two burglars on the run. Suddenly, a precarious situation had turned into a significant victory.

"It was great to prove some people wrong, I will admit that," she said.

"Not long after, I remember the Force giving me expenses to buy a pair of trousers. I felt like a proper officer, contributing as I knew I could."

From that point onwards, the duo's relationship inside and outside of work went from strength to strength, as they enjoyed four years in each other's company until Czar retired and went to live on a farm in



Elizabeth with Czar.

Worcestershire.

Following this, Elizabeth, who was known in the Force by her maiden name, Dodd, returned to a patrol shift in Digbeth in 1983.

Her career was then unfortunately cut short three years later, when she was involved in a car accident while on duty, which left her paralysed.

In extremely difficult circumstances, Elizabeth was diagnosed not only as a tetraplegic, resulting in permanent wheelchair use, but with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) too.

Incredibly, this did not deter her from wanting to make a return to policing, but the decision was taken out of her hands when the Force directed her into retirement.

"That was a big disappointment – I think I just didn't want to accept the career I loved was over. But I eventually moved past it, and I have done all sorts of things to keep myself busy over the years," she said.

"I have done planning work for my local councils of Stratford and Warwickshire and other local organisations around accessibility and inclusion, which has meant a lot to me."

While the museum event was on Thursday 13 March, this year's International Women's Day was celebrated on Saturday 8 March.

Ahead of her [appearance at the police museum](#), Elizabeth added: "I am really looking forward to speaking and I feel honoured to do so. It should be a great day.

"I don't think I realised the significance of being the first female dog handler at the time. But looking back, I am proud to be a part of the Force's history in that way, because I just really enjoyed it and everything I put in to get there felt so worth it.

"Things may have changed so much for women in policing, and certainly for the better, but I still think it's so important to remind them that they are capable of whatever they set their minds to.

"My message would always be that whatever you want to do, you should go for it – and don't take no for an answer."

'It's been a positive first year'

Giving members of the Special Constabulary opportunities to grow and contribute even more than they already do can only continue to be a good thing, according to a Taser-trained Special

A year after becoming the first West Midlands Police Special to carry a Taser, Special Sergeant Ryan Courtney says he has no doubt the Force's investment in voluntary officers will be paid back in full.

Following rule changes around the powers of the Special Constabulary in 2022, Ryan qualified as Taser-trained in January last year, paving the way for other Specials to follow suit and develop their role while also gaining extra protection on duty.

His shifts on response in Stechford have benefited from his training and he believes it has been an inspired move.

"I think it's a piece of kit I've just got used to having – it's such a huge tool and skill to have," said Ryan.

"That comfort blanket element is huge, knowing it's always there if I need it, but it's more than that too. I feel like I've gone up to the next level in my knowledge of policing and tactics, and that makes being a volunteer feel all the more worthwhile.

"As a Special, I don't want to just make up the numbers and still be thanked for it because I'm voluntary – I want to make a real difference."

While he still hasn't actually discharged his Taser, he says he was able to aim it at a suspect to pacify a situation last December.

A man was wanted on recall to prison for violent behaviour and owning illegal weapons and Ryan was part of a police effort to reach him through his home address.



Special Sergeants Ryan Courtney (left) and Aamir Nore.

After a door knock, the man suddenly jumped from his fourth-floor balcony to try to evade the team.

"That was when, after racing back to the ground, I aimed the Taser at him. With his history of violence and clear desperation to get away from us, I wanted to negate any potential attack – and the Taser helped me do exactly that," says Ryan.

"We were then able to make the arrest. For me, the key thing Taser has really opened up is going out on response shifts on demand. That way, the pressure is taken off regular officers, because we are more confident in taking control of matters like that one."

Ryan has furthered his commitment to Taser use in the Special Constabulary by representing his fellow voluntary officers at silver Taser meetings, held quarterly and attended at chief inspector level.

The 33-year-old now also delivers a presentation to new Specials encouraging them to become Taser-trained.

"Being the first [Special to be trained], I'm

a real advocate for it now," he added.

"But I can't be that advocate without the Force really buying into it, so I must give it a lot of credit – to cover both initial and refresher training, and to allow this to be so openly advertised for uptake takes a lot of commitment."

West Midlands Police now has eight Special Constables and sergeants fully equipped to carry Taser.

As far as Ryan is concerned, that return makes the period since he became a Force trailblazer a success.

"It's amazing to think within a year, there is now capacity a few times over for a Taser double crew made up exclusively of Specials.

"It's certainly been a positive first year, and we want this to keep going. A definite target is to get a female Special trained at some point.

"The Special Constabulary at West Midlands Police has had good investment with many new capabilities available to us – not just Taser, but blue light, method of entry and Stinger too.

"Now, it's about paying that back, and I'm absolutely sure we will. Giving Specials opportunities to grow and contribute even more than they already do can only continue to be a good thing," he ended.

“IT'S AMAZING TO THINK WITHIN A YEAR, THERE IS NOW CAPACITY A FEW TIMES OVER FOR A TASER DOUBLE CREW MADE UP EXCLUSIVELY OF SPECIALS.

Newest Special to Taser satisfied with 'no-brainer' opportunity

The latest Special to complete Taser training says he has already felt the benefit – and the weight of responsibility – of carrying a device out on the frontline.

A paramedic in his day job, Special Sergeant Ben Roberts took on another emergency service duty when he joined the Force in 2021.

Currently line managing 10 other voluntary officers, Ben highlighted the importance he places on staying fresh operationally, helped by adding capabilities such as Taser where possible.

"I passed my training last December and, so far, I am very glad I put in the time and effort to get to this point," he said.

"I think the chance to be Taser-trained is a no-brainer for Specials. We get called out to the same jobs as regulars, so why shouldn't we have the same tools at our disposal?"

"Of course, you still rely on your professional judgment first and foremost, but it can only be seen as a boost when you are equipped with a very effective device and the knowledge of how to use it."

While happy to admit a Taser has helped make his policing life easier in some respects, Ben maintains it is a two-way street when the sacrifices made by the individual officer are considered.

"That extra layer of protection is a great thing, but it's not like it comes for free – getting through training isn't a foregone conclusion and, even then, the duty only truly starts once you become operational," he continued.

“ I AM COMFORTABLE WITH IT NOW, BUT I'M STILL AWARE OF HOW ACCOUNTABLE I MUST BE.

"Seeing as it was only a few months ago, I can remember exactly how I felt when I began carrying my Taser on shift. I was quite nervous, to be honest, because it's like a firearm at the end of the day.

"I am comfortable with it now, but I'm still aware of how accountable I must be.

"I haven't used it yet, but I know that if I do I will have to justify that every time. It's the same as in my day job, when I have to justify administering a certain drug, for example.

"So, it definitely works both ways, but that's exactly how it should be."

Ben, who typically commits 40 to 50 hours a month to the Force, went on to praise the development opportunities for Specials as



Special Sergeant Ben Roberts.

'second to none'.

The 26-year-old has also recently become trained in the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP), strengthening his commitment to serving the public both through paid work and volunteering.

'Taser has made me a better officer and a better leader'

Being equipped with a Taser helps Specials to 'follow through' on their promise of stepping up as volunteers, according to a Federation member who passed his training a year ago.

Special Sergeant Aamir Nore joined the Force in 2009, realising a lifelong ambition in the process.

Pursuing a career in teaching closed off his chances of becoming a regular officer, but he says he has no regrets about fulfilling his dream as a Special instead – especially now he believes there is growing parity between the two roles in many aspects.

"When I started, Specials being able to carry Taser was absolutely unheard of. To think in 10 to 15 years' time, we'd have this possibility – as well as many others – would've been crazy," he said.

"It shows how far the Special Constabulary has come and how, in my opinion, there is a bit of a pendulum swing happening towards Specials, in the sense we are beginning to take responsibility for situations in the same way as regulars.

"In high-intensity moments, my Taser has helped to minimise risk so I can then manage things in real time. I think that's vital for an officer to be able to take control when circumstances are constantly changing and developing.

"It has also improved my self-discipline, because I never want to make a rash decision and resort to it just because I can now."

An example of this thought process in action was when Aamir responded to a critical incident at the old City Hospital in Birmingham in June.

A patient had locked himself inside an oxygen chamber, acting erratically and brandishing a lighter, with intelligence also suggesting he had both a knife and hammer.

When he continuously refused to cooperate with police, Aamir deployed a red-dot to clearly indicate he was aiming and ready to use his Taser. This eventually diffused the situation and allowed the patient to be stabilised.

"The whole idea of a Special is that they



Special Sergeant Aamir Nore.

are members of the public who step up – having capabilities like Taser allows us to follow through on that," Aamir, added.

"And I think having this mindset is what really helps to raise standards in the Force. It's allowed me to become a better officer and a better leader."

“ THE WHOLE IDEA OF A SPECIAL IS THAT THEY ARE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO STEP UP – HAVING CAPABILITIES LIKE TASER ALLOWS US TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON THAT



Family members at the National Police Memorial Day service in Glasgow in 2024.

Fallen officers' families invited to memorial day reception

Coventry Cathedral will host this year's National Police Memorial Day service and fallen officers' families are being invited to attend a Federation reception before the service

The families of fallen West Midlands Police officers are being invited to attend a special reception as part of this year's National Police Memorial Day service.

For the first time in the annual event's 21-year history, the service is being held in Coventry Cathedral.

"National Police Memorial Day is one of the most important dates in the policing calendar," says Tim Rogers, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation.

"It gives police officers of all ranks, politicians, civic dignitaries and other key stakeholders the opportunity to come together and stand with the families of fallen officers to remember those who have given their lives while carrying out their policing duties.

"It is incredibly important that we acknowledge the sacrifice those fallen colleagues made, but also recognise the impact an officer's death has on the loved ones they left behind."

The memorial day service rotates around England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each year. Most of the services hosted in England have been held in London, but Lincoln was the venue for the 2021 service.

This year it will be held in Coventry on Sunday 28 September.

"It is a real honour for the memorial day service to come to our region," said Tim, "As a Federation, we are organising a reception for our fallen officers' families before the service and hope as many as possible will be able to join us.



"We would urge them to contact us to let us know if they are interested in attending and also to get more details of what we are planning."

Around 5,000 police officers have died while on duty in the past 180 years. The West Midlands Police Museum website lists almost 150 West Midlands officers to have died on duty.

The first officer recorded is Robert Twyford of Birmingham Police who was shot while on duty in 1806 and died in 1814, aged 54, from lung damage caused by the gunshot wound.

Coventry itself was heavily bombed during the Second World War, with the cathedral being hit in the most devastating raid on the city on 14 November 1940.

Seven Coventry City Police were killed on that night: Albert Bawden, 38; Frederick Barratt, 50; William Lambe, 26; Thomas Lowry, 16; William Timms, 23; Kenneth Rollins, 30, and Harry Berry, 34.

An eighth officer, Bertram West, is listed

as dying on 15 November 1940 in the continuing air raids. He was 17.

Fallen officers' deaths were largely unrecognised until Joe Holness set up the National Police Memorial Day after his Kent Police colleague, PC Jon Odell, was brutally killed in Margate in December 2000. The first service was held in 2004.

The memorial service is held each year on the nearest Sunday to 29 September, which is Saint Michael's Day with Saint Michael being the patron saint of police officers.

The memorial day aims to:

- **Remember police officers who have been killed or died on duty**
- **Demonstrate to relatives, friends and colleagues of fallen officers that their sacrifice is not forgotten**
- **Recognise annually the dedication to duty and courage displayed by police officers.**

The families of fallen West Midlands Police officers interested in attending the memorial day service and Federation reception should [email the Fed office](#) as soon as possible.

Bank Holiday working

In the latest in a series of features putting the focus on Police Regulations, we are re-publishing questions – and answers – about Bank Holiday working.

Remember you can find the answers to many of your queries about regulations [on our website](https://www.polfed.org).

Q What can I claim for working on a Bank Holiday?

A This depends on how much notice you are given that you are required to work.

- If you are given eight days or more notice, then payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time for the hours worked
- If you are given seven days or less notice, then payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time for the hours worked plus a day off in lieu.

Travel time of 1 hour (30 minutes each way) is applicable but only up to a total of 6 hours for duty and travel. So, if you work 5.5 hours you can claim half an hour travel, but once you work 6 hours or over you can no longer claim travel.

Q I had to remain at work at the end of my night shift going into a Bank Holiday what can I claim?

A If you are required to remain at work past 07:00 after a night shift, going into a Bank Holiday you are entitled to claim a minimum of four hours' payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time, even if you work less than four hours.

If you are required to remain on duty for more than four hours, you are entitled to claim payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time for the hours worked.

Q What happens if I am off sick on the Bank Holiday?

A It has been agreed that if you are booked as sick on the Bank Holiday then the sickness should apply to the whole rostered duty so any TOIL deducted for that day can be given back. This will not happen automatically so it will require the individual to request this via shared services. No certification is required.

Q I have had TOIL deducted for Bank Holidays where I would normally work more than eight hours why is that?

A Everyone is given public holiday leave for a Bank Holiday. This over-rides anything else for that day. Meaning if you were due to work you start with public holiday leave and if you were on a rest day you are also shown as public holiday leave and given a rest day in lieu (as you cannot be on a rest day or a normal working day on a Bank Holiday, for everyone it is public holiday leave).

Public holiday leave is the same for all officers and is pro rata. This means that a full-time officer gets the full statutory eight hours public holiday leave for that day. If you were rostered for a shift that exceeds eight hours then you owe the Force the remaining hours. This is because leave is calculated in hours and not days as this is the fairest way to do it. The same way that an RDIL is worth eight hours so if you use it for a day that is over eight hours you have to make up the difference.

When the shift pattern is drawn up the Bank Holidays will be overlaid onto the roster so if the Bank Holiday falls on a day when you are rostered to work a nine-hour shift you will have to work the extra hour somewhere else to make your total hours back up to 2,016.

This is not something the Federation has agreed to it is simply the case that the Force now has the software (GRS) to ensure that officers work the hours they are contracted to work.

A concession the Federation was able to negotiate with the Force with regard to how they would implement this new policy was

that officers could have negative TOIL balances and that these could be worked back as 'pre-planned' over-time so they would not be subject to the 30-minute deductions that would otherwise apply.

Those who work shifts longer than eight hours often feel this is unfair, however, it isn't. It is the same as when you book a day's annual leave you have to use more hours. This is because the reason you work longer shifts is because you get more rest days. If you look at the converse, officers who work five eight-hour shifts with two days off would feel aggrieved if on a public holiday they were getting public holiday leave and getting an eight-hour shift off while someone was getting the same public holiday leave and getting a twelve-hour shift off.

Leave and over-time on a Bank Holiday are totally separate, because the above applies whether you work or not. Although the default is public holiday leave for everyone, the Force must still ensure that it maintains minimum staffing and if it would have been a working day according to your shift pattern you can be required to work. Due to the cost implications in most departments the Force defaults to minimum staffing and eight-hour shifts with no cross over.

However, even if you work in excess of eight hours this does not impact on the hours you owe for the public holiday leave deficit. You would just be paid for any hours you work at double time. So, if the Force did ask everyone to work their normal shifts on a public holiday they would be paid double time for the hours they work. However, they would still owe any hours over the eight given to everyone for public holiday leave to make up the remaining hours of their shift.



A query about Police Regulations? Gary's your man!

We put the Federation's Police Regulations expert under the spotlight

Gary Nuttall has a long and varied history with West Midlands Police.

Starting out as a PC almost 50 years ago, on retiring from the Force around 30 years later, he began working for West Midlands Police Federation and is now the branch's resident expert on Police Regulations.

It's perhaps no surprise that policing has changed a lot during his career, yet it would seem that in more recent years the queries around regs have stayed quite similar.

Gary explains: "Over-time questions have been a constant theme during my 19 years at the Fed."

But looking back on his time as an officer, he says: "Policing has changed from my time. It has certainly become more technical with officers wearing body-worn videos and members of the public starting to record on their phones as soon as the police arrive which puts pressure on officers."

"Then there has been the closure of police stations to save money, and everything done is scrutinised and data driven."

"Whereas when I first joined, you worked with a unit of officers possibly for years from the same station and everyone got to know one another and knew the patch inside out."



During his days as an officer.

They looked after each other and built-up great friendships which last a lifetime."

Gary joined as a constable in June 1975 after nearly three years as a police cadet and was able to join a month early because the entry age was reduced from 19 to 18½ years.

After completing the 10-week training course at Bruche district training centre, he was posted to Digbeth, A2 subdivision which policed Birmingham city centre.

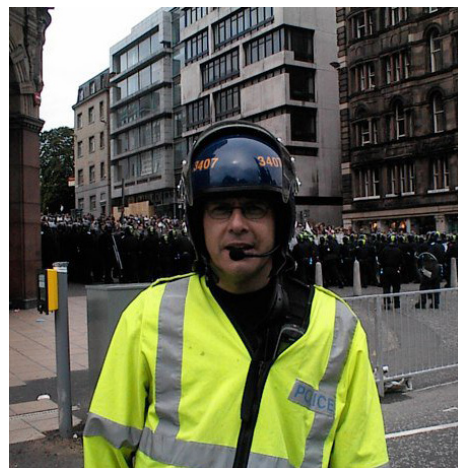
Gary explains: "I was at Digbeth for four years until I felt the need to get promoted so I applied for the traffic control at Perry Barr which enabled me to study for my exam. I was successful in 1982 and I was posted to Acocks Green to get acting experience in the rank of sergeant."

“POLICING HAS CHANGED FROM MY TIME. IT HAS CERTAINLY BECOME MORE TECHNICAL WITH OFFICERS WEARING BODY-WORN VIDEOS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC STARTING TO RECORD ON THEIR PHONES AS SOON AS THE POLICE ARRIVE WHICH PUTS PRESSURE ON OFFICERS.

The following year he applied for the Operational Support Unit (OSU) formerly the SPG, to further his experience in all sorts of policing.

"This assisted me a great deal and found I was extremely busy due to the miners' strike where I was working all over the country policing the various pits that were open and demonstrations at Orgreave, the coking plant," Gary recalls.

"While on the OSU, I was also involved in



Sergeant Gary Nuttall.

the Blues Leeds riot so I can say I certainly gathered a lot of experience from my time on the OSU."

On promotion to sergeant in July 1985, he was posted – much to his disappointment – to Bradford Street part of the F Division which again covered the centre of Birmingham.

Gary says: "I remember ringing up the admin sergeant to find out where I was going, and he asked where do you want to go? I said anywhere but Bradford Street as it was mainly industrial premises, and I wanted the excitement of policing the city centre again. He must have found that quite amusing."

In 1986 following changes to divisional boundaries, Gary was back at Acocks Green where he stayed until 1989 when he went back to the OSU taking charge of his own serial working Handsworth and Ladywood with C Serial or better known as the "Cruel Cs". During that time, he passed the inspectors' exam.

After four years on the OSU, he returned to F1, Steelhouse Lane in Birmingham for a year while he waited for a vacancy to open up at Central traffic covering the whole of Birmingham.

"This was a post I really enjoyed having the freedom of such a big area but sadly the Force decided to do away with centralised traffic and posted officers back on division. I arrived back at Steelhouse Lane in 1997," Gary explains.

This perhaps prompted a change in direction and a post at public order training the following year, where he stayed for the rest of his policing career.

"During that period, I became a trainer and a trainer of trainers. I was also involved in the re-writing of public order tactics and helped in setting up the national public order tactical advisors' course and the competencies for public order commanders," says Gary.

In the background, during his time as an officer, Gary had become involved with the

Feature continued on Page 22

FOCUS ON REGULATIONS

Continued from Page 21

Federation, becoming a workplace representative for operations and training in 2001.

Like so many other Fed reps, this came about after he had been helped by the Federation himself. Having partially lost his hearing, the Fed rep helped him obtain hearing aids through the Force since the NHS devices could not be worn with a public order helmet.

Gary says: "I was impressed by the manner in which my Fed rep negotiated with the Force on my behalf to get me the required equipment at no cost to me. I felt I wanted to help my colleagues in the way I had been helped."

This Federation work culminated in 2006 when a vacancy arose for a full-time member of staff at the Federation office to answer queries relating to Police Regulations and determinations, pensions and the Group

Insurance Scheme (GIS).

At this point, he had 31 years' service as an officer, so he retired and straightaway took up the Federation post answering calls from serving officers mainly on over-time, annual leave and days owing.

While the role is now part-time, Gary is also one of the trustees of the GIS which means he looks after all the deaths of serving and retired officers, a role in which he does his utmost to make sure their families receive what they are entitled to through the scheme.

"I am constantly checking on social media that where officers or former officers have passed to see whether a claim can be made on their behalf, so that their loved ones don't miss out, as a lot of relatives aren't aware until I contact them that there was insurance money that could be claimed.

Gary works in the Federation office each Tuesday and Wednesday and can be contacted with any queries on Police Regulations on **0121 752 4900** or **by email**.



Gary Nuttall away from policing.

“WHILE ON THE OSU, I WAS ALSO INVOLVED IN THE BLUES LEEDS RIOT SO I CAN SAY I CERTAINLY GATHERED A LOT OF EXPERIENCE FROM MY TIME ON THE OSU.


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warrenifa.co.uk
or following us on Facebook
[warrenmortgage](https://www.facebook.com/warrenmortgage)

Join Bluline medical scheme with the first three months free

Federation members can now sign up for a new private healthcare scheme with the first three months being totally free of charge.

Bluline is designed specifically for police officers, police staff and their families and is managed by serving and retired police officers.

It gives rapid access to a professional diagnosis (faster than the NHS) and high-quality medical treatment helping ensure that you recover and get back to work as quickly as possible.

Key features include:

- Comprehensive cover
- Up to £35,000 medical cover per year
- Top quality medical treatment
- Access to the UK's top private hospitals
- Quick and easy claims
- Optical benefit of £75 per year.

Monthly premiums start from as little as £11.25, and there are discounts for student officers, including free subscriptions for the first year and a 50 per cent discount for the second year.

**MONTHLY
PREMIUMS START
FROM AS LITTLE
AS £11.25**

Existing subscribers who refer a friend to the scheme can claim a £25 gift card for Amazon or Marks and Spencer.

Craig Grandison, a former officer and most recently full-time treasurer of the West Yorkshire Police Federation branch, had been a non-executive director of Bluline for more than 10 years and became executive director in March last year after retiring from policing.

He says the scheme, originally part of Tricare which has been running since 1998, gives officers the assurance that they can access medical treatment quickly rather than facing delays on an NHS waiting list,

"I would urge all officers to consider joining Bluline," he explains, "You just never know when you might be injured or suffer ill-health. While you may six months' full pay while you are on sick leave, you could spend the whole of that period on an NHS waiting list waiting to see a consultant.

"Under Bluline, members have been able to see a consultant within a day or two and some have had surgery within a week or two of first getting in touch with us.

"The scheme represents incredible value for money, given the peace of mind it can

provide and the quality – and speed – of treatment it offers.

"The subscription cost is the equivalent of just a couple of sandwich lunches a month, that's all."

Bluline is a not-for-profit organisation so all funds paid into the scheme are used for the benefit of its members.

Existing scheme members have provided the following testimonies:

"Bluline provides peace of mind that your family are going to be given medical care or intervention if required. It is fabulous value for money as you cannot put a price on what they have done for my family."

"On every occasion the team were extremely helpful and professional. They made the authorising and organising of consultations, scans, operations and physiotherapy sessions stress-free."

"I am so glad that I am part of Bluline. My NHS waiting time for an initial consultation would have been over 40 weeks. With Bluline, I have had both my consultations and an operation within the space of four weeks, which has been amazing."

[Find out more and apply online](#) or ring **01905 796 682.**

Pension disputes: What are they and how can we help

Your pension scheme is one of the most important investments in your life, so it is important to know it is protected for when you need it.

Pension schemes are quite rightly protected by stringent legislation to ensure that your rights and benefits are being looked after. However, in a constantly shifting landscape, changes may be made to your scheme that are detrimental to your final pension, and mistakes may also be frequently made such as pension overpayments.

Pension disputes are issues arising from pension schemes and will often involve employers, trustees, pension professionals, members, insurers and industry bodies.

How can we help?

Slater and Gordon's specialist pension law solicitors offer an in-depth understanding of every aspect of pension regulations.

Importantly, they can advise you and act for you with regards to issues with your police

pension. Some of the pensions-related matters they have advised clients on include:

- Pension law issues relating to Police Pension Schemes
- Pension disputes relating to the administration of public and private sector pension schemes, through complaints under the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) and to the Pensions Ombudsman
- Pension disputes concerning the interpretation of pension scheme rules
- Employers' and pension scheme administrators' negligent advice, failure to advise employees or pension scheme members about pension rights and benefits and/or changes to the same
- Pension disputes and appeals concerning access to ill-health retirement benefits



- Pension disputes concerning overpayments
- Challenging rules and provisions in pension schemes which are discriminatory and or in breach of human rights legislation
- Pensions group litigation and dispute resolution.

If you have any questions or concerns about your pension rights and wish to speak to an experienced pensions law solicitor, call Slater and Gordon on **0330 107 5010** or contact them online at [slatergordon.co.uk](https://www.slatergordon.co.uk)

Legal advice for Police Federation members

We've supported the Police Federation for over six decades and provide a suite of tailored legal services to officers both on and off-duty. We're specialists in Police Federation legal advice and understand the intricacies of police work so when you need us, we're here to help.

- Family law
- Employment law
- Wills, trusts, tax and probate
- Court of Protection
- Personal injury
- Medical negligence
- Industrial disease
- Road traffic accident

0330 107 5068
[slatergordon.co.uk](https://www.slatergordon.co.uk)

*Slater and Gordon are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority

**Slater
Gordon**
Lawyers

New benefits under Group Insurance Scheme

A number of new features have been added to the West Midlands Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme (GIS) so that it can provide extra benefits for subscribers.

From 1 April 2025 the policy will include:

- **£750 cover for dog bites**
- **Convalescent benefit of £70 per stay if a member has to stay in a police convalescent home on the recommendation of a registered medical practitioner in respect of accident or illness**
- **The addition of ear pods (up to £250) and smart glasses (up to £1,000) in the mobile phone and gadget policy**
- **Enhanced cover under the legal expenses policy.**

The added benefits also include the introduction of an online virtual physio service through the Care on Demand cover.

This will offer quick, easy access to chartered physiotherapists via video or phone, without the need for a GP referral. This service is available to members and their partners, residing children over 18 and up to 21, or 25 if still in full-time education.

It will provide personalised, evidence-based care from the comfort of the subscriber's home, providing expert rehabilitation for a wide range of musculoskeletal conditions with flexible scheduling five days a week, accessible booking through an App, an initial assessment and follow-up sessions to support recovery.

The system analyses more than 100 points on the body to improve rehabilitation and provide real-time feedback on form and technique. This gives patients better insights

into their recovery while reporting on compliance which helps decision-making for the physiotherapists.

The combination of physiotherapy and real-time AI motion tracking provides personalised data driven treatment plans to improve recovery outcomes.

No pre-existing medical condition exclusion or age limit apply.

Due to the renewal of certain elements of the package and the rise in claims and legal costs, subscription costs will increase starting 1 April 2025.

Monthly subscription costs**

Serving officers

Officer	£31.15
Partner cover	£11.00
Where two officers are partners/ spouses – second subscription	£23.64

Police staff

Staff member	£35.36
Partner cover	£11.50

Retired officers

Under 65	£37.72
Partner	£14.38
Retired officers, aged 65 - 69	£26.59
Partner	£14.40
Retired officers, aged 70 plus	£18.88
Partner	£6.18

"Even with this increase to the subscriptions, we feel the scheme offers excellent value for money and provides the specialised cover police officers need to cater for their particular needs," says Tim Rogers, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation.

"The Group Insurance Scheme policy has been specifically developed for police officers

and is designed to protect them when they need it most."

The package includes the following*:

- [Care on Demand](#)
- [Life assurance including terminal illness benefit and Child Death Grant](#)
- [Additional life insurance option](#)
- [Critical illness cover with the option for additional cover for an added monthly cost](#)
- [RED ARC](#)
- [RAC motor breakdown cover](#)
- [Legal expenses cover](#)
- [Personal accident cover](#)
- ['Best Doctors' cover](#)
- [Regulation 28 - sickness insurance](#) for officers and sickness benefit for police staff
- [Worldwide family travel insurance ***](#)
- [Mobile phone/gadget insurance.](#)

* Policy limits and exclusions may apply, please see policy wording for full terms and conditions.

** The premium includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) and the Federation's administration fee

*** [Further information about pre-existing conditions in relation to the travel policy.](#)

For more information, visit our [Group Insurance Scheme pages.](#)

West Midlands Police Federation is an Appointed Representative of Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, and George Burrows is a trading name of Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered Office: Spectrum Building, 55 Blythwood Street, Glasgow G2 7AT. Registered in Scotland. Company Number: SC108909 www.ajg.com/uk

Did you know...

The West Midlands Police Federation worldwide family travel policy* includes cruising, pre-existing medical conditions and more....

The travel policy includes cover for (per insured person):

- Rental Vehicle Excess - up to £1,500
- £5,000 Cancellation
- £2,000 Personal Belonging
- Cruises including repatriation
- £10 million Medical Expenses
- A wide range of other holiday activities including Scuba Diving to 40 meters, Hiking/trekking, Jet Skiing, Quad Biking and a wide range of other holiday activities
- Winter sports
- and more...

In addition, the scheme provides: £150K Life Assurance, £15K Critical illness, Best Doctors®, GP Care on Demand, Virtual Physio, Personal Accident, Sickness Benefits, Legal Expenses, Counselling Service, Mobile Phone/ Gadget Insurance and RAC Motor Breakdown Assistance

All for £31.15 per month, by payroll deduction**

Visit the Federation website for further details:
www.polfed.org/westmids

Or call us on: 0121 752 4900
Or email:
Westmidlandspf@polfed.org

*Terms and conditions apply. Full details of the cover including exclusions and limitations can be found in the policy wording, which is available from the Federation.

**The premium includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) and is correct at 1 April 2025.

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Worldwide travel insurance with your Group Insurance Scheme



With many people now booking their summer holidays, now's the time to check out the worldwide travel insurance provided through the West Midlands Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme.

The travel insurance policy covers the member and their spouse or cohabiting partner, and any number of dependent children and grandchildren under the age of 23 who are living with them and in full-time education.

It covers everything from cancellation, curtailment and amendment of holiday plans to loss of baggage and personal liability, legal expenses and winter sports.

Cover applies for any number of trips a year, and for up to 31 days each trip. But the duration of a trip can be extended to a maximum of 183 days on request and by payment of an extra premium.

Extensions must be arranged before you travel and full details of your travel plans provided. Please call George Burrows on **01403 327719** if you want to arrange a travel extension.

The cover includes trips in the United Kingdom provided overnight accommodation has been booked and paid for.

A wide range of leisure activities are covered at no extra charge. Page 7 of the

travel policy gives the full list of activities included but activities covered range from abseiling and jet skiing to pony trekking, quad biking and snowboarding.

Cover may be available at an extra free for activities not listed, please contact George Burrows for details.

Extensions can be arranged to include cover for overseas weddings, golfing trips and business equipment, and for children of extended family or friends under the age of 18 who are traveling with the member by contacting George Burrows and on payment of an additional premium.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Health restrictions apply to some sections of the policy. Prior to booking a holiday or commencing a trip, please ensure you read the 'Pre-existing Medical conditions' wording which can be found on Page 6 of the [policy document](#).

Call: **014 1240 1912** as soon as possible on returning to the UK to make a claim for overseas assistance call **+44(0) 20 8049 8301**.

A £40 excess applies to most policy sections, along with other terms and conditions. Full details of cover including the limitations, exclusions and terms and conditions can be found in the [policy document](#) which should be read carefully, in particular the exclusions and limitations.

Travel insurance cover can be continued as a stand alone package for retirees from the age of 65 and up to age 74.

Comprehensive cover

The Group Insurance Scheme represents value for members by providing a range of cover, including RAC motor breakdown plus critical illness insurance and all at a competitive price.

Specifically developed for police officers and designed to protect you when you need it most, the package includes the following*:

- [Care on Demand](#)
- [Life assurance including terminal illness benefit and Child Death Grant](#)
- [Additional life insurance option](#)
- [Critical illness cover with the option for additional cover for an added monthly cost](#)
- [RED ARC](#)
- [RAC motor breakdown cover](#)
- [Legal expenses cover](#)
- [Personal accident cover](#)
- ['Best Doctors' cover](#)
- [Regulation 28 - sickness insurance](#)
- [Worldwide family travel insurance **](#)
- [Mobile phone/gadget insurance.](#)

* Policy limits and exclusions may apply, please see policy wording for full terms and conditions.

**** Further information about pre-existing conditions in relation to the travel policy. [Find out more.](#)**

Helping members back to health

In this edition, we wanted to share news of the new booking process for requesting treatment at St Michael's Lodge as well as showcasing this fantastic membership benefit.

The centre offers first class treatment for both mental and physical wellbeing, with a whole range of treatments including physiotherapy, counselling and holistic therapies for enhancing wellbeing.

Set in the picturesque Ribble Valley, Lancashire, St Michael's Lodge is the perfect place for members of the West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund to visit if they need time away to recover from injury or illness.

We wanted to share details of their impressive facilities for people seeking physiotherapy or wellbeing breaks.

Ben Fund members can apply for residential physiotherapy, a wellbeing break or online counselling.

For residential breaks, members are assessed upon arrival by qualified staff, and a bespoke treatment plan is put together for the duration of their stay.

RESIDENTIAL PHYSIOTHERAPY

The centre offers residential treatment to promote the physical and psychological wellbeing of members.

The physio team at St Michael's have extensive experience in offering individual treatment including exercise classes and complementary therapies.

There is a strong emphasis on self-management with home exercise programmes

designed to further aid recovery.

Specific treatments may include:

- Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy
- Hydrotherapy
- Exercise prescription
- Strength and conditioning programmes and acupuncture.



Testimonial

"I applied to St Michael's Lodge for treatment for the three slipped discs in my back following a fall at work. I was greeted by the friendly staff and shown around the treatment centre which has top notch facilities.

"I received a tailored programme to aid my recovery with one-to-one physiotherapy and a range of supplementary classes which catered for my injury.

"The site is set in a peaceful village with nearby amenities and the accommodation is of a high standard with en suite facilities. The on-site gym and swimming pool helped burn off any calories from the fabulous food provided.

"I've recommended St Michael's Lodge to colleagues who were unaware of the treatment centre. Well worth the £2 per month paid to the Benevolent Fund."

Serving WMP officer.



Photo caption.

FIVE-DAY RESIDENTIAL WELLBEING BREAKS

St Michael's Lodge offers a five-day residential wellbeing break, which is tailored to meet the individual needs of Ben Fund members.

The programme includes meditation classes, holistic treatments and classes run by a fitness trainer and including stretch, Pilates and aqua.

Additional holistic treatments include mindfulness, massage, ai chi and alternative therapies.

Testimonial

"I was fortunate enough to be accepted onto a five-day wellbeing retreat at St Michael's to assist with my recovery after suffering significant physical and mental trauma sustained on duty."

"My circumstances were considered, and a wellbeing package was designed specifically for my stay. I was able to access physio, acupuncture and a whole host of alternative holistic treatments, such as Pilates, ai chi and meditation to name a few."

"The staff were all welcoming and very knowledgeable. Most importantly, they all genuinely cared about you and the recovery journey you are going through."

"The accommodation was spotless along with amazing food and facilities provided."

"I would highly recommend this service provided by the Benevolent fund. Thank you so much to all involved in this charity."

Steven Kidd, serving WMP officer

For further details visit our website
www.wmpben.co.uk



Register your interest to attend our FREE family event



We're busy preparing for this year's family fun day at Blackwell Court Adventure. This will be the sixth year our charity has funded an adventure day for members.

We introduced the family events as a way of thanking members for their continued support.

This year we will be introducing a new activity. As well as the old favourites, such as crate stacking, archery, a giant zip wire, a

dual zip wire and tree climbing, families will also be able to battle it out in teams and enjoy a non-impact game of Laser Tag. This is an adrenaline rush, heart-pumping, ground-based, high-energy activity.

Please note: Activities are suitable for children ideally aged nine and over.

If you and your family are interested in attending, please visit the family event page on our website.

AGM reminder

Here's a quick reminder about our forthcoming annual general meeting (AGM) on **Friday 16 May at Guardians House, Sheldon, Birmingham, B26 3EA**. The meeting will start at 11am and will conclude with light refreshments.

You will be able to view last year's accounts online from 15 April.

[View the accounts.](#)

Please enter password: WMPBENCHARTY to access the accounts.

Not a member of the Ben Fund?

If you're a serving officer, PCSO or a member of police staff, you can join the West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund.

For £2 per month the police charity offers a wide range of wellbeing benefits to support you and your immediate family including discounted holidays, sickness vouchers, residential physiotherapy and wellbeing breaks, online counselling, grants and loans, death grants, free wills and much more.

Visit the [Ben Fund website](#) for more details and for the online joining form.



West Midlands Police

**Benevolent Fund
Charity**

Are you approaching retirement?

West Midlands Police Federation holds regular seminars to help those nearing retirement to prepare for this significant milestone.

Monthly seminars will be held at the Police Federation's Guardians House office on Coventry Road, Sheldon throughout 2025.

Dates are regularly fully booked so please book your place as soon as possible.

The seminars are for members who are within three years of finishing their service.

Among the topics covered by the facilitators will be:

- **Police Pension Schemes**
- **How to retire**
- **Post-retirement schemes for police officers (West Midlands Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme, Benevolent Fund, NARPO)**
- **Next steps (CV writing, transferable skills, starting a business)**
- **Taxation/state pension**

- **Investments and financial planning**
- **Asset protection (will and estate planning).**

Remaining dates for 2025 seminars:

17 April	15 May
19 June	17 July
14 August	18 September
16 October	20 November
11 December.	

Booking

As we anticipate significant take up, please let us know as soon as possible whether you would like to attend by sending an email to westmidlandspf@polfed.org with the details stated below, and confirmation of your booking will follow.

Please ensure you put 'Retirement seminar' and the date you wish to attend in the subject title.

Please include:

- **Your name**
- **Work email address**
- **Personal email address**
- **Personal phone number**
- **Proposed retirement date**
- **Any specific dietary requirements.**

SEMINAR LOCATION AND PARKING

Location: West Midlands Police Federation, Guardians House, 2111 Coventry Road, Sheldon B26 3EA

Time: Coffee and registration between 8.30am and 8.45am. The full day seminar starts at 9am and finishes around 4pm. A meal deal lunch will be provided for you (please advise any specific dietary requirements).

Parking: Please park nearby on the Morrisons car park, letting Customer Services know your registration number and that you are a visitor of the Police Federation.

Feedback from past attendees

"I found the day was informative with each speaker outlining just what you needed to know in the simplest of terms on each topic. A 'not to be missed' seminar for those coming up to retirement." **PC Collins**

"A very useful and informative course which has made me give serious thought as to what to do with my pension money and how to protect it." **PC Tonks**

"An excellent forum and opportunity to help prepare for the transition to retirement." **PC McGoldrick**

"Thank you, a really useful & informative day, well worth giving up a rest day for!!" **Anonymous**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS



NARPO is a rank-free association of retired police officers, dedicated to improving benefits for its members.

NARPO has Branches across West Midlands:-

Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Walsall, and Wolverhampton.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| • FREE ADVICE – | Pensions, Benefits, Computing, Taxation; |
| • MEMBER SERVICES – | Welfare Support, Car, Health and Travel Insurance, Car Purchase, Domestic Appliances, Trusted Legal Advisors, Mobile Phones, Travel Discounts, Job Opportunities + National/Local Websites, National Magazine, Branch Newsletters; |
| • SOCIAL EVENTS – | Keep in touch with old friends and colleagues. |

Annual membership fee deducted from pension:- £26.76 in 2025.

ARE YOU RETIRING SOON?

Join on-line www.NARPO.org, or for more information, contact the secretary of your preferred Branch:-

**Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Walsall:-
Wolverhampton:-**

www.NARPOWestMidlands.org
www.NARPO-Wolverhampton.co.uk



Police museum showcases conferencing options at ‘unique’ Lock-Up space

The West Midlands Police Museum offers facilities for a wide range of events and shows off the Force’s heritage

A host of conferencing options to suit the needs of any occasion are available at the West Midlands Police Museum.

Museum heritage manager Corinne Brazier says the facilities on offer at the Lock-Up on Steelhouse Lane in Birmingham are suitable for events of all sizes.

Corinne said: “Whatever your requirements are, our museum is the ideal place, and we would certainly welcome bookings from Federation members.

“You might consider us if you have meeting coming up at work which you feel could benefit from a change of scenery and pace away from a Force setting.

“Or you could be planning an important corporate event and need an impressive, stand-out venue. Perhaps you’re a national portfolio lead, or you could even be involved with an organisation outside of policing.

“It is such a unique space that really gets people talking. We can promise a safe and secure environment for confidential information – whether the museum is open or closed to the public during your visit – full of everything you could possibly need for a

successful conference.”

The museum’s top-notch boardroom is perfect for meetings of up to 14 people, whether internal (free of charge) or external (bookable for £50 per hour) and has a television which is easy to link to laptops for presentations and video conferencing.

For larger groups, the entire museum building can be hired for exclusive use in the day or evening. Projection equipment, including a large drop-down screen, enables the building to host up to 50 guests around tables or up to 80 guests in a lecture-style conference. Around 100 people can also be accommodated for stand-up social or networking events.

While day sessions, running from 9am to 5pm, are charged at £750 for 30 or fewer guests and £1,000 for more than 30 guests, prices for evening sessions can be provided on enquiry. For an extra cost, hospitality from tea, coffee and biscuits to fully catered lunches or evening buffets can also be included.

A break-out space is included in all bookings for no extra cost and may be particularly handy to boardroom users during

regular museum opening times.

Another complementary add-on is free admission to the museum for all guests booked in for more than two hours.

Meanwhile, whole building hire also provides a great opportunity to tie in some team building with a thrilling murder mystery activity, as well as the option of museum tours and talks.

“Even if you have a lighter event in mind, we can make for a great corporate away day and give your guests a very enjoyable experience,” Corinne added.

“The Lock-Up is a unique, historic building dating back to the Victorian era, and we certainly know how to show it off.

“The purpose of our museum is to celebrate our region’s policing heritage, and if we can help the careers of today’s police officers and staff through our facilities, then we will gladly do so.

“If you have any enquiries about using us for your next conference or work event, please do not hesitate to get in touch.”

All bookings can be made on the West Midlands Police Museum website, for any day of the week – providing sufficient notice – excluding school holidays.

Full terms and conditions can also be found on the booking form.

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Police cadets: 'It's up to us to draw the best out of them'

Programme gives policing an extra opportunity to give something to the community

Federation trustee Winston Christie is urging members to get involved with the guidance and growth of young people as he gives an insight to the West Midlands Police cadet programme.

The programme has been active in its current iteration since 2017 with workplace representative Winston joining later that year. It has recently restructured its curriculum and geographical set-up.

Winston is the leader of the programme's Stetchford unit – one of 12 across the Force area – where he is responsible for the delivery of both policing expertise and wider life skills to teenagers aged between 13 and 17.

Core engagement for the cadets comes through weekly learning sessions covering everything from Force drill routines to preparing for job interviews.

"I would summarise the cadets as policing's opportunity to give something to the community, outside of the obvious things it will always do. It's our chance to pass on our knowledge and skills to the young people we serve," Winston said.

"And I think, as such a visible public service, there is a responsibility for us to do that. So when I saw a programme becoming established in the West Midlands, I didn't think twice about wanting to play my part.

"Above anything else, we want to connect with young people. We want them to know there is something out there they can regularly come to and belong to, gaining self-belief, discipline and friendship.

"By doing this, we are giving them a set of qualities and experiences they could have altogether missed out on if we weren't around."

In addition to curriculum content every week, police cadets can also access real-world development opportunities by getting outside on Force department visits, orienteering missions and community engagement events.

Previous activities have included food bank



Winston Christie (left) joined by Prince Edward and other cadet leaders at the launch of Youth Organisations in Uniform West Midlands in September 2021.

deliveries and supporting Birmingham's hosting of the 2022 Commonwealth Games, with some programme members going on to become High Sheriff's cadets, performing high-level functions including award ceremonies.

"We want to teach them, equip them and test them," Winston added, "With the drill routines, for example, they don't always see why it has to be so regimented at first. But then they realise there is method in the madness – they gain a level of discipline that will serve them well for whatever they go on to do in life.

"And for me, as a leader, it's all about role modelling. Some of them might not have a role model at home in the same way they do in the cadets, so part of my responsibility is showing them life needs hard work and self-belief.

"Once they come into our programme, it's up to us to draw the best out of them."

Winston, who has been a West Midlands Police Federation trustee for seven years, was drawn on the prospect of cadets later becoming police officers, having benefited from their time in the programme.

While maintaining the system should

never be seen as a 'recruitment tool', he revealed it has seen young people over the last eight years go on to join the Force as both regular cops and Special Constables.

Meanwhile, plenty of cadets have returned to the fold as adult leaders and coordinators/instructors – roles, he points out, which are also open to anyone within policing.

"Our young people go on to do all sorts, and as long as we know they have developed from year one to year four in the programme, we are happy," he said, "But seeing them join the police or come back to the cadets as adults is particularly pleasing, I must admit.

"I would strongly urge anyone in the Force to get involved with the running of the cadets, if they think it might be for them. We can always use more inputs to deliver the best possible experience to our members – it's one of many structures which simply couldn't be maintained without volunteers.

"I think the cadets really exemplifies those Peelian principles around the police being the public, and the public being the police. If you want to take your commitment to that idea even further, joining us is the perfect way to do it," he ended.

Federation members interested in supporting the West Midlands Police cadets or finding out more information can contact the Force's citizens in policing manager.

“SEEING THEM JOIN THE POLICE OR COME BACK TO THE CADETS AS ADULTS IS PARTICULARLY PLEASING.”

Fed rep honoured to represent Force at Crufts

PC joined the dog unit at the world's largest dog show which was held at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham at the start of March

West Midlands Police Federation workplace representative Sue Cheek said it was 'an honour' to demonstrate the Force's dog unit at this year's Crufts.

Sue was one of a number of officers recognised for their work with the unit, receiving a round of applause with Police Dogs Viper and Chase as they are retiring. Dave Raymond, the Force's breed scheme

manager, was presented with an award by Crufts for his dedication and commitment to the show for the past 20 years.

And handler PC Paul Hopley was presented with a lifetime achievement award on his retirement, along with his retired police dog Stark, by Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York.

The duchess is patron of the National Foundation for Retired Service Animals (NFRSA), which promotes the care, wellbeing and welfare of retired service animals.

[PC Hopley posted on his social media:](#)

"What a fabulous retirement gift. A lovely surprise and gesture to commemorate Stark's service. Thank you so much."



Sue Cheek at Crufts.

Sue said Crufts, the world's largest dog show, was a highlight of the year.

"It was a fabulous few days," she said. "We got to show off the dogs and their capabilities and give some support back to the dog world."

"I absolutely love it. I love my job, so to be able to go there and represent the Force and our amazing dog unit is a real honour. To put yourself out there on the big stage and get everyone to look at what you can do is brilliant."

"We do a demonstration every day in the main arena and just before best in show as well, so it's quite a big thing for us to be there. And then we do a couple of little displays as well, so if people can't get into the main bit, they get to a chance to see the dogs working."

Sue said they had a huge amount of engagement with the public, particularly

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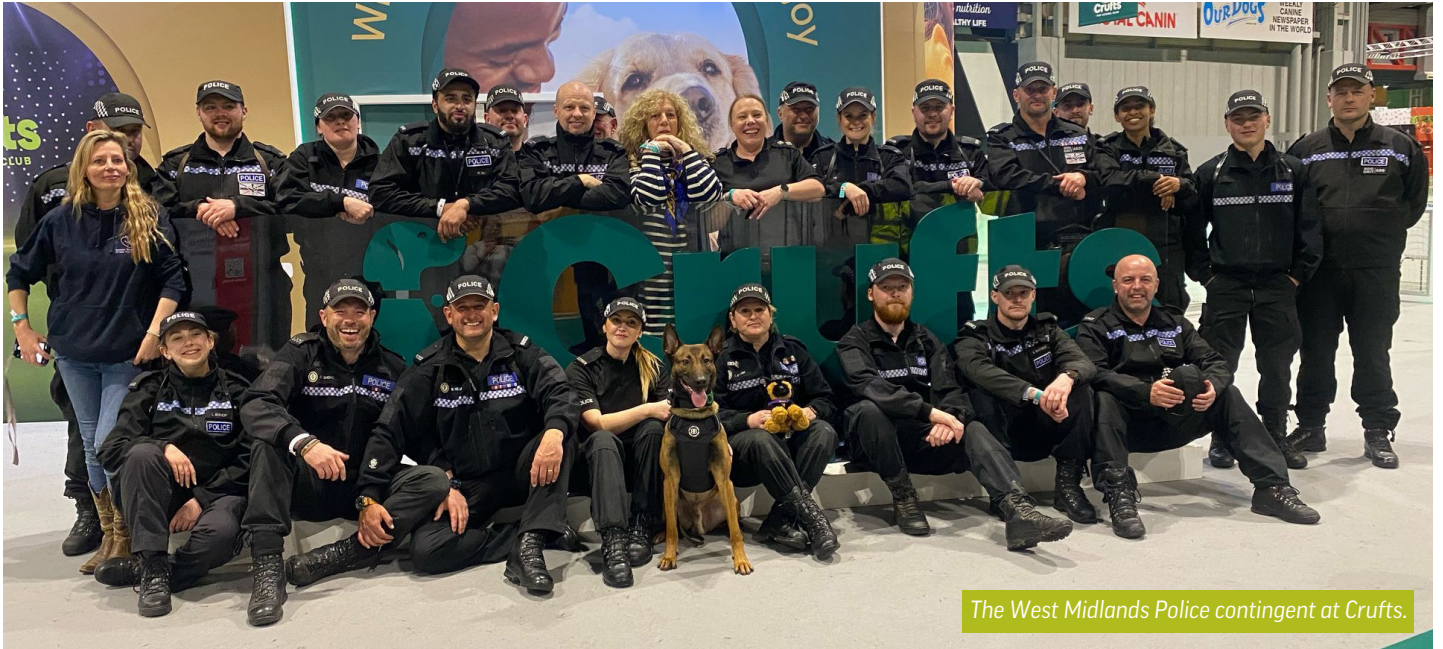
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The West Midlands Police contingent at Crufts.

around the work of the unit's digital media dogs.

"We have a stand where people can come and chat to us about what we do," she said.

"We get a lot of people ask us how to become a dog handler, but people may be interested in being a puppy walker, and helping to make it a steady dog before it goes into police work.

"We get to show off some of the dog's

achievements over the previous 12 months.

"We talk about some of the roles that we play, the roles that the dogs do, and how we can support our communities.

"This year we talked a lot about our digital dogs. They're little search dogs, like spaniels or sprockers, and they will find anything digital related or with a chip in it.

"They search for trackers, mobile phones, SIM cards, USB sticks, memory sticks,

anything like that.

"We deal with people who like to hide information electronically. It could be drug dealers hiding phones, people with inappropriate photographs, people accessing the dark web, and dogs will go in and indicate locations where there is digital media being hidden.

"They are amazing dogs – they all are," she added.

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