

# FEDERATION



West Midlands Police Federation

June/July 2025



**TIM IS AWARDED  
KING'S POLICE MEDAL**  
Page 6

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# WELCOME

Welcome to the June/July 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.

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# The Government must listen to what we are saying



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

It hardly seems possible that we are almost halfway through 2025 already, but here we are, fast approaching the longest day of the year.

As is fitting as we near the mid-year point, it seems a good time for reflecting on what has happened around policing and the Force so far, but it seems appropriate to look ahead to the next six months too.

It also feels like a suitable time to be planning the branch's plans for the rest of the year since we now have a new Branch Board in place - see the final column of Page 5 for more details and Pages 16 onwards for a Q and A feature giving you more details of some of our Board members (more will be featured in the next edition).

But, first off, I just want to say how proud I am to have been elected, by you, to be the new branch chair and, significantly, the first woman to hold this position within West Midlands Police Federation.

I can honestly say that I have never felt being a woman has held me back within the Force, though I appreciate that other women may have had a different experience.

Looking back on the first six months of 2025, it's fair to say that in many ways the same issues are still affecting the police service.

Pay, and in particular the lack of a fair and independent pay review process that we can all have faith in, continues to impact on officers and I am sure this is a major factor in the current officer retention crisis that is crippling the service.

The results of the nationwide Police Federation pay and morale survey revealed earlier this year that almost one in five West Midlands Police officers plan to leave the service in the next two years, or sooner if they can.

Let that sink in a little - that's almost 20 per cent of the workforce that we will need to replace, and I am not sure that even takes into account the number of officers who will

naturally reach their retirement date.

The survey also revealed that 90 per cent of our officers felt that morale within the Force was low or very low, with 59 per cent reporting their own morale was low or very low - which was the sixth highest of all 43 forces in England and Wales.

How can officers who are carrying out a challenging, dangerous and demanding role as they serve and protect their communities, be expected to deliver the effective policing service the public want and deserve when their morale is so low?

You can read more about the findings of the survey on Page 8, and you can also have your say in a nationwide survey being carried out by Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service.

I know there are many who say taking part in these surveys makes no difference, and I can understand their viewpoint, but I would argue that the more officers who take part in these surveys the better, the louder it makes their voices.

It can be easy for police leaders and the Government to dismiss survey findings if only a small percentage of officers have filled out the questionnaires, but it is much more difficult for them to ignore the results if there has been

“ **HOW CAN OFFICERS WHO ARE CARRYING OUT A CHALLENGING, DANGEROUS AND DEMANDING ROLE AS THEY SERVE AND PROTECT THEIR COMMUNITIES, BE EXPECTED TO DELIVER THE EFFECTIVE POLICING SERVICE THE PUBLIC WANT AND DESERVE WHEN THEIR MORALE IS SO LOW?** ”

a good take-up.

The national Federation has recently launched a campaign on police pay under the banner of Copped Enough – What The Police Take Home Is Criminal – and we will have to wait to see if this makes any difference at all.

But what the Government should definitely do is listen to what the Federation is saying.

Ten years ago, at the annual national Police Federation conference in Bournemouth, the then Home Secretary Theresa May who, of course, went on to become Prime Minister, accused the Federation of scaremongering and crying wolf when it warned that the sweeping cuts to police budgets would have consequences; consequences for the police service, for the public and for police officers.

I would say that the evidence of the last 10 years proves that we were not crying wolf at all. Our worst fears have been confirmed.

We welcome the Labour Government's plans to boost neighbourhood policing, cut knife crime and tackle violence against women and girls. These plans are laudable.

However, for us to deliver on the Government pledges, it must make sure its words are backed by appropriate action – proper, long-term and sustained investment in policing.

Without this investment, the Government's plans will spectacularly fail, and that failure will once again have consequences. Are you listening, Home Secretary?

## Branch Board planning for new term of office

Plans are now being made for the future development of the West Midlands Police Federation branch so that it can effectively and efficiently meet the needs of members.

The new Branch Board, in effect the executive team, is in place following the completion of this stage of the Federation's ongoing election process.

The officials who will serve for the next triennial are:

**Tim Rogers** – secretary

**Jess Davies** – chair

**Chris James** – deputy secretary (with the portfolio for operations)

**Aaron Bell** – deputy chair (with the portfolio for CID and intelligence)

**Dave Hadley** – conduct lead

**Dawn Murkett** – conduct lead

**Jon Nott** – equality lead (with the portfolio for student officers)

**Julie Fleming** – equality lead.

Other West Midlands Police Federation Branch Board members are:

**Winston Christie** – with the CJS and learning and development portfolio

**Rich Cooke** – with the contact portfolio

**Gemma Griffith** – with the response portfolio

**Matt Minton** – with the ROCU and CTU portfolio

**Darren Neville** – with the neighbourhood portfolio

**Ali Rowe** – with the PPU portfolio.

Branch secretary Tim Rogers said: "With the new Branch Board now in place, we are in a position to plan how we develop the branch over the coming three years.

"We have already taken great steps forward in terms of professionalising the way in which the branch works with more effective management of our workplace representatives so that everyone is serving the members to the best of their abilities, now we want to build on this.

"The Branch Board is responsible for the day to day running of the branch and for overseeing everything it does. Board members will now work closely with the Branch Council which is formed by all elected workplace representatives to ensure that we continue to provide the advice, support and representation our members need.

"We will give members a voice and ensure that voice is heard both within the Force and beyond."

More details about the new Branch Board officials and members feature on Pages 14 – 19.





# Tim is awarded King's Police Medal

**W**est Midlands Police Federation branch secretary Tim Rogers has been awarded the King's Police Medal (KPM) - one of the most prestigious honours in British policing - in recognition of his long-running campaign to give police drivers better protection in law.

**“ I HAD EXCELLENT BACKING FROM COLLEAGUES ACROSS THE COUNTRY WHO BELIEVED IN THE CHANGE AS MUCH AS I DID.**

Tim, who has served with West Midlands Police for 30 years, led the successful push to change legislation so that police drivers are no longer judged by civilian standards when responding to emergencies.

Thanks to his efforts, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 now ensures that officers' driving is assessed against that of a "competent and trained police driver", rather than a "careful and competent member of the public".

Reflecting on the award, Tim said: "I'm delighted and genuinely humbled to receive the King's Police Medal. When I first heard, I honestly thought it was a wind-up.



*Sir David Thompson (right) presented Tim Rogers with an award when he retired from his position as West Midlands Police Chief Constable.*



*Tim with Sir Henry Bellingham whose support was critical.*

"I never realised the resistance I would face during this campaign - and some of it came from people you wouldn't expect. But I knew how much this change mattered to officers on the ground.

"They deserved to be protected in law for doing what they were trained and expected to do. That was the reward I fought for. This recognition is just the icing on the cake."

Tim's eight-year campaign involved persistent lobbying of MPs and extensive collaboration with national policing bodies, barristers and Government departments.

He helped draft the Home Office's public consultation document and worked to ensure post-reform training standards were embedded in police driving schools across the country.

Tim has thanked several people for their

support for the campaign.

He explains: "I had excellent backing from colleagues across the country who believed in the change as much as I did. Special thanks go to Norfolk Police Federation chair Andy Symonds. Andy introduced me to former North Norfolk MP Sir Henry Bellingham whose support was a game-changer.

"I also want to acknowledge Roger Gardner from the National Police Chiefs' Council, Greater Manchester Deputy Chief Constable Terry Woods who was the national lead for roads policing, and barrister Mark Aldred, who often stood beside me at the Police Federation's annual national conference and helped draft parts of the legislation."

Tim will receive his King's Police Medal at an official awards ceremony later this year.

# Sergeant in line for national Police Bravery Award

**Officer who saved woman from dog attack set to be recognised at July event**

**S**ergeant Paul Williams says he is looking forward to hearing stories of incredible courage from officers across the country at the national Police Bravery Awards this summer.

Paul will represent West Midlands Police Federation after saving the life of a woman who was being savagely attacked in the street by two out-of-control dogs.

His courage was recognised when he was presented with the PC David Green Shield as the overall winner at the West Midlands Police Bravery Awards in January.

Paul said the bravery awards are a chance to celebrate policing and police bravery.

"We see examples of bravery all the time, and that's happening right across the country every day," said Paul, who is looking forward to sharing the occasion with his wife, Jemma.

"To be able to go to London and spend an evening with people who have done amazing things and are being recognised for that, to have the feel-good factor in the room, is something I'm really looking forward to."

Paul added: "It's easy to make a story out of something negative or a mistake that's been made. The fact that officers are doing brave things every single day, it's often seen as just being part of the job."

"I know, as a supervisor, that officers go above and beyond the call of duty every day. To be able to go to the bravery awards and share the evening with people who have done amazing things and hear their stories will be great."

The PC David Green Shield, awarded to Paul by West Midlands Police Federation, is named in honour of 20-year-old PC David Green who was stabbed to death by a mob in



Sergeant Paul Williams.

Birmingham city centre in 1975. In David's 15-month career, he was commended three times for his bravery.

Paul received the shield after rescuing a woman from a mauling by two German shepherd-type dogs in Yardley, Birmingham, in the early hours of 23 May last year.

He was single-crewed when he arrived at the scene to find the woman being mauled by two German shepherd-type dogs. She already had serious injuries and was close to dying.

Paul got out of his car and tried to use his Taser to subdue one of the dogs, but was unsuccessful.

The dogs charged at him, forcing him back into his car, before continuing their attack on the woman. Paul got out again and this time his Taser brought down one of the dogs. The other latched onto his arm, but he managed to shake it off and get back into his vehicle.

Colleagues arrived in support and took the

victim to hospital, while both dogs were captured.

The woman was in intensive care for four weeks, while Paul described his injuries as superficial, requiring dressings and injections.

Paul said: "I'm still shocked that I won the West Midlands award, because there were so many outstanding examples of bravery. I'm really looking forward to going down to London and representing our Force."

Jess Davies, West Midlands Police Federation chair, said: "We are all very aware of the threat posed by savage dogs and all too often have to deal with the tragic consequences of their attacks."

"But despite this and the very real fear of being mauled himself, Paul showed incredible bravery and quick thinking to tackle two out-of-control animals. In true policing style, he put his own safety on the line to protect the public."

"There is no doubt in my mind that his actions saved the woman's life, and who knows what else would have happened if those dogs were able to continue prowling the streets?"

"Paul did a fantastic job in very frightening circumstances, and his actions make him very deserving of his nomination."

**"I'M STILL SHOCKED THAT I WON THE WEST MIDLANDS AWARD, BECAUSE THERE WERE SO MANY OUTSTANDING EXAMPLES OF BRAVERY. I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO GOING DOWN TO LONDON AND REPRESENTING OUR FORCE."**



# New survey lays bare the officer retention crisis

## Annual officer poll reveals members' views on pay and morale

**A**lmost one in five West Midlands Police officers plan to leave the Force within the next two years, or as soon as they can, a new survey has revealed.

The findings give further strength to West Midlands Police Federation's claims that an officer retention crisis is not only damaging policing but also putting the public at risk.

Jess Davies, Federation branch chair, explained: "We are losing so many of our longer-serving officers that we are being left with an experience deficit.

"It's almost like we cannot recruit quick enough to fill the gaps within the Force but, while we obviously welcome our newer officers, they can't really make up for the experience we are losing.

"For the public, this means that the real likelihood when they call for police assistance is that the officer they see will be inexperienced. But, in a more general sense, it will also mean slower response times, fewer crimes being solved and more communities feeling unsafe.

"Losing experienced officers, particularly at the current rate, is a direct threat to public safety and, unless the Government acts, this crisis is only going to get worse, and we will see even more experienced officers quitting.

"A recent study from Sarah Charman at the University of Portsmouth shows that for the first time ever, voluntary resignations nationally have overtaken officers retiring.

"We need the Government to commit to long-term, sustained investment in the police service and that does not just mean officer recruitment. We also need to see money ploughed into the infrastructure needed to

support those officers and, critically, we need to see fair pay for police officers.

"We accept the purse strings are tight, but failure to find the money to address the current crisis in policing, will be a false economy. Further down the line, if the Government doesn't act now, it is going to cost billions of pounds to try to replace the experience we have lost and who is going to support and mentor new recruits if there are few experienced officers to mentor them?"

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) has released the findings of its annual pay and morale survey, which canvasses the opinions of police officers at all 43 forces across England and Wales.

West Midlands Police Federation's results revealed:

- **59 per cent of respondents felt their personal morale is currently 'low' or 'very low', the sixth highest of all forces**
- **90 per cent felt that morale within the Force is currently 'low' or 'very low', slightly higher than the national statistic for low force morale, 88 per cent**
- **19 per cent reported they intend to resign from the police service either 'within the next two years' or 'as soon as (they) can'**
- **West Midlands respondents' most frequently cited reasons for intending to leave were morale, how the police are treated by the Government, and the impact of the job on their mental health and wellbeing, 83, 72 and 72 per cent respectively**
- **Almost two thirds (63 per cent) said that they are 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their overall remuneration (including basic pay and allowances)**
- **16 per cent reported 'never' or 'almost never' having enough money to cover all their essentials. Nationally, 15 per cent of respondents reported the same.**

**59 PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS FELT THEIR PERSONAL MORALE IS CURRENTLY 'LOW' OR 'VERY LOW', THE SIXTH HIGHEST OF ALL FORCES**

The survey findings also reveal officers' views on their training and development, conditions within the Force, officer health, safety and wellbeing, while also showing they did not feel valued within policing (73 per cent) or respected by the Government (92 per cent).

Almost three quarters (73 per cent) of respondents from West Midlands Police said they would not recommend joining the Force to others.

"This is a pretty damning statistic," says Jess, "Yet I am not surprised. Police officers are under huge pressure; they are trying their best to tackle ever-increasing and ever-evolving crime, they are increasingly assaulted while carrying out their job, they are under constant media scrutiny, they face trial by social media, and they have lost a fifth of their pay in real terms since 2010.

"Given all this, the majority of police officers are not going to recommend their family members, their friends or their friends' families to sign up."

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW), which represents more than 145,000 rank-and-file police officers, is warning that a 'broken' police service of underpaid, overworked and under threat people risks a public safety crisis – with the loss of experienced officers set to cost taxpayers nearly £10 billion in five years.

It says voluntary resignations from the police service have risen 142 per cent since 2018 and, if this trend continues, 10,000 officers will resign every year by 2027, forcing the Government to spend £9.9 billion on recruiting and training replacement officers just to stand still.

Read the full [West Midlands Police Federation survey report](https://www.polfed.org/westmids).

**“UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT ACTS, THIS CRISIS IS ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE, AND WE WILL SEE EVEN MORE EXPERIENCED OFFICERS QUITTING.**



# Copped Enough

## Federation launches new campaign



Officers are being urged to join a digital picket line to call for fair pay as part of the Police Federation of England and Wales' new Copped Enough – What The Police Take Home Is Criminal campaign.

The Federation says police officers are being pushed to breaking point through real-terms pay cuts of up to 21 per cent since 2010, rising assaults, and daily trauma and risk.

It hopes others who support police officers will also join the digital picket line saying:

- A third of officers struggle to afford food, rent or heating
- 32 officers are violently assaulted every day
- Mental health crises are soaring, with policing now the profession with the highest mental health-related sickness rates.

The Federation argues that when police officers are pushed out of the job by poverty pay, public safety suffers and says that, without urgent action, 10,000 officers could be lost every year, £9.9 billion could be wasted just trying to maintain numbers and communities will be less safe because fewer experienced officers are left to protect them.

It is calling for fair pay, recognising the unique demands of policing; support for frontline risks, including an army-style P-Factor allowance recognising the dangers officers face; retention initiatives with a real plan to keep experienced on the beat not just recruit new officers and better protection with mental health support so that officers do not have to suffer in silence.

[Join the digital picket line.](#)

## Letter of thanks

Federation representatives are always on hand to offer members help, support and advice – often when an officer is facing a trying time.

While they don't do their role to get thanks, it can be uplifting when they receive a message from someone who has been grateful for the support they have received.

Tim Rogers, branch secretary, recently received this message from an officer he had represented: "What can I say? You have been my rock throughout the grievance and ill-health process. The support you have given me has been exceptional and above and beyond. I'll never be able to thank you enough. An absolute credit to the Federation and WMP."

Tim commented: "All too often, the Federation seems to come in for criticism but a handwritten note from someone you have guided through a challenging period in their career makes it all worthwhile."

## Win £500 towards your bills

With household bills seeming to rise all the time, a new competition could give your finances a boost.

Police Mutual, which provides products and services for police officers, police staff, their families and the wider police family, will give four winners £500 to help toward paying the bills.

The draw closes on 30 June 2025.

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Police Mutual has also published its latest monthly factsheets for Federation members.

[Men's Health Week](#)  
[Healthy Eating Week](#)  
[Carers' Week](#)  
[Loneliness Awareness Week](#)  
[Let's Talk - Addictions](#)  
[Let's Talk - Losing your job](#)  
[Let's Talk - Relationships ending](#)



# Police chiefs make plea for improved funding

**P**olice chiefs' pleas for improved funding were long overdue, according to West Midlands Police Federation secretary Tim Rogers.

Tim welcomed the fact that, ahead of the Chancellor's spending review announcement, members of the National Police Chiefs' Council urged the Government to give forces the funding they need to deliver on Home Office pledges on crime, but argued they should have all been speaking up sooner.

"The Federation has often appeared to be a lone voice when talking about the impact of cuts on the police service we can offer the communities we serve," says Tim.

"Ten years ago, when we first spoke out about the consequences of cuts to our budgets, we were accused of crying wolf by the former Prime Minister and Home Secretary Theresa May. Back then, there was an almost deafening silence from more senior officers.

"Yet, we have largely been proved to have been right. Cuts have had consequences in terms of crime levels, particularly violent crime, in terms of the quality of the services we have been able to provide and also in terms of officer morale and pay which have led to a retention crisis. We were not scaremongering, and we were certainly not crying wolf.

"Now, while on one hand, it is sad that we

have been proved right, it is also a reminder that the Government should listen to the experts in policing and that is the police officers who day in, day out are trying to meet ever-growing demand while inadequately funded.

"While the Police Federation's views do not seem to be taken on board by the Government, perhaps now that police leaders are finding their voice, ministers will listen to what they are being told.

"Police officers want to help the Government fulfil its promises, they want to tackle crime, they want to provide communities with the policing services they want and need,

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## Legal Services for West Midlands Police

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but they have to have adequate funding for that. They also deserve to be paid fairly, something that will help with officer retention. The building block for fair pay will be the creation of a truly independent pay review process to replace the current system which is weighted too heavily in favour of the Government."

Tim has also urged police and crime commissioners, including West Midlands PCC Simon Foster, to be more realistic about what they can deliver when setting out their plans for policing and tackling crime.

**“CUTS HAVE HAD CONSEQUENCES IN TERMS OF CRIME LEVELS, PARTICULARLY VIOLENT CRIME, IN TERMS OF THE QUALITY OF THE SERVICES WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE AND ALSO IN TERMS OF OFFICER MORALE AND PAY WHICH HAVE LED TO A RETENTION CRISIS. WE WERE NOT SCAREMONGERING, AND WE WERE CERTAINLY NOT CRYING WOLF.**

"We totally understand that PCCs want to set out their ambitions for improving the policing services their forces provide and explain to the public who have elected them what they will deliver," says Tim.

"But they also need to be realistic. They cannot just set out their pipe dreams without being honest about the potential financial barriers to them delivering on their plans."

Five chief officers – including West Midlands Chief Constable Craig Guildford – wrote to The Times newspaper predicting the Government would miss its key crime targets if it did not give police more funding in the spending review.

Mr Guildford joined Sir Mark Rowley, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, and the chiefs of Merseyside, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire in citing "increasing public demand, growing social volatility" as well as new serious and organised crime threats



West Midlands Chief Constable Craig Guildford.

"emboldened by the online world" as forthcoming challenges.

In an interview with Sky News, the Chief said neighbourhood policing and other services had to be pared back during the austerity years but he said without adequate funding police

chiefs would again be forced to make tough decisions around rationalising services and slower delivery times.

"We want to reform, we want to keep delivering on the mission and to do that we need the cash maintaining," he explained, saying the police chiefs were behind the Government's plans to cut knife crime, tackle violence against women and girls and boost neighbourhood policing but finance would be needed to enable forces to deliver.

In an interview with BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Sir Mark said forces nationwide were carrying the "scar tissue of years of austerity cuts" and argued that, if they were to deliver on the Government's plans, policing needed to be given more funding in next month's spending review.

He also explained that the policing model is out of date and called for radical reform.

His suggestions include having fewer policing organisations so they can be more efficient, more capable and an effective national police agency that could lead to better coordination.

## 'What the police take home is criminal and this spending review proves it'

The national Federation's acting chair issued a statement on the day that Chancellor Rachel Reeves announced details of the spending review.

Tiff Lynch said: "This spending review should have been a turning point after 15 years of austerity that has left policing - and police officers - broken. Instead, the cuts will continue and it's the public who will pay the price.

"As rank-and-file officers kit up for night duty this evening, they'll do so knowing exactly where they stand in the Government's priorities. It is beyond insulting for Cabinet ministers to call on police to 'do their bit' when officers are overworked, underpaid and under threat like never before.

"They are facing blades and bricks, managing mental health crises while battling to protect their own and carrying the weight of trauma and financial stress home with them every day.

"Police pay has fallen by over 20 per

cent in real terms since 2010. The number of crimes allocated to each officer has jumped by a third in a decade. We will lose 10,000 experienced officers a year to resignation by the end of this spending review period - driven out by poor pay and unacceptable working conditions.

"This Chancellor hasn't listened to police officers. She hasn't listened to the Home Secretary. She hasn't listened to the public's concerns about community safety.

"We await the Government's decision on police pay in the coming weeks. But with this spending review, the signs are deeply worrying; the consequences will be even more so. And those consequences sit squarely on the shoulders of the Chancellor and the Prime Minister."

Ms Reeves told MPs: "I have made my choices. These are my choices. These are the choices of the British people."

Writing in the Telegraph, the Chancellor said: "We are keeping our country safe."



# Reps encouraged to look after their wellbeing

**Officers put themselves forward to be Federation representatives so they can help and support their colleagues. However, it can come at a cost to their own wellbeing. Dave Hadley, West Midlands Police Federation's conduct lead, is urging reps to make sure they take care of themselves too.**



Conduct lead Dave Hadley.

**F**ederation representatives are being encouraged to look after their own emotional and mental wellbeing – the same as any other officer.

Dave Hadley, branch discipline lead, says reps can experience vicarious trauma supporting colleagues through conduct issues.

He said: "Being a full-time discipline representative means you spend your entire time dealing with other people's problems.

"You carry the weight of all those problems, you absorb them in the process.

"It comes about because you worry about

people. You wouldn't do this job if you didn't care about people.

"The cumulative effect of that can take its toll and, if you're not careful, you can find it creeping up on you when you're not paying it any attention."

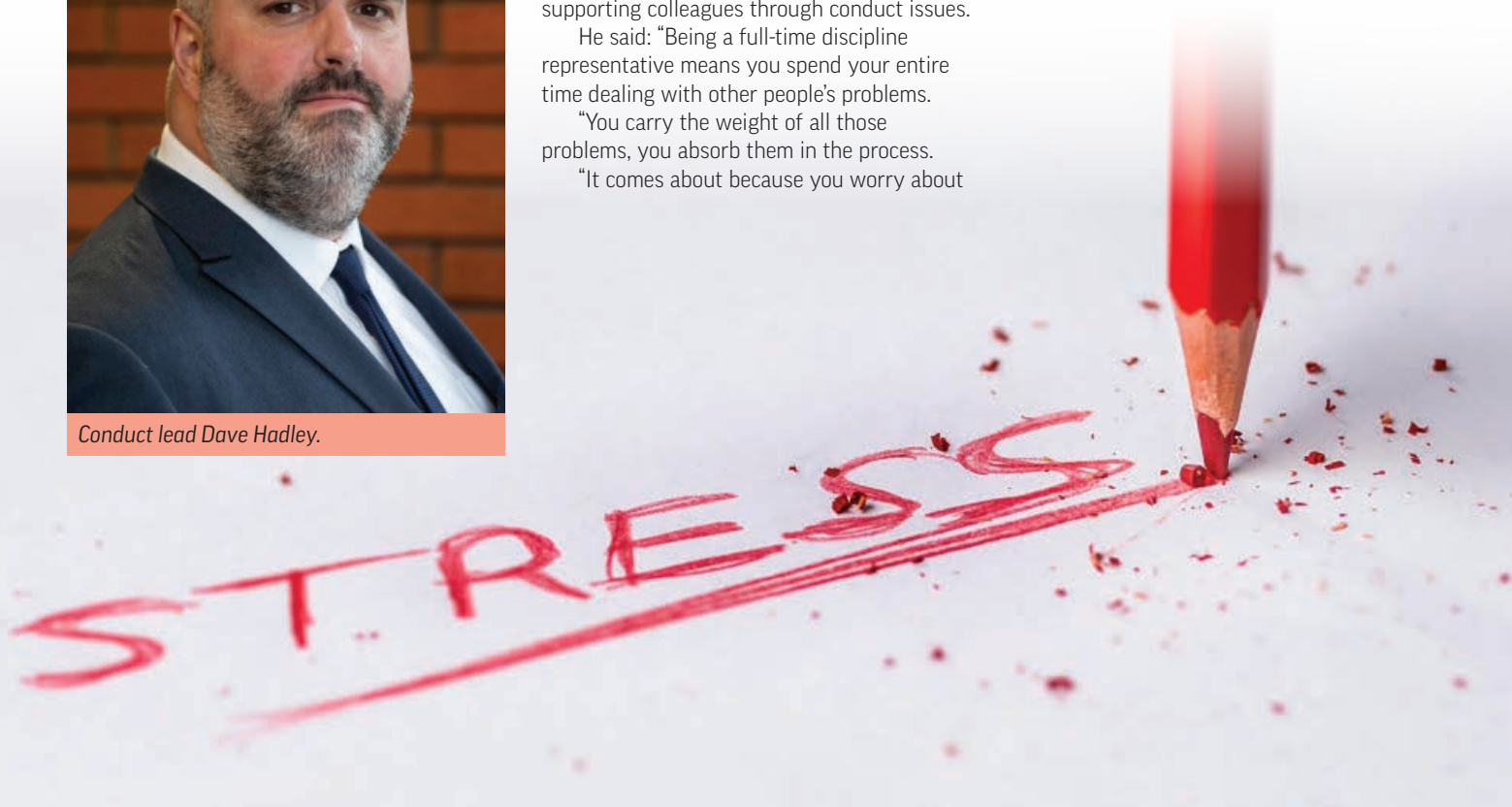
Dave was speaking to mark this year's Mental Health Awareness Week (12 - 18 May).

He said that misconduct proceedings have an enormous impact on everyone involved – the officer, their family and friends.

"For the officer concerned, it can be a huge weight to bear," he said. "It's a shock to the system as you find yourself being investigated.

"You will have been likely restricted or suspended for a lengthy period of time and the regular shift pattern you were once working is suddenly replaced with something else – and most likely from another parade station. Life gets tipped on its head in an instant.

"Just as they have settled into that new







routine, it all gets thrown out of the window again, only to be replaced with uncertainty and worry as the hearing draws near.

"There's uncertainty around their future. If they are going to lose their job, how will they be able to pay their bills? What will the future look like in terms of retirement plans? It can be incredibly unsettling and stressful."

He added: "It certainly feels as if there has been an increase in poor mental health among those investigated officers over the last few years, but whether poor mental health is a cause or contributor to the issues that have led to investigations or a symptom of the process itself is perhaps up for debate."

Dave spoke of his own experience of how supporting officers can impact emotional wellbeing.

"Obviously, it's not me that is the subject of the proceedings, I'm there representing the officer, sitting next to them as they have their matter forensically considered by the panel, but I live what they are going through with them," he said.

"It can be an incredibly tense and emotional time.

"When it comes to the decision about whether the officer is going to lose their job, you live those moments of fear with them. You vicariously live their trauma. That has never changed in all the years I have done this job."

Now he is encouraging reps – as well as officers – to take steps to support their own wellbeing.

"No one is going to react to things in the same way," he said. "In terms of looking after your emotional and mental health, different things work for different people.

"Speaking to people is invariably a good idea. I think there is a lot of truth to the adage that a problem shared is a problem halved.

"If I were to say one thing specifically for Fed reps, it's that I think you have to try to draw some healthy boundaries between your professional and home life.

"Part of that is making sure that you take time away from work, which is undisturbed by phone calls and emails."

**“IT CAN BE AN INCREDIBLY TENSE AND EMOTIONAL TIME. WHEN IT COMES TO THE DECISION ABOUT WHETHER THE OFFICER IS GOING TO LOSE THEIR JOB, YOU LIVE THOSE MOMENTS OF FEAR WITH THEM. YOU VICARIOUSLY LIVE THEIR TRAUMA. THAT HAS NEVER CHANGED IN ALL THE YEARS I HAVE DONE THIS JOB.**

## Mental Health Awareness Week

Mental Health Awareness Week was first started by the Mental Health Foundation in 2001.

It gives the whole of the UK a chance to come together to focus on mental health.

The aim is for the week to help people to tackle the stigma surround mental health and to prioritise not just their own mental health but that of others.

In recent years, the Mental Health Foundation says Mental Health Awareness Week – which is one of the most high-profile public campaigns in the UK – has evolved to focus on preventing mental health problems.

Each May, millions of people mark the week in schools and further education and within the private, public and charity sectors.

This year's theme was community.



# New chair vows to ensure the Federation is representative of the membership



**T**he first female chair of West Midlands Police Federation has vowed to ensure the branch truly reflects the diversity of the officers it serves.

Jess Davies, who until appointed as chair in early May was the branch's acting deputy chair, says that having only recently stepped away from frontline policing she fully appreciates the need for a strong, representative and supportive Federation.

"I am incredibly proud to have been elected as the branch chair," says Jess, who first joined the Force in 2001.

"It is an honour to be able to represent colleagues, to provide them with a voice and to be able to offer them support. The fact that I have made history in becoming the first female chair of our Federation branch just makes it that little more special.

"Having originally volunteered to temporarily become acting deputy chair for just two days a week alongside my policing role late last year, it quickly became necessary for me to work in the Federation office full-time.

"It's fair to say I have been on a very steep learning curve but, while at times it has been challenging, it has also been rewarding and I have already grown in the role. I have been given fantastic assistance by the other full-time officials who have been nothing but supportive and empowering.

"I want to continue to build on the branch's powerful legacy of progress, inclusion and bold leadership and will lead with passion and purpose but also with a vision for a future where every voice is heard and valued."

Jess followed something of a family tradition when she signed up to become an officer when she was just 21.

"I had a bit of life experience at that stage," she said.

Her Dad had been a police officer, and is now retired, while her Mum was a member of police staff. Both are proud that she has followed them into the police service.

Having served on response in Birmingham



**“IT IS AN HONOUR TO BE ABLE TO REPRESENT COLLEAGUES, TO PROVIDE THEM WITH A VOICE AND TO BE ABLE TO OFFER THEM SUPPORT. THE FACT THAT I HAVE MADE HISTORY IN BECOMING THE FIRST FEMALE CHAIR OF OUR FEDERATION BRANCH JUST MAKES IT THAT LITTLE MORE SPECIAL.**

in her early years of service, Jess went on to work in the Central Motorway Police Group from 2009 but had a four-year period away from policing when she tried various other jobs including retail management and a stint working in a building society.

But she returned to the Force in 2020, explaining: “I just couldn’t settle away from policing. To some extent, I didn’t feel I had left completely on my own terms, and I felt I still had something to give.”

Fired up to get on, she worked hard to gain promotion to sergeant and, having learned from her own experiences and been grateful for the Federation support she had received, also became a workplace Fed rep so she could help support colleagues.

“Like so many other Fed reps, I just wanted to give something back,” Jess recalled. “But it can be challenging. Being a workplace rep is very time consuming, if you are working 24/7 shifts at the same time, you are fitting in your Fed rep role outside of your shifts and that can involve a lot of hours of your own time.

“Obviously, you get a lot of people contacting you in need of advice and support. You want to help but you also have to learn to manage members’ expectations so it can be a bit of a balancing act.

“But when you are able to help a member achieve a good outcome it’s very rewarding. Often it will be a compromise. For example, with officers seeking flexible working



arrangements, you are helping to find a satisfactory solution for them but also ensure the needs of the organisation are met too.”

Jess had been a workplace Federation representative for four years when she first took on the acting deputy chair position last year and has represented numerous members.

Since joining the full-time office team, Jess has co-ordinated the 2025 West Midlands Police Federation Bravery Awards, attended meetings with a number of local MPs, undertaken regular meetings with the Force Executive Team and represented the branch at national Federation meetings.

She explains: “I have been networking around the Force and have started to build up strong partnerships with our staff associations and represented West Midlands Police Federation at various events including one to mark International Women’s Day event.”

Jess is currently leading the new nationwide Federation pay and conditions campaign “Copped Enough” and recognises that policing is in crisis due to the exodus of officers.

“We need the Government to re-invest in policing, not just with short-term fixes but with long-term and sustained funding that will ensure police forces are properly resourced, and police officers are paid fairly and truly

valued,” says Jess.

“I was proactive as a workplace rep, and I will be proactive as a chair highlighting the issues officers are facing and bringing the Federation to the membership.

“Ultimately, I have only just stepped away from the frontline, I know what it’s like out there, I know what members are facing because, until very recently, I was there too. I also know what it’s like when the chips are down, and officers truly need the Federation. This is why I became a workplace representative, and this is why, as chair, I will put members at the heart of everything I do.”

As such, she is keen to ensure that officer wellbeing is front and centre and particularly wants to see more done to reduce the length of time officers are under investigation both through the Force Professional Standards Department and the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

“Some of these investigations are still going on for months and months, and sometimes years and it can’t carry on like this,” Jess said.

She also wants the local Federation branch to do more to promote the value of the Federation, its role within the Force and the way in which it supports members and gives them a voice.

But she is also making an appeal to the membership, and wants members to contact her with their concerns.

“I would like to hear feedback from members,” Jess explains, “I want to be proactive and will get out and about around the Force area, but I also want officers to contact me directly and let me know the issues they are facing.”

**“I HAVE STARTED TO BUILD UP STRONG PARTNERSHIPS WITH OUR STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AND REPRESENTED WEST MIDLANDS POLICE FEDERATION AT VARIOUS EVENTS INCLUDING ONE TO MARK INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY EVENT.**

# Meet your new Board

The Federation's elections started at the end of last year and are now reaching their final stages.

All branches across England and Wales have been involved with new workplace representatives being elected along with local Branch Boards and branch officials.

The next rounds of the election will see posts filled on the National Board including the election of a new national chair, with all members invited to vote.

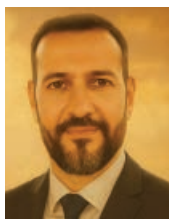
The West Midlands Police Federation has now elected its new Branch Board members and, in the first part of a two-part series, we put a series of questions to them and publish their responses in a Q and A style feature.

The branch is committed to raising awareness of the work of the Federation, the workplace reps and the Branch Board and wants to encourage members to engage with the Federation so that it can effectively represent their views, negotiate on their behalf and influence key decision-makers.

**Get to know your new Branch Board members:**

## DEPUTY CHAIR AARON BELL

Aaron Bell was elected as deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation in May this year. He has been a workplace Fed rep for seven years and joined the Force in January 2002.



### **Why did you become a police officer?**

I wanted to help people who could not help themselves. I had good and bad experiences with the police growing up. They helped me when I was the victim of a hit and run as a child, but also targeted me when I was older due to the car I drove and area I lived in. I felt that change from within was better than sitting on the side-lines. It was a profession I felt was important to society and that I could make a difference.

### **And why did you become a Fed rep?**

It was a difficult decision. Much like my decision to join the police, I had good and less favourable experiences with the Federation. I knew many people felt the Fed was not representative of their backgrounds and so I felt again that I could have more influence working within the Federation than from the outside. I wanted people to have trust and confidence in the office. I felt I could do that while helping officers who often face the most difficult challenges and need to know they have support when things are not going well for them.

### **What did you see as the challenges and rewards of being a Fed rep?**

Stepping into the role, I wasn't sure how I'd be received – especially as someone who's autistic and known for being direct or blunt. I worried that my approach to challenging systems and processes might be misunderstood. But what I found within the Federation was a refreshing openness to different perspectives. Many reps value alternative thinking and problem-solving, which has made the experience incredibly rewarding.

While not every conversation has been easy, I've learned that mutual respect can thrive when we're united by a shared goal of making things better. I have also been able to help members when they are at their lowest and potentially looking to leave the organisation. I have helped some with ill-health retirement and others gain new roles or return to existing ones, with the knowledge they have someone there to support them.

### **What skills and experience do you have that will help you carry out your current Federation role?**

With more than 20 years of frontline leadership experience, I bring a deep understanding of the balance between operational effectiveness and officer welfare. My lived experience helps me advocate meaningfully for our members, recognising that real change starts with those delivering it on the ground. As an active member of the Black and Asian Police Association, I'm passionate about building stronger, more inclusive relationships across the Federation locally and nationally. I see these roles as a bridge - helping to ensure every voice is heard and that our collective strength benefits the whole membership.

### **What are your key objectives within the portfolio you hold?**

To be a visible, trusted voice for our members - someone who not only represents them but actively works to bring about meaningful change. I'm committed to ensuring members are fully informed and feel confident in the decisions made on their behalf, with transparency and accountability at the core of everything I do. I aim to build stronger relationships across the Federation by promoting open dialogue, integrity and professionalism. I want to create a culture where members feel heard, supported and empowered to speak up. I want to support the chair in her role and shape the direction of the West Midlands Branch Council.

### **Do you foresee any potential barriers to you meeting these objectives?**

One potential barrier is the natural resistance to change within policing – often driven by scepticism or change fatigue. I understand that meaningful progress takes time, collaboration and consistent communication. My goal is to keep members engaged by listening to their concerns, being honest about the pace of change and showing that their voices are shaping change and that we are moving forward in that journey together.

### **What do you see as the challenges in the next three years:**

#### **For West Midlands Police Federation?**

One of the key challenges will be maintaining trust and morale in a climate of increasing public scrutiny and financial pressure. As demands on officers grow, ensuring their wellbeing, fair treatment and access to support will be critical. Another challenge is navigating organisational change - whether through reforms or evolving operational priorities.

The Federation must be a steady, credible voice that listens to members and advocates for them effectively during these transitions. Finally, we must continue to build stronger relationships across diverse communities both internally and externally. Representation, inclusion and transparency will be essential to ensuring the Federation remains relevant, respected and truly reflective of those it serves.

#### **For the Force?**

West Midlands Police faces several key challenges over the next few years. Rebuilding public trust is critical, especially following recent HMICFRS reports on how the Force handles investigations and supports vulnerable people. Tackling serious violence - particularly youth violence and violence against women and girls - will require long-term, collaborative solutions that go beyond enforcement and focus on prevention and trust-building. This alongside a force that is yet to truly reflect the community it serves, makes building that trust difficult; those of us in privileged positions need to ensure we continue to work as ambassadors for West Midlands Police as an employer of choice.

Financial pressures remain a major issue, with a persistent funding shortfall exacerbated by a formula that disproportionately impacts West Midlands Police, limits the Force's ability to invest in frontline resources and affects its ability to recruit, retain and support officers. Balancing limited resources while meeting rising demand will require innovative thinking and strong leadership. At the same time, the region has seen a rise in public demonstrations, placing additional strain on already stretched teams and highlighting the need for sensitive, community-focused policing.



### **And for policing in general?**

One of the biggest challenges will be restoring public confidence in the service. High-profile incidents, increased scrutiny and growing demands for transparency have placed significant pressure on officers and leadership alike. As a Federation official, I see a clear need to rebuild trust through consistent standards, visible accountability and a renewed focus on community engagement.

Another major challenge is officer wellbeing. Policing continues to face rising demand with fewer resources, leading to burn-out, low morale and retention issues. It has been 10 years since we were accused of scaremongering, but the reality is that we are seeing officers leave, not just on retirement, but in search of roles not just for pay but also to seek better work-life balances. We must push for better support systems, fairer workloads and a culture that prioritises mental health and professional development. Without a healthy, supported workforce, we cannot deliver the service the public expects.

Finally, officers are expected to navigate complex societal issues - ranging from the rise in serious violence and online crime to the impact of political and social unrest. Officers are increasingly expected to be everything from social workers to counter-terrorism experts, often without the right level of training or resources to match. The Federation must continue to advocate for realistic expectations, proper investment and a policing model that is both sustainable and fit for the future.

### **CHRIS JAMES**

Chris James has been a workplace Federation representative since 2018 having joined the Force on 23 April 2007.

#### **Why did you join the Force?**

I had always been interested in the police and felt that it was a job where I could really make a difference.

#### **And why did you become a Fed rep?**

I always had a good understanding of Police Regulations and was happy to stand up for others when things weren't right. Also, with the changes to the Force, that ability to see a job through and make a difference had lessened. I saw, however, that this is something I could get from being a Fed rep.

#### **What did you see as the challenges and rewards of being a Fed rep?**

One of the biggest challenges is accepting you can't help everyone or solve everything. You must always balance the needs of the individual with the needs of the membership as a whole.



The reward is when you finish a case and can see that you have made a significant, positive impact on a member.

#### **What skills and experience do you have that will help you carry out your current Federation role?**

I have completed my Federation health and safety, equality, conduct, advocacy and post-incident procedures courses. I am also experienced as a trustee.

I am a Bluelight Mind Champion and have completed mental health first aid training.

#### **What are your key objectives within the portfolio you hold?**

To continue the work that I have done with the Force to reduce the number of cancelled rest days. But also working with the Force to ensure there is some guidance around the use of 'exigency of duty'. This is a phrase that is far too widely used and there needs to be some guidance and accountability to ensure our members are not being unnecessarily disrupted.

#### **Do you foresee any potential barriers to you meeting these objectives?**

Not currently.

#### **What do you see as the challenges in the next three years:**

##### **For West Midlands Police Federation?**

Restoring the confidence of our members in the Federation. Ensuring better engagement with our members.

We must continue to hold the Force to account, ensuring we look after our members locally. At the same time, we must work to improve the Federation nationally. We must ensure that the Police Federation of England and Wales is representative of our diverse membership and always puts them first.

We must drive for better member engagement, accountability and transparency. Members want to see one Federation working together to bring change that will positively impact them. We need to ensure that every member has a voice. Sometimes we only hear the loudest voices, when it is the quietest ones we should be listening to.

##### **For West Midlands Police?**

Increasing officer numbers which will help reduce the demand on our members who are seeing ever increasing workloads. Ensuring we retain experienced competent officers.

##### **And for policing in general?**

Changing the narrative regarding the police. There are thousands of hard-working, passionate officers who see a real negative rhetoric in the media (and particularly social media). But there is only a small minority who are not fit to wear the uniform and they ruin the reputation of the many.

### **CONDUCT**

#### **DAWN MURKETT**

Dawn Murkett joined the Force in 2002 and became a Federation workplace representative seven years ago. She became the full-time conduct lead in August 2023, working alongside Dave Hadley.



#### **Why did you join the Force?**

I always wanted to become a police officer even at an early age. I have no honest idea as to why it was always something I felt I would do as soon as I was old enough to apply.

#### **And why did you become a Fed rep?**

I was on the other end of the discipline process in 2017/2018 and felt the support and service I received could have been far better. I felt the rep I had assigned to me wasn't really invested in me and did not represent me as well as they could have done. I am a proactive person and felt that if I had some criticism of the Federation support I had I should act on it and become trained so I was then able to represent members in the future to help make their experiences more positive.

#### **What are the challenges and rewards of being a Fed rep?**

Fed reps in the discipline world must navigate complex disciplinary and/or criminal matters, often involving emotionally charged situations. Maintaining trust and building a professional relationship with the member is key - as many of the matters have the potential to last years and impact on their wider family. Having up-to-date knowledge of new and amended policies and legislation are ongoing challenges.

But the role is hugely rewarding in terms of making a real difference to colleagues' lives. Supporting officers through difficult times in the misconduct process can have a tangible and positive impact. The discipline/criminal process can take a considerable amount of time to conclude, often years. It can be fulfilling to influence policy, and also see the shift in working relationships with other departments which historically have been fractured.

#### **What skills and experience do you have that will help you carry out your current Federation role?**

I bring a combination of operational policing experience and a deep understanding of Police Regulations and procedures. I have developed strong interpersonal and communication skills, allowing me to build rapport, negotiate effectively and advocate confidently on behalf of members.

My approach is empathetic yet assertive, always ensuring the best outcomes for members while upholding professional standards. I have vast experience of the

Feature continued on Page 18

criminal process to support members who have been arrested and face criminal charges and trials. I also have presented on members' behalf at misconduct meetings and accelerated hearings in front of the Chief Constable. I am proactive in my own learning and seek any opportunities to upskill myself and keep up to date with new and amended regulations.

## **What are your key objectives within the portfolio you hold?**

Ensuring all members receive timely, informed and consistent representation during conduct and criminal proceedings

Monitoring trends in misconduct cases to identify any learning opportunities or systemic issues, and feed these back accordingly  
Building relationships with the Force Professional Standards Department (PSD), the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and other departments and to promote fair, transparent processes

Continuing to promote Federation membership and Group Insurance Scheme membership to all members.

## **Do you foresee any potential barriers to you meeting these objectives?**

Time constraints can be a barrier, especially in the misconduct world where most documents have strict timeframes for responses which often are lengthy and require the input of the member and regularly a legally qualified individual, this can sometimes be problematic. Additionally, ensuring consistent communication and access to accurate data or case updates can also be challenging.

Increasingly high workloads are also a barrier – the amount of PSD/Criminal/IOPC matters I feel personally are at an all-time high and now, with new vetting regulations that have just come in, I can foresee the workload getting even greater.

## **What do you see as the challenges in the next three years for:**

### **West Midlands Police Federation?**

- Maintaining effective representation amid increasing demands and complex misconduct environments
- Ensuring transparency, fairness, and trust in all internal processes
- Sustaining member engagement and visibility of the Federation across the Force
- Encouraging and developing new Fed reps who reflect the diversity of the workforce.
- Finances and how we manage budgets and ensure transparency around this without the members services being at detriment.

### **For West Midlands Police?**

- Recruiting and retaining officers – especially those with considerable experience
- Delivering Force priorities under budget constraints
- Maintaining public trust and confidence especially in a world where social media is prevalent and public opinion is low.

## **And for policing in general?**

- Restoring public trust especially after several of high-profile national incidents involving serving officers
- Tackling increasing levels of online crime, fraud and cyber threats
- Ensuring officers are protected and supported - both legally and mentally - against rising assaults and stress. And fighting for fair pay and conditions for officers.

## **JON NOTT**

Jon joined West Midlands Police in August 1998 and became a Federation rep 10 years later.

## **Why did you become a police officer?**

I had never really thought about policing growing up and had a couple of different jobs after leaving college. At my last job, a colleague left to join the Fire Service and that got me to thinking about public service. I started looking into the police, applied and, as they say, it all started there.

## **Why did you become a Fed rep?**

My DS at the time was a Fed rep and was the only detective on the Branch Council so encouraged me to stand as a rep.

## **What did you see as the challenges and rewards of the role?**

At the time of applying the full details of the role was unknown as it wasn't as widely advertised as it is now. I already had a good standing on the OCU at the time so the issue of dealing with supervision did not faze me. It was the learning of Police Regs that was a steep curve. It was rewarding in terms of being able to help people who found themselves in difficult times.

## **What skills and experience do you have that will help you carry out your current Federation role?**

I have been a rep now for 17 years and within that time have held a full-time position for five years now, holding differing roles within the Federation as well as having national exposure as a National Trustee. I am trained in all areas of work within the Federation. I am able to bring calmness to situations and try to work together with the Force to resolve situations as well as bringing about changes in policy.

## **What are your key objectives within the portfolio you hold?**

I hold two different portfolios – I am the equality lead and also the student officer lead.

**Equality.** The ever-changing demand on officers alongside the competing operational demands of the Force. As we move away from all the restrictions of Covid, coupled with the increased workload for officers and the Force, this has led to a review of working arrangements within the Force. This, in turn, has led to stress and worry for officers as different departments and LPAs try to implement directives given by FET



through their own interpretation. Together with Julie (Fleming), we are trying to bring uniformity across the Force so that people can actually understand and know what is acceptable within the Force and ensuring that adjustments are actually considered for individuals.

**Student lead.** The past few years have seen a huge uplift in new recruits as well as a change in academic supplier for the Force. This has led to a large number of differing entry routes which can be problematic for both the Force and officers due to differing demands and targets for each one.

I have managed to work with the Force to update and improve the Force policy for probationers. The main objective now is to ensure the new processes settle in and that each individual officer gets the support and direction that they need to give them the best chance of successfully making it through their probation.

## **Do you foresee any potential barriers to you meeting these objectives?**

For both portfolios, the main barrier is having all the differing areas of business working to their own interpretation of directives given by FET within the Force. Trying to bring standardisation around decisions and support provided is the biggest obstacle as it can have a major impact on individual officers.

## **What do you see as the challenges in the next three years for:**

### **West Midlands Police Federation?**

As a local Federation, I think we are working really well together in supporting members locally and providing support and advice where needed within the workplace. The bigger concern is keeping the support of our external specialists due to the wider issues with the Police Federation of England and Wales. I think that there is also a confidence issue with the Federation as a whole due to the pensions issue and trying to rebuild the trust of members is critical.

### **West Midlands Police?**

Keeping up with the change in demand for service. Trying to restore officer numbers to what they were, with a reduced building capacity due to austerity.

## **And for policing in general?**

The ever-changing dynamics of policing in the 21st century and increased workloads, with more paperwork and risk.

## **EQUALITIES**

### **JULIE FLEMING**

Julie Fleming is joint equality lead, sharing the responsibility with Jon Nott. She has been with the Force for 23 years and first became a workplace representative in 2018. Julie took on a full-time Federation role five years ago.

## **Why did you join the Force?**

Cheesy, I know, but I did think I could make a difference; catch the baddies and look after the good guys!



### **And why did you become a Fed rep?**

I had reached the stage in my career where I needed a new focus and challenge. I could see people around me who needed support for various reasons and realised more what the Fed actually had to offer. I relished having a new focus on supporting colleagues who served the public rather than serving the public directly.

### **What do you see as the challenges and rewards of the role?**

I enjoy supporting people in whichever direction is the right one for them and the organisation. This can be supporting them back to work, into the right role with the right adjustments for them. It's a means to assist them in finding a solution to a problem.

Sadly, it can also be supporting people as they leave policing via ill-health retirement. But, while this can be sad, it can often be a relief for them when they finally achieve it as it is the right thing moving forward.

A real challenge in the current climate is supporting officers with disabilities into the correct or most suitable role while also meeting the needs of the organisation.

### **What skills and experience do you have to help you in your current role?**

I have dealt with most aspects of the equality and personnel world. I have completed courses in equality, injury on duty and ill-health retirement, conduct and mental health first aid, and I also hold a Level 6 CIPD qualification in people management. Even with all this training, the biggest learning still comes from just doing the job and speaking to people and appealing to the common sense approach.

### **What are your key objectives?**

Education is a big thing for me: educating other Federation reps in best practice and educating supervisors in policies, regulations and, again, best practice. I have created various guides for reps and members to access via the Federation website. I have also held a training input for reps regarding unsatisfactory performance and attendance and attendance support meetings. I have another planned for ill-health retirement.

I now want to work with stakeholders to ensure we have relevant and effective policies and practices while also helping to improve these.

I will also aim to promote positive diversity practices and ensure everyone is treated with respect.

### **Do you foresee any potential barriers to you meeting these objectives?**

We have an increasing challenge in supporting officers with various disabilities and finding the correct roles and adjustments for them. This is also the case for flexible working. There is a challenge in supporting these but also ensuring the needs of the Force and the public we serve are also met.

### **What do you see as the challenges in the next three years for:**

#### **West Midlands Police Federation?**

I feel we need to demonstrate that we are here for the right reasons, that we do a good job and the vast majority of Federation staff are striving to make positive change and support our members. I don't think members always know what they get for their money. We should sell ourselves more and highlight the successes we have on behalf of the members.

I think the odd bit of bad press can cause untold damage and loss of confidence in us. I do worry that the demand for our assistance is increasing and I hope that funding claims or accessing support in future is not affected negatively.

#### **The Force?**

Ensuring we have the right people in the right places. Ensuring demand for services is met, along with ensuring officers are supported with their needs also.

### **GEMMA GRIFFITH**

Gemma Griffith joined the Force in December 2008 and became a workplace Federation representative four years ago.

#### **Why did you become a police officer?**

Having left university after studying geography and realising I hadn't a clue what I wanted to do as a job, I did a bit of travelling and slowly came to realise policing ticked all the boxes. I found out I had been successful halfway to Everest base camp.

I come from a family of police officers and it was probably inevitable this was the path I was going to follow. My Dad had just retired as a detective, my uncle had retired a few years previously and both my auntie and uncle from my Mum's side also served in the mounted branch and on the helicopter.

#### **Why did you become a Fed rep?**

I didn't know a lot about the Fed, I think this is quite normal for officers who have never had to use its services. However, I had colleagues in the Fed at the time who encouraged me and said they thought I would be a good workplace rep. I genuinely felt I could try to make the Fed more accessible for front line officers and wanted to be that person officers could turn to for help and support.

#### **What did you see as the challenges and rewards of being a Fed rep?**

I feel the Federation has always been quite political and this unfortunately detracts from what it's there for and the help we should be giving to our paying members. I constantly heard people moaning about paying their subs with no apparent reward or benefits and since becoming a Fed rep I always find myself trying to sing from the roof tops, the great work the local branch is providing and its unwavering support for officers.

It can be very hard work at times. I never really switch off and sometimes work here and

there on every one of my RDs reaching out to members and supporting with cases. The rewards, however, are definitely when members thank me for what I have done and tell me my interaction has positively improved their work life. This makes me feel very happy. It's also great when people recommend you. However, it does create me more work!

#### **What skills and experience do you have that will help you carry out your current Federation role?**

I have only recently been voted onto the local Branch Board with the portfolio of response and proudly sit as a full-time and fully operational response sergeant with a Branch Board seat. My officers are the ones on the coalface, the ones workly crazily hard with little or no rewards more often than not. I really feel I can bring these frontline voices to the Federation and try to integrate change and improvement off the back of live scenarios and ongoing and current issues.

#### **What are your key objectives within the portfolio you hold?**

I want frontline officers to feel heard and to know the Federation is there to support them and represent them when times are hard and they are not being treated correctly. I want to be able to offer changes and suggestions to SLT that will actively improve our workplaces and working life. I want officers to enjoy work, feel productive and feel recognised for what they do.

#### **Do you foresee any potential barriers to you meeting these objectives?**

We have to appreciate we work in a dynamic working environment and, as such, as every officer would like for example an uninterrupted refreshment break, and this isn't always practicable. We all want and need more officers but we have to accept, with natural loss and resignations, we are just about balancing and therefore we need to find solutions to issues that don't always involve more staff.

#### **What do you see as the challenges in the next three years:**

##### **For West Midlands Police Federation?**

Political unrest within the Federation. We all need to have the same aims and values and move forward as a united front. We are here for our paying members. End of!

##### **For West Midlands Police?**

We move into the next three years with an ever-more inexperienced and young workforce and we need to recognise the big challenges this will have for the Force and ensure we have the right officers in the right roles in the right locations.

##### **And for policing in general?**

New crime types and an increase in social media-related offences and online offences which need to be managed appropriately before forces become overrun with more minor offences with less focus on the serious.

# Naloxone: Federation will support officers

Officers who carry Naloxone have been given an assurance that they will be fully supported by West Midlands Police Federation if they use it in the way they have been trained but are later the subject of a complaint.

There are around 220 West Midlands officers who currently carry Naloxone, a drug which reverses the effects of an opioid overdose and can prevent deaths. But this may be increased to 280, largely neighbourhood, officers - though it is only carried on a voluntary basis.

It is now 20 years since legislation first enabled Naloxone to be administered by anyone in an emergency, improving the chances of preventing overdose deaths with the latest Government statistics revealing police officers have administered it 1,232 times by police in the UK between June 2019 and December 2024.



The first recorded administration of Naloxone by a West Midlands Police officer was in 2019.

The Police Federation of England and Wales has recently revised its stance on Naloxone use by officers and now supports it being carried voluntarily where an operational need is identified, saying it should remain a personal choice, based on appropriate training and individual circumstances.

Initial concerns, which were discussed by former West Midlands Police Federation chair Jon Nott BBC's Newsnight in 2021, centred around officers being subjected to lengthy and stressful investigations if someone still died after being given Naloxone by a police officer to block an overdose of an opioid such as heroin.

Patrick McBrearty, health and safety lead for West Midlands Police Federation, said: "I just want to give an assurance that if any of our officers use Naloxone the way they have been trained and are later subject of a complaint we will fully support them.

"I know there was some resistance from

the Federation nationally initially and there are those who might wonder why they wouldn't support officers carrying, and using, a life-saving piece of equipment but you do have to bear in mind that officers are primarily law enforcement professionals and not healthcare professionals.

"The Federation has argued in the past that ambulance staff and paramedics are best placed to administer Naloxone and there have been understandable concerns about an enforced mission creep on officers. Operational decisions have been seen to be made by other services based on the knowledge that officers have Naloxone at their disposal.

"But, despite these concerns, as a Federation, we appreciate our officers are often the first to come into contact with someone who has taken an overdose and we will support and represent them should they find themselves under investigation."

A Government backed study into police carrying Naloxone has called for training in its use to be standardised across all police forces so officers receive the same high quality tuition.





# Home Secretary urged to act over WA80 ruling

**W**est Midlands Police Federation secretary Tim Rogers has criticised the Home Secretary for failing to announce legislation to overturn the ruling in the WA80 firearms officer case during her first 10 months in office.

Tim said Yvette Cooper should have addressed the issue and, in doing so, could give officers the confidence they need when using their use of force powers.

He believes there should be no doubt in their minds that when using their powers appropriately they would be supported.

The WA80 firearms officer case was ruled upon by the [Supreme Court](#) in 2023, and legislation would be needed to overturn its judgement.

"An officer is entitled to use reasonable force as is necessary in the prevailing circumstances, while in the agony of the moment," Tim explained.

"The WA80 determination stated that if an officer's belief was deemed after the event to be unreasonable, they could not be entitled to rely on it.

"This, of course, means that if in the officer's mind at that time, in that split-second of the agony of the moment, they feel their life or the life of a member of the public was at risk due to someone having a firearm, then two weeks later - poring over it forensically - the investigators determine that was not the case, they deem the officer to be unreasonable meaning they are unable to rely on their honest held belief as a defence."

Tim said he was extremely disappointed the Home Secretary had not addressed the case.

He continued: "We regularly hear warm words of support from politicians keen to voice their support for police officers and the police service. But, sadly, we often don't see those words followed by actions as appears to be the case with the issues around the WA80 issue.

"As a result of the Supreme Court ruling, officers remain in a very vulnerable situation when they use the powers at their disposal, powers conferred on them to allow them to serve and protect their communities and protect the law-abiding public from harm.

"In the 10 months since Ms Cooper was appointed as Home Secretary, there will be

scores of officers who will have found themselves facing internal conduct proceedings and criminal investigations after using use of force, as they have been trained to do.

"Officers, and particularly firearms officers, are making split-second decisions, assessing the threat and risk to them and the public in a rapidly unfolding, and tense, situation.

"They make those decisions, perhaps pulling the trigger on a gun, or discharging Taser, in the honestly held belief that they have to do so in terms of self-defence or to protect other people but then find their actions are analysed, frame by frame, with the benefit of hindsight, by investigators who sometimes seem to just want to catch them out.

"The Home Office says it is working to resolve the situation but it has been going on for over a year and we are dissatisfied with the response and dissatisfied with the fact that officers are every day using force with the honest held belief believing that they will be supported and yet they are actually leaving themselves vulnerable to prosecution."

Tim pointed out that it is not just firearms officers who are affected since police drivers are also facing similar vulnerability.

"Due to the rapid evolving nature of crime, police drivers, even when fully up to date with their training, may come across an incident that was not covered by their courses. As part of their role, they will act instinctively, assessing what's in front of them and acting accordingly to try to bring an incident to a safe conclusion," he explained.

"But they then find themselves facing conduct proceedings because they have used tactics or manoeuvres not included in the prescribed training that acts as their protection from the driving legislation that applies to other non-police drivers."

Tim is calling on the Home Secretary to launch legislation to over-turn the Supreme Court ruling as soon as possible.

"I hope that Ms Cooper will use the remainder of her first year in office to act on this as it will make a huge difference to police officers who are currently facing a crisis of confidence in terms of using the powers they have," says Tim.

"Officers need to be confident that they



Tim Rogers.

when they use force, according to their training and in the honestly held belief that they need to act, they will not find themselves facing conduct or criminal proceedings.

"These proceedings, it has to be said, can drag on for weeks, months and sometimes years having a massive impact on them, their families and the Force.

"Currently, I think some officers are reticent to use force and yet any delay in doing so can be disastrous, not just for their safety but also for the public.

"We need the Government to show that it really does support the police and will stand behind officers when they follow their training and use their powers according to that training.

"Officers should be able to confidently rely on their honest held belief relevant to the situation and be judged in the agony of the moment not frame by frame, days and weeks later."

Tim says the effects of W80 case ruling have already been felt much further than the firearms world and have been discussed not only by police drivers but also by most officers who are trained to expect to use reasonable force as part of their role to keep the public from harm.

"The Supreme Court's judgement in the WA80 case needs to be overturned urgently - only Parliament can do that by expressly worded legislation. But, if it is not overturned, the Federation will need to universally explain the potential jeopardy officers face because of it remaining in place," Tim said earlier this year when he first called on the Home Secretary to act.

"Warm words of support from the Government are appreciated but meaningless if followed by acts of betrayal through retrospective criticism and potential prosecutions."

**“CURRENTLY, I THINK SOME OFFICERS ARE RETICENT TO USE FORCE AND YET ANY DELAY IN DOING SO CAN BE DISASTROUS, NOT JUST FOR THEIR SAFETY BUT ALSO FOR THE PUBLIC.**

# 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;
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## ARE YOU RETIRING SOON?

Join on-line [www.NARPO.org](http://www.NARPO.org), or for more information, contact the secretary of your preferred Branch:-

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

[www.NARPOWestMidlands.org](http://www.NARPOWestMidlands.org)  
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# What expenses are you entitled to claim?

In the latest in a series of features putting the focus on Police Regulations, we answer common questions about expenses.

Remember you can find the answers to many of your queries about regulations [on our website](#).

## **Q** I've been retained on duty and had to buy a meal what can I claim?

**A** If you have been retained on duty more than two hours past your normal finish time then you are entitled to claim for a meal. The only requirements under regulations are that the meal is reasonable and receipted.

There is no requirement for you to purchase this meal after your normal finish time. If you were aware earlier in your shift that you would be retained on duty, you can purchase this meal in anticipation. However, if you are then not required to remain on duty you would not be entitled to claim for it.

It is worth noting that it doesn't matter whether a member volunteers to work over or is required to do so. Either way they are entitled to make a claim for a meal.

## **Q** Am I entitled to claim for a meal during my shift?

**A** If an officer is unable to obtain a meal in their usual manner and, as a result, it

costs the officer more money, then the officer can claim the difference between what they normally pay and the cost of the replacement meal.

There is no distinction between an officer being on a scheduled tour of duty or being required to work on a rest day. It all hinges around being able to obtain a meal in their normal manner. If they can't, then they can claim.

It is a reasonable expectation that if your role means you may not be able to return to your parade station for refreshments then you ensure you have the facility to take your food with you (ie, a cool bag). However, if you have a microwave meal, for example, you should be provided with facilities to heat this when you take your break. These facilities do not have to be at a police station providing they are available for you to use. If these facilities are not available to you, and this means you are unable to take your meal in the usual manner, then you are entitled to

claim for a replacement meal.

In conclusion, it does not matter where officers are working during a shift, unless they can show they were unable to obtain or take their meal in the normal manner, and have deducted the cost of that meal from the replacement meal, the claim will fail.

Police Regulations do not specify any maximum amounts. They merely state 'reasonable and receipted'. The Force has its own guidance but this does not usurp the regulations and suggested amounts have not been uplifted for many years despite the increase in food costs.

If you cannot find the answer to a question about Police Regulations [on our website](#), please contact our regulations specialist Gary Nuttall who works in our office at Guardians House and can answer any further queries you might have. He can be reached by calling **0121 7524900** (Option 1) or [email Gary Nuttall](#).





## Have you suffered an injury that was not your fault?

Accidents happen, especially in police work. Whether you have suffered an injury on duty or off, we are here to help.

We have over 60 years' experience working with the Police Federation and its members, which means we understand how your job is different from others. We are proud to support members of the force and provide legal support.

Through your federation you are covered for:

- Road traffic accidents (either on or off duty)
- Fatal accident claims
- Defective equipment
- Accidents in the workplace
- Training accidents
- Public liability claims
- Accidents on other premises
- Animal handling incidents
- Occupational deafness
- Employer liability claims including stress
- Medical negligence

### Why choose us?

Your personal injury claim will be covered by the Police Federation, and you will not be required to

have Legal Expense Insurance. Your claim will also not cost you or the Police Federation anything, even if the claim is not successful, as we take all the risk.

If your claim is successful, you will retain 100% of the damages we recover on your behalf. We are specialists in personal injury and ensure the right amount of compensation for police officers injured on and off duty is awarded.

### How to start a personal injury claim

If you have suffered a personal injury, either on or off duty contact your local branch board in the first instance for more information or to discuss your claim.

[slatergordon.co.uk](https://slatergordon.co.uk)  
Authorised and regulated by the SRA.

**Slater Gordon**  
Lawyers



## Personal injury claims experts

If you have experienced a personal injury, you might be eligible for compensation, regardless of whether the incident occurred in the UK or abroad, at work or in public.

Our legal experts are here to help you get the rehabilitation, compensation and support you need.

We can offer support in cases of:

- Road traffic accidents
- Accidents at work
- Accidents and injuries abroad
- Asbestos related illness
- Injuries in public places
- Sexual and physical abuse
- Illness claims
- Faulty products
- Industrial disease & industrial injury

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# Fed rep praises neighbourhood team after success of 'all out' day

A neighbourhood policing team has gone 'all out' for its community on a day which reflected the remarkable progress it has made in recent months.

A special day was held in April to further engage with the residents of Shirley after hard work and a series of projects and arrests had made the town a safer place to live.

And the 'all out' day gave the Force a chance to heighten its presence in the area as well to show residents its zero-tolerance policy on important issues like anti-social behaviour and knife crime.

Back in January, Federation rep Sergeant Kev Vince inherited a group of Shirley-based officers from the Solihull Local Policing Area (LPA), following a move from custody into community policing.

The four constables and three PCSOs were not being managed by a permanent sergeant before Kev's arrival and were suffering from a lack of direction.

But, since then, things have changed dramatically and they have enjoyed plenty of wins that have benefited the town and resulted in the 'all out' initiative.

"An all out day is where the Force will heighten its presence with extra resources in a certain location – ideally, from multiple different areas of policing, so the local community can see how we work, interact with us and get the reassurance that we are doing everything we can to protect them," Kev explained.

"They are usually carried out across a whole LPA, but it was my idea to have one just for the Shirley neighbourhood, and I spent a month or so planning it out.

"The main aims I had for the day were for us to build on the changes we have implemented so far, and to show the public that we will not be stopping there, either – and that's exactly what we got."

A crackdown on shoplifting saw five of the town's most prolific offenders return to prison, with two more arrested in late April.

A serial car theft criminal was also put



behind bars by the team, and its strict approach to this offence was reflected by plain and marked police cars patrolling certain areas and using automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) during all-out hours – which helped identify five stolen vehicles.

The initiative also led to both uniformed and plain-clothed cops in key areas of the town, including hotspots for anti-social behaviour (ASB) such as shops and public transport stations.

This allowed the Force to communicate its zero-tolerance towards such offences, something Kev says is important not only in terms of punishment, but for education on the community impacts of ASB some may not fully appreciate or realise.

A hardline stance was also taken around violent crime arising from habitual knife carriers and those who target and intimidate women and girls.

"As well as violence itself, we have put a lot of effort into eliminating the factors which can lead to such incidents," the 44-year-old said.

"An example of this would be our work with partner agencies to take more rough sleepers off the streets and into permanent housing, reducing their exposure to violent

incidents breaking out, as well as public intimidation."

Perhaps the most encouraging outcome of the day, however, was the feedback received by many officers from impressed residents.

"Overall, it was just a really positive day. I am pleased with a lot of our numbers since I came into the team, but something which is just as important but unable to be measured is public opinion on us," said Kev.

"We've got a fantastic community in Shirley, and they deserve the best possible protection, education and support. There is still work to be done, but I am glad so many people are feeling they are getting that from us.

"For me, that's what policing is all about – having those links with the community, so they can tell us what their problems are and how we are doing in response to them."

Part of West Midlands Police for 21 years, Kev made the switch to his latest role in anticipation for his inspector's board later this year.

He says he also wanted a change of scenery so as not to become deskilled as a cop, particularly with custody policing being so specialised.

The workplace rep also paid tribute to his new team.

"I'm really pleased with the efforts of everyone – they've been fantastic. To a person, all the energy in the group is focused into helping each other, and that's amazing to be a part of," he said.

"It's early days, but things couldn't be going any better right now, and they deserve all the credit in the world."

**“WE’VE GOT A FANTASTIC COMMUNITY IN SHIRLEY, AND THEY DESERVE THE BEST POSSIBLE PROTECTION, EDUCATION AND SUPPORT. THERE IS STILL WORK TO BE DONE, BUT I AM GLAD SO MANY PEOPLE ARE FEELING THEY ARE GETTING THAT FROM US.**

# 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**

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**[Westmidlandspf@polfed.org](mailto: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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# Physio service now available to GIS subscribers

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 has included:

- **£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 and in association with Teladoc Health. 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.

Tim Rogers, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, said: "We feel the scheme offers excellent value for money and provides the specialised cover police officers need to cater for their particular needs.

"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](#).

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## Testimonials for the physiotherapy service

### PHYSIO ON YOUR SCHEDULE: GETTING HELP AROUND SHIFT WORK

"As a shift worker dealing with recurring lower back pain, I finally reached out for help when one episode lasted longer than usual. Accessing physiotherapy through the app was refreshingly easy—just a few taps to book an appointment, and I could review each therapist's bio and expertise to find someone who suited my condition and schedule.

"Within days, I had my first session with the physio, who not only addressed the pain but focused on my personal goal: being able to play actively with my three-year-old daughter.

"The app-based exercises were a game changer, letting me track pain levels and progress while tailoring my therapy between sessions. With the physio's support and the flexibility of virtual care, I've regained mobility and confidence - simple things like climbing stairs or lifting my daughter no longer feel impossible. I now swim regularly, manage flare-ups better, and understand the long-term lifestyle changes I need. Having rapid access to expert help, even for my wife, who also struggles with musculoskeletal pain, has shown me just how valuable this service is - especially when traditional routes are hard to access."

*Service user 2025*

### SUDDEN BACK PAIN ON HOLIDAY

"On holiday in Spain, I woke up to chronic back pain and was unable to get out of bed. Luckily, I had access to a UK-based GP and virtual physio service delivered by Teladoc Health UK.

"I called Teladoc Health and took the next available consultation slot. During the consultation, the Virtual GP was warm and reassuring. I was feeling quite scared that I had done something very serious to my back. After a thorough consultation, the GP diagnosed that it was muscular and that I should recover in a couple of days with pain medication and some physio. The GP gave me an e-prescription by email, which I could send to my cousin to collect from a pharmacy.

"On the GP's recommendation, I had a physio consultation with Nicoleta and was given recovery exercises and advice for protecting against future back issues. Nicoleta was really lovely and so helpful. I got back to my holiday within two days. I'm so grateful. I don't know how I would have got help otherwise. It would have been complex and expensive!"

*Service user 2025*

## GIS SUBSCRIPTIONS COSTS (from 1 April 2025) are:

### 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

# Need legal advice? Turn to our partners for help and support

Federation members can access a range of legal support and advice through West Midlands Police Federation's member service providers.

You can find out more by visiting our [directory of the branch's solicitor partners](#) but here is a round-up of what is on offer.

## FBC Manby Bowdler Solicitors

With offices across the West Midlands, Shropshire and Worcestershire, [FBC Manby Bowdler](#) has a proven track record in advising members of the police force with a range of legal services covering buying and selling residential property; all family matters including divorce and separation and arrangements for children following a family breakdown.

The company offers a 10 per cent discount on residential property sales and purchases (excluding new build properties) and a free initial telephone consultation for family, divorce and childcare enquiries.

For property and family enquiries please contact the FBCMB team at [newenquiries@fbcmb.co.uk](mailto:newenquiries@fbcmb.co.uk) or on 0345 512 0057. Please quote 'Police Fed'.

## Gorvins

A free initial consultation on family law is available from the experts at [Gorvins solicitors](#).

They can help with divorce and financial settlements, children matters, cohabitation disputes, civil partnerships and Inheritance Act claims.

Gorvins will be running surgeries for Federation members on 17 June, 15 July and 19 August.

Contact Gorvins to arrange an appointment in person, over the telephone or on Teams on 0161 930 5151 and ask to be put through to the family team. Or [email the family team](#).

## Irwin Mitchell

Irwin Mitchell's family team has a wealth of experience in dealing with separation, divorce and financial matters. They have a long history of acting for members of the police force which means they have extensive expertise in police pensions and related issues. The team are also experts at resolving disputes in relation to arrangements with children.

They can guide you through the legal process of dealing with your case and represent you in court proceedings, if necessary.

[Irwin Mitchell](#) offers appointments with the family law team in Birmingham. Lucy Todd and colleagues are offering the first consultation free of charge, and there will be a discount of up to 10 per cent on all fees thereafter. Irwin Mitchell will arrange a face to face, telephone or video appointment with you on a mutually convenient date.

To arrange an appointment, please contact Amy Brown on her direct mobile 0779 234 0684 or via [e-mail](#).

## McAlister Family Law

[McAlister Family Law](#) has more than 20 years of experience in representing police officers facing divorce and related children disputes.

The company offers a divorce fixed fee of £350 plus VAT, and a free first appointment.

In addition to its general services, it also offers expert advice on:

- Police pensions and divorce
- How your pension is to be valued, advancing counter arguments when there is a dispute
- How pre and post-marital pension contributions are to be treated on divorce.

Call Amanda McAlister direct to book an appointment via telephone until further notice on 0161 507 7140 or email [Amanda.McAlister@mcalistfamilylaw.co.uk](mailto:Amanda.McAlister@mcalistfamilylaw.co.uk)

## Pickford Solicitors

A small team of legal specialists with 40 years combined experience in residential property, commercial property, family law and business law, [Pickford Solicitors](#) are based in the Midlands (Birmingham) but act for customers across the country.

Its team of experts understand that moving home can be a stressful time and aim to make the process as smooth as possible, ensuring clients are kept updated and informed throughout the process.

Their specialisms are: buying, selling, buy to let, re-mortgages, transfers of equity, shared ownership, new builds and right to buy.

Pickford Solicitors offer Federation members a 15 per cent discount on all legal fees, when instructed to help with any of the above mentioned services.

## Police Federation RTA Legal Assistance

One of the benefits of your Police Federation membership is the ability to receive [legal support and make claims](#) if you are injured on or off duty.

A team of specialist personal injury lawyers are dedicated to recovering damages for you and your family and whether you win or lose your claim you will not be charged and you keep 100 per cent of any compensation won.

They have expert knowledge of the unique losses that can affect police officers and ensure that these are recovered as part of your compensation award.

If you or a member of your family have suffered an injury as a result of a road traffic accident then you are entitled to free legal advice, support and representation to obtain financial compensation.

All RTA personal injury claims can be submitted directly via the [PFEW RTA Legal Assistance site](#).

## Slater and Gordon

Slater and Gordon has supported the Police Federation for more than six decades and provide a suite of tailored legal services to officers both on and off-duty.

The firm can help with legal issues around employment, personal injury, family matters, wills, trusts and estates, and medical negligence.

Slater and Gordon offers 100 per cent discounted wills for Police Federation members using a web-based facility, so you can make your own will online via the [Slater and Gordon website](#).

## Thomson Financial Solutions

As a family business, Thomson Financial Solutions Limited provide a friendly, personal and professional service to serving West Midlands Police officers, including home visits, advising all aspects of:

- Wills (A free, standard will service is provided)
- Asset protection
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Care fees and funeral planning.

Its services are available for all serving and retired police officers, staff and employees, Special Constables and their families.

[Free wills: find out more.](#)

## Wadsworths

[Wadsworths Solicitors](#) are a family-run solicitors acting in the best interest of their customers and their families since 1986. They have offices in Shirley, Tamworth and Henley-in-Arden.

Wadsworths Solicitors give a 10 per cent discount to all serving and retired police officers and police staff on all fees in respect of wills, Lasting Power of Attorney and probate matters.

For wills and Lasting Power of Attorney, please telephone Michael Wadsworth on 0121 745 8550 for a quote.

For probate, please telephone the probate team on 0121 745 8550 to book an initial consultation.

## Wilkes

[Wilkes](#) offer all West Midlands Police Federation members a 10 per cent discount on the following legal services.

- Wills
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Divorce and child protection
- Buying and selling a property
- Contentious probate
- Court of Protection
- Medical negligence
- Notary services
- Personal injury
- Planning
- Property disputes
- Will disputes.

# ‘The better we educate them now, the less police work to do later down the line’

## PC discusses knife crime awareness in schools

**D**elivering important messages around knife crime to young people has been part of a West Midlands PC’s ‘career rejuvenation’ as the face of the Force at a number of the region’s secondary schools and colleges in recent years.

After two decades in response policing across areas such as Chelmsley Wood, Solihull and Coventry, PC Andy Blyth swapped the frontline for the classroom in 2023 when he became a schools intervention and prevention officer (SIPO).

Andy says an injury sustained in his previous role afforded him the opportunity to assess whether such duties were still right for him, prompting the eventual change.

His move into partnership work has seen him take on 10 secondary schools south of the Solihull borough as a policing role model for pupils, assuming responsibility for the building of relationships and promotion of positive pathways in life.

SIPOs will also typically provide advice and information around the law, with the aim of educating their audiences on the consequences of crime for both individuals and wider society.

This includes the acts of carrying and using knives, central topics to Andy’s guidance so far.

“Of course, knife crime is as significant a social issue as ever, and the efforts never stop to show young people what its true impact can be,” he said.

“From the very first time I spoke about it, I felt the responsibility on my shoulders to provide them with something which would really make them take stock of what it means to carry such a weapon.

“The way my sessions are delivered is two-pronged – firstly, they can be whole-school, whole-year or class assemblies, where I will speak about areas like law changes and dangers, and implore pupils to realise they can always talk to us if they feel caught up in a

situation related to knives in any way.

“This can be daunting as it puts the onus on them, but it has brought about some good outcomes. One that springs to mind is when a pupil came forward with information about someone’s possession of a knife immediately after an assembly had finished.

“While it was obviously handled sensitively, the quick turnaround was encouraging to see in terms of the sort of influence I want to have in this role.”



PC Andy Blyth.

Meanwhile, the other half of Andy’s work involves smaller focus groups, centred around the use of virtual reality headsets taking participants through a decision-making sequence on knives.

The 57-year-old describes this activity as being generally very well-received, creating a safe environment for pupils to explore the various outcomes of the gameplay.

Outside of his educational duties, Andy also oversees the use of knife search poles at his partner schools, where pupils will be screened for the possession of weaponry through both walk-through and handheld metal detectors.

Changes in policy to protect both officers and young people mean teachers and school staff must now directly action the pole searches, although police are still able to be present.

“There is a much bigger responsibility for schools now in this respect, but everyone I work with has really stepped up,” added Andy, who is also temporarily covering three sixth-form colleges as a SIPO.

“Having proper partnerships like this is so important to us as a force, because that is what gives us the platform to be an effective and visible presence to the young people we serve.

“Essentially, we want our work to be diversionary – the better we can educate them now, the less work there is for police and criminal justice system to do later down the line.”

While Andy points out the impact of his SIPO work on crime prevention is not always straightforward to measure, he says the positive feedback he has received from schools is reflected in the productive conversations he often enjoys with pupils.

Many of his assemblies have been concluded with a Q & A session, where he will be open and honest with audiences when drawing on his own experience of some of the ‘gruesome’ knife crime incidents he has witnessed in his career – something he says is generally appreciated and handled maturely.

Even a handful of more challenging interactions with pupils have proved useful in their own way, providing Andy with some learnings of his own.

“What I have realised is that a joker in the pack can often be treating the topic insensitively because they are uncomfortable about it in some way, and I can then address that with them individually,” Andy explained.

“For everything I hope I am helping my schools to discover, the fact I am discovering things myself goes to show how much this role has rejuvenated me in the Force.

“After 20 years of going straight from job to job on response, I think it was the right time for me to see what difference I could make over the longer term.

“And I feel like I am doing exactly that, which is really pleasing, because it’s nothing less than what our young people deserve,” he ended.



## SEMINAR DATES

# Are you approaching retirement?

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

**M**onthly 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 July FULLY BOOKED**

**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](mailto: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**

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# Aamir's dual roles making a difference on the streets and in the classroom

**W**hen the door closed on Aamir Nore's ambitions of entering regular policing, it never became a question of if he'd be able to serve his community – only how he would find a way to do it.

During his joining process in 2008, he had a start date confirmed as a PC when an unexpected recruitment freeze his career plans suddenly thrown into uncertainty.

But not to be deterred by the misfortune, the then 19-year-old decided he couldn't wait to make his mark in West Midlands Police and pivoted to the Special Constabulary.

From here, he made a great success of his initial duties in a Birmingham city centre neighbourhood team and hasn't looked back.

"Of course, having my path to becoming a regular officer blocked at the last stage was disappointing, but I still felt so strongly about representing the police in some capacity because I wanted to help people and guide them towards good choices," Aamir said.



Aamir Nore on duty.

"All I then needed was a new day job to aim for – something that would still fit in with these same values.

"Eventually, in my third year of being a Special, I began training to become a teacher. From the start, I knew my specialist subject would be religious education (RE), because I'd always been passionate about faith, belief, culture and tradition.

"Fast-forward to now, and this working set-up I have ended up with could be better than what I originally had in mind. Speaking today, I certainly wouldn't have it any other way – that's for sure."

Now 35, Aamir currently works at Ark Boulton Academy in Small Heath, where he directs the secondary school's personal development curriculum in addition to teaching RE and citizenship.

He says these responsibilities allow his



Aamir in his teaching role.

impact as an educator to go beyond academic attainment and into 'shaping characters'.

"Within the curriculum I oversee, it's all about developing students holistically as people. I think it's crucial the younger gets that from different areas of society – including the education system and the police, so to be able to contribute to this in both ways is a privilege."

Elaborating on the common ground between being a teacher and a police officer, Aamir discussed his approach to behaviour management in the classroom.

"This is another key area of teaching, because when standards drop, I obviously want to bring them back up but do so in the least invasive way I can," he added.

"My students know exactly what I do as a volunteer, but it's not about using that to scare them. If someone disrupts the learning environment, I am big on restorative conversations, where I can explain what consequences their actions could have in wider society.

"For example, I might tell someone their aggressive behaviour could be a public order offence in the real world – and I know, because I help to enforce those. And, to their credit, they're usually very receptive to this kind of response."

This only covers one direction of a two-way street, nevertheless, with Aamir pointing out his two roles very much complement one another.

Over a decade of teaching experience underpins his even longer stint as a Special, where he continues to go from strength to strength on the frontline as a Special Sergeant on response at Newton Police Station.

Here, he can take a slightly firmer approach to difficult interactions with young people, while keeping an emphasis on the learning being as important as the discipline.

On countless occasions, he has used his background in education to find solutions to both crime itself and the attitude of the teenager behind the act.

"I will ask them what school they attend, and I can then offer to go down this path with them. It's not an easy way out, by any means, but again, it's also not just about punishing them either.

"I can then use the contacts I have built to get in touch with different schools and recommend some kind of intervention.

"It happened recently with a robbery of three mobile phones in Nechells. In the end, the phones were returned and the offender was arrested – all facilitated between me and his school."

For Aamir, however, the benefits of being a cop who teaches as a day job go beyond any specific incident as he is helping drive positive change in the world around him.

"This is what continues to motivate me on both fronts. I want to see my local community thrive in every way possible, and I think the younger generation should always be at the heart of that," he explained.

"When you see some teenagers getting caught up the likes of knife crime and gang culture, it takes strong role models to show them they have a much better purpose in life.

"If I can keep making that difference out on the streets and in the classroom, then I will look back on what I have achieved in my career with a lot of pride."

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# Captain proud to lead West Midlands Police to national success

The captain of West Midlands Police Ladies Hockey Team says she was proud to lead the side to victory in a national cup competition.

The West Midlands Police team beat the Met 6-1 in the final after a narrow 3-2 victory against Merseyside in the last four.

They had earlier come through a pool stage featuring Police Scotland, Kent, Northumbria and the Met.

Team captain PC Sade Gerald said: "I'm very proud of the team. The last time we won it was when we hosted it back in 2019. We lost last year on penalty flicks in the final, so it's been a long time coming. Part of me felt relieved, I think it's the pressure of being captain.

"It was a really good standard of competition. We had a mix, from national league players to grass roots players, and some who are relatively new to the sport."

Sade joined West Midlands Police eight years ago and has been captain of the hockey team for the past five years.

An attacker, she represents Stourport Hockey Club in the national leagues and has been playing for 19 years having played at school.

Sade said playing in the tournament was a great way to relax away from the job.

"The teamwork, the camaraderie, and building contacts is great," she explained.

"But my team talk was about us not forgetting why we're there. It's one thing that we all look forward to. We get special leave and it's all about us having fun and trying to relax.

"We're all from different areas of the Force, we all see horrible things every day but it's the one weekend we all look forward to where we can enjoy ourselves – and that's the main thing.

"We're a good laugh. Everyone gets on really well. And you if you spoke to any of the other teams, I'm pretty sure they'll say we're the ones that are the party freaks."

The tournament was held in Chelmsford and organised by Essex Police.

It was attended by women's hockey lead Temporary Assistant Commissioner Rachel



The hockey team.

Williams of the Met and by Essex Assistant Chief Constable Lucy Morris.

They presented awards, which were funded by the tournament [sponsors National Police Healthcare Scheme](#).

Sade was full of praise for the organisers.

"The host teams always make such a big effort when it comes to hosting," she said.

"Thankfully, this year the weather also turned up, which always sets out well for a good tournament. There was a lot of sun lotion used.

"There were some really high-ranking

officers there as well. They made a big effort and were really supportive, which was great."

The tournament was also attended by Baloo, a retired Essex Police dog, and her handler Mandy Chapman, a retired handler from the Met.

The pair were awarded The Kennel Club Hero Dog Award this year at Crufts in recognition of their outstanding work in supporting police officers and the wider community.

"We got a team photo with Baloo, which made everyone happy," Sade said.

Now Sade is encouraging West Midlands Police Federation members to get involved with the Force ladies hockey section which was founded in 1959.

"We're always looking for new players to come and join us," she said. "It's a great way to relax and to make new friends."

[Contact Sade](#) for more information about the ladies' hockey team.

**“WE’RE ALL FROM DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE FORCE, WE ALL SEE HORRIBLE THINGS EVERY DAY BUT IT’S THE ONE WEEKEND WE ALL LOOK FORWARD TO WHERE WE CAN ENJOY OURSELVES – AND THAT’S THE MAIN THING.”**



# Benevolent Fund delivers on promise after birthday celebrations

**W**est Midlands Police Benevolent Fund has held its Annual General Meeting.

The fund's chair, John Williams, started the meeting, which was held on Friday 16 May, by recapping on last year's special anniversary celebrations and explaining how the charity has been busy fulfilling its promise of providing the best level of support to members.

So far this year, the charity has pushed forward with improvements to its website and membership benefits, including:

- **The Death in Service Grant has increased to £4,000 with £25 per week to all surviving children until their 18th birthday**
- **Membership subscription fees have been frozen for the 13th consecutive year and remain at £2 per month for serving members and £1 for retired**
- **The holiday home prices have also been frozen for another year**
- **Enhanced treatment is available for members at St Michael's Lodge, including residential physiotherapy, wellbeing and mental health support.**

The Benevolent Fund has provided much needed treatment and care to sick and injured officers and police staff. During last year alone, £38,280 was spent on providing specialist treatment and mental health support. A further £7,160 was given out, through the sickness voucher scheme, to members off work.

The Ben Fund has also branched out across the Force to provide new posters about its membership benefits. The posters now feature in 20 wellbeing rooms across the Force, with similar posters displayed around Lloyd House and Tally Ho! If you're not already a member of the Benevolent Fund, why not look out for the posters and scan the QR code to join?

Over the course of last year, the police charity gave out £335,563 to support its members.

Here are some of the grants given out from



applications received.

- **£4,071** for a retired member for a specialist mobility wheelchair
- **£12,000** for a retired police officer member for a walk-in shower bathroom conversion following progressive dementia and mobility illness
- **£2,019** for a serving staff member for rent and key money to move following domestic violence

- **£5,440** for a retired member for a stairlift following mobility issues caused by cancer, and
- **£3,480** for two funeral drapes for use by the Force and NARPO.

A grant of £16,077 was awarded to retired member Steve Knight who was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) just a few years after retirement. The grant paid for an internal lift, driveway work and specialist ramps.

Steve joined West Midlands Police back in 1987 and signed up to the Benevolent Fund soon after, never doubting for a minute its good work.

Upon his retirement in February 2017, Steve wisely carried on with his membership, feeling fortunate that during his 30-years' police service, he never actually found himself in a position where he needed to ask for help.

However, in December 2023, at the young age of 58, he was diagnosed with MND. Due to the progressive nature of Steve's illness, it quickly became apparent that his home was no longer equipped to meet his changing needs.

With his MND illness developing at pace, the Benevolent Fund's Board of Trustees and Operations Committee were unanimous in offering support. A grant enabled the family to

cover the remaining cost in full of the building adaption work so desperately needed at Steve and Sam's home. This meant the family could free up their finances to put towards other things for themselves.

The grant enabled their driveway to be resurfaced and the installation of assistance ramps and rails to the front and rear of their home. The Ben Fund also paid for an internal lift system to be installed so that Steve can continue to go upstairs independently.

In a message of thanks, Steve said: "I've lost so much since my diagnosis, the ability to walk any distance, cycle, play golf, dress myself and wrestle with my grandsons, to mention just a few of the things that I miss.

"But I still have so much to enjoy and I endeavour to live life to the full as best as I

can. Having served with the police for 30 years I know all about the camaraderie with my fellow officers.

I never considered the Benevolent Fund would feel such a continual part of the police team spirit but it does. Words cannot express my thanks for the support given. And I just want to thank all the members the staff, chair, and committee members for the support and work they do.

**"I NEVER CONSIDERED THE BENEVOLENT FUND WOULD FEEL SUCH A CONTINUAL PART OF THE POLICE TEAM SPIRIT BUT IT DOES. WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS MY THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT GIVEN. AND I JUST WANT TO THANK ALL THE MEMBERS THE STAFF, CHAIR, AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE SUPPORT AND WORK THEY DO."**

"I have a wonderful family and friends who are all such a support to me. And the police family is part of that support. Thank you again."

Steve's daughter, Rebekah, recently completed this year's London Marathon in aid of the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MND). She completed the 26-mile course in an impressive four hours, 2 -minutes. Huge congrats to her for successfully completing the epic distance and for raising more than £10,000.

If you would like to support Rebekah's fundraising efforts here is the link to her JustGiving Page <https://www.justgiving.com/page/becky-knight-1730068901659>

"I am glad we have been able to show our support again this past year," explained John Williams.

"This would not be possible without the continue support of our members. We are steadily growing in numbers and are hoping to celebrate a new membership figure of 10,000 towards the end of the year!"

The West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund provides many membership benefits for its £2 per month subscription fee. For more details about these and how to join visit [www.wmpben.co.uk](http://www.wmpben.co.uk)



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