

# FEDERATION



West Midlands Police Federation

October/November 2023



## REMEMBERING FALLEN OFFICERS

Pages 12 and 13

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# WELCOME

Welcome to the October/November 2023 edition of **Federation** - the magazine for members of West Midlands Police Federation.

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

Just get in touch and let us know.

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

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# It's time to recognise the bravery of your peers



By **Rich Cooke**, chair of West Midlands Police Federation

Last month, I was honoured to represent our members at the annual National Police Memorial Day service in Cardiff. It's an occasion that brings together the policing family from all parts of the UK to pay our respects and honour the more than 5,000 officers who have died or been killed on duty.

It is by turn a sombre and uplifting event, as husbands and wives, partners, parents, children, chief officers, Federation reps, senior politicians and faith leaders take the time to remember our fallen heroes. As always, the day was not only a fitting tribute to those officers but also served to provide comfort and support to their families, friends and colleagues, and to show they're not alone.

This year's service was made even more poignant coming days after the death of one of our own, Sergeant Paul Frear. I, like so many of our members, was devastated when I heard the news, having worked with Paul for a number of years at Wolverhampton. Paul was a dedicated officer who was committed to serving the people of the West Midlands. He was a fantastic officer with a great sense of humour. He will be so deeply missed by his

family, but also so many of his police colleagues. The French novelist George Sand said in a quote personal to me, 'there is only one happiness in life, to love and be loved' - Paul certainly had that, and it shone out in the person he was.

When we lose one of our own, it sends shockwaves through the policing family, so we were deeply touched to be contacted by Federations and officers across the country offering their condolences.

My thoughts were very much with Paul's family, friends and colleagues during the National Police Memorial Day service.

Paul was one of eight officers who had died in the line of duty in the past 12 months, and one of the most poignant points of the service came when their names were read out and petals of remembrance fell, one petal for each officer who had lost their life. It's a moment that will stay with me for a long time. They will never be forgotten, and the National Police Memorial Day ensures that will be the case.

It should also be the case that officers who are killed in the line of duty receive formal recognition from the country.

The Federation is continuing its support for the Medals for Heroes campaign, which calls for an Elizabeth Medal, a posthumous honour awarded to the bereaved relatives of officers and emergency workers. Bryn Hughes MBE who is leading the campaign, is the father of PC Nicola Hughes, who was murdered on duty in 2012. While it won't bring them back, it will honour their memory and give their family recognition of the sacrifice they've made.

It finally feels like we are close to this becoming a reality, with more and more influential people throwing their support behind the campaign as the months go by.

A reminder to all members that the annual

Police Federation of England and Wales Annual Conference takes place on Tuesday 10 and Wednesday 11 October.

It's always a highlight of the policing year bringing together senior figures in the Federation, policing experts and Home Office and Government figures to share experiences, discuss current issues, and shape the future of policing.

This year's event will take place online. This decision which was taken in recognition of the financial challenges the organisation faces following the Employment Tribunal (ET) ruling earlier this year and the Federation's acceptance that it discriminated against the claimants, all members of what is known as the Pension Challenge. It is imperative that the Federation, as a whole, is true to its word and takes action to reach a speedy settlement, while also addressing the fundamental change of approach required to ensure nothing like this happens again and we rebuild trust with that large section of our membership.

There will be some advantages to an online conference, such as offering more opportunities for our members to have a say. There will be important updates on our industrial rights ballot which will take place in the New Year. It is vital for all within policing that we embrace this once-in-a-generation opportunity to send a clear message to the Government about how our pay is currently determined. I for one am looking forward to the campaign and persuading the mass of colleagues to participate - which will be difficult considering my earlier comments - but we must do it; it is as important for every single one of us.

It's a lot easier to join the sessions and to ask your questions online than it is to take time to travel to the conference venue and be part of the audience. So please [register](#) if you can and make your voice heard.

“ **EVERY DAY OUR MEMBERS ARE PUTTING THE SAFETY OF OTHERS BEFORE THEMSELVES AND WE WANT TO CELEBRATE THOSE INCREDIBLE ACTS OF SELFLESSNESS WITH OUR OWN BRAVERY AWARDS.** ”



This is a vital time for policing and there are so many issues affecting us, many of which are exacerbated by seemingly endless negative media coverage. But make no mistake, we're fighting hard for our members on the issues that matter to them and will continue to do so.

I was delighted to launch our inaugural West Midlands Bravery Awards, which will recognise our courageous and inspirational colleagues who go above and beyond the call of duty to serve and protect the public.

Every day our members are putting the safety of others before themselves and we want to celebrate those incredible acts of selflessness with our own Bravery Awards.

There are seven awards, one for each geographical area of the Force: Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton, as well as a special award named in honour of our late deputy chair Sam Hughes. Nominations are now open and I am actively encouraging you all to put your peers forward and ensure they get the recognition they deserve. Simply email [westmidlandspf@polfed.org](mailto:westmidlandspf@polfed.org) to request a nomination form from the branch. For more information on the awards turn to page 6.

Mental Health problems can impact anyone at any time, but there seems to be a societal lack of sympathy and acknowledgement that police officers can experience mental health issues too. I feel that because of the job we do, people often look at us almost as being like robocops and think that we're somehow different to the rest of the population and don't experience problems with our mental health and wellbeing.

But the nature of the job means that many of our members are exposed to traumatic incidents during their careers and the reality is it can impact their mental health and wellbeing.

Which is why we're encouraging members to use World Mental Health Day on Tuesday 10 October as a chance to talk about mental health, how to look after it and importantly, how to get help if you're struggling.

And if you are struggling, you're not alone. In this edition Jase Dooley, our branch deputy chair who has spoken bravely and openly about his own mental health, talks about 'Coffee With a Cop', a new initiative which encourages officers to talk about their issues and to look after their wellbeing. My hat goes off to Jase for speaking so openly about the challenges he has faced with his own mental health.

Mental health is a priority for the Federation, and if you'd like to speak to somebody about your wellbeing then contact your local representative.

Until next time, enjoy this year's Conference and don't forget to get your Bravery Award nominations in.

# Annual PFEW Conference: Members encouraged to register for virtual event



**W**ith just a few days to go until this year's Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) annual conference, West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke is encouraging members to get involved.

This year, PFEW's flagship event takes place online on Tuesday 10 October and Wednesday 11 October.

The conference will be a mix of live broadcasts and pre-recorded presentations from senior Federation officials as well as experts in policing, Government, and the Home Office.

Rich said: "Conference will give us a chance to examine the past year and to explore the future of policing.

"It's an opportunity to share best practice and new ideas, and to engage with key figures in policing.

"And with the conference being held online, hopefully it will allow for more members to join in and take part in the

debates and discussions than may have been the case with a physical event.

"It's your Federation and I'd encourage you to register to be part of the conference and have your say."

The conference will be hosted by Talk TV presenter Ian Collins.

Day 1 agenda includes discussions on leadership in policing, the Home Office review impact on independent panels, and disclosure and redaction, as well as retirement, misogyny and Mutual Aid.

Industrial rights and wellbeing will be explored on Day 2 when there will be a keynote address from PFEW chair Steve Hartshorn and a Q & A panel session.

The conference will also recognise outstanding contributions to policing through the presentation of awards for excellence in roads policing, detectives and women in policing.

For more information on the agenda and to register visit our [website](https://www.polfed.org).

# West Midlands Police Federation launches its own bravery awards

**W**est Midlands Police Federation has launched its own bravery awards to recognise the courageous and inspirational officers who put the safety of others before themselves.

The West Midlands Police Federation Bravery Awards will celebrate the dedication and commitment of officers who go above and beyond the call of duty every day to serve and protect the public.

Nominations for the awards are now open and any Federation member can nominate a colleague.

Email [westmidlandspf@polfed.org](mailto:westmidlandspf@polfed.org) to request a nomination form from the branch. The deadline for nominations is midnight on 30 November.

Branch chair Rich Cooke said: "Our officers put their lives on the line every day, fighting crime and saving lives.

"We've seen the actions of our members recognised at the national Police Bravery Awards this year, which was fantastic.

"It is with this recognition and celebration in mind that West Midlands Police Federation has made the decision to deliver its own awards

ceremony.

"The risks officers face is often overlooked until tragedy occurs and the loss of an officer, such as the sad passing of Sergeant Graham Saville who made the ultimate sacrifice in trying to save another person, brings this into focus.

"The West Midlands Police Federation Bravery Awards will be an opportunity to shine a light on the brave and extraordinary actions of police officers who go above and beyond the call of duty.

"We look forward to hosting this event for them."







The inaugural awards will be held at Tally Ho Conferencing and Banqueting Centre in Edgbaston on Wednesday 31 January.

There are seven awards, one for each geographical area of the Force - Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

These awards are for an act of bravery in that geographical area which could have been carried out by any police officer in England and Wales. Nominations for the awards are not limited to officers serving in those areas.

An eighth award, the Sam Hughes Award, will recognise an officer who has been an inspiration to or assisted others in the face of personal adversity.

The award is named after West Midlands Police Federation deputy chair Sam Hughes, [who died earlier this year aged 53](#).

The overall winner will be presented with the PC David Green Shield.

This award is named after PC David Green, a 20-year-old officer who was stabbed to death by a mob in Birmingham city centre. In PC Green's 15-month career, he was commended three times for his bravery.

Rich said: "It serves as fitting tribute to name these awards after Sam and David."

Jamie McDonnell, of [Slater & Gordon Solicitors](#), who are the headline sponsor for the event, said: "Slater and Gordon has worked with the Police Federation for more than 60 years, providing legal services to police officers.

"We are proud to be headline sponsoring the West Midlands Police Federation Bravery Awards and to celebrate and acknowledge the hard work of the attendees."

The winner of the PC David Green Shield will represent West Midlands Police in the national Police Bravery Awards, which includes a visit to Downing Street and a gala awards dinner in London.

This year, a team of West Midlands Police officers who put their own lives on the line as they formed a human chain to try to save four young boys who had fallen into a frozen lake, was named the [overall national Police Bravery Award winner](#).

PS Paula McDowell, PS Fergal Sharkey, PC

Harriet Batchelor, PC Alana Grigg, PC Stewart Powers, PC Joshua Adams, PC Anthony Maginnis, PC William Finnegan, PC Fidha Akhtar, PC Olivia Studholme, PC Charanjit Chana, PC Jordon Finn, PCSO Chloe Westlake and PC Jason Gilbert were honoured for the tremendous courage they showed throughout the tragic incident at Babbs Mill near Solihull on 11 December last year.

**“OUR OFFICERS PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE EVERY DAY, FIGHTING CRIME AND SAVING LIVES. WE’VE SEEN THE ACTIONS OF OUR MEMBERS RECOGNISED AT THE NATIONAL POLICE BRAVERY AWARDS THIS YEAR, WHICH WAS FANTASTIC. IT IS WITH THIS RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION IN MIND THAT WEST MIDLANDS POLICE FEDERATION HAS MADE THE DECISION TO DELIVER ITS OWN BRAVERY AWARDS.**



The West Midlands Police officers who were winners of the Police Federation's Police Bravery Awards 2023.

# Opinion: Rich Cooke responds to Home Secretary's review

'Members want to serve communities equally and fairly', says the chair of West Midlands Police Federation as he responds to the Home Secretary's announced review into police impartiality and activism.

Rich Cooke's comments come after Suella Braverman commissioned His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to carry out a review of police impartiality and activism.

He said that while he understands the concerns the Home Secretary has - having seen several years of debatable policy, instituted by senior police officers, apparently aimed at addressing their views on various matters of public policing - his confidence in the Home Office is very low.

Rich says he feels the Home Secretary's announcement, ironically, comes hard on the heels of what he believes are both misguided and politically driven proposals to reform police misconduct.

He said: "We've seen how Theresa May, as Home Secretary, used the 'Best Use of Stop and Search' scheme to tie officers' hands on the use of S60. We saw how despite the law stating clearly that an inspector was the appropriate rank to institute the power, policy (effectively a lawful order), inhibited them from doing so, instead requiring the assent of a chief officer rank. This led to the virtual death of the practical use of a legitimate legal power for several years. From where I was standing, this was a politically motivated attempt to change police tactics and disempower rank-and-file officers to fit an agenda. And sadly that attitude persists in some forces today.

"We've also seen the removal of discretion from frontline cops on offences like drug possession or street sex work, from time to time - due to the views taken by certain senior



West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke.

officers that drug addicts and sex workers are in fact 'victims'. This may well be the right approach, however, it is clearly not for the police to decide. It is a fact that the law laid down by Parliament says certain things are criminal, and that has not been changed. Who are we to usurp the will of Parliament in these matters?

"When we think about powers of arrest, for years, colleagues were told to use any alternative. Arrest was overtly and tacitly discouraged, particularly for juveniles and even where very serious offences had been committed such as possession of bladed

weapons in areas where kids were being murdered by kids. The mantra being not to 'create adverse childhood experience' or 'we don't want to criminalise kids' - both statements which, I believe, are open to political debate and said to influence the decisions of frontline cops.

"In some forces, I'm aware that officers feel their discretion on arrests is now being taken away, with pressure to arrest in most circumstances to fulfil what they feel is a hard-line political narrative. Again, none of this is 'the law', yet these policy decisions have had a massive impact on the way the UK is policed over the years and has led to colleagues feeling disempowered, unable to apply a common sense decision based on the individual merits of a case. And let's be clear, the decision to arrest sits with each individual officer - it is for them to justify, not a senior rank who knows nothing about the case. Sadly, that independence, while still existing in law, has been badly undermined in practice through constant interference.

"Fortunately, in West Midlands, especially during more recent months, I feel we are gradually returning to that traditional model of decisions made at the lowest possible level - where they are most efficient, based on the individual circumstances of the case by officers with abundant local knowledge.

"The ancient 'Independent Office of Constable' must be given due respect. Frontline

**“ THE ANCIENT 'INDEPENDENT OFFICE OF CONSTABLE' MUST BE GIVEN DUE RESPECT. FRONTLINE OFFICERS SHOULD BE APPROPRIATELY TRAINED IN AN UNBIASED WAY ON WHAT THE LAW ACTUALLY IS, AND WHAT THE OPTIONS ARE IN A GIVEN CASE. THEY MUST THEN HAVE THEIR DECISIONS, YES, SCRUTINISED, BUT RESPECTED.**



officers should be appropriately trained in an unbiased way on what the law actually is, and what the options are in a given case. They must then have their decisions, yes, scrutinised, but respected. Senior officers up and down the country have, in my view, been going beyond their rightful constitutional role too often and I hope that the latest review will lead to an end to the constant political interference we've seen for years.

"Ultimately, we want everybody to be able to come to us. We want everybody to feel they've got a voice with the police.

"It's about common sense policing. But that means giving officers the time, training and leeway to apply it."

Deputy chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) Tiff Lynch said: "Policing should never be put on any political agenda and is too important to be kicked around like a political football.

"Our members want to go out there and serve communities in the best way possible but need help when the Government constantly changes the goalposts.

"One minute they want police officers to be more involved, the next, they want them to act like robots."

In a letter to chief constables, Ms Braverman said public confidence had been damaged as a result of police 'engaging in contentious issues' such as dancing with political marchers, taking the knee in a gesture against racism and 'waving the Progress flag'.

Ms Braverman said: "The British people expect their police to focus on cutting crime and protecting communities - political activism does not keep people safe, solve crimes or support victims, but can damage public confidence."

The HMICFRS review has been asked to cover:

- **Policies and processes that go further than, or contravene, obligations set out in the Equality Act 2010, and how those impact operational decision-making**
- **The quality and neutrality of associated training provided to implement such policies and processes, and by which organisation(s) this is delivered**
- **The selection process for groups that are consulted on revisions to policy or process, how decisions are made on which policies and processes are selected for amendment, how the views expressed by those groups are balanced against others, and what consideration is given to other groups that may be impacted as a result**
- **The involvement of staff networks in the development of policies and processes, and the use of police resources and time dedicated to such networks and whether they are involved in contested political matters**
- **Communication with the public on these issues, including social media.**

# Fed chair pays tribute to 'lovely and supportive' sergeant



Sergeant Paul Frear.

**W**est Midlands Police Federation has paid tribute to Sergeant Paul Frear who tragically died on the morning of Friday 22 September following a road traffic accident.

Paul, 45, was on his way to Smethwick Police Station on Thursday 21 September when he was involved in a collision with a car. Paul was on rest days but supporting the Force as part of its recruitment drive, as he was a regular assessor of new recruits.

Paul led the Low Hill, Bushbury and Fallings Park neighbourhood team having served with West Midlands Police for 21 years. He leaves behind a wife and children.

West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke has paid tribute to the 'lovely and supportive officer, who had a great sense of humour'.

He said: "I am devastated to hear this news, as I know so many colleagues who knew Paul and have worked with him over the years will be.

"I worked with Paul at Wolverhampton and knew him well - it is surreal thinking of him in the past tense. He was a lovely person, mild-mannered, measured, always supportive with a great sense of humour. I will miss our meetings and chats putting the world to rights.

"Paul had everything going for him, first and foremost a beautiful, loving family and our thoughts are focused on them at this desperately sad time.

"Rest in peace Paul, we will never forget you."

Any officers who require support from the Federation are advised to contact their local Federation representative.

**“ I WORKED WITH PAUL AT WOLVERHAMPTON AND KNEW HIM WELL - IT IS SURREAL THINKING OF HIM IN THE PAST TENSE. HE WAS A LOVELY PERSON, MILD-MANNERED, MEASURED, ALWAYS SUPPORTIVE WITH A GREAT SENSE OF HUMOUR. I WILL MISS OUR MEETINGS AND CHATS PUTTING THE WORLD TO RIGHTS. ”**

# Uplift is more like 'no lift' says Fed deputy chair



The deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation described the Government's Uplift Programme as "no lift" after it was revealed the Force has almost 700 fewer officers than in 2010.

Jase Dooley said huge investment was needed to meet the Home Secretary's demand that forces pursue all reasonable crime leads.

He said the West Midlands Police budget had been slashed, that investigators were "hitting brick walls" such as the data protection laws around disclosure, and officers were working full shifts without a break and without food and water.

Jase was responding to Suella Braverman's comments that police forces had the resources to pursue all reasonable leads following the Government's Uplift Programme and the restoration of the 20,000 officers cut after 2010.

He said: "Of course we want to catch these people. That's the whole point of being a police officer."

"But this spin that [20,000 police officers have been recruited](#), that was just to get back to the levels of 2010 but we're still 698 officers down on that in the West Midlands. The uplift has been a no lift for us."

He said that hundreds more officers had been seconded to the counter terrorism unit and the regional organised crime unit, which have been established since 2010.

"So, we're even more officers down, and the Chief Constable is working tirelessly to try to get the numbers back up again," he said.

"The Metropolitan Police are struggling to



Home Secretary Suella Braverman.

recruit officers at the moment. The Chief Constable has approached the Home Office to say that if they don't get their recruitment figure, West Midlands Police will take it and that we can facilitate another 400 officers.

"This will also mean an uplift in the staff to train them and facilitate other areas where our police staff colleagues provide assistance and support.

"It will mean we're still 300 short from 2010 numbers but it's a step towards getting back to where we were.

"And while the Chief is committed to increasing numbers, we also need a commitment that this will translate into less disruption for officers, and better support and investment in the infrastructure.

"The Government also cut many of the mechanisms that supported the numbers we're now reintroducing at some pace."

Jase said the Force also faced more cuts to its funding after its budget was slashed by £30m in the last financial year.

He said: "West Midlands Police has been the main Force that has lost the most, and we're a metropolitan force that needs to be funded correctly.

"How can the Chief cope with that? How can he expect to give a full service to the public of the West Midlands when they're cutting the funding we're getting?"

"He's being expected to police more, he's being expected to investigate more, but with 700 fewer officers."

Jase said that members were being "run ragged" because of the demands being placed on them.

"Response officers are going without their rest for nine hours," he said. "What other areas of business would allow that?"

"Our officers regularly do not have any food or water and are expected to continue to turn out for these jobs with fewer staff and fewer people on the streets.

"The service is becoming young in service. We're losing a lot of people who are resigning because it's not what they expected the police to be.

"Officers are being injured daily just doing their job, which takes them out of action."

He said the [DG6](#) disclosure guidance made a detective's job "almost impossible".

"It's absolute craziness, the barriers they're putting up against us day in day out but expecting more and more from us," he said.

Jase added: "Something has got to give. The Government has to work with us on this and it has to invest more money in policing.

"It has got to get the right people into the job. And it has got to be smarter in the way we police, because internet fraud and social media is a huge issue but we haven't got the resources and the brick walls we're coming up against on data protection and GDPR are killing us."

“OUR OFFICERS REGULARLY DO NOT HAVE ANY FOOD OR WATER AND ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO TURN OUT FOR THESE JOBS WITH FEWER STAFF AND FEWER PEOPLE ON THE STREETS.”



# 'Roads policing: Urgent investment needed'

Chief officers must make an immediate commitment to a sustained investment in roads policing if they are to bring it back from the brink of failure, according to the Police Federation's national lead for police pursuits and driver training.

Tim Rogers, who is also secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, has been highlighting the dangers of under-investment in roads policing for more than 10 years and says the austerity years brought a disproportionate reduction in the number of roads policing officers.

He warned: "It makes no sense at all not to invest in effective roads policing. Each year 1,700 people die on UK roads – more than twice the number of deaths from homicides and terrorism combined. In addition, more than 25,000 people are seriously injured. Is it really the position that we find these numbers a success when we talk about the decade of reductions we have seen?"

"We have eroded the numbers of specialist officers policing our roads to the point of failure. But it is not just the reduction in numbers that is having an impact on the safety of road users. A lack of investment in specialist training and a failure to properly consider what the role of a roads policing officers should be is also leaving police forces with a skills shortage which makes it difficult for them to keep officers and the communities they serve safe.

"We identified a serious risk to road safety when chief officers, forced to make tough decisions around budgets due to funding cuts, seemed content to removing more than 25 per cent of the dedicated, professional and well-trained roads policing resources. This has been a common theme from 2009 when the austerity measures were first introduced.

"But the risk has also been commented upon by the key stakeholders involved in roads policing including the Department for Transport, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS).

"There just seems to be a common theme of road safety being seen as a 'nice to have' by chief officers and this has reduced roads policing to the point where it is not only inefficient but is also failing to meet the road safety strategies set out in policies by Police and Crime Commissioners and chief officers."

Since February this year – and for the first time – roads policing has been identified as a Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) set out by the Home Office. This sets out the Home Secretary's view of what the current national threats are, and the national policing capabilities needed to counter those threats.

"In short, this means the Government is recognising the importance of roads policing in terms of keeping our roads safe but also tackling crime. Yet, we are not seeing chief officers responding to this."

Tim is calling on chief officers to genuinely invest in roads policing.

"They have to do this as a matter of urgency," he explains, "For the first time in a decade, the number of road deaths and serious injuries are starting to rise. Forces must act. We have been tolerating a decline in roads policing capability for years but it is totally unacceptable for us to continue to do this. It is no good settling for a halt in the decline, that is just not good enough. We have to see a genuine reinvestment but we also need to have all chief constables on the same page, committed to treating deaths on the roads their forces police seriously and with positive action rather than words.

"As an example of the variation that exists across the country, it is still unclear what the consistent minimum standard of training is for a roads policing officer. It differs from force to force which is unacceptable in such a reputationally important and safety critical role. It leaves members of the public facing a post code lottery in terms of road safety and that cannot be allowed to continue."

In June 2020, PACTS published its 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety' report focusing on the links between roads policing, compliance with traffic laws and road casualties. It summarised the policy and responsibility framework for policing in the UK and identified trends in enforcement, compliance and casualties relating to the "fatal four" offences – speeding, drink and drug driving, not wearing seat belts and using mobile phones while driving.

The report's recommendations included:

- **Reversing the cuts and expand the number of specialist officers**
- **Taking a more proactive approach to the use of technology and information sharing**
- **Calling for police forces to:**

- **Work more closely with other forces and agencies**
- **Engage the support of the public through communications and use of dashcams**
- **Collaborate on research and improve monitoring and reporting.**

At the time, Tim commented: "Many of the recommendations from this report are in line with what the Police Federation's own roads policing group have been putting forward for a number of years now. We need to see roads policing prioritised so that we can bring about a reduction in these numbers so I hope this report will make the Government and chief officers consider a change of direction."

He now says that while the Government realised the flaw and added roads policing to the SPR, chief officers now need to catch up.

"Talking about zero deaths as a target is welcome but, with no consistent plan, it seems nothing more than warm words," says Tim, "The inclusion of roads policing as an SPR should have been a game-changer, but we are just not seeing chief officers address the under-investment in roads policing," he said.

Three years on, Tim says he is disappointed that there has not been a significant change of direction.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Foster chairs the regional committee for road safety and Tim welcomes his pledges on investment in roads policing, but says more has to be done to actually deliver that investment.

Tim explained: "The reality is that the Road Harm Team has grown in number but these resources came from other areas of roads policing which is just a false economy."

He also wants full consideration to be given to the launch of a specialist roads policing force along the lines of the Transport Police.

"Some say that the misdirection of budgets designed for road policing and road safety has gone too far but, by taking back this portion of the police budget, setting up a dedicated force to deal with roads under the Department for Transport rather than the Home Office will ensure a focus on road safety and the casualty reduction that many chiefs, Police and Crime Commissioners and politicians speak about," Tim concluded.

[Read the PACTS report.](#)

# Chair attends poignant National Police Memorial Day service





**W**est Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke has attended this year's National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) service to commemorate colleagues who have died in the line of duty.

The ceremony, which was in its 20th year and took place in Cardiff, was particularly poignant for the branch as it came just two days after the tragic death of West Midlands Sergeant Paul Frear.

Rich, who described Paul as a "lovely and supportive officer, who had a great sense of humour", stood alongside police chiefs, politicians and religious leaders as well as the families, friends and colleagues of fallen officers at the service on 24 September.

Rich said: "The National Police Memorial Day service is always a very moving and emotional occasion but had an added poignancy this year because it came so soon after the death of one of our members.

"Our thoughts and prayers were with Paul's loved ones throughout the service and we are here to offer them our continued support."

Joining Rich at the event was Chief Constable Craig Guildford, along with the family of West Midlands Police Officer Ryan Hunt, 31, who died in 2006.

"National Police Memorial Day allows us the time and space for reflection on the sacrifices made by colleagues and is one of the most significant, important dates on the policing calendar," added Rich.

Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford, Home Secretary Suella Braverman and shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper attended the service and each gave a reading.

National police chaplain and NPMD co-ordinator, the Reverend Canon David Wilbraham MBE, welcomed the congregation.

He said: "Grief is a universal experience that affects all our lives and today we gather to support each other and pay tribute to those lost in service."

The Act of Remembrance saw candles, one from each of the four nations in the UK, lit to remind people of the "undying flame of devotion and commitment, exemplified by those whom we remember today".

Sid Mackay, father of Metropolitan Police Constable Nina Mackay, 25, who died in 1997 after being stabbed by a wanted man, represented England.

Dorothy Ellis, the mother of Gwent Police Constable Adrian Ellis, 29, who died in 1989 in a road traffic collision, represented Wales. Scotland was represented by David Taylor, the son of Strathclyde Police Constable George Taylor, 27, who died in 1976 when he was attacked with an axe.

Northern Ireland was represented by Mervyn and Dorothy Reynolds, parents of Constable Philippa Reynolds, 27, who died in 2013 following a road traffic collision.

The names of officers who lost their lives



West Midlands Chief Constable Craig Guildford (left) with Federation chair Rich Cooke in Cardiff.

during the past year were read by Police Federation Welsh affairs lead Nicky Ryan.

This year's Roll of Honour included:

**Sergeant Paul Frear**, West Midlands Police  
**PC Bruce Lister**, Hertfordshire Constabulary  
**Police Community Support Officer Daniel William Gower**, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary  
**Sergeant Steven Creal**, Sussex Police  
**PC Richard James Joseph Kemp**, Lancashire Constabulary  
**PC Neil Pattinson**, Northumbria Police  
**PC Andrew Boardman**, West Mercia Police

**Inspector Gareth Earp**, Dyfed Powys Police  
**Sergeant Graham Saville**, Nottinghamshire Police.

"We give thanks to God for their courage and their dedication," said Nicky, as the petals of remembrance fell, representing those who have lost their lives.

The event ended with audience members standing in silence, as the orchestra played 'Abide with Me' and the Last Post sounded.

The National Police Memorial Day 2024 will take place in Glasgow next year.



# Custody provision: improvements ongoing

**W**est Midlands Police Federation deputy chair Jason Dooley says a collaborative approach with the Force has led to “significant improvements” in custody provision.

Jase said the Federation had been working with the Force to tackle issues “head-on” and that work was ongoing to continue to improve custody provision.

His comments follow a report on an inspection visit from His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in May.

The report found progress had been made since the last HMICFRS custody inspection in 2017 but there were still areas to improve.

Chief Inspector Jason Nunn, the Force’s custody lead, said work was already underway to address many of the points raised in the report.

He said: “West Midlands Police custody staff work incredibly hard in a specialist policing area. This requires them to prioritise and manage multiple risks in an environment where things can change very quickly.

“We started work to improve the service we provide some time ago, supported by all of the custody teams.

“We welcome the observations made by HMICFRS, which complement the ongoing work our hardworking staff were already doing.

“The new operating model has improved the service we provide, additional facilities have reduced travelling time and ensure officers are returned to frontline duties quicker.

“We are working diligently through the recommendations, with the support of our partners, to see how we can improve and enhance the service in the coming months.”

Jase said that Chief Inspector Nunn had approached the Federation to work with the Force on improving its custody provision.

Jase explained: “He was aware of some of the shortcomings in the custody block.

“He came to me and said would you help us in challenging the problems we have in custody, working alongside the Federation and alongside police regulations.

“He has taken a decent approach. He’s seen the issues and hit them head-on and there have been significant improvements since the inspection.”

The [inspection report](#) highlighted four areas of concern:

- **Leadership of custody was not making sure safe and respectful custody services were consistently provided**
- **The Force’s management of detainee risk is not good enough. The Force is not always assuring detainees’ safety and isn’t following authorised professional practice guidance in all areas**
- **There were several areas where the Force wasn’t consistently meeting the requirements of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and its codes of practice**
- **The governance and oversight of the use of force in custody was not good enough.**

His Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary Wendy Williams said: “West Midlands Police has shown some improvement in its custody



services since our last inspection.

“Frontline officers have a good understanding of vulnerability and consider this when deciding whether an arrest is appropriate, and custody staff treat detainees with respect and do their best to meet individual needs.

“However, progress has been limited and there are still several areas of concern, including West Midlands Police’s oversight of the use of force in custody and the lack of consistency in the custody services it provides.

“We will be working closely with West Midlands Police and monitoring its progress against our new recommendations.”

Jase said he would challenge the report’s findings on the management of detainee risk.

He said that people who come into West Midlands Police custody suites routinely had the cords removed from clothing and shoes.

“But now they’re saying the authorised professional practice (APP) of the [College of Policing](#) states this should be on an individual basis and should be risk-assessed on each one,” he said.

“But you can’t get into someone’s mind. If someone wants to do something they’ll do it.

“I think it could be discussed a bit more and take in the opinions of all of the people who work in that area, but I don’t think it has.”



# ‘Change to data protection laws would benefit detectives and victims’

**P**roposed amendments to data protection legislation and disclosure guidance would free up officers’ time and speed up justice for victims.

That’s the view of Jon Nott, deputy chair of the Police Federation National Detectives’ Forum (PFNDF) and West Midlands Police Federation’s personnel and student officer lead.

An amendment to the Data Protection and Data Information (No 2) Bill, which seeks to adjust the Data Protection Act 2018, has been tabled by Conservative MPs Jane Hunt and Peter Aldous.

Under the proposed changes, police officers and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) would be exempt from certain data protection principles so they can share un-redacted data with each other when making charging decisions.

Jon said the amendment, if it was voted through in Parliament, would make a huge difference to police officers and to victims of crime.

He said: “It would simplify the whole process and make officers’ work easier as there wouldn’t be the need to do a lot of extra work before sharing everything with the CPS.

“This would mean that officers were able to spend more time investigating other matters and it would speed up the process for victims of crime.”

The Federation launched its #SimplifyDG6 campaign almost a year ago and Jon said that with the backing of MPs at Westminster it



Jon Nott.

feels like it’s gathering momentum.

Jon said: “Now that we have support from MPs who have been able to table a bill, it feels like this is moving to the next stage.

“Rather than conversations and trying to raise awareness of the issue, we now have support in the House of Commons to try to make a change.”

He added: “The first year of the campaign has been a learning curve to find the best way

to raise detectives’ concerns to try to make the process simpler and save time, so they can concentrate on helping the public and investigate other matters they have.”

Jon encouraged members to raise the campaign with their local MP to help put it in the spotlight when the House of Commons returned from its summer recess on Monday 4 September.

“Members can support the campaign by speaking to their local MPs,” he said, “Raise the issue, share your concerns so that it gets debated in Parliament and we can build support for the motion.”

Ben Hudson, PFNDF chair, said there was “a glimmer of hope” now the amendments have been tabled.

He said: “The amendment would result in cutting thousands of hours from police officer workloads and save valuable resources where we have officers spending incredulous amounts of time meticulously reviewing and redacting material, even before the CPS makes a charging decision, thereby allowing them to focus on other policing priorities and being visible within their communities.”

Labour recently proposed, due to the shortage of investigators, that it would force police to recruit detectives direct from business if it won the next General Election because of a shortage of investigators.

But Ben said the amendment to data protection legislation would help to ease some of the problems resulting from a shortage of investigators without turning to the private sector to directly recruit detectives.

He added: “Unnecessary and problematic red tape must be cut when addressing matters of public safety, and both police officers and the public await the Government to exhibit its commitment by endorsing the amendment to the bill and see it through the due legislative process.”

[Read how the disclosure rules have been having a huge impact on detectives and their morale.](#)

**“IT WOULD SIMPLIFY THE WHOLE PROCESS AND MAKE OFFICERS’ WORK EASIER AS THERE WOULDN’T BE THE NEED TO DO A LOT OF EXTRA WORK BEFORE SHARING EVERYTHING WITH THE CPS. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT OFFICERS WERE ABLE TO SPEND MORE TIME INVESTIGATING OTHER MATTERS AND IT WOULD SPEED UP THE PROCESS FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME.**

# West Midlands officer says move to Australia is a chance of a lifetime





**A** West Midlands Police officer has spoken about the reasons behind his decision to quit policing in the UK and apply for a role Down Under.

The officer said there were “no incentives” to remain in policing in the UK as it was revealed that hundreds of serving officers have applied for jobs in Australia following a recruitment drive.

The officer, who does not want to be named, said pay and lifestyle were key reasons behind his decision to pursue a new career in Australia.

The 21-year-old said: “It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity to be able to move to a new place.

“It’s grey, miserable and raining here at the moment. I’m not saying it’s not going to be like that in Australia but I’ve been before and I think the likelihood is low!

“I’ve applied for Queensland, whereas a lot of others have applied for Western Australia because they were the first to open up to British officers.

“Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Great

Barrier Reef, it’s such a beautiful place, it would be silly not to go.

“I can go and if I don’t like it I can always come back whereas, if I didn’t go, in 20 years’ time I might be wondering what if?”

The officer’s comments come as it was revealed that [1,400 serving UK police officers have applied for jobs in Western Australia](#) following a recruitment drive.

The officer said he would have to wait at least another four years for his UK wages to match the starting salary in Australia.

“And that’s one of their lower pay scales,” he said. “It only rises from there.

“It’s a no brainer. I will be earning more money, I’ll be in the sun, right next to one of the best beaches in the world.”

West Midlands Police Federation deputy chair Jase Dooley said he was not surprised officers were looking to take advantage of recruitment drives to relocate Down Under.

He said austerity had been a key driver.

“This has been happening for a while since the first cuts,” he said. “We lost a lot of officers. Recruitment was frozen. The pensions have

been slashed. The pay has been slashed. We had a recent pay award of seven per cent but we’re still down from where we should be.

“We said that cuts have consequences.

“There’s no proper mechanism to bargain for pay. We pulled out of it because we weren’t being listened to and the Government wasn’t listening to what the Pay Review Board was saying.”

Officers were struggling under heavy workloads, he said, while the scrutiny of every aspect of their role - including breaks - was turning officers away.

“They can’t eat lunch because people say we’re not paying your wages for you to eat,” he said. “What other industry would be treated like that?”

“The conditions we’re up against such as cancelled rest days and court appearances when you’re on annual leave are unfair.

“We’re not even [being spoken to about court dates](#), they’re just booking them. It doesn’t matter if you’re on a rest day or whatever, you’re expected to go.

“We’re only employing young people because the wage at the moment can’t cover a person with a family.

“We’ve got officers on food banks - what’s that all about?”

“So, given the support they seem to get in Australia, the weather, the conditions, it’s not surprising when you hear officers are applying for roles.”

**“ IT’S A NO BRAINER. I WILL BE EARNING MORE MONEY, I’LL BE IN THE SUN, RIGHT NEXT TO ONE OF THE BEST BEACHES IN THE WORLD.**



# 'Speed cap could leave police drivers vulnerable to legal issues'

Imposing a speed cap on police drivers would reduce the ability of officers to respond effectively to emergency calls.

That's the view of Tim Rogers, pursuits and driver training lead for the Police Federation of England and Wales, who said introducing a secondary speed limit for police drivers would be exploited by criminals.

Tim, who is also the secretary of West Midlands Police Federation, added that it would be a move away from the law and could leave police drivers vulnerable to legal issues.

His comments come after Judge Mark Lucraft called for the Metropolitan Police to review acceptable speeds for responses to 999 calls during the sentencing of an officer for

causing death by dangerous driving

Mr Lucraft said: "I note there is no clear guidance provided by the Metropolitan Police on speeds police cars should not exceed in responding to emergency calls when driving in residential areas or roads subject to a speed limit of 30 mph.

"In my judgment further thought should be given to this issue particularly as the speed







Tim Rogers.

limits in many residential areas are being further reduced to 20 mph.”

Tim said: “To impose a second speed limit moves away from the law, creates confusion and vulnerability for all concerned.

“It also reduces the ability of policing to operate effectively. The imposition of a second limit would make police drivers somewhat impotent. Criminality would soon catch onto this frailty.

“The efficiency of subject matter experts assessing the standard of the careful and competent police driver is confused by any force imposing a local speed cap.

“The force then would be sitting outside of the national legal standard that keep officers and the public safe.”

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has written to all chief constables in England and Wales to say that a review into all aspects of police driving was being carried out following the court case.

But Greater Manchester Police Deputy Chief Constable Terry Woods, NPCC lead for police driving, said the NPCC “does not support

the notion of speeds caps or a local policy which in effect serve only to create another speed ‘limit’ above the legally recognised limit”.

He wrote: “The act of driving to attend a call for service or incident must always be regarded as an integral part of our overall response to the incident itself.

“Decisions that relate to the appropriate use of speed, whether exceeding the posted limit or not, must be made by the trained police driver on a case by case basis, considering all of the available information and individual circumstances known at the relevant time.”

Tim welcomed the NPCC’s “sensible and evidence-based approach”.

He said: “I do hope for a sensible approach from chiefs across the country, one that supports the mechanisms we have worked hard to implement.”

**“ DECISIONS THAT RELATE TO THE APPROPRIATE USE OF SPEED, WHETHER EXCEEDING THE POSTED LIMIT OR NOT, MUST BE MADE BY THE TRAINED POLICE DRIVER ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS, CONSIDERING ALL OF THE AVAILABLE INFORMATION AND INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES KNOWN AT THE RELEVANT TIME.**



# Fears changes could turn conduct hearings into 'kangaroo courts'

**W**est Midlands Police Federation conduct lead Dave Hadley fears new powers to allow chief constables to sack officers found guilty of misconduct could turn disciplinary hearings into "kangaroo courts".

Dave said police chiefs already have the powers to remove officers and that the changes would undermine confidence in the process.

He said: "It is a retrograde step. Legally qualified chairs were introduced to improve confidence in the disciplinary process by inserting an independent oversight.

"There was a perception that the previous disciplinary arrangements were little more than kangaroo courts. It feels like we're returning to those bad old days."

**“GROSS MISCONDUCT SHOULDN'T AUTOMATICALLY EQUATE TO DISMISSAL. THE WAY A SANCTION SHOULD BE APPROACHED IS THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROVEN CONDUCT, FOLLOWED BY A DETERMINATION AS TO THE MOST APPROPRIATE, PROPORTIONATE SANCTION WHICH ADEQUATELY ADDRESSES THE PURPOSE OF THE PROCEEDINGS.**

He added: "It must be remembered that our members are also important stakeholders in the misconduct process, it is vital that they have confidence that they will receive a fair hearing.

"Sadly, there are numerous examples of forces making decisions which are motivated by political concerns, rather than on a sound, neutral assessment of the facts.

"But if you were an officer accused of gross misconduct you'd be looking at the news today and wondering if it's worth turning up."

Dave's comments follow a Government announcement that a finding of gross



West Midlands Police Federation conduct lead Dave Hadley.

misconduct will automatically result in a police officer's dismissal, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Under the new system, chief constables or their deputies will chair misconduct panels. Until now, they have been chaired by an independent lawyer.

Dave said: "Gross misconduct shouldn't automatically equate to dismissal. The way a sanction should be approached is that there should be an assessment of the seriousness of the proven conduct, followed by a determination as to the most appropriate, proportionate sanction which adequately addresses the purpose of the proceedings.

"But that's all been thrown out of the window. Proportionality is a casualty of this loss of discretion."

Dave added: "There's an old phrase that says hard cases make bad law, effectively that's what's happened here."

"The Government keep using extreme cases like Wayne Couzens and David Carrick to justify

the tearing up of the police misconduct regulations.

"When considering reform, we shouldn't be solely focussed on the extreme cases because that way lies disproportionate, skewed processes which are then applied to cases which are nowhere near as serious."

The Government has also announced that officers who fail vetting checks can also be fired.

Dave said: "It's been a failure by forces to properly implement vetting procedures over years that have led to inappropriate people wearing our uniform.

"But it's the members now who are going to end up paying the price for it, with this knee-jerk reaction.

"The ability to sack people is going to be effectively placed in the hands of a vetting manager.

"The tide really does feel like it's against our members. It's going to do nothing for morale," he added.



# Meet the Federation's new health and safety lead

**'Health and safety needs to be everyone's responsibility'.**

**T**hat's the view of Patrick McBrearty, West Midlands Police Federation's new health and safety lead.

Patrick takes over the role from Deano Walker, the branch's former health and safety lead, who retired from policing in the summer.

He said he wants to build on Deano's work and raise awareness with officers about health and safety.

"Deano's a fantastic guy," said Patrick. "He's a really nice person who worked really hard. I'm really looking forward to following on from his work and trying to educate officers and raise awareness.

"How do you educate people on a subject that's not the most captivating?"

"That's one of the things I'm looking forward to doing and making a subject that's not very exciting more interesting."

Having joined West Midlands Police in 2002, Patrick's career has seen him in a variety of roles, including nine years in uniform frontline, later working as an intelligence officer investigating serious crime followed by a role as a cyber crime protection officer.

In 2021, he became a Federation workplace representative and earlier this year became chair of the branch's health and safety committee.

Patrick said there was, for him, an obvious crossover between health and safety and his previous area of work in cyber crime.

"That was all about presenting the risks of cyber crime so that people could be more aware of it," he said.

"For instance, 90 per cent of cyber crime occurs following spear-phishing emails. So you need everybody to be aware of what a spear-phishing email is, not just the IT department, so they can identify it and report it rather than click the link or download the



*New West Midlands Police Federation health and safety lead Patrick McBrearty.*

attachment.

"And that's how I see health and safety.

"If you see something, something happens, or there's a near miss you need to report it to protect others in the future and further down the line.

"It's about education and awareness, and it's everyone's responsibility."

One of Patrick's priorities in his new role as health and safety lead is to change the culture around reporting near misses, he said.

"There's definitely an under-reporting of

near misses," he said. "Today's near miss is tomorrow's accident for someone else.

"We can't hammer home enough the need to report near misses.

"If we as a Federation go to the Force when people complain about things, they'll look at it and say that no one has reported it.

"In policing terms, we need the evidence so that we can do something before something goes wrong.

"Because, when something goes wrong in health and safety, it goes very wrong."



Leon Mittoo (third from the left) is pictured with Phillip Schofield, Holly Willoughby, West Midlands Police colleague James Willetts, Holby actress Adjoa Andoh and actor Adrian Lester receiving his Pride of Britain Award.

# Pride of Britain winner speaks out about racial abuse

A hero West Midlands Police officer who received a Pride of Britain Award has spoken about the racist abuse he regularly experiences on the beat.

PC Leon Mittoo described the verbal attacks as "abhorrent" as he called on the courts to impose stiffer sentences on those who racially abuse officers.

His calls have been backed by West Midlands Police Federation, which has also called for a change to procedures around charging offenders to speed up justice for victims.

Leon said: "I get a lot of racist comments. I'm down on police systems as being a repeat victim because it's happened that often.

"When it happens, it's hard to stay composed, carry on being professional and carry on my duties."

Leon said some of the abuse he has received has been from black people or people with a mixed ethnic background.

"I'm mixed race myself and I think some people use racial slurs thinking it's acceptable because they're of the same colour, but it's not," he said.

"It's not just me. Every person of colour on the team has been racially abused at some point.

"I've had colleagues who are gay and they've been verbally abused with homosexual slurs and it's just not on.

"It's abhorrent but you can't let it affect you, because you wouldn't be effective in your job if you did," he added.

Leon, who received last year's Emergency Services Pride of Britain Award with colleague James Willetts after detaining two knife-wielding brothers in West Bromwich,





Leon Mittoo (right) is pictured with TV presenter Leigh Francis and West Midlands Police colleague James Willetts, receiving his Pride of Britain Award.

said officers will always look to arrest when someone is being racially abusive.

And he urged the courts to support the police with stiffer sentences for offenders.

"We'll always look to arrest, whereas a few years ago we might not have," he said. "And then it becomes a separate offence because it's aggravated by the racial element.

"I get a lot of support from the Force and the Federation but we need harsher penalties from the courts.

"People need to know that type of behaviour is unacceptable and we won't stand for it."

Jase Dooley, deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation, echoed Leon's calls for tougher punishments.

And he said the process of putting offenders before the courts also needed to be speeded up.

He said: "Our members are only human

and racist abuse can have a huge impact on them. It must never be tolerated.

"Our courts need to pass sentences to show it's unacceptable for anyone to commit such disgusting offences."

He added: "At the moment, if an offender uses racial abuse, it's captured on body cam, and it's admitted in an interview, we've still got to go to Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) advisers," he said.

"The Federation is working hard to change the current guidance so we don't

have to go to the CPS if the evidence is overwhelming.

"It's taking six or seven weeks for that information to come back before we charge somebody. It's delaying justice and, to me, delayed justice is justice denied.

"It causes backlogs in cases where it shouldn't because the evidence is overwhelming.

"We need to be able to speed it up and give peace of mind and a sense of justice for the victim."

**“ I GET A LOT OF RACIST COMMENTS. I'M DOWN ON POLICE SYSTEMS AS BEING A REPEAT VICTIM BECAUSE IT'S HAPPENED THAT OFTEN. WHEN IT HAPPENS, IT'S HARD TO STAY COMPOSED, CARRY ON BEING PROFESSIONAL AND CARRY ON MY DUTIES.**

# Police-themed holiday club sessions at museum this half term

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SOMETHING FOR YOUR CHILDREN TO DO THIS OCTOBER HALF-TERM?

The West Midlands Police Museum is holding its Pint-Sized Police holiday club with a series of activities each day for children to take part in.

The activities range from making your own police helmets to fingerprinting and learning about animals in policing.

The holiday club runs from Tuesday 31st October to Thursday 2nd November.

It's suitable for children aged eight to 12. Refreshments will be provided, but children are asked to bring their own packed lunch.

Drop off is from 9am with activities starting at 10am. Collection is between 2pm and 3.30pm.

Visit the [West Midlands Police Museum website](#) for more information.



## Legal Services for West Midlands Police

With over 20 years' experience of working with police, Gorvins have been a leading provider of legal services in all matters arising from relationship breakdowns and disputes concerning children. We understand the importance of family and the impact that a family breakdown can have upon all of those closely concerned and that is why our service (with discounted fees) is offered not just to serving and retired police officers and police staff, but also to their partners and immediate family members.

Part of **our commitment** to supporting those whose vital work supports us all includes a prompt **initial consultation - free of charge**.

We also supply our legal advice to you at a discounted rate and are able to offer a **fixed-fee divorce process**.

Our family and divorce law specialists understand the aspects that particularly impact upon the police with reference to pensions in divorce cases and shift patterns in relation to arrangement for children.

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- Employment Law
- Insolvency
- Dispute Resolution and Civil Litigation
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The advertisement features a dark blue background with a photograph of two police dogs, a Springer Spaniel and a German Shepherd, sitting side-by-side. The text is white and red. At the bottom, there are logos for 'resolution' and 'LEGAL SERVICES FOR POLICE'.



# Fed rep encouraging others to follow in his footsteps

**D**uncan McDonald has spoken of the pleasure he gains from supporting West Midlands Police officers as a Federation workplace representative.

Duncan has been a rep since 2021 because he wanted to provide help to his colleagues in the Operational Support Unit (OSU).

And now he's encouraging other officers who are thinking of becoming a rep to go for it. Duncan said: "I decided to enter myself in the process mainly because I felt it would bring some support and help to my department.

"I'm happy to try to sort the issues that members are struggling to sort through their busy working days.

"I've got reasonable experience and understand the difficult and dangerous conditions we as officers are asked to work in and how we're under pressure to make informed, sound decisions while under stress.

"For anyone thinking about being a Fed rep my experience is that it's really worth it.

"It's a real mixture of myth-busting to real advice. Offering basic support to officers on the mysterious regulations - they really aren't - to ensure members get what they deserve and are entitled to is extremely satisfying."

Duncan intends to specialise as a conduct and performance liaison officer (CAPLO) or an equality rep.

"But if I'm really honest I'm happy to help anywhere," he added.

Duncan followed in his father's footsteps when he joined West Midlands Police in 2006. He had previously been working for eight years in a high-security prisons estate.

He said: "I'd got to 27 and decided I'd like to try the police.

"My dad was a bobby in Nottinghamshire and did 33 years as a PC then another eight as a civilian. I suppose seeing how much he enjoyed it rubbed off on me.

"My first posting was the E3, which was great and a really fantastic learning experience.

"Not everyone will agree but I used to love the competition of who got the best and most arrests and detections. There was a real buzz about proactivity then.

"I was lucky enough to be part of some great teams on response and neighbourhood.

"When Paragon hit, I went to Birmingham East and was on the local policing team. I felt like we made a real difference in crime trends then and really enjoyed it.

"It was so diverse from burglary and vehicle crime to being part of a six-month test purchase operation. I got to work with some top officers."

Duncan has been in OSU for seven years.

"It's a rewarding role with lots of critical searching and the excitement of a busy high-risk football match," he said.

"It's also got some real sombre difficult tasks like searching for mispers and body recoveries.

"The next few months for me will be busy trying to support officers through the unknown of policing European football visitors at Aston Villa, negotiating the expanding and new shift pattern on the OSU, and ensuring I'm approachable and can continue to assist members.

"The challenge is being organised and getting a balance between being on the OSU and making sure I'm available to help members."

He also acknowledged there were challenges facing the Federation and policing in general, adding: "I think we're at a really critical point in policing and also as a Federation.

"I think we need to appeal to our members and allow them to shape how we go forward and regain trust and support; Federating by consent.

"Face-to-face policing needs to return and, in my opinion, we need to provide assurance to the public that we're working to make the West Midlands as safe as we can.

"I think we do this by returning to policing's traditional values and providing tangible results, supporting communities and victims, but also supporting offenders to reduce risk.

"The overwhelming silent majority of people support the police and we need to reward that support with positive actions."

Duncan ended by encouraging his colleagues to read *Cloak Without Dagger*, the biography of Sir Percy Sillitoe.

"If I had a wish it's for us to embrace change but remember all the Peelian principles, of which there are nine not just one. Put the public first but support and protect each other," he said.

"And for every officer, from top to bottom, to read *Cloak Without Dagger*, the biography of Sir Percy Sillitoe. It's never felt more appropriate than in today's climate. Great support causes great actions."

**“THE OVERWHELMING SILENT MAJORITY OF PEOPLE SUPPORT THE POLICE AND WE NEED TO REWARD THAT SUPPORT WITH POSITIVE ACTIONS.”**





GeorgeBurrows

# Did you know...

## The **West Midlands Police Federation Group Insurance scheme\*** includes **GP Care on Demand?**

Funded by the Federation, this benefit provides subscribing scheme members and their resident families with unlimited access via telephone or app to a GMC licensed practicing GP, from the comfort of their home.

Available 24/7, 365 days a year, worldwide — you can even use it when you're on holiday!

At **£25.94\*\* per month** the scheme also includes:

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- Personal Accident Cover
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- Best Doctors®
- Worldwide Family Travel Insurance
- Mobile Phone/Gadget Cover
- RAC Motor Breakdown Assistance

Visit the Federation website for further details:

**[www.polfed.org/westmids](http://www.polfed.org/westmids)**

Or call us on: **0121 752 4900**



\*Terms and conditions apply. Full details are available from the Federation or George Burrows.  
\*\*Correct at 1 May 2023 the premium includes the Federation administration fee and Insurance Premium Tax (IPT).

GP Care on Demand is provided by Teladoc Health, Inc. Teladoc, Inc. is a telemedicine company that uses telephone and video conferencing technology to provide on-demand remote medical care via mobile devices, the internet, video and phone. [www.teladoc.com](http://www.teladoc.com)

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# Care on Demand uncovered

HELPING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY TO LEAD A HEALTHIER LIFE



**In this article, Dr Debs Basu from Teladoc Health UK describes the Care on Demand benefit available to West Midlands Police Federation Group Insurance Scheme members and their families.**

### What Is the service?

Care on Demand is a leading virtual care solution that enables members of the Group Insurance Scheme to receive primary care support 24/7, 365 days a year (including Bank holidays) via an app.

Members can have unlimited consultations with our experienced General Practitioners via a phone call or a video link from the comfort of



their own home and at a time of their choosing. The service is a flexible and convenient way to access primary healthcare.

Our doctors can provide prescriptions, referral letters, medical certificates, and general health advice. Consultation notes can be sent directly to the member's NHS GP, ensuring smooth communication with local community services.

### What are the key benefits?

- Fast and easy access
- GPs have time to listen (no limit on length of consultation)
- Instant e-prescription service
- Quick reassurance

### Recent case studies

#### Virtual GP user Reza shares his experience:

*"With a young family, we use the Virtual GP service a lot. It's a real-time saver and so convenient"*

*With two toddlers going to nursery and day care, my family uses the Virtual GP service weekly, sometimes daily. It's so convenient and a real-time saver and video appointments are available within 48 hours, 24/7. I have even arranged a call while queuing in the supermarket! Without the Virtual GP service,*

*we would need to take a day off or emergency leave on Monday, then try to take them to A & E and spend the night there or try to reach our NHS GP, which is very difficult.*

*We used the service because my younger son developed a high fever, gradually progressing to a high temperature. My wife was going on a work trip to Germany on Monday morning, leaving at 3am, so I was there like a single dad without help. I had to work in the morning with a sick child to look after and another one to take to the nursery. I decided to make an appointment with the virtual GP at around 2:45am.*

*The triage doctor called me, asked questions, and did observations with me. He suspected tonsillitis but could not prescribe antibiotics as my son needed a physical examination. He still reassured me and confirmed that we didn't need to go to the A & E then. I could wait for the NHS GP in the morning to open and get him to be seen. This triage filtering was useful and comforting, knowing there was nothing to worry about. It also saved me from spending the night at the hospital with two toddlers!"*

*This is an invaluable service that people need to be more aware of. You can talk with a qualified GP: they can answer your questions, reduce your worries, and prescribe medication you can collect from the nearest pharmacy or have it delivered to a location of your choice. All within a few hours - priceless."*

#### Virtual GP user Julie shares her experience:

*"My temperature had rocketed - I felt awful"*

*I contacted the service as I had a sore throat, was aching and felt very tired. My temperature was 37.1C at its highest. The lymph node in the left-hand side of my neck was swollen, and I had what looked like a blister on my left tonsil.*

*The doctor diagnosed tonsillitis and advised that I take a course of antibiotics which should ease the symptoms. I was encouraged to contact the service again should my symptoms not improve or if I developed any other symptoms.*

*I'm so impressed with the service, had a call back within an hour and a prescription waiting for me within a few hours at my local pharmacy."*

### For more information:

<https://www.polfed.org/westmids/group-insurance/care-on-demand/>

REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT





# Baby Loss Awareness Week: Fed member opens up about the reality of miscarriage

**A** West Midlands Police Federation member has opened up about the reality of experiencing a miscarriage as she tells how not talking about it led to years of guilt, blaming herself and not being able to enjoy her next pregnancy.

Like so many other expectant parents, the moment Emily Dooley saw that the pregnancy test was positive, she had planned the next 18 years of her unborn child's life.

She and her former partner Jase Dooley, deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation, who she was engaged to at the time, were 11 weeks pregnant when they experienced a miscarriage. Although she had experienced no pain, she noticed some light spotting, which led to her going to the hospital to be checked out.

"I was sent to the early pregnancy unit for a scan, which is when the nurse said I was only measuring five weeks," said 37-year-old Emily, who miscarried in 2014.

"I remember the nurse saying to me, I don't think the baby is alive. I can't find a heartbeat. She was very nice but very matter-of-fact, although I suppose you have to be. I know, if she had given me any glimpse of hope that my baby was still alive, I would've latched onto that.

"It was horrible. I don't recall too much more about what else was said, all I know is that I felt like I was surrounded by other people getting such positive news.

"I tried to convince myself that it wasn't happening but the bleeding only got heavier. I felt so much guilt - like it was my fault, like I'd done something wrong. I now know, it was nothing I did."

Emily is now sharing her experience to mark this year's Baby Loss Awareness Week

9 - 15 October and to support other Fed members who might have shared a similar experience.

"After it happened my main focus became getting pregnant again," continued police officer Emily, who was a staff member in the Force at the time.

"Jase was emotional for a couple of days and then it seemed like he just got on with it. I know that wasn't him being malicious - I think that reaction is pretty common from men, especially police officers.

"I found it really difficult though, especially because five of my colleagues in the control room were pregnant at the time. I guess I was the statistic."

Three months later the couple fell pregnant again.

"I must've been a nightmare to be around during that time. Even when I fell pregnant again I couldn't enjoy it. I took around five to 10 pregnancy tests each day for the first three months, I was obsessed with making sure it was happening," said Emily.

"I think people underestimate the emotional trauma a person can go through when they experience miscarriage. Whatever stage a person is when they lose a baby, they are still losing their baby."

Eight years on, Emily and Jase who are no longer together, co-parent their daughter, Olivia.

Emily added: "The challenges didn't stop when Olivia was born. I suffered quite bad Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and looking back, that was probably because I didn't give myself the time to grieve for the baby.

"It's made me realise just how important it is to talk about it."

Although Emily received support for her mental health from the doctor, she admits the experience has definitely left her with some anxieties.

"What happened had a big impact on me and my life," she explained. "But the more I ended up talking about it, the more I realised I wasn't the only person going through this. Hearing other people's stories definitely makes you feel like you're not as crazy as you once thought."

As well as speaking up about her own experience, Emily is encouraging fellow members to reach out for support if they need it.

She said: "If anybody is reading this who might've experienced similar, then I want you to know you're not alone. I know how you feel and I'm here if you want to talk. Nobody said that to me - and if they had, I might've opened up a lot sooner than now."

Looking back, Jase says he now understands he didn't give Emily enough support when she needed it most.

"I think because it hadn't happened to me physically, I could only see her hurting and upset but didn't feel what she was feeling, if that makes sense," said Jase, who was in his mid-40s at the time.

"My coping mechanism was just switching off. I put the whole thing to the back of my mind and tried to forget about it. I went to work and made that my focus. But that wasn't the right thing to do and I know that now."

Jase admits he was ignorant and feels he 'let Emily down'.

"We can't forget that being a cop changes you as a person - it changes how you deal with trauma. Remember, we see hundreds of bad things throughout our career, and you have to find a way to deal with it. But, as a result, you deal with your own trauma differently - at least in my case, anyway.

"But that didn't help Emily and I can see that now."

**“ IF ANYBODY IS READING THIS WHO MIGHT'VE EXPERIENCED SIMILAR, THEN I WANT YOU TO KNOW YOU'RE NOT ALONE. I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL AND I'M HERE IF YOU WANT TO TALK.**



# Sky-high drone pilot reflects on success of Channel 4 TV show

**A** chief pilot says he's "immensely proud" of the West Midlands Police Drone unit after it was featured in a major TV documentary series.

Sergeant Keith Bennett said Channel 4's Sky Coppers has helped to increase the public's understanding of how drones are used in policing and of how effective they can be.

More than 1m viewers watched the first of the six hour-long episodes when it was aired earlier this year.

Keith said he's been amazed by the public reaction, and said it wouldn't have been

possible without the work of the drone team.

"The first episode attracted more than 1m viewers, which is fantastic," he said. "My focus has always been on sharing what we do with the public and what better platform to do that?"

"We've got 19,000 followers on Twitter, but to be able to share what we do with 1 million viewers on that first night was amazing.

"I was immensely proud of the team because they're the ones who have made this happen and is a shining example of their

tenacity.

"Drones in the police was a concept a couple of years ago. The team has worked incredibly hard to turn that concept into a reality with drones now firmly embedded into everyday frontline policing within the West Midlands.

"The more and more we used drones the greater the demand became. The team really stepped up to the challenge and is a testament to our success.

"Most pilots on the team came from a drone background, had their own drone or





Chief drone pilot, sergeant Keith Bennett

were really into their technology.

"If you speak to them, I'm sure they'll say they love their job."

The Channel 4 cameras were embedded with the drone unit for a number of months. It allowed the programme to show the highs and the lows of life in the unit.

Keith, a West Midlands Police Federation member, said: "Sky Coppers was about showing the human side of police officers, and that's exactly what was shown.

"The cameras were rolling 24/7 so they captured conversations between the drone crews and there's some really nice human elements and some really nice interactions

with the public. "It was a proud moment watching.

"I hope it came across as really transparent in what we do."

Keith said that interest in the unit's work has been increasing from not only the public but also from other forces since the series launched.

"We're getting a lot of interest from other forces looking at using drones," he continued. "We've got forces asking if we can help and support them.

"It's been great for us. The majority of responses we've had have been really positive and speaking to the public about what we do

has been key from the beginning.

"Back in 2017 before we flew drones operationally, we did so much work getting out there.

"It's really important when you're proposing to use new innovative technology that the public knows why you're using it, and to allay some of their fears because there have been negative connotations around other uses of drones."

Keith said he hopes that the series has shown the public that they are 'not just snooping in back gardens'.

He explained: "I hope people see that everything we do is directed. Every request we receive we triage. Is it the right thing to do? Is it reasonable and proportionate to use a drone in those circumstances and is it lawful?"

"If a job comes through we've got to make sure it's either preventing or detecting crime, saving life and limb, and in the majority of police incidents we can."

Sky Coppers is available to watch on [Channel 4's on-demand service](#).

“ DRONES IN THE POLICE WAS A CONCEPT A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO. THE TEAM HAS WORKED INCREDIBLY HARD TO TURN THAT CONCEPT INTO A REALITY WITH DRONES NOW FIRMLY EMBEDDED INTO EVERYDAY FRONTLINE POLICING WITHIN THE WEST MIDLANDS.

# Supermarket offers free coffee for officers in bid to deter shoplifters

West Midlands Police Federation deputy chair Jase Dooley says officers are only human and often need to take their breaks in public.

Jase said that officers taking refreshments while on duty was an accepted practice in America but there was a stigma around it in the UK.

Now he's encouraging people to say 'hello' to officers who are having refreshments as he pointed to the benefits of them taking their breaks while out and about.

Jase was speaking after Waitrose and John Lewis offered free hot drinks to on-duty police

officers in a bid to deter shoplifters.

John Lewis Partnership has written to the Police Federation of England and Wales to say officers can claim a free tea or coffee from drinks machines as long as they bring a reusable cup.

Officers, including Specials and Police Community Support Officers, will also be able to use staff cafeterias for breaks and buy discounted food as well.

John Lewis Partnership has called the initiative "thanks a latte".

Jase said: "Officers are only human and

need time to refuel, and they can't always go back to the police station to have their break.

"There are benefits of an officer having refreshments in the public eye, not least the deterrent they give when doing this.



"The public feel safe, criminals would rather go elsewhere, and officers can stay out on their patch for longer.

"In the US officers do this regularly and it's an accepted practice by the public. However, here in the West Midlands, and with other forces, we've seen the stigma of officers eating and drinking on duty and videos and images being posted on social media.

"People need to remember that if an emergency call comes in, officers have to drop everything and turn out to that call.

"On occasions their food is ruined by doing this, but it's what our members do on a daily basis.

"If you see an officer on their break while out and about, say hello to them and give a smile. They're there to protect you and the wider public from harm."

Nicki Juniper, head of security for the John Lewis Partnership, said: "We've already got great relationships with some local police forces, but want to see this reflected across all our stores.

"Offering these perks is a win-win; the police already work incredibly hard, so will have more options to take a break, while also building even better relationships with our frontline teams.

"Likewise, even just having a police car parked outside can make people think twice about shoplifting from our branches, or becoming aggressive towards our partners."



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# Keep an eye on high blood pressure

To mark this year's Know Your Numbers Week (4 - 10 September), members were encouraged to get their blood pressure tested.

Many people will have high blood pressure without knowing it, which can lead to other health problems.

A new factsheet has been produced for Know Your Numbers Week offering West Midlands Police Federation members practical advice and tips.

Produced by Police Mutual, which provides financial services for serving or retired police officers, staff and their families, the guide includes advice on how to get your blood pressure checked.

There are tips on staying healthy, exercise and nutrition, as well as advice on how to boost the immune system and on sleeping.

The free factsheet is available to read or [download now](#).

# World Suicide Prevention Day: practical advice from free factsheet



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A new guide has been published for World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September, offering practical advice and links to organisations that can help.

Every year people and organisations come together for the day to raise awareness of how we can create a world where fewer people die by suicide.

World Suicide Prevention Day is as important as ever. According to the World Health Organisation 700,000 people die by suicide every year - and for every suicide there are many more people who attempt suicide.

The factsheet has been produced by Police Mutual, which provides financial services for serving or retired police officers, staff and their families. It includes signs to look out for that someone may be thinking about suicide, advice on how to help someone, and a list of organisations that offer support.

[Download or read the factsheet.](#)

# Don't miss out on our latest Member Services offers

**W**hether you are looking for a new car, a family day out or financial advice, please remember to check out the [Member Services](#) pages on our website.

Our Member Services partners offer a wide range of offers and services for Federation members and this dedicated area of the website lists everything under relevant headings:

- [Advice surgeries](#)
- [Clothing and footwear](#)
- [Discounts, holidays and leisure](#)
- [Finance, mortgages and conveyancing](#)
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The website is regularly updated with the latest money-saving offers, so please keep an eye on the site and make sure you don't miss out.



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- **SOCIAL EVENTS** – Keep in touch with old friends and colleagues.

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