



DECEMBER 2016

# YOUR VOICE

A photograph of two men in dark suits and ties. The man on the right is holding a silver trophy with both hands. They are standing in front of a wall with a large blue and white logo that partially shows the letters "P" and "F".

**Tim's our  
Community Service  
Award winner** – See Pages 3 - 5

# You can't get a degree in common sense



By Simon Newport, Chairman of North Wales Police Federation

## Is it essential to be educated to degree level in order to join the police?

This is a question that has been raised on many occasions over the past 12 months and will, no doubt, continue to be asked as the College of Policing pushes forward plans to see all future recruits educated to degree level to make them eligible to join the service.

Many have spoken for and against the idea and many of those making such comments do so on the back of an academic background. So what of the uneducated view from a serving officer?

Well, it is my opinion that degree level education is not necessary to ensure that today's modern police service copes with future demands. Given such a bold unscientific statement, let me be allowed to qualify why I say this.

Modern policing, as we would generally recognise it today, commenced in 1829 and

back then its founding fathers came from all walks of life and backgrounds; that has pretty much remained unchanged through to the modern day. We are all aware that Sir Robert Peel, the founding father of the police service, famously said: "The police are the public and the public are the police." No mention of the police being better educated than the public?

In the United Kingdom, we have a proud and envied police service that is made up of a cross-section of the country's communities and it works. Not everyone in the communities we work in has a degree, not everyone is educated, not everyone has common sense and not everyone wants to be educated to a higher level and this would bar a vast number of exemplary candidates to the police service.

It is reported that today 43 per cent of police recruits have degrees presumably with the debts that are reportedly associated with a degree course – on average £44,000. Is this a possible corruption risk even before you start your career?

Critics and academics would say that we need to improve. I accept this. We must be seen to adapt and improve on a regular basis but would having an educated degree level workforce help us achieve that improvement?

While you can teach subject matter and reward people for passing examinations, you can't teach common sense and you can't teach life experience. No amount of certification or diplomas will help you out on a rowdy high street in any town on a weekend night if you have no common sense or cannot speak to people on the correct level. As yet, I am unaware of any degree course that rewards such attributes.

I also see an all degree level educated

workforce becoming frustrated at promotion and career development opportunities as most pass the promotion examinations and are unable to progress due to the lack of vacancies. I would call it the inverted funnel effect.

The cynic in me would say that this is the aim in order to make the future police service less attractive to career lifers whereby the frustration in not being able to progress and achieve promotion would see many leaving the service before triggering pension benefits. But I could be wrong.

On a slightly different subject, but one that could also affect the recruitment of potentially outstanding recruits, is tattoos.

Like many forces, North Wales Police has recently reviewed its Tattoo Policy. The Police Federation of England of Wales has also recently concluded its own survey due to the inconsistent way that current national guidance was being interpreted across the 43 police forces of England and Wales with regards to tattoos.

An overwhelming 80 per cent of those surveyed said their confidence in a police officer would not be affected if they had visible tattoos and further to that 60 per cent of those surveyed by Ipsos Mori said they believe people with visible tattoos should be allowed to join the police service.

With statistics like these, and the fact that forces across the country constantly tell us that they are modernising and keeping up with modern trends, think of this. One in three young people now have tattoos, it is almost a modern day rite of passage and many of those will presumably have degree level education. Unless a common sense approach is adopted nationally in the near future, the service, as a whole, will no doubt miss out on a huge amount of potential talented recruits.

Finally, as this is the Winter and Christmas edition of *Your Voice*, it only remains for me to wish you, your partners and families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and to hope that you all remain safe if you are working over the Christmas festive period.

**Cover photo:** DC Tim Bird (left) receives his Community Service Award from Chief Constable Mark Polin.

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# Difficult task for community award judges



North Wales PCC Arfon Jones congratulates nominee PC Gemma Poulton.

Full story on Pages 4 and 5 

# Difficult task for community award judges



*PC Sue Carrington receives her certificate from PCC Arfon Jones.*

**By Richard Eccles, Secretary of North Wales Police Federation**

**This year's North Wales Police Federation Community Service Awards drew a strong field of nominations from across the Force area making judging a difficult process.**

The awards ceremony was attended by the PCC Arfon Jones, Deputy PCC Ann Griffith together with our Chief Officer Team and local Assembly Members Ann Jones and Mark Isherwood.

Among the nominations was PC Gemma Poulton who was Beat Manager for Caia Park in Wrexham which has a population of more than 14,000 residents and creates some of the highest demand in the county.

Gemma was highlighted as she was the

sole Caia Park Community Beat Manager for a considerable time prior to a restructured team being implemented.

During that period Gemma was instrumental in tackling significant issues on Caia Park in terms of anti-social behaviour and crime.

Gemma needed to address a culture within the community whereby those who were suffering were often too scared to report matters to police.

Working closely with the local authority, Gemma evidenced great problem-solving skills and progressed a largely untested piece of legislation and applied for closure orders on two private premises.

Gemma was able to work with the private landlords in order to ensure those

who were causing the problems in that area did not return.

Since the evictions, Caia Park has seen increased public confidence and also a reduction in the ASB and crime to such an extent that local councillors were soon remarking that they had never seen the area as quiet. The local communities were also full of praise and some went on to describe how their quality of life had been improved.

Gemma's nomination included the following tribute: "PC Poulton was the sole CBM for a considerable length of time and has always remained professional, enthusiastic and dedicated to her role of policing such a challenging area. The way in which she has tirelessly dedicated herself to the area and successfully managed the

team of PCSOs is commendable and has had a huge impact on the local community."

Also nominated was PC Sue Carrington who had an extensive record of serving the Flintshire communities as a CBM from the inception of Community Beat Managers in North Wales.

Sue was very much regarded as the font of all knowledge for all things related to community policing and was the first point of reference for colleagues looking for solutions to their problems.

Sue opted for a change of role and moved to the Safer Communities Unit in Wrexham aiming to reduce demand within Wrexham.

Sue is absolutely instrumental in this role, using her vast experience to bring together key partners when various issues are identified ensuring that all partners rise to address their responsibilities.

Sue is always looking at ways to develop skills and processes, both for her own benefit and that of colleagues, to make day to day tasks less onerous and the organisation more efficient.

Sue is engaging, enthusiastic, popular, friendly, approachable and just very, very nice!

Recent evidence of Sue's involvement in projects are:

1. Wrexham Town Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) – recently introduced legislation, aimed at addressing ASB within Wrexham town.
2. Wrexham Town Action Plan – linked to the PSPO, assisting with quality of life issues within Wrexham.
3. New Psychoactive Substances Pathway Group – addressing the recent surge in the use of NPS, engaging with service providers to offer a recovery pathway.

All are significant pieces of work in their own right and all contribute to the NWP vision of a Safer North Wales and all of which have drawn positive comment from local councillors.

This year's overall Community Service Award winner was DC 139 Tim Bird from Crime Services.

Tim was recognised for his voluntary work as a member of Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation (OVMRO).

A former professional mountaineering and water sports instructor, Tim has been a volunteer member of the Mountain Rescue Team (MRT) for 15 years.

The mountains and rivers of Snowdonia form a unique landscape and attractions for



DC Tim Bird (left) receives his Community Service Award from Chief Constable Mark Polin.

tourists and outdoor pursuits enthusiasts. The outdoor community is an important economic part of the North Wales region bringing much valued tourist income and jobs to the area.

Over a period on 15 years, Tim has contributed during both his North Wales Police roles and as a volunteer Mountain Rescue Team member:

#### **Mountain fatalities:**

Snowdonia has between 10 and 15 mountain-related deaths per year.

Tim has used a combination of his policing skills as an Investigator and professional mountaineering skills and National Governing Body qualifications to take a lead role in investigating and training of both MRT and Police in the Investigation and Reporting of Mountain Fatalities. The Fatal Incident Protocol course run by Tim has trained more than 120 staff and has been recognised as best practice by the national College of Policing.

In addition, Tim has attended and investigated as a community volunteer numerous mountain fatalities and then produced expert opinion reports and given evidence to the coroner. The combination of Tim's work with in the Mountain Rescue community linked with his policing skills has helped many bereaved families come to terms with the loss of a loved one in the

mountains of Snowdonia.

#### **Mountain safety:**

Tim has played a key role in setting up 'Mountain Safe', a multi-agency community project which has provided community outreach to all mountain users via awareness campaigns and training courses to reduce the impact of mountain incidents in North Wales.

#### **Mountain Rescue call-outs:**

Tim has been a volunteer member of OVMRO for 15 years and has attended more than 500 Mountain Rescue incidents. Many incidents occur during extreme weather and at night and require a high level of team working with MRT and NWP colleagues from all parts of the North Wales community. In recent years Tim has become a Team Leader with OVMRO and now co-ordinates rescue callouts on the mountain and at the MRT base in the Ogwen Valley.

#### **Swiftwater and Flooding incidents:**

In addition to traditional Mountain Rescue incidents, Mountain Rescue Teams in North Wales also provide a Swiftwater Rescue and Flooding response. Tim is a qualified Swiftwater and Flood Rescue instructor and has recently attended as a community volunteer at a number of local, regional and national flooding events.

In addition to winning the award, Tim was able to donate the £1,500 bursary to OVMRO to assist them in building upon their successes in keeping the mountains of Snowdonia a safer place.

Following the awards, Ann Jones AM commented: "I thoroughly enjoyed the evening as I always do and I always find the awards a true inspiration and a credit to both the Force and your organisation."

**“ PC Poulton was the sole CBM for a considerable length of time and has always remained professional, enthusiastic and dedicated to her role of policing such a challenging area.**



# 'A problem shared is a problem halved'

By Jonathan Ashton

Well, I've finally been collared to do an article, I've kept my head down for the last three years but Richie (Eccles, Federation Secretary) has finally caught up with me!



I am the Constables' representative for Flintshire and have been in post for nearly three years now, juggling the role with being a response officer in South Flintshire.

During my tenure, I have advised many officers on a variety of issues including health and safety, performance, misconduct, UPP and the old favourite, over-time enquiries; Bobbies are still inextricably linked to the that well-known policing phrase: "What can I claim for?"

I have represented officers in discipline and UPP cases and take a keen interest in officers' wellbeing and any associated subsequent welfare issues. There is nothing worse than worrying about work-related matters as it impacts life at home and I will actively encourage officers to seek advice at the earliest opportunity. You will be surprised as to how much support the Federation can provide.

Life on response can be tough and equally rewarding. There are constant issues with staffing and maintaining DSL - that didn't exist some 25 years ago when I was

parading on at Wrexham with 12 officers on a rota, two dog handlers and two traffic cars on for the area. How times have changed.

There were no computers to speak of apart from the one "Bob the collator" would use, many of you will still remember him.

I still have my wool trousers and until recently I could still fit into my original tunic, unfortunately, kebabs on lates and the trusty "Big tasty" have put paid to that along with the common notion of "eating on the hoof". I am a firm believer that, wherever possible, you should always try to take your full refreshment break, you're entitled to it and that 45-minute window gives time for your batteries to recharge.

Policing has changed immeasurably in the last 25 years and we are now faced with the massive challenge of constantly dealing with a multitude of mental health issues, concerns for safety, missing persons, sexting, CSE, the list goes on.

The modern day officer has become a unique breed dealing with the woes and troubles of modern day society but also, crucially, we can be the beacon that shines out and reaches out to victims. It is vital that this continues and it never ceases to amaze me how the police service meet and deal with new challenges.

Over the past three years I have kept officers up to date with the latest news and will continue to do so. I have an open door policy and always believe in the adage, a problem shared is a problem halved. If there are any issues that you are concerned with then don't hesitate to contact me.

**“There is nothing worse than worrying about work-related matters as it impacts life at home and I will actively encourage officers to seek advice at the earliest opportunity. You will be surprised as to how much support the Federation can provide.”**

## Public confidence unaffected by officers having tattoos

**The vast majority of people are not bothered if police officers have tattoos, according to the results of a Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) survey carried out earlier this year.**

And 81 per cent of respondents said a visible tattoo would make no difference to their confidence in the officer.

The survey, conducted by Ipsos Mori, also revealed:

- Nearly 60 per cent of the public who responded said they would feel comfortable in dealing with an officer who has a visible tattoo – slightly higher than they would with doctors or teachers (both 56 per cent)
- 60 per cent of those surveyed believe people with visible tattoos should be allowed to join the police service
- More than half of the officers who took part said they felt comfortable or very comfortable working with colleagues with visible tattoos
- 48 per cent of officers surveyed said they had a tattoo, with 17 per cent having a visible tattoo
- Many officers said their tattoos helped them to relate to the public, diffusing situations and that officers should be judged on their work, rather than tattoos.

Vicki Martin, who has been leading on the work on behalf of the PFEW, welcomed the results: "What we need to see now is a sensible approach to officers in the service and to potential candidates who want to join the service, otherwise we are missing out on a huge talent pool.

"Policies need to be modern and flexible to ensure the public get the best people delivering their policing, being representative of the communities we serve."

The research – which was two-fold and asked views of officers as well as the public – was undertaken because of the inconsistent way national guidance was being interpreted among forces across the country.

The Federation will now work with Leicestershire Chief Constable Simon Cole who is leading a small group looking at appearance standards and specifically tattoos.

PFEW is seeking a national standard so that there is an up to date professional policy fit for the modern day police service.

# Do attitudes need to change with the times?

By Kim Owen,  
Chair, Sergeants'  
Branch Board

**One subject that has seen a lot of publicity in recent months – and a lot of debate within Force – has been the issue of police officers with tattoos.**



Here in North Wales we have reviewed our own Force policy on the matter during the year.

It is a subject in which I have a personal interest. I have two tattoos and I am considering a third which I would like to be visible on the back of my neck.

Following all the debate, I have found myself asking, as a police officer with nearly 19 years' service and a mother of two, if having tattoos makes me any different to anyone else.

Do they make me less capable of doing my role as an officer? Do they make me less of a role model to my children? Do they change how I deal with people? The answer to all the above for me was no. I am still the same person, still that same officer and still capable of carrying out my duties professionally.

So why do people still have issues with tattoos and feel people should be discriminated against, treated differently or, at the worst, refused a job just because they have a visible tattoo? As long as they are not offensive or racist, then tattoos should not be the barrier to exclude potentially the most able job candidates.

My own view is that attitudes need to change with the times as more and more people, young and old, are hitting the tattoo shops and getting personal body art.

But the police service is not alone in having concerns around tattoos.

ACAS recently raised concerns that employers are missing talented workers because of negative attitudes towards people who have tattoos. It pointed out that dress codes in the workplace must not be discriminatory, suggesting employees ought to be consulted on changes in working practices. It also highlighted that employers with a diverse workforce can reap many business benefits as they can 'tap into the

knowledge and skills of staff from a wide range of backgrounds'.

As was reported by one newspaper, Margaret Mountford, Lord Sugar's former right-hand woman, spoke out saying that she thought tattoos are 'unhygienic and a real problem for British youngsters'. She claimed having a tattoo decreased their chances of obtaining and holding down a job and that she had even refused to have her hair washed by a stylist with tattoos!

I question if it is right to treat people this way just because they have a tattoo. This is an archaic attitude. I regularly say to my children: "Don't ever judge people on their looks and always treat others with dignity and respect."

Studies still reveal some type of stigma surrounding tattoos, although they are now gaining a wider social acceptance. One in five adults now has tattoos and research shows they are most popular among 30 to 39-year-olds. Figures also show a third of young people now have tattoos.

I found it interesting while researching this article that David Dimbleby had a scorpion tattoo on his shoulder when he was 75; Felicity Kendall got her first tattoo at 63 and Dame Judi Dench had one on her right wrist for her 81st birthday. Cheryl Fernandez-Versini (formerly Tweedy and Cole) has a tattoo on her lower back while Samantha Cameron (wife of the former PM) has one on her ankle. Finally, how can we forget David Beckham who sports tattoos?

The UK law on equality in the workplace does not cover employees with tattoos as a protected characteristic; the only exception would be on religious or belief-related markings under the Equality Act.

Yet forces taking a tough line on recruiting staff with tattoos risk losing a group of exceptional future officers. We hear more and more that the police service should recruit to reflect the communities we serve, yet we still have old-fashioned attitudes on tattoos in some forces.

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) is seeking a more consistent approach with its national lead in this area, Inspector Vicki Martin, now part of a working group, led by Chief Constable Simon Cole from Leicestershire, to look at standards of appearance including tattoos.

The group also includes UNISON and the Superintendents' Association and is reporting to the College of Policing. It aims to come up with guidance, fit for modern day policing, to be used by all forces to encourage consistency.

Home Office guidance states that tattoos should 'not cause offence' and are 'acceptable so long as they are not particularly prominent garish or undermine the dignity and authority of the police officer role'.

It also states that candidates for the police force with visible tattoos or facial piercings may be 'eligible for appointment and that each case should be considered on its merits'.

But Vicki is concerned this vague wording has led to some forces rejecting applications from 'very talented' candidates, as the rules are being interpreted differently by all 43 forces.

Research has started with PFEW seeking the views of the public and commissioning two surveys in relation to tattoos and attitudes towards them. The results will be reported to the new group to influence the final guidelines.

I will await the outcome and look forward to seeing a change in the policy and the views nationally, which will enable me to look at my new tattoo sooner rather than later!

Finally, as I sit thinking about where this past year has gone, I cannot believe this article is for the December edition of *Your Voice*. I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. For all those working over the Christmas period, stay safe and look out for each other.

I wish you all the best for 2017 and, in conclusion, never judge a book by its cover!

**“My own view is that attitudes need to change with the times as more and more people, young and old, are hitting the tattoo shops and getting personal body art.”**

# Police bail: 'Government is making a mistake'

By Paul McKeown  
Chair of the North  
Wales Inspectors'  
Branch Board

I can't believe its  
December already.  
Another year  
almost gone.

I think I'm still  
in a state of shock  
over the Brexit vote

and David Cameron resigning. Our new Prime Minister has a heck of a job on her hands.

What has happened to austerity? The politicians seem to have gone very quiet about it.

You will all remember that last year North Wales Police introduced a new Bail Management Policy where set pre-charge bail time limits had to be authorised by specific ranks. This came about as we were aware that the Government was looking at police bail apparently as a result of some high profile cases.

Despite our tightening up on how we do it, we are now facing a potential administrative nightmare when the actual new bail provisions are introduced in the Policing and Crime Bill 2016.

The Bill contains the following:

- There will be a presumption that persons in custody will be released without bail unless certain pre-release conditions are fulfilled.
- Inspectors will now be required to authorise all pre-charge bail for up to 28 days after arrest.
- Superintendents will be required to authorise pre-charge bail from 28 days until three months.
- Magistrates will have to authorise pre-charge bail beyond three months and will require a written submission or in some cases an oral hearing.
- In SFO cases a senior civil servant will be able to extend pre-charge bail beyond three months, up to a maximum of six months, before the courts become involved.
- Extensions up to six months can also be obtained from an Assistant Chief Constable (in consultation with a senior prosecutor) in complex cases



involving the CPS.  
The Bill is currently going through the House of Lords. From reading the debate, it is clear that the Government is not going to back down.

Amendments have been tabled requesting that the initial decisions are made by sergeants and not inspectors and also that initial bail date is moved from 28 days up to 56 days.

But, from what I can see, these will be ignored.

Apparently the Government's view is that it does not look at the extra work required as an administrative burden; it sees it as requiring an appropriate level of intrusive supervision to ensure that pre-charge bail is used appropriately and that investigations are progressed diligently and swiftly.

**“ Frankly, it is obvious they have no idea what is going on in the real world of policing.**

The Government is apparently relying on an Impact Assessment report published alongside the Bill. I've read it. This outlines how the new process will have almost no impact on inspectors and a little on superintendents. I was left spluttering...

The word 'assume' is used repeatedly throughout the report.

Those who have written this impact report think it will take a superintendent 'only' 20 minutes to extend pre-charge bail. But this doesn't appear to have taken into account that the superintendent will have to take representations from the suspect and their solicitor. How long will that take?

They also think that a bail hearing in Magistrates' Court will only take 15 minutes. When was the last time the authors were in a court?

They also don't think there will be any impact on an inspector's time as they are already in custody 24/7? We will have to be if

this goes through; no more going on the streets.

They acknowledge that there may be a 'potential time burden' on those involved.

They point out that, in a worst case scenario by assuming no reduction in the need for bail in spite of the other reforms in the Bill, those officers would need to make 404,000 initial bail decisions and 118,000 bail extensions, or 86 per inspector and 161 per superintendent over the course of a year.

Apparently, the Government does not consider that these numbers are unmanageable for these ranks of police officer to carry out.

Frankly, it is obvious they have no idea what is going on in the real world of policing. When this comes in inspectors and superintendents are going to be snowed under just dealing with Bail issues. We won't have time for much else.

But what gets me is what will all this really change?

Those detainees released without bail (which will likely be the majority of cases going forward given the presumption for release without bail) will continue to operate outside of any statutory limits, meaning that suspects can still remain "under investigation" for inordinate amounts of time.

OK, they won't be on bail, but they will still be 'under investigation'. Will that make them feel any better?

What about the pre-charge conditions we currently put on bailed suspects to protect witnesses and victims? I suspect that we will do this less and less as we find the issue of bail simply a nightmare administratively.

The Government is ignoring the police service's warning that the Bill will hamper our other work. It appears to have forgotten that it has reduced our numbers drastically in recent years.

My own view is that the Government doesn't care, and wants to please its celebrity friends. I think it is making a mistake and will eventually have to either give us more resources or amend the legislation in the coming years as it won't be working.

May I just take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



# Protect the Protectors

The Police Federation of England and Wales is launching a new campaign in early 2017 to highlight that assaults on police officers are an assault on society and that such assaults are unacceptable. The campaign is called 'Protect the Protectors' and will focus on:

- Ensuring officers record the details if they are assaulted
- Pushing for better consistency of recording of police assaults across all 43 forces on crime systems
- Generating public, political and media support that an assault on a police officer is an assault on society; that it is unacceptable
- Highlighting the real number of assaults on police officers in England and Wales and the dangers officers face
- Through lobbying, to see the Sentencing Council review the minimum sentences for those convicted of assaulting an officer and increase the tariff
- Ensuring the judiciary recognises the seriousness of an assault on a police officer and uses the guidelines to deliver maximum sentences
- Promoting and ensuring the seven-point plan is actively adopted by all police forces – assaults on officers should not be treated as secondary to any other assault; officers are victims too if assaulted
- Ensuring that chief officers give proper consideration to double-crewing where appropriate and do not let officers feel vulnerable as a result of the reduction in police officer numbers.

The Federation's Parliamentary Working and Campaign groups have been working for some time on devising campaigns that will achieve a real difference for our members.

Officer assaults is an area the Police Federation feels needs addressing through Parliament and the Sentencing Council to ensure that an assault on a police officer is treated as an assault on society. It should never be seen as an expected part of the role of a police officer by either the officer themselves or the public.

There has been considerable support for this topic with MPs and discussions have started over lasting solutions.

Federation officials held meetings with MPs at both the Labour and Conservative Party conferences and this was followed up by an event in Westminster on police officer safety. This was arranged and supported by Holly Lynch, the Labour MP for Halifax, who

## Assaults on police

**23,394 officers have been assaulted in England & Wales in the last year**

That's almost 2,000 a month. 450 a week. 64 a day. **One every 22 minutes.**

That means a **fifth** of serving officers have been the victims of an assault in the past year.



**If every officer assaulted got together, they would...**

Fill the Royal Albert Hall - four times over

Fill centre court at Wimbledon one and half times over

Be the length of a marathon (26 miles) stood hand to hand at full reach



raised the issue of officer safety in the House of Commons during an evening debate at the start of October. A further debate was held by the opposition (Labour)

on 2 November and again focussed on the issue of police officer safety.

The campaign will be publicised in the media next year, so keep your eyes peeled!

**“ It should never be seen as an expected part of the role of a police officer by either the officer themselves or the public. ”**





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PMGI2260 0816

# The many hats of policing

By Mark Jones,  
Central Sergeants'  
Representative

Back in 2006 North Wales Police hit the headlines locally, nationally and globally when the decision was made, controversially, for police officers to ditch the traditional custodian helmets, flat caps and bowlers and don the baseball cap.



There were strong opinions from both sides of the camp; some promoted the practical benefits of baseball caps while others were outraged about the apparent termination of the much-loved helmet and bowler, romantically associated with the bobby on the beat.

Thankfully, in 2010 common sense prevailed with the re-introduction of the flat cap, helmet and bowler with the baseball cap being used for specific duties only.

It seems 10 years on the debate over hats is back but this time it is not literally but more figuratively. Police officers are not just expected to have a choice of a flat cap, bowler, and helmet but also carry with them a hat-stand brimmed with a variety of other 'hats'. For example, police officers are now expected to wear the hat of a social worker, a paramedic, a child psychologist, a marriage counsellor, a drug and alcohol support worker, an environmental health officer, a fire safety officer... I could go on and on.

We know that policing by virtue is varied and officers have to deal with a wide-ranging spectrum of incidents. But the vast majority of police work contrasts with what the then Home Secretary, Theresa May, clearly stated in her speech to the ACPO and police authorities' national conference in June 2010 when she said: "Your job is nothing more, and nothing less, than to cut crime."

In the shadow of deep cuts to policing and other public sectors, all agencies are asked to do more with less and it simply isn't possible. From my experience working and supervising front-line officers, the demands placed on them to fill the various

'hats' is increasing day by day. I fear we are at a tipping point.

It should be no surprise to Mrs May, now Prime Minister, that the police are not cutting crime, however, I emphasise that this is not through any fault of their own. How are they expected to do this when they have to take on the role of other professions when they have neither had the training or expertise in that field? How are they expected to cut crime when the majority of their time is diverted, dealing with social issues that shouldn't even come to the police?

The fact remains that policing is a 24/7 operation and when others clock-off for the weekend, the Bank Holiday, the festive periods, it's policing that remains constant. Questions have to be asked to the most senior of politicians, police management and the public as a whole as to what the police should be dealing with. We cannot sustain this model of trying to deal with the world's problems on our own any longer and it's time other partners took some of the slack.

With the introduction of the Managed Response Unit (MRU) earlier this year, the principal aim was to 'review slow-time incidents to assess the threat, harm, risk and vulnerability in order to direct a suitable response, where appropriate resolving matters without the requirement to deploy a police officer'.

Initial feedback from the Central trial seems positive; so much so that the unit is now expanding to cover the entire Force. Will this work in the long run? Will the actual demand on the police reduce? I honestly don't know. But we've got to explore all opportunities.

Police officers will always do their best in a situation and, of course, they will never turn away from someone who is in need, but it's time to re-group and focus our



efforts on the areas where we really need to be, based on our establishment numbers and resources available.

If the powers-that-be determine that we will still continue to service all needs then there has to be a significant reduction in forms and unnecessary bureaucracy combined with enhanced training. A simple crime investigation now involves a plethora of form-filling. Despite Government decrees that red-tape must be cut within the public sectors, new procedures and operating methods are being introduced or amended on a regular basis. But the training and guidance for officers is very much lacking. An email is simply not sufficient. In an ever-changing world, we need to ensure that our colleagues are adequately equipped to face whatever demand they face.

So now is the time to decide what hat we actually wear. Is it the traditional custodian helmet or bowler and deal with cutting crime, no more, no less, or do we venture into more unfamiliar territory? Either way it is vital that the officers on the front-line are sufficiently informed, trained and equipped as well as being supported by an actual colleague being next to them. The police are infamous for being flexible in adapting to an ever-developing situation but they can't do this alone. It's not safe, it's not fair. Everyone has their part to play and the time has come for other agencies to up their game.

In the meantime, we'll just keep juggling the numerous hats with the hope we don't drop one as I have a feeling their original owners won't be too keen on having them back!

**“ We cannot sustain this model of trying to deal with the world's problems on our own any longer and it's time other partners took some of the slack. ”**

## Cadets represent Force at memorial service

**Police Cadets represented North Wales Police at the National Police Memorial Day Service.**

Cadets Gethin Thomas and Aaron Davies Thomas, who are both based with the Western Cadets in Bangor, were privileged to represent the Welsh forces at the service held at St Paul's Cathedral, London alongside Chief Constable Mark Polin.

The North Wales Police Cadets were joined by their fellow Cadets from the City of London, the Met, Cleveland and Cambridgeshire Police.

Both Gethin and Aaron, who are students at Coleg Menai in Bangor, assisted the guardsmen at St Paul's during the service. They also had the privilege to line a guard of honour for HRH Prince Charles and had the opportunity to talk with the Prince about their experiences and learning.

PS Ian Roberts who accompanied the Cadets said: "This was a moving service with representatives from UK forces, dignitaries and friends and family of fallen colleagues. It was a unique experience for the Cadets to represent the organisation."

Western Cadets are a group of 14 to 17-year-olds from Gwynedd and Anglesey areas who give up their time to volunteer in the community and to learn about police law and develop their skills.

They meet weekly and follow a national programme of leadership, team building and an introduction to police studies. The team also volunteer at public events and are mostly dependable on charitable donations.

The Cadets began their two-year programme in September 2015. Volunteer Police Cadets are also based in Rhyl and Deeside.



# 'We m

**HRH The Prince of Wales joined the Home Secretary, police officers and family members at this year's National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) service at St Paul's Cathedral in London.**

The 13th annual memorial day honoured police officers who have died or been killed in the line of duty.

Prince Charles, patron of the NPMD charity, joined a congregation of more than 2,000 people including 40 Chief Constables and a number of dignitaries.

He paid tribute to the police service in a foreword to the commemorative brochure: "For many of us, the security challenges of today further underscore the importance of the police and their ongoing commitment to protecting us all, despite the inevitable risks that they face on a daily basis."

Amber Rudd, attending her first memorial day as Home Secretary, gave a reading and said: "The police show extraordinary bravery day in, day out, tackling dangerous situations in order to keep our families, communities and country safe. It is tragic when a police officer loses their life, protecting their community, and we must never forget their sacrifice."

"It is my honour to take part in National Police Memorial Day and pay tribute to the courageous police officers who have fallen in



Photos courtesy of Anderson Photography

# ust never forget'



the line of duty and the families that are left behind."

The names of officers who have lost their lives during the past year were read by national Federation chairman Steve White during the service: Constable Douglas Wiggins, Police Scotland; Constable Sahib Lalli, Metropolitan Police Service; and Constable Dave Phillips, Merseyside Police.

Candles were lit by relatives mourning their loved ones and in remembrance of officers throughout the country who have lost their lives. This year's candles were lit by eight-year-old Abigail Phillips, daughter of PC Dave Phillips; Gaynor James, mother of PC Andrew Lloyd James, South Wales Police; Andrea Irvine, widow of part-time Constable Kenneth Thomas Irvine, Police Service of Northern Ireland; and Elaine Gordon, daughter of Sergeant Alan Ewen Gordon, Grampian Police.

Prayers were led by Angus Morrison, brother of DC James Morrison, Metropolitan Police; Alice Fisher, granddaughter of Reserve Constable William Wallace Allen, Royal Ulster Constabulary; Paul Bone, father of PC Fiona Bone, Greater Manchester Police; and Chief Constable Alan Pughsley QPM, Kent Police.

There was silence as petals of remembrance, representing all who have lost their lives, fell from the Whispering Gallery as the orchestra played 'Abide With Me' and the Last Post was sounded.

Inspector Joe Holness QPM, founder of NPMD, said: "For me personally, the day was undoubtedly the most poignant service in the history of National Police Memorial Day. This was my last service as national co-ordinator and to gather again where the inaugural service took place is somewhat surreal.

"National Police Memorial Day was an idea borne out of tragedy and I would never have dreamed that the charity and service would progress to have the standing it has today. My aim was to honour my fallen colleagues with a fitting annual service of remembrance and bring the nation together to do so.

"I extend my gratitude to everyone who attended today's service and for their ongoing support. It was a day filled with emotion but also with immense pride, and I know it meant a lot to the families and friends of our fallen colleagues to have our patron, The Prince of Wales, with us today."

Speaking about the service and its importance, Robin Phillips, father of PC David Phillips, said: "This service is important to us as we approach the first anniversary of Dave's tragic death. All of Dave's family, and the

families of those other officers we have lost, gain solace in knowing that they, and the sacrifice they made, is never forgotten. It is also a comfort for those families who may have lost their loved ones many years ago to come together and draw strength from meeting others who share their sense of pain and loss."

As part of the service The National Police Air Service (NPAS) and The Police Service of Northern Ireland together conducted a formation fly past using three of the helicopters from the National Police Air Service fleet and an Islander aircraft from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

The service is held on the last Sunday of September each year and rotates around England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## We will remember them

*By Barry Andrews*

On Sunday 25 September 2016 I was honoured to attend the 13th National Police Memorial Day service which was held in St Paul's Cathedral in London.

More than 4,000 police officers have died while on duty in the past 180 years. However, this sacrifice and dedication to duty remained largely unrecognised until Inspector Joe Holness of Kent Police began a campaign to rectify this following the death of a colleague, Constable Jon Odell in December 2000.

His tireless efforts lead to the inaugural service which was also held at St Paul's Cathedral in 2004. Since then the service has been held all over the United Kingdom in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The service is held each year on the nearest Sunday to St Michael's Day. St Michael is the patron saint of police.

This year His Royal Highness Prince Charles, who is Patron of the National Police Memorial Day charity, attended the service. There were 2,000 people there including families of fallen colleagues, dignitaries and many serving and retired officers including most Chief Constables.

The service is now recognised around the world. This was highlighted by the attendance of uniformed officers from Australia, Canada and the USA.

There were readings by the new Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, Met Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe and Steve White, Chair of the Federation of England and Wales.

The most moving moment by far was when eight-year-old Abigail Phillips, daughter of Merseyside's Constable Dave Phillips, stepped forward to light a candle and give a short reading to remember those who died from police forces in England. This was followed by family members representing Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland also lighting candles.

Silence was kept during which 4,000 petals of remembrance, representing all who have lost their lives, descended from the gallery. At this stage the orchestra played 'Abide With Me' and the Last Post was sounded. It was a very moving moment. I was sitting next to a husband and wife from a Canadian police force. They both began to cry and it was clear that many people present were moved to tears at that time.

At the conclusion Prince Charles met the families of those who had taken part in the service in the cathedral's crypt. There was a fly past by the NPAS and a parade of members of the mounted branch. It was pleasing to see the support from hundreds of members of the public who applauded as they watched.

It was the last service as organiser for Inspector Holness as he will soon be retiring. He should be proud of what he has achieved and how important and respected this service is now regarded.





It'll take more than a mag



agic trick to keep your job!

# Custody matters

**By Paul Anderson, North Wales Police Federation, custody lead**

**The pick of a really good bunch of speakers at this year's Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) National Custody Seminar was Inspector Michael Brown, the award-winning Mental Health Cop blogger.**

Inspector Brown, who now looks at mental health issues for the College of Policing, was a stand-in for the Met Commander Christine Jones who leads on mental health for the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and was ill on the day.

Having only got the nod to speak on the day, Insp Brown, despite having no notes, spoke solidly without any hesitation or stumbling for 45 minutes during his conference presentation.

Here was an officer who has the drive to make things better both for those in crisis who find themselves in contact with the police and for those officers who have to find the solutions to problems for which we just are not the primary or most suitable agency.

It was clear that the college is alive to the difficulties front-line officers face when dealing with mental health issues, not least in custody, with Insp Brown spending a significant amount of time discussing common scenarios that face custody sergeants every day.

We were also informed that to coincide with World Mental Health Day on 10 October 2016, the college would release five new mental health training packages to cater for various levels from those who seldom have contact with mental health issues to those who work in street triage teams.

If the passion in his public speaking and blog are anything to go by, then Insp Brown's training package will be of value, I have no doubt.

The seminar, held in Warwick in September, promotes better awareness, knowledge and understanding of what is a complex and high risk area of our business.

The first speaker was Surrey Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave, NPPC lead on custody. He outlined a new six-point strategy for custody nationally then raised matters more relevant to the live custody environment.

The first was the introduction next spring of a new decision-making approach specifically for custody. It goes by the name of the 'fast, frugal trees model' and involves asking a few simple questions to speed up the risk assessment process.

The second, and linked to the first, was around a reduction in the number of deaths in custody in recent years, but highlighting the continued high proportion of mental illness and drug or alcohol addiction in those who

do die in custody which, of course, leads around again to the importance of the risk assessment process in what custody sergeants do.

Unsurprisingly, death and serious incidents in custody was a theme that ran throughout the seminar, with Mr Ephgrave specifically bemoaning the fact that his force has recently lost staff via resignation because they had simply had enough of the length of time investigations into incidents were taking.

Some of his officers had also had mental health issues and some were not deployable on front-line duties because the investigation was still ongoing.

The length of investigations into police officers is something the Federation has been highlighting for a number of years now and it was interesting to hear a chief constable say directly while 'the focus should rightly be on families affected by these incidents that there is a significant welfare issue for officers'.

It remains to be seen whether pressure can be brought to bear on the IPCC, whose chair, Dame Anne Owers was also a speaker at the seminar. She had no option but to recognise the issue of lengthy investigations and explained that the IPCC will be imminently undergoing a 're-structuring' which she hoped would assist in bringing down the time investigations take.

Without any detailed commitment to increased funding or resourcing, I am doubtful whether this 're-structure' will realise any benefits for officers, whether it be following a custody or any other serious incident or investigation incident in terms of more prompt outcomes in the near future.

One delegate pointed out that when a criminal is under investigation they can be arrested, charged, found guilty and have served a significant time in prison within lesser timescales than some officers are being investigated by the IPCC.

Returning to the subject was speaker Juliet Lyon CBE, chair of the Independent Advisory Panel on Death in Custody. The panel's mantra of 'care not custody' is driven by the tragic death of the son of a Women's Institute member of the panel while he was serving a prison sentence for an incident that had been largely down to his mental health.

She acknowledged that while deaths in prison have doubled recently, deaths in police custody remain low but that Prime Minister Theresa May has instructed Amber Rudd, the new Home Secretary, that further reductions must be a priority.

The panel has identified better completion of PER forms, tied in with the risks of transferring and escorting prisoners, and the use of restraint in police custody as areas

for work to be done.

The most controversial speaker of the seminar was the law society's Richard Atkinson, a seasoned defence solicitor, who has sat on various committees and spoke about protecting detainees' rights at the police station.

He challenged custody sergeants for being too keen to refuse bail following charge - placing too many defendants before a court the next day that in all probability would then release them. A lively debate followed which was fascinating yet conducted with decorum.

He went onto to complain about low percentages of detainees who were represented in custody suites and the plight of defence solicitors whose pay and conditions are being eroded due to cuts, with young lawyers apparently being actively discouraged from entering criminal law.

Susan Freeburn from Slater and Gordon spoke about issues that arise from searching detainees, with the scenario of officers looking for drugs in the mouths of detainees generating most discussion.

There was also a presentation from Mark Hill of the Police Estates Group who has provided advice on our new custody suite at Llay. He had some very simple messages about safety in custody including advice to close cell doors behind detainees in the event of a fire evacuation!

He hit the point home with a graphic that showed how quickly the fire at Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam in 2001 spread within the detention centre there after doors had been left open. He also spoke about the 2mm rule which is the same width as £2 coin. Therefore if a £2 coin can fit inside any gap or crack in a custody cell then so can a shoelace or the hook of a bra strap. So with these lessons taken on board and the day of the week being correct, I didn't miss out on 'Top Tips Tuesday' at all, despite being out of Force!

Finally, there was an update on various aspects of law from Michael Zander QC. The most interesting was about the new concordat or official agreement that will ensure that all requests for accommodation for juveniles who are refused bail by custody sergeants are accepted and fulfilled by local authorities.

He also spoke about the difficulties that will so clearly arise with the new Bail Act, when the new law will make it clear that there will always be a presumption of release without bail, even following an arrest for breach of bail! This is one of the most significant pieces of legislation to affect day to day policing in recent times.

I left the seminar having listened to some fascinating talks on subjects that are really relevant to custody, realising ever more that those of you work within custody face unprecedented levels of risk and scrutiny.

I will try to keep you updated with any developments that will help and support you.



# The Botha Disaster Rhosneigr 1941

By Inspector Jason Higgins  
Gwynedd Inspectors' Representative

**Sitting in my office late one Friday afternoon, having battled with a mountain of e-mails for a week, yet another email pops into my inbox. This one is from the DCI. I'd better open it just in case it's important. You know the sort of thing, a last minute request for officers to carry out some task or other.**

I opened the e-mail and it was a request from the Valley Aviation Society for a police officer to attend a ceremony to mark the 75th anniversary of the Botha Disaster in Rhosneigr. What's that all about then? A plane forced to ditch in the sea, a daring attempt at a rescue by two teenagers, heroic actions, many casualties.

My first reaction is to forward the e-mail to the local CSO and ask them to pop along. No, perhaps it would be more appropriate to send a constable? My curiosity gets the better of me and I want to know why they want the police to attend. I open the attachment 'Casualty list' and there's the reason. Two thirds of the way down the list of fatalities is the name PC14 George Cledwyn Arthur, Anglesey Constabulary. Well, that settles it then, I am definitely going to this.

The Blackburn Botha was designed as a medium range bomber shortly before the Second World War. The aircraft became notorious for its lack of power and frequent mechanical failures and was soon rendered obsolete by powerful long range bombers required for cross-Channel operations.

The Botha was relegated to training and transport missions. At 11.30am on Thursday 28 August 1941 Flight L6417 attempted to take off from RAF Valley with a crew of three, a Polish Air Force pilot and two trainee navigators. The flight was a training mission to south west Scotland. Minutes into take-off, the aircraft plunged into the sea half a mile off the coast at Rhosneigr.

The most incredible but tragic chain of events was then set in tow. Having witnessed the crash, two 17-year-old boys - John Wood from Chester and Derrick Baynham from Walton-on Thames - put to sea in a small boat. Showing immense bravery they managed to reach the aircraft and release the seriously injured pilot from the cockpit. They had to leave the other crew members clinging to the aircraft wreckage while they tried to get the pilot to shore. The sea conditions were rough and a short distance from shore they had to get the pilot out of their boat and secured him to a gun emplacement.

Shortly after, the boat capsized throwing them into the sea. Soldiers from the Royal Artillery Coastal Defence Gun Battery had made their way to the beach and formed a human chain, rescuing the two boys and



recovering the pilot who unfortunately died of his injuries in hospital.

Meanwhile in Rhosneigr Harbour another tragic chapter of the tale was unfolding. PC George Arthur, the Rhosneigr village constable, Arthur Owen, a merchant seaman on compassionate shore leave, two soldiers and Evan Jones of the Auxilliary Coastguard put to sea in an old whaling boat to rescue the airmen still in the sea.

The tide had pushed the wrecked aircraft and the airmen closer to shore. They were now only a quarter of a mile away and no doubt the hastily mustered crew of the whaler thought they would be able to save them.

However, the whaler was overturned by a wave before it reached the aircraft. All the men on board were thrown into the sea. In 1941 there were no helicopters and the best the RAF could do was to send up an aircraft full of lifejackets and drop them into the sea in the hope that the men would get to them and survive long enough to get to shore. Sadly, it was not to be. The wind blew the falling lifejackets away from the men. On that fateful day eight lives were lost including that of 29-year-old PC George Arthur.

Sunday morning 28 August 2016 has arrived and I am at the fire station in Rhosneigr. Unfortunately, I have not had time to arrange a wreath so some flowers will have to do. The RAF, coastguard, fire service and RNLI are there and we have a brief ceremony at the memorial stone after a minute's silence to remember those who lost their lives.

I paid a tribute to PC Arthur which was well received. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr G. A. Thomas, the last surviving member of the Rhosneigr lifeboat crew from 1941. He is 90-years-old and his memories of that sad day are still very clear and poignant. He kindly provided photographs of PC Arthur's funeral and showed me where he was standing in the

photograph outside Rhosneigr Police Station, as a 14-year-old boy.

I had the pleasure meeting a lady who I had originally been told by one guest was PC Arthur's mother; I honestly didn't believe that! She was in fact the daughter of the merchant seaman Arthur Owen. Fate had dealt a very cruel blow to First Officer Owen and his family that day. He was home having been granted compassionate leave to attend his father's funeral.

As the events of 28 August unfolded, Mr Owen acted selflessly along with the other rescuers to try to save the lives of the airmen. Mr Owen's late wife and daughter have lived, and are living, with the consequences. While she was very proud of her late father, I could still sense the pain that the loss had caused 75 years later.

PC Arthur was from Amlwch and was buried in the cemetery there after a funeral with full honours. I reflected on the way that the bravery of those men, the eight who gave their lives to try to save three others seems to have gone relatively unremarked beyond the Menai Straits.

In 1941 such a tragedy would have been seen in the context of war-time Britain. In May that year, Liverpool had suffered a week of sustained German bombing with a civilian death toll of 4,000 and many others injured. By May 1941 London had been subjected to more than eight months of air raids with 43,000 civilian lives lost.

By August, Hitler had turned his attention to the eastern front, reducing the pressure on the British mainland. The event at Rhosneigr on 28 August while truly shocking would have probably been fairly unremarkable outside of North Wales.

PC Arthur was posthumously awarded the RNLI Bronze Medal and the King's Commendation For Brave Conduct.



# 'Sign up to the PTC – you never know when you might need it'



By PC Daniel Owen

Having joined North Wales Police at the age 20, I thought it would be some time before I would have to visit the Police Treatment Centre (PTC) for any health or physical complaint.

However, nearly four years into service, I

was assaulted while arresting an offender and suffered a fractured ankle. I was hospitalised for five days and had to undergo surgery to realign and fix the ankle with screws and plates. Post-surgery, I was in plaster for six weeks and was then referred to NHS physiotherapy.

Having signed up for the PTC when I

joined, I was eligible to attend the centre for treatment. Before attending, I had completed four sessions of NHS physiotherapy, I was walking again but with a painful limp, and I had limited flexibility in the ankle. It was difficult to make any real progress with only one session a week on the NHS.

I applied for treatment at the PTC, Harrogate and was scheduled for two weeks' treatment in late March this year. I must admit I wasn't expecting them to work miracles and merely expected to regain some flexibility and hopefully be able to walk without a limp.

The facilities were second to none; it felt like a treatment centre for pro athletes. I had a personal physiotherapist who I visited daily. They treated the ankle with manipulation and increased the movement day by day, and I even had acupuncture as part of my treatment. In addition, my physiotherapist helped me with a daily exercise plan, using the gym, hydrotherapy pool, swimming pool and the anti-gravity treadmills.

It was a painful two weeks, however, having arrived in Harrogate with a painful limp and limited flexibility, I left two weeks later being able to run, jump, land from height and turn on the injured ankle.

I was amazed at how much I had recovered in such a short space of time, my time at the PTC almost definitely helped me with being able to return to work only four months after sustaining the injury, I had originally been told

## Take a fresh look at the PTC

By Mel Jones, Deputy Secretary and Treasurer of North Wales Police Federation



The article written by Daniel provides a valuable insight into the benefit of being a member of the Police Treatment Centres which are located in at

either St Andrews in Harrogate, North Yorkshire or Castlebrae in Auchterarder, Perthshire. Almost 4,000 serving and retired officers attend one of the two treatment centres each year

I am certain that all the officers who attend the treatment centres would happily give the same testimonial as Daniel. The treatments available are second to none and assist officers to regain full fitness.

The quality of treatment provided could sadly never be replicated by the NHS where there are very long waiting lists for physiotherapy and counselling services. The cost of having this treatment carried out privately is prohibitive and it results in officers being on a waiting list for several months.

The subscription cost is £7.80 per month which provides excellent value for money if you are ever unfortunate enough



to expect to be off work for more than six months.

It is worth noting that there are a variety of different activities on daily basis and a chance for you to try something you may not have tried back at home, for example, Pilates, box fit, spinning to name a few. The accommodation is very good, comfortable and relaxing! The food provided is also very good, plenty of choice and variety.

When you're not in the gym or swimming pool, there is plenty to do. There are two lounges, both have large flat screen TVs with Sky (Sky Sports and Movies included). There are pool and snooker tables and you're also able to hire bikes for the day if you fancy getting out to explore a bit.

Personally, the advantages of the PTC cannot be underestimated. My advice to anyone joining the organisation is to sign up! You never know when you might need their services and for the small monthly donation that it costs, it is comforting to know that if you are injured or have any other welfare issues then there is somewhere you can go to get the treatment you need.



to require the services of the treatment centres. The subscription covers all the treatment, food and accommodation costs.

Around 50,000 of the 67,000 police officers within the PTC service area donate to the PTC.

If you are in the minority who do not, please take a fresh look at the PTC and see how you too could benefit from what they can offer. Visit their website for further information [www.thepolicetreatmentcentres.org](http://www.thepolicetreatmentcentres.org)

If you want to subscribe, email SSF Payroll and they will begin deductions direct from your salary.

# Our detectives are worthy of awards

By Nick Hawe

**Next time you see the email which comes through with the nomination forms for the Police Federation National Detectives' Forum (PFNDF) Awards, just before you delete it – take a minute and think. Think about what you and your colleagues have achieved over the previous 12 months. I guarantee that you will be surprised about the excellent jobs you have simply forgotten about, because you just get on with the job.**

Please think about some examples and take the time to nominate them, it is the very least that you all deserve. The nomination alone will get recognised with a response, even if it does not win an award. Sometimes that little pat on the back can make all the difference.

I say this because on Thursday 13 and Friday 14 October 2016, I attended the PFNDF annual seminar and awards in Broughton, near Scunthorpe.

On the Thursday evening, numerous awards were presented to detectives from across England and Wales, recognising their achievements and hard work throughout the year. It is an honour to witness officers being praised and applauded, a very welcome change to the normal sort of feedback the majority of officers receive.

While I was impressed by what they had done, it did strike me that some of the examples were no better than the type of work that North Wales Police officers have done, and do, day in and day out, and yet they have so far been overlooked. I do share the nomination emails with members, but I have disappointingly not had any back.

I know that there have been numerous examples of 'Outstanding Trainee

Detectives', 'Services To Detectives', 'Smarter Detectives' and investigations worthy of praise and recognition. It is with this in mind, that I make this request for you to stop and think before deleting the email when I send it out next year.

Going back to this year's awards though, one contentious delivery at the seminar was given by a detective superintendent from the Metropolitan Police. The Met are 700 short of the number of detectives they should have. The detective numbers in England and Wales are lower than needed across the board.

New and emerging crime types, coupled with risks to vulnerable children and adults, mean that new departments have had to be created. This is all very well but those resources generally come from one place... and that is response.

Annoyingly, the short-term response in the Met is to trial 'direct entry at detective level'. I won't go into any detail here but, suffice to say, there were many comments from the floor. One of these hit home with the audience. Instead of looking elsewhere to graduates or people from other walks of life who can bring their experience, why not look at what we already have? That is a wealth of talent, skills, experience and determination which turns up to work, day in and day out, and performs the role of a police officer.

I know of officers who have failed the exam, and also some who just do not sell themselves correctly during interviews. But I know for sure that we in North Wales Police have got masses of talented and keen officers who could benefit a multitude of roles. It is a shame that the Met are choosing not to nurture what they already have.

**“ I know that there have been numerous examples of 'Outstanding Trainee Detectives', 'Services To Detectives', 'Smarter Detectives' and investigations worthy of praise and recognition.**



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# Meet Pat, our new Anglesey rep

**My name is Pat Murray. I'm the new Anglesey Sergeants' Federation representative and I've been asked to write something to introduce myself. This might be where you want to turn the page...**

I had never previously considered a role as a Federation representative. When the vacant post was advertised, I read the e-mail and promptly forgot about it. It wasn't until much later when I actually started discussing the role with some current reps that I seriously considered whether to put myself forward for the post. Even then it took some considerable prompting from colleagues before I finally put my name forward.

But really, given the recent battering that our job continually suffers at the hands of politicians, policy makers, bureaucrats and journalists I feel that our voice also needs to be heard and that the post of a Federation representative is more important than ever. Federation representatives are vital in order to protect and promote officers' interests and welfare.

I am personally concerned that morale within the service is at its lowest ebb and that the welfare of serving officers sometimes appears to be one of the last things taken into account. If we fail to protect the welfare of our workforce we would not function as an organisation therefore it is vital that members have the support of their Federation in dealing with any interests or issues.

By the time you read this I should have attended my initial reps' course in Leatherhead which I am sure will provide me with a foundation on which to build my knowledge and understanding of the role.

I have more than 20 years of uniformed service behind me. I was originally an officer for the Met Police. In early 1996, I and my equally new and shiny colleague were kicked out onto the streets with the only briefing being: "For God's sake, try not to foul up too badly!" As a PC, I worked at stations covering the City of Westminster, Camden, Kentish Town and Hampstead. In 2005 I was promoted to sergeant and spent the last 12 months of my service with the Met in the Borough of Harrow.

While in London, I met and subsequently married a Caernarfon girl who was working at The Yard. Against her better judgement, I convinced her we needed to move to North Wales.

In 2006 I transferred to North Wales Police. My initial posting was as a Response PC at Llangeifni Police Station on Anglesey before I was promoted to sergeant for a second time. I've subsequently done a five-year stint in Holyhead and Caernarfon Custody Suites before being released 'back into the wild' and have spent the last two and a half years working as a Response Sergeant on Anglesey.

Outside of work I read, attempt to grow things in an allotment and support Plymouth Argyle FC.

Please don't hesitate to contact me, if I can help you in any way – my details are on the system.

**“ Given the recent battering that our job continually suffers at the hands of politicians, policy makers, bureaucrats and journalists I feel that our voice also needs to be heard and that the post of a Federation representative is more important than ever.**



# Our new Welsh speaking Fed rep

**I am Acting Sergeant Trystan Bevan, I am the new Western Welsh speaking workplace representative on the North Wales Police Joint Branch Board.**

It may be useful to provide a little of my background information. I hail from the small village of Rhostryfan, near Caernarfon. I am a first language Welsh speaker and completed my primary, secondary and further education entirely through the medium of the Welsh language.

I joined North Wales Police in the summer of 2002 and, following my probationary period at Llandudno and Conwy, I became an authorised firearms officer based at St Asaph covering the entire Force area.

Some years later I became a dog handler based at Llandegai. This period of duty was followed by a return to the firearms department as a member of the Royal Residency Protection team, based in Anglesey. During this stage of my career, I passed Parts 1 and 2 of the OSPRE sergeants' exam.



**“ The current system simply does not have any structures in place to facilitate or permit parts of the promotion process to be taken through the medium of Welsh.**

In 2012, I joined the Roads Policing Unit based at Llandegai and this is a role I continue to undertake to the present date.

The cynics among my colleagues are probably thinking, why would anyone volunteer to become a Welsh language Federation representative? The simple answer is that during my preparation to take the OSPRE Parts 1 and 2 as part of the promotion process, I became aware of the inequalities and additional hurdles that first language Welsh speakers have to navigate and overcome in an effort to gain promotion.

The current system simply does not have any structures in place to facilitate or permit parts of the promotion process to be taken through the medium of Welsh.

Why do I believe this issue is important? Well, we are constantly being told that North Wales Police is a bi-lingual police service and indeed there is considerable evidence to support this assertion, for example, signage on police vehicles, uniforms and in the buildings we occupy. I do, however, feel we have lost some of our 'Cymreictod' or 'Welshness' with the loss of the Welsh flag from our operational black tops.

We are frequently reminded that the Welsh and English languages have equal parity within the North Wales Police service area, however, there is some evidence to suggest that this is not always the case when it comes to the experiences of a number of members of staff.

Can I please assure you all, that it is not my intention to politicise this issue, and I am certainly not advocating that first language Welsh speaking officers should be given any preferential treatment in the promotion process, or indeed in any other aspect of their working lives. I am merely seeking a level playing field for all North Wales Police colleagues.

I would also like to assure all colleagues throughout the Force area that I will give them my full support in all matters including those relating to the use of the Welsh language in their working environment.

# Our new Gwynedd North rep



*By Elizabeth Owen, North Wales Police Federation representative*

**I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Gwynedd North Constables' Police Federation representative.**

For those who don't know me, I am Llandudno born and bred and I have 15 years' experience as a constable. It only seems like yesterday that I was wrinkle-free and had the call that I was going to Holyhead and that "WEST IS BEST". I can't remember who said that to me but they were correct.

Having completed my probation in Holyhead, I then moved on to Bangor where I served a further two years before moving onto the Force Control Room working on the IST department and as a communication operator.

Due to cutbacks within the Control Room, I then found myself back where I started, in the West, in Bangor Police Station. I was not very happy about this to say the least - consideration was given to chaining myself to the gates - as I thoroughly enjoyed working within the Control Room and I had learnt a lot. However, 18 months down the line, I couldn't be happier and I am now based in Caernarfon Police Station, even further west!

My main hobbies are shopping, shopping, more shopping, eating and attending fitness classes with the latter

being because of my love of food. I have successfully completed four Tough Mudders and I am looking forward to completing another two in 2017.

I am due to attend my initial reps' course in December down at Leatherhead. I have been told by previous Federation representatives that the course is one of the best they have been on and I am sure it will provide me with a foundation on which to build my knowledge, experience and understanding of the role.

I have only been in post for a few weeks but have already been surprised at how much work the Federation does for its members in Force and national issues that affect us from pay and conditions through to disciplines and officer support.

I look forward to representing you and hope that you feel happy to approach me once I have settled into my role and built up my knowledge and understanding. If you have any concerns or wish to speak to me regarding any issues that concern you please don't hesitate to get in touch, my details are on the system.

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# Goodbye 30 years in North Wales Police

By Jane Thomas

**5 January 1987, I remember it as if it was yesterday, a 21-year-old arriving at HQ with my suitcase, bulled shoes and pressed uniform. How we ever managed to get a crease in those thick woollen tunics I will never know.**

This was the start of a near 30-year journey during which time I have been very fortunate to meet some fantastic colleagues and friends, some of whom were influential in my choice of career on roads policing, a role I have been fortunate to hold for some 26 years as a constable and sergeant.

Many changes have been taken place during my service in relation to our methods of communication. Imagine life in the service without email.

How many of us can remember the mass of white paper ticker tape we had to produce to send the daily reports across the division via telex machine? And the unreliable radios not personal issue? If you could find a couple of batteries that would last the full shift then happy days.

What about the uniform? I often hear officers complaining about the current operational tops, the badly fitting faded cargo trousers and the stab vests we are now supplied with. Well, all I can say is: "You don't know you are born."

Policewomen now have a uniform fit for purpose, no longer do we have to wear A-line skirts, carry handbags and have a wooden staff no longer than 20cms as our only means of PPE. If anyone has had to climb over a six bar gate in pitch dark searching for a missing child in a skirt, size nine wellingtons (the smallest size available) and a long black gabardine coat you will be able to empathise with me.

With this mind, I have been fortunate during the last 16 years to be a Federation rep which has allowed me to be a member of the Clothing and Equipment Committee.



This committee over the years has provided, in my opinion, some excellent uniform for officers.

The days where 'one size fits none' hopefully have gone and gender specific equipment is readily available. Although this committee is no longer in being, it is important that everyone has a voice in what we wear and the equipment we use.

One of the biggest changes I have witnessed in my 30 years concerns the opportunities now afforded to female officers. We are no longer part of a quota on specialist departments, no longer asked to look after lost children and stay on switchboards during busy shifts for fear we will get assaulted.

I recall from my days in Rhyl when I was put on the front desk on a Christmas Eve as it was thought to be the safest place, then being sent to Colwyn Bay Police Station to babysit a female prisoner for the rest of the night shift; not a task I was expecting or hoping for when I came into work that evening.

I can still remember the words spoken to me by a senior officer on my move to

Barmouth in 1991 who stated during my welcome meeting to the section: "I don't know why they have sent you here we already have a police woman in Barmouth." I am sure no offence was meant by this but thankfully these situations no longer exist, and the formation of the Women's Association over 10 years ago has strived to give female officers the confidence and ambition to achieve their goals whether that be on specialist department or as a supervisor.

If I could turn back the clock would I still have joined North Wales Police?

Yes, without hesitation, North Wales Police has given me 30 years of a career which has provided me with so many different experiences, some have provided me with great laughter and some have provided my rota with great laughter at my expense. Ask Jo Roberts about the time we got the patrol car stuck on Caia Park and the need to jet wash me and the vehicle after we attempted to push the vehicle out of thick mud.

The job of a police officer can, however, be extremely demanding and at times can be quite emotional. Very few members of the public will be able to appreciate the emotions a police officer will experience in their day to day work, coupled with the ever-increasing demands placed upon officers as a result of the cut in police numbers.

On a personal note, my role as a RPU officer has provided me with a great amount of satisfaction working as a team to provide families affected by the loss of a loved one in a road traffic collision and working towards securing successful prosecutions and justice for families.

Looking back this has been achieved due to good team working. It is important that as officers you continue working together and helping each other to ensure that, despite Government cuts and the erosion of police pensions and pay and conditions, we continue providing the public with a police service they deserve.

I cannot sign off before mentioning our local Federation. I have been the RPU sergeants' representative for more than 16 years. I have thoroughly enjoyed the role and would recommend that officers consider putting themselves forward to represent their colleagues in the future.

I am sure that in the years ahead you will see a lot of changes, some for the better and some perhaps for the worse. Let's ensure the Federation remains strong and fit for purpose but to do this your support is needed.

On 23 December I will work my last shift for North Wales Police. Can I take this opportunity to wish everyone all the best for the future and I hope you all have a great Christmas? Stay safe.



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# Top tips for separated couples on arranging time with children over Christmas

By **Roland Humphries**  
Principal lawyer in family law at Slater and Gordon



Christmas is a time for families to come together but for those families that have separated it can be a challenging time.

It is always difficult to decide who should spend time with children and when. The festive season may still be some way off but at Slater and Gordon we have already seen an increase in the number of enquiries from clients about how to divide time over Christmas.

Here are some of my top tips to help separated couples manage the festive period:

- Compromise is crucial. Christmas is a magical time where your children should be at the heart of any plans. Think about how they would like to spend their

Christmas Day.

- Plan your arrangements as early as possible. This should give you plenty of time to identify and amicably resolve any potential disagreements. And if clashes can't be resolved, then look at other options – including attending mediation, seeking advice from a family lawyer or ultimately, if an agreement really cannot be reached, an application to the court can be made.
- Before making an application to the court specialist advice from a family lawyer should be sought.
- If you do feel you have exhausted all other options and need to make an application to the court, then this application should be made as soon as possible. The courts are very busy and December is one of the most congested. Depending on how busy your local court is applications generally take anything from one to four months to be heard.
- Some separating parents choose to split Christmas Day. This tends to work best when parents live close together. If you do not live nearby then splitting

Christmas Day may not be in your children's best interests and it is often considered unfair to expect children to have to travel on Christmas Day.

- If just one parent is going to spend Christmas Day with the children, then this should be alternated next year with the other parent. If you are the parent who does not have the children this Christmas then try to re-create Christmas Day on another day such as Boxing Day so the children have the benefit of two Christmases.
- Importantly, try to relax and enjoy the time you have with the children on whatever day is it.
- After the Christmas period is over, it is important to reflect on what has and has not worked for the children. Parents should then discuss this and work together to ensure any of the same issues are not encountered again.

If you would like specialist advice from a family lawyer then please contact Slater and Gordon on **0808 175 7710** and we'll be happy to help.

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# Glory for Force in the Welsh Police Cup

**North Wales Police football team stormed to a 4-3 win over South Wales Police in the Welsh Police Final held at Merthyr Tydfil FC.**

The Force team reached the final having beaten Gwent Police 4-1 in the summer and team expectations were high following good performances in previous games. An exceptionally strong looking squad, however, was hit by a number of late withdrawals meaning that manager PC Rich Hughes and assistant PC Chris Jones took a squad of 11 including Hughes in a player/manager role.

Despite the late withdrawals, the squad boasted quality players and lined up with good representation from different districts and departments for the match on Wednesday 7 September.

Team captain A/DI Chris Bell moved to goalkeeper with Rhyl's PC Kieran Davies partnering veteran Det Supt Steve Williams at centre back. Full backs were MRUs PC Chris Davies and Armed Policing's Sgt Kalum Davies. Midfield was anchored by manager Hughes and boasted the quality of PCSO Dan Stanton, ASB Officer Andy Watkin and debutant Dispatcher Gareth Evans from the JCC. Up front was the relentless PCSO Duncan Midgley from Llandudno and PC Marc Jones of Prestatyn. The team were ably assisted by PC Paul Davies of Training as the team's medic with his daughter, Beth Davies, as physio.

Conditions couldn't have been better for the game with the sun belting down on Merthyr's fantastic 3G playing surface. In the early moments of the game, the notoriously slow-starting NWP were caught in possession and SWP's attacking midfielder lofted a classy finish from the left edge of the box over the stranded Bell.

This early goal fired NWP into life and the team's dynamic midfield began to dictate play with Watkin and Stanton getting on the ball and feeding Midgley and Jones who stretched the physical SWP defence. It was debutant Evans who brought about NWP's first goal as Evans used his skill to leave a



couple of SWP players in his wake. Evans' own effort hit the post, however, he unselfishly squared it to Midgley who showed his composure and finished low to the keeper's right.

NWP's equaliser settled the game into its pattern of NWP playing far more attractive football against SWP's more physical based game. This led SWP to again take the lead against the run of play when failure to clear a long ball into the box from a set play presented SWP's striker with a close range chance. Bell kept out the initial effort but could not stop the follow-up.

NWP again responded and dominated the rest of the half with superb attacking play seeing a number of chances go begging to level. It was Evans who eventually brought the scores to 2-2 with a lovely strike from the edge of the SWP box and NWP finished the half in the ascendancy.

The second half again saw NWP start slowly with SWP having a couple of half chances but NWP responded and cracking work by the tireless Midgley saw him cross low from the right to his strike partner Jones who slotted home from the six-yard area.

NWP continued to attack with superb play between the midfield and attack seeing Jones score his second placing a shot from 18 yards leaving the SWP keeper with no chance.

With the scores at 4-2 SWP heads dropped and they were forced into hopeful long balls to their strikers, however, Kieran Davies and Steve Williams were superb in their defensive play with both of the Davies' at full back in support. The game took an unfortunate swing when Stanton was sent off after two quick-fire yellows following a prolonged physical battle with SWP's aggressive midfield.

The final 10 minutes saw nerves tested as SWP brought on their subs on to test the 10 players remaining. Their pressure paid off as SWP again were fortunate with a clearance from Williams hitting their striker and falling to an unmarked SWP player who toe-poked under Bell to bring the scores to 4-3. NWP's defence remained firm and saw the game out leading to celebrations at the final whistle - and Rich Hughes passing out with exhaustion - as NWP reclaimed the Welsh Police Trophy for the first time in 15 years!



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