



# POLICE UPLIFT

Suffolk on course to meet  
quota but is it enough?

SEE PAGE 7

# A message from the chair

BY DARREN HARRIS, CHAIR OF SUFFOLK POLICE FEDERATION

## Welcome to the autumn edition of our members' magazine.

Policing is the best job in the world, but sometimes it can be the hardest too.

The stresses and pressures can feel relentless. And there is also the threat of physical assault as well. Nobody should be assaulted for simply doing their job but in policing this is sadly a reality.

As the days become years, we can be storing up a mental health timebomb for ourselves. We are all human and can be badly affected by our experiences, even if we don't realise it at the time.

So, I am delighted that the Police Federation of England and Wales is funding the Welfare Support Programme for another year until December 2023. This is a lifeline for members who are struggling with their emotional and mental wellbeing, either because of their experiences at work or in their private life.

The programme is run by Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS), an independent charity, and has already helped more than 500

members by providing a sympathetic ear and timely advice and signposting since 2020.

Please do get in touch with Suffolk Police Federation or your workplace rep if you feel you or a colleague would benefit from a referral to the WSP service.

As you will have seen from the cover (and our article on Page 7) officer numbers in Suffolk increased by 47 in the last year. The Force is now just 16 short of reaching our target under the Police Uplift Programme.

This will give us a net gain of 163 officers. That is great news, but it can feel like 'treading water' as we gain new officers only to lose more experienced colleagues. There is no doubt in my mind that low pay and morale are key factors.

We now have a new Home Secretary and Prime Minister. They must grasp the nettle and reverse the years of neglect in policing.

I hope you enjoy this edition.



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# Police drivers will be impacted by new legislation



Police drivers are being urged to read a frequently asked questions document giving guidance on new regulations which come into force later this month.

The new regulations, effective from 30 November, set out the prescribed training that will in effect give trained police drivers the better protection in law afforded to them under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

“The new regulations will have an impact on officers trained to drive police vehicles,” says Tim Rogers, police pursuits and driver training lead for the Federation nationally.

“Their driving will no longer be assessed by the standards of the careful, competent driver, as was previously the case, but will now be judged by those of their careful and competent colleagues who have completed the same level of prescribed training.

“The change in the law, which means police officers’ skills and professional training will be recognised, is welcomed but, as ever, there is a note of caution in that we must now ensure that all drivers are ‘in ticket’ with their training.

“My advice to any officer who is not up to date with their police driver training is very simple – don’t drive a police vehicle because if you do you could be vulnerable to prosecution.”

National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) police driving lead DCC Terry Woods has welcomed the legislative change: “I believe this is an excellent step forward for police drivers. Standardisation throughout the UK on police driving courses is essential in providing a minimum standard to all officers and

making the roads safer for all.

“I would urge officers to ensure they understand the new legislation and the importance of compliance with the relevant driving refresher requirements.”

The regulations will be enshrined in law through The Road Traffic Act 1988 (PoliceDriving: Prescribed Training) Regulations 2022 and come into effect on 30 November.

The new FAQ document has been produced by the Police Federation of England and Wales and the NPCC and aims to help officers better understand the new laws regarding their driving.

“Quite simply, the previous legislation did not recognise the training that police response drivers undertake and the tactics they may need to employ when responding to emergencies or pursuing criminals,” says Tim, who for eight years has led a Federation campaign to change the laws affecting police driving.

“This new legislation is a great stride forward but, for the new test to be applied, officers must be driving for police purposes and have undertaken the prescribed training as set out in the regulations.

“Police driving schools have had months now to ensure that they are compliant with the requirements of the legislation and have undertaken self-assessment exercises.

“But the onus is on the individual officer to make sure that they only drive when they are up to date with the prescribed training as defined in the regulations and legislation.”

Training must be delivered by an accredited and licensed police driving instructor, in line with the

nationally set learning standards.

Tim, who is secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, is keen to stress that there is only one standard and any divergence by any force or senior officer will mean they are denying officers the ability to respond on blues and twos.

“The new law demands that an officer’s driving, when an incident makes the inquisition necessary, is assessed by a professional, knowledgeable and competent individual,” he said.

“Each force must have an appropriate mechanism by which these nationally agreed and enshrined in law standards are assessed. Locally, officers will have a driving standards unit. Nationally, and for matters requiring subject matter expert (SME) evidence, there is the NPCC SME group.

“Members of this group have received training at the West Midlands Police Federation office, delivered jointly by the Federation and the NPCC, and with complete continuing professional development (CPD) each year. As agreed by the Federation, the NPCC, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Independent Office for Police Conduct and the Home Office, they are the only people who can provide the evidence.”

As a result of the change in legislation, police driving schools are likely to be licensed in a similar way to firearms units, since there is a higher incidence of risk, and the College of Policing will issue new Authorised Professional Practice (APP).

[Read the FAQs.](#)

[Read the ‘prescribed training’ statutory instrument.](#)

# Wellbeing lead urges officers to 'reach out and talk'

Police Federation national wellbeing secretary Belinda Goodwin is “urging all members to turn to their colleagues and ask them ‘how are you?’”.

Following World Mental Health Day in October, Belinda is encouraging police officers to open up, reach out and talk about how they are feeling.

Her comments come after research showed that emergency service workers are twice as likely as the general public to identify problems at work as the main cause of their mental health problems, and they are also significantly less likely to seek help.

“Although police officers are held to higher standards within our regulations, we need to remember that we are human beings too. We are exposed to 400 times more trauma than everyday civilians and, whether we like it or not, this will have an impact on our mental health,” said Belinda.

“We can’t lose sight of how impactful simply asking a colleague how they are can be.

“We need to start having more meaningful conversations with our peers and that means not just discussing our performance but welfare too. Supervisors should be asking their team, ‘how are you doing?’, ‘how is the family?’ and ‘how

can we support you more?’

“Peer-to-peer support is also huge. We need to continue to provide members with that safe space to debrief with their colleagues so they can talk through the incidents they have attended.”

World Mental Health Day 2022 was the first to follow the Covid-19 pandemic, a global crisis that had a huge impact on emergency services workers, with the police service being no exception.

In fact, research reveals that 66 per cent of police staff feel that their mental health has deteriorated following the pandemic, with 32 per cent admitting that they did not access support during this period.

“As we continue to recover following the Covid-19 pandemic, and the devastating impact this has had on so many of us, including our colleagues and their families, we need to shine the light on our mental health and how forces can really support officers, as well as their loved ones,” Belinda added.

“Now, it’s more important than ever for forces to think about and implement support for our members, as well as their wives, husbands, sons and daughters. It’s time to start putting officers first, and to

make sure we’re doing all we can to prevent them from breaking.”

Belinda continues to say that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) ‘is a reality for officers’ and can often ‘lead to some using harmful substances and behaviours in order to cope and get through the day’.

“As a Federation, we have previously looked at the impact stress has on our officers as a whole, but with a real focus on how this can lead to substance and gambling abuse,” she added.

“If you feel that you are spiralling or are relying on these harmful behaviours to survive, and need help and support, I urge all our members to reach out to the Federation.”

Suffolk Police Federation chair Darren Harris echoed Belinda’s message.

He said: “It is very important that any members with concerns about their own mental health or that of their colleagues get in touch.

“It is not a sign of weakness to ask for help, in fact I think it shows great courage and strength.

“We have access to a wide range of professional services that are able to offer the right help and support and I would urge anyone who feels they are struggling to reach out.”

# Former inspector now holds PCC to account

A former chief inspector who is now the chair of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel says he believes the key to its success is keeping its independence but working collaboratively.

Mark Jepson, a district councillor, has been chair of the panel for two years, after working for 30 years in Suffolk Constabulary before retiring in 2011.

He now draws on his own experiences of the Force, while continuing to both support and challenge the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Tim Passmore.

"I'm proud of the time I spent at Suffolk Police and I enjoyed my 30 years there, but this is now and that was then. And, although I can use

my experience within the Force to support my role as chair of the panel, I pride myself on having a pragmatic view at all times," said Mark.

"I never say 'we used to do that' because I don't think that's fair. The way policing works has changed tremendously, and it's important that I approach my role with an open mind.

"It's vital that people recognise we're not here to scrutinise Tim, we're here to challenge and support him - not to always agree with him necessarily but to ultimately ensure the Force is delivering as good a service as possible."

The Police and Crime Panel is made up of county and district councillors, who all have an

interest in policing.

Their role is to hold the Police and Crime Commissioner to account, with the PCC holding the Chief Constable to account.

[Read more.](#)



## Helen providing vital link with student officers in new Fed role

Suffolk Police Federation's Helen Self is settling into her new job as the branch's third full-time rep in addition to her regional role on the Federation's National Council.

Helen has been a police officer for 26 years and a Fed rep for eight. She became a full-time rep in August primarily to ease the workload on chair Darren Harris and secretary Ben Hudson.

She was already wellbeing and health and safety lead and is using that experience, plus the knowledge she gained as a tutor to new recruits, as the branch's go-to person for student officers who are still finding their feet in what is often their first job.

Helen said: "I used to be a tutor so I

am using that experience to help them work out where they are at. A few student officers have got some little niggles that need sorting out so we are working with them on that and pointing them in the right direction.

"Sometimes when you have a new job you can get a bit lost when you're trying to find your feet and making sure you have everything you need. And also this job isn't for everybody so sometimes there are hard conversations to be had and it can be about helping them through the process."

Helen will get out on the road to meet members and make sure everyone knows about the work of the Police Federation.



"I want to let our members know we are always here for them and also promote what the Police Federation does," she said.

"A good example of that would be the Police Benevolent Fund which is under-used because members often don't know it's there for them or what to do to access it."

Members can contact the Suffolk Police Federation office by [emailing suffolk@polfed.org](mailto:suffolk@polfed.org) or phoning 01473 782001.

# ‘New disclosure guidance could ease workload for detectives’



Suffolk Police Federation secretary Ben Hudson is calling for newly revised CPS disclosure guidelines to be rolled out across the country after they were adopted by the Force.

Ben, who is also chair of the Police Federation National Detectives’ Forum (PFNDF), said he hoped the changes to DG6, now adopted by the Force, would lead to reduced workloads for officers.

He is seeking feedback from officers to gauge the impact of the revisions which came as a result of the Police Federation #SimplifyDG6 campaign launched in August.

He said: “I’m confident that the revised guidance, applied correctly, will reduce the redaction burden on police officers while also complying with the legal framework.

“But I would urge members to contact me or the Police Federation with their experiences of how the revised guidance is affecting their workload. Is it making a difference? Is it easing the burden and making life a bit easier? We would like to hear from any officer affected by the new guidelines.

“We’ll carefully watch and consult with members to see how much mitigation these joint principles bring to the huge task that redaction currently is for our members.

“We would welcome their views on the revisions and indeed any other suggestions they might have for

further improving the current system. “It’s still our position that there’s an urgent need for amending the Data Protection Act and we’re working with partner agencies in this direction. We hope to formally engage with the Attorney General’s office in early 2023 to see how these concerns can be addressed.”

The successful #SimplifyDG6 campaign followed a review by the Attorney General’s office which recognised that some of the shortcomings led to significant pressure on police officers regarding the submission of case files to the CPS for charging decisions.

However, the review failed to make any recommendation to immediately mitigate the impact on officers.

The National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) has since worked with the Federation through the PFNDF and has now produced the revised Joint Principles for Redaction.

They have been developed by the CPS and the NPCC Disclosure Portfolio setting out their joint position on how police officers and prosecutors should approach data protection responsibilities.

The Federation said that the revised guidance should further help officers comply with the Data Protection Act as the redaction of personal information is necessary when sharing information with CPS,

including the pre-charge stage.

The revised principles are supported by legal advice from a King’s Counsel (KC) specialising in information law to ensure they’re legally robust and have been endorsed by the co-chairs of the Joint Operational Improvement Board (JOIB).

The main changes are:

- New Supporting Guidance to aid redaction decision-making, including how and when non-redaction can be justified on the grounds of disproportionality. To withstand any legal challenges, it’s important such decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, with the decision documented and approved at inspector rank or above.
- Updated FAQs following feedback on common disputes – changing approaches to data minimisation in favour of pragmatism, including when to consider the redaction of occupations, dates of births, vehicle registration numbers, suspects not charged and names of potential witnesses from witness statements.

Given the volume of data breaches documented for these categories, the Federation expects to see a significant reduction in the volume of redaction required following these changes.

[Email Ben](#) to give your views on the amended guidance. Is it making a difference?



# Force closes in on officer uplift target

Officer numbers in Suffolk have increased by 47 in the 12 months until the end of September this year, Government statistics reveal.

This means the Force is just 16 short of reaching its allocation under the Police Uplift Programme through which the Government wants to increase officer numbers by 20,000 over a three-year period which ends in March 2023.

The Home Office data showed the Force had 1,387 serving officers at the end of September compared with 1,340 in October 2021.

The Force has recruited a total of 416 officers since the Uplift Programme launched in 2019, and this has increased the Force's officer numbers by 163.

The Home Office said a total of 15,343 officers had now been recruited across England and Wales from funding for the Police Uplift Programme.

Suffolk Police Federation chair

Darren Harris said he welcomed the increase in officers but warned the figures had to be balanced against the number of colleagues leaving the Force and the attrition rate of newcomers.

Darren said: "We welcome our new colleagues to the Force and we wish them all the best for their future careers in policing.

"But it sometimes feels like we are treading water with recruitment and these latest figures highlight the fact that despite taking on new recruits under the uplift programme, in real terms we only have 47 more officers than we did this time last year.

"Experienced officers leave the service for a number of reasons but pay and conditions and low morale are usually the main factors in their decision to quit.

"We welcome the Police Uplift Programme but have always stressed it is only one part of the story and we are hoping the new Government will make a commitment to ensure

our members are properly rewarded for the unique job they do.

"Policing is also crying out for sustainable investment in the infrastructure that supports them in doing that job."

The Home Office said: "The Police Uplift Programme's primary focus is to support the recruitment of officers across the 43 forces.

"Recruitment across each force is the responsibility of an operationally independent chief constable and held to account by a locally elected Police and Crime Commissioner.

"The Government has pledged to invest more £3.5bn in policing between 2020 and 2023 in order to recruit 20,000 additional officers.

"Additional officers will support forces in tackling crime and making communities safer.

"The Police Uplift Programme is one of a range of initiatives the Government has implemented to support policing."

# A cut above: hairdresser Tina realises her dream of becoming a Special Constable



A woman who dreamed of being a police officer at school but chose to fulfill a career as a hairdresser says she has 'now got the best of both worlds' after becoming a Special Constable.

Spurred on by the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, Tina Barber applied to become a Special Constable in Suffolk in January 2020, after feeling like she wanted to find a 'new zest for life' and learn a new career.

Now, having been in the role for almost a year, she has explained why she has chosen to join the Police Federation and why being a Special is 'more than she thought it would ever be'.

"Being a Special has actually given me lots of challenges which I enjoy," said mother-of-one Tina, who owns her own hairdressers and admits she felt that she wanted to do something else in life, something that would make a difference to others.

"I wanted to do some good and make a difference.

"I remember enquiring about becoming a police officer when I'd just started out but was told there was a height restriction, being only 5 ft 2, meant I wouldn't be tall enough.

"I then applied to be a Special 10

years ago but my son was only five, so it wasn't the right time. I have my own career now and business with supporting staff so I can spend hours building a career with the police and my son is older, so it seemed the right time to apply."

After successfully training for three months, Tina now volunteers around 50 hours a month of her time as a Special and admits sometimes she racks up almost 100 hours.

"I thought my age might stop me, as I like to challenge myself but actually it made me more determined," she continued.

"Being a Special is more than I ever thought it would be. I'm given so many opportunities and the freedom to work with so many different teams. The regular officers are very supportive which is great, I'd actually like to thank the Force for all the support.

"I loved the training and the learning, in all areas of policing, especially the physical side of training, like learning how to defend myself better.

"This has been a whole new challenge. I've learnt so much already.

"One highlight from the past year was when I helped find a man who

suffered from dementia and was lost. He was so far away from his home, but we helped him get back. To know that I had helped get him home, and to see his family so happy - that was very rewarding."

Tina became a member of the Police Federation after it was announced in July this year that Special Constables would be eligible to receive legal protection and representation from the staff association.

"I joined the Police Federation so I know that support is there if I need it. I almost see the Federation as a comfort blanket, peace of mind and I would encourage others to join too," she said.

Tina says her son, is 'very proud' of her, and has even shown interest in joining the Force one day himself. She said: "He is very supportive and my work as a Special has even sparked an interest in the job from him.

"For me, I want to keep going and keep learning. Who knows, one day, I might go for it and apply to be in the Force as a regular officer or in another role."

If you are a Special and want to become a Federation member, please [email the Federation office](mailto:info@polfed.org).



# Austerity cuts have hit policing, as Federation warned

Suffolk Police Federation chair Darren Harris said that years of cuts have left the police service understaffed, underfunded, and under-resourced, forcing forces to make difficult operational decisions.

His comments follow the publication of a new report on burglary, robbery and theft from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

Andy Cooke, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, said that failing to target burglary, robbery, and theft "damages public confidence in policing".

Darren said: "We understand that crimes like burglary, robbery and theft can have a huge impact on people's lives and livelihoods, and acknowledge this report highlights key areas for improvement.

"However, 12 years of cuts and underinvestment in policing have led to an overstretched service, and forces having to make difficult decisions on how and where they allocate resources.

"We've lost many experienced investigators and it takes time for

our new uplift recruits to learn their roles. But, even still, there are that many demands on their time and the caseload is so big that all too often there isn't the capacity to investigate.

"The Federation has been warning about this for years and it has to change. And the only way it can change is with a properly funded and resourced police service so that we can serve and protect the public and retain their confidence."

The HMICFRS report found:

- Forces are missing opportunities to identify and catch offenders, from the moment a member of the public reports the crime to the point where a case is finalised;
- Police are not doing all they can to help victims when they report crimes – in 71 percent of the burglary reports examined, police personnel did not give victims any advice on crime-scene preservation during the initial call;
- Forces lack investigative capacity and capability to effectively tackle burglary, robbery and theft, often because of the national detective shortage and inexperience; and

- Investigations are not being appropriately or thoroughly supervised, with a third of cases examined having insufficient evidence of proper supervision.

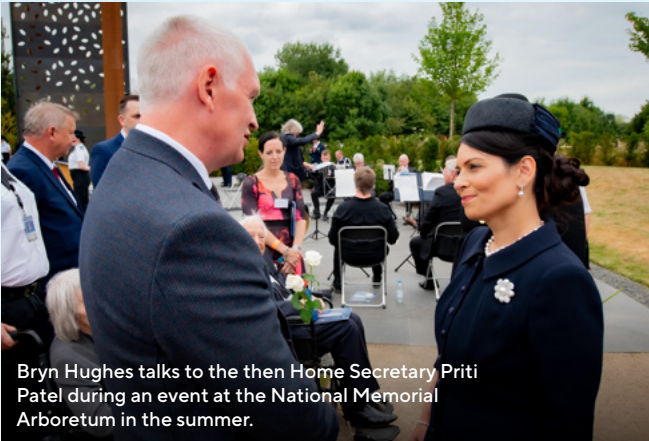
HMICFRS has recommended that by March 2023, all police forces should ensure:

Their crime-scene management practices adhere to the authorised professional practice on managing investigations for burglary, robbery and theft; and

These investigations are subject to effective supervision and direction. The report highlighted Suffolk Police's data collaboration agreement with Norfolk Police.

It said: "This collective endeavour between two counties' organisations aims to use data to give insights into public services and the needs they serve. One of the Norfolk priorities is to give police vulnerability data to help reduce crime and exploitation."

Darren said: "While the report highlights areas for improvement, we're pleased to see our work with colleagues in Norfolk recognised in this way."



Bryn Hughes talks to the then Home Secretary Priti Patel during an event at the National Memorial Arboretum in the summer.

## Momentum builds for Elizabeth Medal for fallen officers

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) have put their name to a letter calling on the Government to establish an Elizabeth Medal for fallen police officers. Military personnel already receive the Elizabeth Cross if they are killed in the line of duty and a similar honour should apply to police officers, it is being argued.

Suffolk Police Federation secretary Ben Hudson said: "I am delighted that this campaign to honour police officers who make the ultimate sacrifice is gaining momentum – the Federation and Superintendents' Association have already got behind the idea, and the backing of PCCs is another significant step forward."

He added: "Our late Queen, Elizabeth II, exemplified public service for 70 years and it would be a fitting legacy to have a medal named after her which can be posthumously awarded to police officers who make the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country."

The campaign was started by Bryn Hughes and Paul Bone, fathers of PCs Nicola Hughes and Fiona Bone, who were tragically murdered by a gunman in Great Manchester a decade ago.

Bryn is a former prison officer who campaigned to establish the dedicated UK Police Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. He also runs the PC Nicola Hughes Memorial Fund to help children whose parents have been murdered.

Speaking about the Elizabeth Medal campaign, he said: "For the likes of me and other family members, it would be a nice feeling to attend certain remembrance services wearing that medal in their memory and their honour."

## Officer assault case thrown out by court

The Federation has criticised the criminal justice system after a case against a man who allegedly assaulted and abused three Suffolk officers had his case thrown out by the court due to a shortage of available barristers.

The Judge refused to adjourn the case and directed that not guilty verdicts should be recorded.

Darren Harris, chair of Suffolk Police Federation which represents the three officers involved in the incident, has also condemned the outcome of the case at Ipswich Crown Court.

"In the past, the Federation has criticised courts for handing out seemingly lenient sentences when police officers have been assaulted and abused, saying that offenders had escaped with little more than a slap on the wrist," says Darren.

"But, in this case it seems that this individual didn't even get a slap on the wrist. It is beyond belief that they have been able to walk away completely scot-free for this despicable abuse of police officers just going about their duties."

[Read the full story.](#)

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# Retired inspector runs more than 200 miles in four days

A retired Suffolk inspector who completed a 215 mile ultra-marathon in honour of Nicola Hughes, a decade after the police officer was tragically killed while on duty, says it was the “toughest challenge” he has ever taken part in. Alan Oliver (56) spent four days running from the West to the East coast of Scotland in August to help raise money for the PC Nicola Hughes Memorial Fund, a charity launched in memory of the late police officer after she was shot following a routine burglary call.

Alan, who had been in the Force for 30 years before retiring in March this year, is taking part in a number of fundraising events to help bring in money for the charity and says “it is so important to keep Nicola’s memory alive”.

“I’ve run 100-mile ultra-marathons before and I thought that was tough but this one took things to another level,” said father-of-one Alan.

“For every positive, there seemed to be a negative - for every up, there was a down. For the last 21 miles, my feet were in agony. Every step was agony, my feet were covered in blisters and bruises from the pounding of running.”

The GB Ultras Race Across

Scotland was an organised event, with ultra-marathons defined as any running distance longer than a 26.2 mile marathon.

Alan explained that during the first few days of the challenge, temperatures were hot, reaching more than 30 degrees, and leading to him suffering from heat exhaustion.

“The medics didn’t actually think I’d make it,” he added. “But I did it in 97 hours.”

Alan ran day and night for four days, only managing to sleep for a total of two hours, which led to him actually hallucinating due to exhaustion.

“When you take part in an ultra-marathon, you need to get to certain checkpoints in particular times, which means you have to keep going. I basically had two options, to run faster and sleep or go steady and sacrifice sleep,” he continued.

“I managed a few power naps but to be honest, the pain in my feet was keeping me awake. When it comes to ultra-marathons, I think it’s all in the head.”

Alan started running in 2018, and has since completed multiple ultra-marathons, but his most recent challenge is the longest run he has ever taken part in.

“When I got to running the last 21

miles, it was tough. I thought to myself, ‘do I quit?’ and for me, the answer is always no,” added Alan.

“I get a thrill from pushing myself to the limit and I like proving to myself that I can do it.”

Alan has also taken part in the New York Marathon and will be running the Berlin Marathon later this year, raising money on both occasions for the PC Nicola Hughes Memorial Fund. His fundraising efforts are being supported by Police Pass and Niche, who are both providing corporate sponsorship for him.

“As I was retiring this year and it’s 10 years since PC Hughes was so tragically killed, it seemed only right that I raised money in her memory,” said Alan.

“Nicola was so young, it’s so important that we continue to keep her memory alive and hopefully, I can help bring something good to the children the charity supports.”

The PC Nicola Hughes Memorial Fund aims to provide learning opportunities and pre-employment skills to children who have experienced the death of a close family member as a result of violent crime such as murder or manslaughter.

[Donate to Alan’s fundraising page.](#)

# ‘Honoured and lucky’ to police Queen’s funeral

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A proud police officer who was deployed to London to represent Suffolk Constabulary during the funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II says he felt honoured and 'lucky to have had such an opportunity'.

Federation member Ashley Gorbutt was one of the officers lining The Mall, which was bursting with members of the public waiting to catch a glimpse of the cortege and pay their respects to the Queen.

Recalling his experience, Ashley says the whole day 'felt a bit like a dream' and something he will be talking about for years to come.

"It was a surreal day, being part of the state funeral. When the Queen's hearse passed, and we all bowed our heads, it felt like a dream being there. I'll definitely not be forgetting that shift in a hurry," said Ashley, whose name was selected at random to represent the Force.

"Although I'm a member of mutual aid, I wasn't chosen by them, so when the opportunity came up directly through the Force, to represent Suffolk Police, I felt very lucky. I believe the name of everyone who had volunteered to work was put into a spreadsheet before a random name was chosen.

"To be there to celebrate the Queen and pay our respects that close to the cortege was something else. It was a nerve-wracking experience but also very moving.

"Although I wore my tunic during my passing out, I've never felt smarter or prouder than I did on Monday."

After arriving in London on Sunday and having to get up at 3am to get ready for the 5am start, Ashley, who has been with the Force for three years, was briefed and then sent to position at around 7.30am. His role was to look after members of the public while keeping an eye out for any unusual behaviour.

"I knew I'd be working on Monday but it wasn't until a few days before when I received an email from the Met that I knew how heavily involved I was going to be," explained Ashley, who was joined by dozens of other officers, not only from forces from the across the country but also across the globe too.

"It was amazing meeting people from across the world, including officers from Fiji, the Caribbean and South Africa.

"As we walked from our meeting point and down towards The Mall, the streets were full of people who

had been camping out, and they all cheered for us. It's hard to explain but it was very moving to see so much gratitude for the police as we don't always feel that.

"Pretty much everyone we saw clapped us or said thanks. It was very humbling."

Ashley says that he quickly got to know the crowds around him, some of whom he shared conversations with throughout the day.

"I was surprised at how many people turned out on the day. The atmosphere was electric and full of emotions. I met people from all over, even a father and son from China," he explained.

"It was interesting getting to know the different members of the public. We were chatting about how long they'd been there and they were asking me questions about the job.

"And seeing the Queen's Guards, as well as the Navy and Armed Forces, while the bagpipes were playing, now that was impressive. Of course, it was difficult because I couldn't turn around, I had to keep facing the public - although, I did try to get a sneaky peak as the cortege was approaching.

"I feel very lucky to have been given the opportunity."



PC Ashley Gorbutt with other officers during his deployment.



# Why we all need to support colleagues going through menopause

All officers – male and female – should support colleagues going through menopause, says branch chair Darren Harris.

Pointing out that half of the population will experience menopause, Darren added: “The physical, psychological and emotional effects of menopause can be debilitating for so many women and that can have a knock-on effect on their families, friends and colleagues. “It’s up to all of us to educate ourselves and to understand the

impact it can have.

“And it’s up to all of us to open up those conversations to offer support to our colleagues and our family members and friends, to help break the stigmas surrounding menopause, and to ensure that colleagues going through it get the help they need.

“We all have a role to play in breaking the silence around menopause.”

Darren was commenting for World Menopause Day, which took place on 18 October.

His comments echo those of Hayley Aley, who is menopause lead and a National Board member for the Police Federation of England and Wales and has spent the past four years tackling taboos surrounding menopause across forces nationwide.

Hayley has told how she is on a mission to boost the support female officers and staff transitioning through menopause receive while educating their colleagues.

“The impact menopause has on women is huge, there are so

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many symptoms, including the likes of fatigue, sweating, weight gain, joint problems and not to mention the psychological effects it has, like brain fog,” said Hayley, who has been working as menopause lead since 2018.

“And the trouble is, officers that are transitioning through menopause are often at the age when they are achieving their best, the peak of their career, with some even considering career progression. And, then all of a sudden, menopause comes along with a whole host of symptoms they can’t control and it strips all their confidence away.

“We’re actually losing amazing officers because they no longer feel like they can actually do their job anymore. We could prevent this if there was more education surrounding menopause and people felt more comfortable talking about their symptoms.”

In the UK, the average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51, however, it can generally happen anytime between 42 and 56, as a woman’s oestrogen levels start to decline. However, 1 in 100 women experience menopause before the age of 40.

“We can’t keep thinking traditionally about this either,” explains Hayley.

“I’ve heard from officers who have actually experienced menopause in their 20s and 30s - and there is even more stigma in those cases because nobody believes them.”

In 2019, a national survey was carried out across all forces to help determine statistics surrounding menopause, and to support the creation of national guidance for all forces to use.

“When we first collected the data,

we actually found that nobody could report sickness absence due to menopause symptoms. This has now changed and 22 forces allow it. Of course, we have advanced so much since 2019 but I didn’t think we would still have to be pushing for consistency across all forces,” added Hayley.

She explained that it is hoped to distribute a secondary survey next year, to see what has changed over the last few years.

“Not only do we want to see how far we’ve come but we need to know what areas can still be improved,” said Hayley, “Ultimately, we need that consistent approach across all forces, and the support and education officers receive needs to be continuous. It’s amazing that we have initiatives like World Menopause Day but forces need to be supporting women who are transitioning every single day of the year.”

Hayley said that since working on raising awareness of menopause, they have held regular mornings, supported officers by providing places to chat confidentially and launched training sessions.

She is also a part of ‘MAG’ – the Menopause Action Group - which has hundreds of members from all emergency service teams looking for ways to improve education and awareness of menopause.

“The trouble is, we avoid talking about it - even as women and it’s common for us to be in denial about

the symptoms too,” added 49-year-old Hayley, who revealed she first noticed symptoms when she was 45.

“Even I was in denial about going through menopause, because it just creeps up on you. And I’m 12 months post-menopause and I’m still experiencing symptoms, I still get brain fog.

“And I’ve heard some horror stories from officers who feel so anxious and worried about transitioning, they actually believe they can no longer do their job. I’ve heard of women actually covering up their symptoms either because they don’t want to look like they can’t do their role or they are embarrassed - and that’s more common than you think.

“There’s no denying it, menopause can totally floor you. But this isn’t something women should worry about talking about. We should not be ashamed that this is happening.”

Hayley continued to say that as well as supporting officers currently experiencing menopause, she is determined to prove to others who will be transitioning in the future that the correct advice, guidance and help will be there.

“I want to help ensure these women feel worthy. We cannot see any more of our fantastic officers leaving the force because of menopause.”

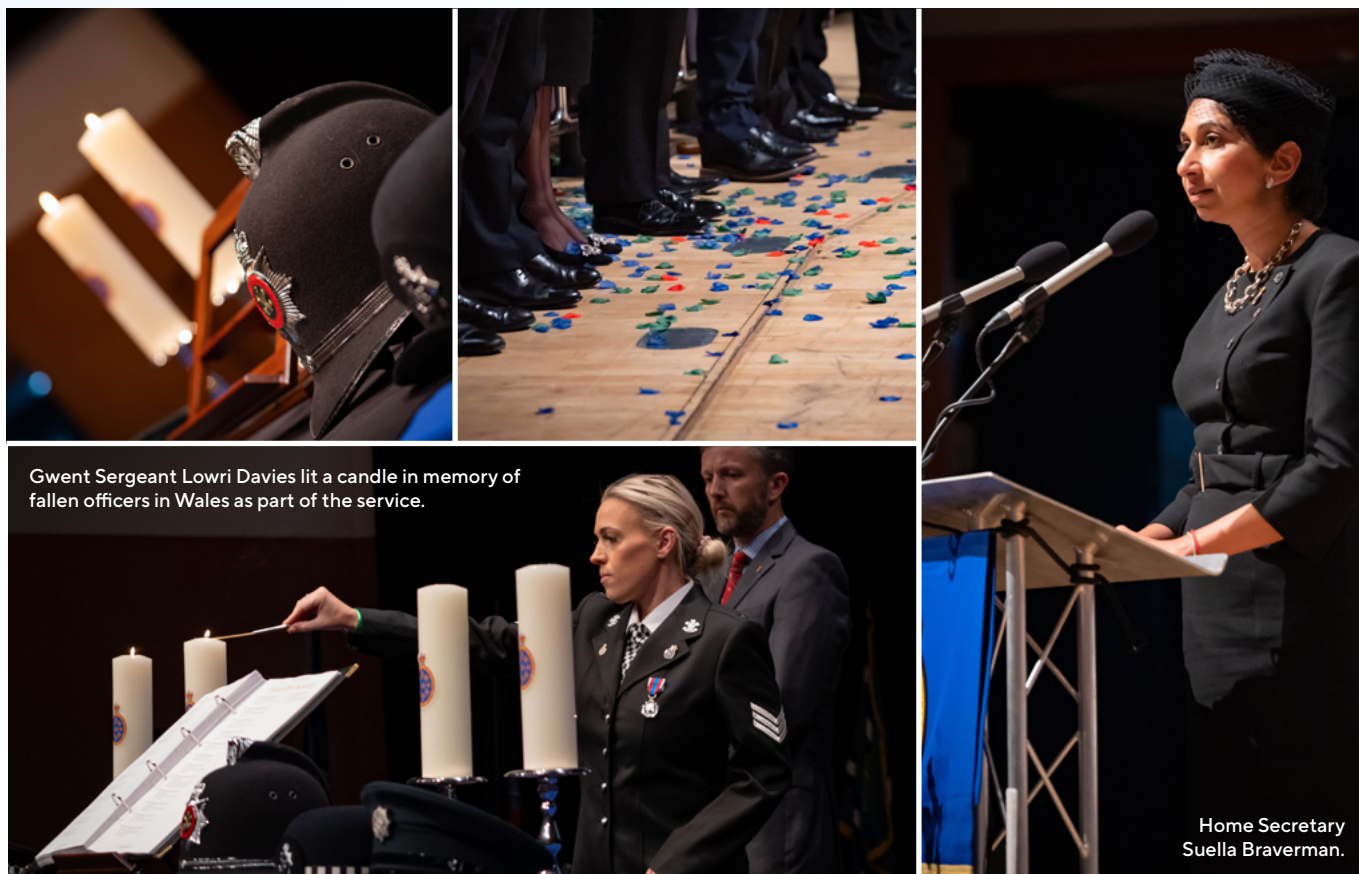
The theme for this year’s World Menopause Day was cognition and mood.



# Remembering fallen colleagues on National Police Memorial Day in Belfast







Gwent Sergeant Lowri Davies lit a candle in memory of fallen officers in Wales as part of the service.

Home Secretary  
Suella Braverman.

Suffolk Police Federation chair Darren Harris says it was an honour to join colleagues from across the UK in remembering fallen officers at the National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) service.

Darren attended the service at the end of September with Ann Masterson, the widow of Suffolk Sergeant John Masterson, and their son and daughter-in-law PC Andy Masterson and Sergeant Louisa Masterson who are both serving officers with the Force. John was 46 when he collapsed and died while on motorcycle escort duty during a royal visit on 26 June 1992.

Darren said afterwards: "It really was an honour to attend the National Police Memorial Day service and to be joined by John's family. The day is an opportunity to show the families of our fallen officers that the service remembers their sacrifice and that they will always remain part of the policing family."

A congregation of almost 2,000 people attended the service including secretaries of state, police chiefs, and family and friends of

fallen officers.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman, who gave a reading during the service, said: "To all the officers who lost their lives while working to keep us safe, we thank you and we honour you.

"Their bravery and commitment to their duty was unfaltering. Society owes them and their loved ones a debt we cannot repay, but it is one we will not forget.

"As Home Secretary I make a promise to give police the powers and tools they need to do their jobs safely."

During the service, candles were lit by relatives in remembrance of officers throughout the country who have lost their lives, one from each of the four nations of the United Kingdom.

Representing England was Kat Dumphreys, widow of PC Nick Dumphreys, who died on 26 January 2000 aged 47. He sustained fatal injuries when the police vehicle he was driving was in a single vehicle collision on the M6.

Liam Kelly, chair of the Police Federation for Northern Ireland, read the names of officers who have

lost their lives during the past year – PC Daniel Golding, Metropolitan Police, PC Craig Higgins, Greater Manchester Police, PC Alex Prentice, Northamptonshire Police, and PC Darryl Street, Civil Nuclear Constabulary.

He said: "National Police Memorial Day is an occasion to reflect and celebrate the best in policing not only in Northern Ireland but throughout the United Kingdom.

"Daily we see officers stepping up to the mark to safeguard communities and, sadly, on occasion, some officers are injured or lose their lives in the execution of their duties. This weekend, we say to assembled families that the police 'family' recognises, appreciates, and empathises with what you are experiencing and will never forget the sacrifices your loved ones made."

There was silence as petals of remembrance, representing all who have lost their lives, descended from the gallery as the orchestra played Abide with me and the Last Post was sounded.

# How you can help shape digital police memorial

Suffolk Police Federation is backing an appeal by the Police Arboretum Memorial Trust to help it create an online memorial for fallen officers.

The trust, which is headed by the former Chief Constable Martin Hewitt, created the new UK Police Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire that was dedicated in July 2021 in the presence of King Charles III (then Prince of Wales).

Now, as part of the next stage of its work it aims to create a digital memorial to take the memorial to a national and international audience and is seeking the feedback of Suffolk officers to help shape the website.

Federation chair Darren Harris said: "When a police officer loses their life in the line of duty and often while protecting the public, it is devastating for their loved ones and the whole police family. It is our duty to ensure those colleagues are never forgotten and that's why we should all support this project.

"One easy way to help get it off the ground is by providing feedback to help shape the website. So, I am urging colleagues to take a few minutes to complete the Trust's survey and encourage others to do the same."

The digital memorial is being developed by the trust in partnership with the Police Roll of Honour and will carry an 'on this day' tribute which highlights the names of officers who died on a particular day and allow users to search for an officer by name, force, date of death and rank.

Enhanced tributes will be developed that tell the personal stories of those behind the badge including interviews with family, friends and colleagues, access to news archives and personal photographs.

Chair of trustees Mr Hewitt said: "The digital memorial will give visitors access to the records of almost 5,000 police officers who have dedicated their lives to policing, from as far back as the Bow Street Runners in 1749.

"However, we need the help of the service, and the public to help us develop the next stage. We want to hear from you about what you would like to see on the digital memorial and how you and visitors may wish to use it."

[Complete the online survey.](#)





# Federation officials impressed with Flint House

At Flint House are (left to right) Ben Hudson, Suffolk officers Rachel Gibson and Kevin Miller, and Darren Harris.

Suffolk Police Federation's chair and secretary have visited the Flint House police rehabilitation centre in Oxfordshire to get an insight into the facilities and treatments available to officers. Chair Darren Harris said he was impressed not just with Flint House itself but also the grounds and the setting.

"It has a very relaxing feel about it," says Darren, who has long encouraged Federation members to subscribe to the rehabilitation centre. "By visiting Flint House in person, I feel I now have an even better insight into the treatments and support offered so that I can better explain to officers the different approaches that are available to them."

Branch secretary Ben Hudson added: "The location, grounds and facilities really are excellent. During our visit three Suffolk officers were staying at Flint House and we were able to speak to two of them. They had nothing but praise for the treatment they were receiving.

"Like so many other aspects of

life, Covid has brought about a change to the way in which Flint House provides support. They are now more flexible with a blended approach to treatment incorporating online and home-based support, day patient treatment as well as the more traditional residential stays."

Flint House, which is in Goring-on-Thames, offers physical and mental rehabilitation and support services. It has a well-equipped, state of the art gym, fully accessible swimming and hydrotherapy pools and offers intensive, personalised physiotherapy.

Within the grounds, there is a mental health lodge where therapists provide individual and group sessions, as well as an all-weather pitch used for physical rehabilitation, leisure activities and bleep test training.

Flint House also offers a bespoke, virtual conditioning programme which can help officers get into shape for their next fitness test.

The centre has 158 guest bedrooms, all with en suite bathrooms, freeview and free WiFi. It has a restaurant providing three meals a day prepared

by a dedicated catering team using free and locally sourced ingredients.

Flint House is a charity, entirely funded by donations from those in the police service and their families. It helps 3,000 serving and retired police officers each year.

Only around half of Suffolk officers currently subscribe to Flint House.

It costs no more than a cup of coffee a week to subscribe. Serving officers pay a donation of £7.37 a month via direct debit to apply for access to Flint House's residential, outpatient and virtual treatments.

To sign up, simply email the [Force charities coordinator](#) asking to subscribe to Flint House and the rest will be done for you.

If you're a former officer with a police pension or medical pension you can apply for treatment at Flint House. A donation of £5 per month gives retired officers access to the same clinical services as serving officers. Find out more.

[Read the testimony of Kevin Miller who visited Flint House earlier this year.](#)