Centenary Event
Thursday, 21 November 2019
Central Hall, Westminster
BUCKINGHAM PALACE

John Apter Esq,
National Chair,
Police Federation of England and Wales.

Please convey my warm thanks to all those associated with the Police Federation of England and Wales for their kind message, sent on the occasion of their One Hundredth Anniversary which is being celebrated throughout 2019.

On this most notable anniversary, it is important to reflect on the vital work undertaken by Police Officers and the role of the Federation in supporting their Members.

I much appreciate your thoughtfulness in writing as you did and, in return, send my best wishes to all concerned for a memorable and successful Centenary year.

ELIZABETH R.

2019.
‘Time to take stock, and more importantly to look ahead’

It’s our 100th birthday, our centenary – a staff association that was expected to fail is still going strong. I am delighted to be able to join our Federation reps and staff throughout England and Wales, our National Council, National Board, the Home Secretary and distinguished guests, here at the Central Hall Westminster, the venue that served as the backdrop for our very first Conference exactly 100 years ago.

Our organisation was formed by Act of Parliament in 1919 to avoid a repeat of the police strikes of the previous year, and to ensure that police officers would always have a voice and someone to fight their corner. As we gather in Central Hall, it is impossible to avoid being struck by a sense of history. It is important to honour and remember the work of those who have gone before, but also to be mindful that the story of the Police Federation of England and Wales continues, and we all have our part to play in its future.

Sure we’ve had our challenges over the decades, but as your National Chair, I see the fantastic work that local Federation reps, staff, and people at the national office do every day to make the lives of our members that little bit easier – whether its negotiating on the kit that we use, on legislation that’s been drafted by us and supported by Parliament to support our colleagues, whether they’ve been assaulted, in driving matters or otherwise, we have achieved big things.

On a local level, I’ve seen colleagues whose lives have been made better – and in some cases, saved – by the work of our reps. We’ve got people doing brilliant stuff and that’s been happening for one hundred years. Our centenary is a moment to take stock, but even more importantly to look ahead – using our achievements to inform and inspire the work we’ve still to do.

This moment is about recognising how far we have come, learning from the difficulties we’ve had and moving forward, keeping our members at the heart of everything we do.

John Apter, National Chair
Police Federation of England and Wales

‘A tremendous contribution to policing’

It is an honour to pay tribute to 100 years of the Police Federation. As Home Secretary, I’m hugely proud of the extraordinary job our police do each and every day to protect our country and our freedom. Your organisation sits at the heart of that, supporting frontline officers as they keep our towns and communities safe.

This centenary is a remarkable achievement. It means that for 100 years the Federation has ensured our police are fully protected as they protect the public. It has given them a voice as they selflessly put their lives on the line to secure our streets.

Over the years there have been challenges and successes, but the Federation has undoubtedly achieved a great deal and come a long way. We now even have the first National Chair who has been directly elected through a ballot of all members, showing how the organisation has adapted to ensure it truly reflects the needs of those it represents. I have been delighted to work alongside John and to know he speaks for every hard-working officer.

Policing is an incredibly tough job, some of our officers have even sacrificed their lives to keep us all safe. Brave officers like PC Andrew Harper, tragically killed in the line of duty. Nothing can be more important than supporting those on the frontline and ensuring they have the protection they truly deserve. The Federation plays a key role in this. Whether it is engaging with government, supporting families, or helping officers who have been assaulted, the organisation continues to work tirelessly to represent the interests of rank and file officers.

I would like to thank all of those who have been a part of the Police Federation over the years, who have made a tremendous contribution to policing in England and Wales. You have been there for our police, who are there for us all. I look forward to seeing what more you can achieve in the years to come.”

Rt. Hon. Priti Patel
Home Secretary

#PFEW100
“Now the pressure’s gone, I can get back to my police work.”

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Centenary Event  

Thursday, 21 November 2019 – Central Hall, Westminster  

Facilitated by Ian Collins  

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Thank you to our Centenary sponsors:
‘SURPRISE POLICE STRIKE!’ shouted the Daily Herald on its front page on Friday 1 August 1919. The newspaper reported in breathless terms how members of the outlawed Police Union had held “enthusiastic mass meetings”, where they resolved to take on the Government of the day to demand the recognition of their union.

That organisation, the National Union of Police and Prison Officers, had been founded in secret by John Syme, a former Metropolitan Police inspector in 1913. He had been dismissed from the force in 1910 after threatening to write to his Member of Parliament about police grievances.

The union grew in strength and number and enjoyed a fleeting moment of success, when in 1918, it was able to persuade almost every London constable and sergeant to strike. The Government responded by passing the Police Act of 1919, which at a stroke removed the right of UK police officers to strike. It did however establish the Police Federations of England and Wales and of Scotland as the permanent and official representative bodies of police officers. That subsequent strike of 1919 was a final act of rebellion by officers who were suspicious of the Federation as being a tool of government – in time it would win the trust and confidence of police officers.

The Police Act became law in July 1919, and the elections of all the Branch Boards took place in September and October of that year. The first Central Conferences were held at the Central Hall, Westminster on Monday 17 and Tuesday 18 November 1919. Nine hundred delegates attended, with constables, sergeants and inspectors holding separate meetings. Constable James Farley, a Metropolitan Police officer aged 30, became the first Chairman of the Joint Central Committee and would hold the post for 18 years. Resolutions passed at that first meeting included a call for county police officers who were dismissed from their forces to have a right of appeal. It is fitting that the successors of those first federated officers will meet at the same venue almost exactly a century later, on Thursday 21 November 2019.
‘If anyone attempts to move that necklace – shoot them and ask questions later!’

Stanley Kirby served in the Met Police from 1938-68 and recently celebrated his 100th birthday, just like the Police Federation.

He recalled how it was his father who gave him a nudge to choose a career in policing.

“I was in a dead-end job and looking to do something else,” Stanley said. “My father said if I was going to get another job, it had to be one with a pension. I thought about the Post Office and the army, and he said, ‘What about the police?’ The girl next door was being courted by a policeman and I thought that’s not a bad idea.”

Stanley applied to Scotland Yard and received a book on joining the police. He saw photos of Peel House and the students there.

At the outbreak of World War Two the police was a reserved occupation, so it wasn’t until 1942 when all policemen under the age of 35 were given instructions to enlist – Stanley joined the navy. He finished his military service in 1946 as a Regulated Petty Officer and returned to policing.

“The uniform had changed, and the jacket was now a tunic – a ghastly thing. It was like a corset,” Stanley recalled. “There were no pockets and at the back were two flaps for your pocket book or sandwiches. That was the only means we had of carrying anything.

He thought briefly about giving up the job, but a respected senior officer talked him out of it, telling him: “You have 10 years’ service – you’ll always be wanted and necessary.”

Stanley has a fond memory of guarding a diamond necklace belonging to the future Queen Elizabeth. He said: “I was given a pistol and instructed that if anyone attempts to move that necklace to shoot them and ask questions later!”

If he had his life over again Stanley would still choose the police for “job security and comradeship”.

‘Health and Safety would have a field day today’

David Harfitt, who joined Southampton Police in 1952 following his National Service, shares a memory of a close encounter with an unexploded World War Two bomb.

“As a young probationer, my Inspector asked me to come in one weekend in my gardening clothes,” he explains. “A garden at the back of the station was overgrown, and an eyesore. In those days, they wouldn’t employ people to do jobs like that.”

“We started digging the weeds and heard a ‘clunk’. Thinking it was probably a training item they carried on digging up various shells and putting them in a pile. Their inspector arrived later and had a fright! Bomb disposal experts were called. David recalls: “It turned out we had found old anti-aircraft shells, butterfly bombs, and ammunition from allied and enemy aircraft. The Inspector told us that they had intended to dispose of it all after the war, but it became overgrown and forgotten about. The disposal men thought we had been very lucky. Health and Safety would have a field day today!”

“Health and Safety would have a field day today”

MEMBERS’ MEMORIES

1913: John Syme founds Metropolitan Police Union, which is promptly banned by the Commissioner

1918: The Police Union calls a strike which is widely supported (left); Prime Minister David Lloyd George agrees to meet a delegation

1919: An inquiry under Lord Desborough (right) leads to the creation of the Police Federation by Act of Parliament; the Home Secretary is made responsible for policing

1919: Officers receive a substantial pay rise and become the envy of other trade unions

#PFEW 100
‘I don’t miss the circus – but I do miss the clowns’

Neil Sutton, who retired in 2016, joined the Metropolitan Police as a fresh-faced teenage recruit and was involved in policing the industrial action at Wapping and the Poll Tax riots. He jokes that some of his family had been “on the other side of the fence” to the police, but fortunately it wasn’t held against him when he was accepted into the Met, aged 19 in 1985. He served on the frontline in Streatham and Gypsy Hill and was tasked with keeping order as print workers staged strike action against Rupert Murdoch’s News International group at Wapping. Neil recalls, “our briefing was ‘don’t engage with the pickets’, but it was tricky because my dad happened to be one of the striking workers!” He received training in dealing with major disorder and it came in handy when bricks and masonry was thrown at the officers by demonstrators. “My dad told me that demo had been hijacked by a rent-a-mob rogue element – if anyone says it’s not scary in those situations when you’re under attack, they’re lying,” he adds.

He progressed to the Territorial Support Group, the ‘last line of defence’ against public disorder in the Capital. Neil was involved in combating the Poll Tax riots and recalls the South African Embassy being set on fire in scenes resembling a war zone. “In a riot situation, when you get hit by a brick, it is going to hurt regardless of what kit you are wearing,” said Neil, adding “adrenaline gets you through”. He also worked as a detective on the robbery squad at Shepherd’s Bush.

Neil experienced long days, disruption to his home life, and was frequently the target of spurious complaints from dealing with members of criminal gangs – “if you’re a busy, proactive police officer who is looking for the villains and you know they’ve got ‘previous’ for carrying weapons, it’s your duty to search them – and nine in ten times you’d find something. If they’re in the cells for several hours they aren’t on the streets robbing or injuring the public.”

Neil was involved in a number of dangerous encounters, including having firearms pointed at him and being set upon by a mob at the Notting Hill Carnival, an event he helped police on 20 occasions. He recalls, “We’d regularly do a 24 hour shift, would take so much abuse and have things thrown at us.” His ‘scariest moment’ was intervening in pub brawl in Shepherds Bush where a man held a foot long serrated knife to the stomach of an officer. Neil recalls, “My colleague had a wall behind him and nowhere he could go to get away – I made a split-second decision to make a pre-emptive strike with my baton as we were always told that action beats reaction.” He received a commendation for potentially saving his colleague’s life.

Neil became a Police Federation workplace rep and was later elected as General Secretary of the Metropolitan Police Constables Central Committee, speaking for 25,000 officers. He represented more than 1,000 officers until his retirement in 2016, and now serves in a civilian role as a Claims Advisor to the National Federation in Leatherhead. He jokes, “I don’t miss the circus, I do miss the clowns!” He argues passionately that Federation membership is well worth the monthly subscription. “In policing, you never know what is going to happen and whether that routine incident you’re dealing with can turn into something where you need legal support,” he says. “When you’re in trouble facing misconduct or even the loss of your liberty, you need the best lawyers to fight your corner, and that gold-plated service is what the Federation provides.”

1920: The Police Council draws up the first Police Regulations, setting out standard conditions of service

1927: The Police Appeals Act gives officers a right to appeal to the Home Secretary, then Edward Shortt (left) against serious disciplinary punishments

1931: PC Albert Goodsall appointed the first full secretary of the Federation’s Joint Central Committee (JCC) – there is a crisis as the Government considers austerity pay cuts

1940: Police get their first pay increase since Desborough

1948: The Police College is established, which is fully supported by the Federation
The Police Federation marked its 50th anniversary with a conference in Blackpool.

“It wasn’t big or extravagant,” recalls Monty Slocombe, a Federation rep who attended. “I remember the Home Secretary and future Prime Minister, James Callaghan, was there and there were lots of pats on the back saying ‘50 years, isn’t it great’. It was a good atmosphere and lots of looking back over the history of the Federation and its achievements.”

Monty joined Liverpool City Police in 1961, attracted by the prospect of a secure job with a pension. He recalls that most officers were on foot in those days – “if you got a push bike you were really somebody” and officers worked without a radio. They knew their beat and were highly attuned to anything out of the ordinary. “We would notice little things like a disturbed window arrangement that might indicate a break in,” said Monty. One of his proudest arrests was when he was lying in wait for a disqualified driver, and spotted thieves stealing from a Hotpoint factory – a case of being in the right place at the right time. Monty served as a branch secretary of his local Federation and recalls that the organisation was well regarded by members.

“We did our best to look after the interests of the lads. Most were in favour of the Fed and it was rare to hear a bad word said.”

Former detective Ken Wright is full of praise for Essex Police Federation for fighting his corner when he was assaulted on duty.

In the early 1990s he was chasing a car thief in Southend who had decamped from a stolen car. After rugby-tackling the suspect, he received a kick to the head and was repeatedly struck with a mobile phone. “In those days phones were like house bricks,” he jokes.

The incident caused Ken several injuries to his head and face, and he started having repeated migraine attacks, which had never happened before. His Federation rep advised him to apply for criminal injuries compensation, and to appeal when the amount offered was unsatisfactory.

Ken said: “The Federation made an appointment for me to see a neurologist at a private hospital. He wrote a very detailed report in which he clearly stated that I could suffer from psychological episodes for the rest of my life. At my appeal I was represented by a Federation solicitor and was awarded a far greater amount, which helped towards my recovery. Had the Federation not fought my corner I wouldn’t have received this.”

Ken, who is pictured receiving an award from ACC James Devlin of the Southend-on-Sea Borough Constabulary in 1968, retired in 1997. His message for current Federation reps is: “Happy Centenary, please keep up your good work for those serving today on our ever-thinning blue line.”
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ARMED FORCES COVENANT
Stuart Cadmore took a stand for better pay and conditions for police officers in the 1970s while a member of what is now Devon and Cornwall Police.

He considers those years to have been a key time in the struggle against “poor pay, bad shifts and lack of care for police officers”. It was an era when the children of police officers were entitled to free milk at school, because their parents were considered low paid workers. Things came to a head when Stuart’s Chief Constable wanted to bring in more weekend working.

“The silence won the day and destroyed Merlyn Rees really. It was the first time a politician had been subjected to this and was very effective.”

He recalls how the Federation made a stand: “With no social media, email or mobile phones in those days, it was difficult to get a concerted action. I organised letters to be written by 200 wives of police officers in the city, talking about how the weekend shift changes would affect their families. These were all collected, stamped and addressed to the Chief Constable. They were all posted on the same day to the Chief – at which he blew his top!”

The Federation put posters up across Plymouth and officers made a conscious effort not to report as many ‘minor offenders’ as normal, to the extent that the number of magistrates courts in use went down from four per day to one. “At one point the Assistant Chief Constable called me in and asked me to get the blokes back working!” says Stuart.

It was around the time of Lord Edmund Davies’ inquiry into policing and Stuart appeared on the BBC’s Panorama to discuss the Government’s rejection of his findings. There were calls for the law to be amended to allow police officers to strike. “I was on the programme, broadcast to millions of viewers; when asked if I would strike over the low pay – I said I would.”

Stuart continues: “There was also the famous annual joint conference of 1977, when the Home Secretary Merlyn Rees received the silent treatment to his speech. I told conference that my board would walk out if there was any noise at all. At one point in his speech he made a comment and there was some derision from the floor. At that point my board got up and left the conference – followed by a couple more boards – but the silence did win the day and destroyed Merlyn Rees really. It was the first time a politician had been subjected to this and was very effective.

“I am convinced that this type of action, which was replicated to a certain extent elsewhere, helped the Police Federation at that time in negotiations to reach improved standards.”

Stuart was involved with the Federation locally and nationally, finishing his career as General Secretary of the Constables’ Central Committee in 1994.
From the earliest days of the first Police Federation Conference in November 1919, our organisation has focused on the welfare and rights of our members – from campaigns and conferences to frontline support, rehabilitation and recognition.
‘I was told I would get ridiculed or be sexually assaulted’

Deborah Watson joined the Metropolitan Police in 1978 and was exposed to the sexism of the times. “We were told we wouldn’t be able to go out on the streets, as we would get ridiculed or sexually assaulted,” she recalled. “I remember being in the West End of London and a member of the public coming up to me and asking me exactly what I was – people didn’t understand that women could do the same job as men. Years later, I was with a male colleague and someone came over and directed his question at my colleague, saying ‘sorry love, I didn’t ask you because you’re probably just a Special!’”

Deborah policed the Brixton riots, with no protective equipment – just skirts, thin hats with no chin straps and their issue handbags – which she describes as “terrifying”. She adds: “Aside from having a baby it was the only time I’ve ever been truly frightened, watching big lumps of concrete come through the air at you when you have no protection.”

She wrote a letter to the Met in-house magazine, The Job, that got picked up by the Daily Mail and headlined ‘We want riot gear too, says police girl’. She added: “I got into a lot of trouble for that, but something had to be done.”

In 1996, she became a Women Constables Rep for the Federation and negotiated entry issue trousers for women, “although it was tempered with ‘you still need a skirt for court’”. She thinks attitudes have changed dramatically in recent years. “It’s very different from when I started, although women are still under-represented in senior management and specialist teams, like firearms.”

‘Female officers were not allowed to police the miners’ strike’

Christine Longmore served with Kent Police and North Yorkshire Police in a career spanning three decades. The now-retired inspector encountered prejudice and inequality but also significant support from male colleagues. She joined Kent Police Cadets in 1975, becoming a regular officer two years later. During the miners’ strike her colleagues were despatched to picket lines all over the country. Female officers stayed behind at stations to cover regular policing duties.

Christine recalls: “When I’d joined in 1975 there were still women police units which only dealt with women and children issues – policewomen did not even interview offenders; they were only allowed to deal with victims. Things started changing gradually during the latter 1970s and the miners’ strike allowed police women to demonstrate their full capabilities.

“We had the chance to perform all the roles the men had traditionally undertaken. It provided opportunities to join the CID for example. There was a mixed reaction among senior officers. When you’re young you don’t really understand what you’re fighting against in terms of male attitudes. There was sexism in the police service but also at every level of British society. There were cases where police management just got rid of women officers if they showed any perceived signs of weakness or did not fit in, or if they challenged the status quo. I just put my head down, shut my mouth and got on with the job.”

In her later years, Christine got involved with North Yorkshire Police Federation and served as a representative for women inspectors. She joined the fight on issues such as inspectors’ pay. The Federation supported her against several spurious allegations during her career. She adds: “I was grateful for their support and guidance – it was a worrying time for me but the Federation was brilliant.”

1964:
The Police Act allows for the amalgamation of forces; Home Secretary Henry Brooke announces the first force mergers of Luton with Bedfordshire and Northampton with Northamptonshire

1966:
The Home Secretary establishes an inquiry by the Police Advisory Board (PAB) into manpower, equipment and efficiency, and compulsory mergers see the number of forces reduced from 126 to 49

1967:
A PAB report stresses that police should not be employed on tasks that don’t require their powers or expertise; duties of traffic wardens and special constables are extended

1968:
POLICE magazine launches, edited by Tony Judge
‘You have to take people with you’

In 2002 Jan Berry made history when she became the first (and to date only) woman to be elected National Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW). But her first National Conference was nearly her last.

“I wanted the media to stay until the final day and not leave after the Home Secretary’s speech,” she recalled. “So we held a debate on final day about arming the police. It worked with the media, but went down quite badly with the delegates. I forgot the most important people were the members in the hall. It was a hard lesson – you have to take people with you.”

After that initial baptism by fire, Jan steadied the ship and went on to serve as National Chair for six successful years, the high point of which was leading 23,000 officers in a march on Westminster to protest at over police pay. They wore baseball hats emblazoned with the slogan ‘Fairness for Police’ which looked like “a sea of white from above”.

Jan joined the police in 1971. She realised female officers were treated differently to the men. “We didn’t work nights and it was thought we needed longer rest breaks to recover – there was quite a bit of sexist banter,” said Jan. “When I was expecting my first child, my boss told me I’d put my career back five years, and nobody said congratulations!”

After a similar experience when she was expecting a second child, Jan decided to work with the Federation to change the way women officers were treated. She was elected to chair Kent Police Federation and joined the Joint Central Committee (forerunner of today’s National Board) in 1993 and later served as deputy to PFEW National Chair Fred Broughton.

Jan added: “My main challenge as PFEW Chair was to keep the three central committees and 43 Branch Boards together – the way to do that was through listening and responding and not trying to power my way through. Maybe being a woman helped me in that.

“Negotiations with government were always hard. When Theresa May was Home Secretary they were at their worst, but even under her Labour predecessor Jacqui Smith there were police officers working extraordinarily long hours and not being paid what they should have. The Police Negotiating Board would agree a pay increase and the government wouldn’t accept it.

“I am proud of the Federation for reaching its first centenary. That is no small achievement, considering we were set up to fail.”

Jan Berry leads the Police Federation’s march on Parliament in January 2008, calling for Fair P(l)ay for Police officers

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<td>1970</td>
<td>The Equal Pay Act gives equal pay to woman police officers</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>Parliament guarantees that police pensions will be index-linked to inflation by regions</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>Commutation rights are extended to officers retiring with less than 25 years’ service</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>The six provincial metropolitan police forces are established, and the number of separate forces reduced to 43</td>
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'John did complete his full 25 years’ service but was never the same after the attack'

PC John Parkins suffered head injuries when he was attacked on duty in 1968, but the Federation helped ensure he got the compensation he deserved.

John served with Mid-Anglia Constabulary (now part of Cambridgeshire Constabulary), and pursued a stolen car on his police motorbike. His widow, June, took up the story: “John and a colleague, PC Creek, pursued the car, with John pulling in front of it to get it to stop. The car accelerated and hit the rear of John’s motorbike, causing his back wheel to lock.”

Her husband had fallen from the bike but picked himself up to confront one of the suspects who turned out to be armed with a shotgun. PC Parkins sustained a serious head injury during the confrontation.

June continued: “We were living in a police house at the time and our next-door neighbour was a Federation rep. He suggested that we should try to get some compensation, as John’s injuries had been so bad. He did it all for us and the Police Federation was very supportive.”

PC Parkins was given £1,000 – “a lot of money back then” – and was given three months to recuperate before returning to light duties, but he continued to suffer from the injuries he sustained until the end of his life.

June added: “John, myself and our daughter went to Buckingham Palace on July 6, 1969, where he was given his BEM for gallantry from the Queen. He was about the 25th person she had seen that day, yet she knew everything about the incident and we were amazed that she made him feel as though he was the only person she was awarding a medal to. John did complete his 25 years’ service, but was never quite the same after the attack.”

‘The Federation has done so much to help people’

Violet Symes was serving as a police officer with Bournemouth Police when a botched operation in 1967 left her with a drop foot. The Police Federation of England and Wales took up her case against the hospital.

She recalls: “I was sent to an orthopaedic hospital in London to try to help my foot, but I still had a foot drop. The Police Federation opened a case against the hospital and in due course, I received £4,000 compensation for pain and suffering. They supported me so very well – they even offered to arrange for me to recuperate at a police convalescent home. I refused the offer, which was silly, as they really did have my best interest at heart.

“The compensation (which I received six years later) for pain and suffering, enabled me to repay my mother the money she had previously lent me to buy my house. Also, there was some left for me. The Federation were responsible for that.

“I only did eight years in the police but kept friends with many of my colleagues through the years. For some years now I have done welfare visits for the Bournemouth Branch of the National Association of Retired Police Officers. I gain much pleasure from the visits and at 85 years of age, I am lucky to be able to do so.”

1976: The Federation walks out of the Police Council, demanding direct negotiations with Government; Conference carries a motion with the right to strike

1977: The Government concedes an independent inquiry led by Lord Justice Edmund Davies to examine police pay and the right to strike

1978: Edmund Davies’ report rejects affiliation to the TUC and the right to strike and the Police Council is abolished and replaced with the Police Negotiation Board (PNB)

1981: Lord Justice Scarman blames ‘insensitive policing’ as factor in the London riots

#PFEW 100
Protecting our members, promoting their rights

Through lobbying Parliament and stakeholders, the Police Federation of England and Wales is able to achieve beneficial change. Our Protect the Protectors campaign highlights the terrible physical and mental cost of assaults against officers, secured a doubling of the maximum sentence for such offences – and we have gone further in securing a wider roll-out of Taser and seeking a Police Covenant as well as legal protections for police drivers. Our Time Limits campaign is highlighting the injustice of long, open-ended nature of misconduct investigations into police officers, calling for a 12-month cap. The toll that lengthy investigations have on officer, their families and colleagues cannot be underestimated.
Recognising the brave, remembering the fallen

Building on a century of campaigning for better pay and conditions for police officers, the Federation also highlights the best of policing and remembers those we lost on or off duty, through annual events. Our Police Bravery Awards, in London, proudly recognise officers who have gone over and above what could ever be expected of them. Nominees attend a reception at 10 Downing Street and are honoured at a glittering ceremony. National Police Memorial Day was founded by Kent Police Inspector (now retired) Joe Holness, in memory of fallen colleagues. The service is hosted in turn by the four nations of the United Kingdom. A dignified and moving event – it is attended by Royalty, Government and UK Police services.
‘I’m so glad I decided to do it… I’ve not looked back’

PC Melanie Earnshaw was elected in 2018 as one of the new intake of reps for the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW).

It was the Gloucestershire officer’s actions in preventing a suicidal woman from setting fire to herself that started her on the path to becoming a Fed rep. In 2017 Melanie was nominated for a Police Bravery Award, for her actions in saving the woman.

On the way home from the awards she got talking to a senior Federation Rep who encouraged her to think about getting involved, and the rest is history.

Melanie said: “I enjoy being a Fed rep for the same reasons I like policing: it’s the variety of the work, and I’m interested in people’s lives and helping them. I feel that I’m able to empathise with colleagues and whatever they are going through."

“I’ve been helping colleagues with a range of queries, including professional standards interviews. I’ve also become a mental health wellbeing lead – there’s not nearly enough understanding around this issue and people still don’t feel comfortable to admit when they are struggling. I hope we can change that. I’m more than happy to speak to anyone on a member’s behalf.”

Melanie has a child of school age and recognises that family commitments can be a barrier for some female officers, but their presence is needed to ensure the PFEW stays relevant to its members.

She added: “It is hard work and I regularly do work at home – if you have an understanding family like I do then that definitely helps. But forces usually allow time for us to do Federation work on duty. Being a rep is a great way to upskill and network, while also helping your colleagues. I’m so glad that I decided to do it. I’ve enjoyed the first year and have not looked back.”

“I enjoy being a Fed rep for the same reasons I like policing: it’s the variety of the work, and I’m interested in people’s lives and helping them.”

DC Bal Gill became a local Police Federation rep for two reasons – to “find out where my subs were going” and to “increase the diversity” of his board in Warwickshire.

The Police Federation of England and Wales has always placed importance on ensuring that its representatives reflect the members they serve. In 2018 our national Reps@Work campaign actively sought to persuade more women and more candidates with protected characteristics to become candidates.

Bal, who joined earlier, was happy to be one of the trailblazers. His role involves representing detectives and, as an equality rep, helping to address and prevent discrimination on grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, faith, ability or for other reasons, wherever it arises in policing.

He says: “I strongly recommend to others that they join the Federation, especially black and minority ethnic (BME) officers. The Federation and the police service have changed so much – it’s so dynamic now. We need individuals there to represent them.

“It’s about having the opportunity to represent other officers, who perhaps don’t feel empowered to be able to come forward and approach management with issues they may have. I find satisfaction in being able to do that.”

‘The Federation and service are so dynamic now’

2010: The coalition government’s Comprehensive Spending Review paved the way for 20 percent cuts to policing – despite strong opposition from the Federation

2011: Tom Winsor’s review of police pay and conditions is announced: the Federation campaigned strongly against this

2012: PFEW Chair, Paul McKeever, leads a march of 30,000 off-duty police officers against cuts to policing

2013: The PFEW wins a case at the Police Arbitration Tribunal to stop the introduction of compulsory severance for police officers
‘The need for the Federation will grow, not diminish’

Zuleika Payne is a former Chair of South Yorkshire Police Federation, and was elected to the Police Federation of England and Wales National Board in 2018. She believes the centenary is an opportunity to take stock of what’s good about the organisation and to look ahead.

“When you look at how policing has been dismantled in recent years, you can see the need for the Federation will grow, not diminish,” said Zuleika.

Zuleika’s route into policing was more unusual than most. She moved to London from Derbyshire to become a classical ballet dancer. A rape in her neighbourhood put her local community on edge, but she was reassured by the presence of uniformed police, and started to think about the public service.

She started her probation in Sheffield City Centre and was soon exposed to the Federation and its mission of standing up for her fellow officers and challenging ill treatment. When Zuleika found herself on the receiving end of “unpleasantness” in the workplace in 2002, the Federation was there in her time of need and she decided to become a rep. “I never set out to become a Federation chair or National Board member, but I’ve learned that if you have a particular interest or inkling in life and an opportunity presents itself, then take it.

“As well as being a regional rep, I’m the lead for Learning and Development. I feel that this is an exciting time to be part of the Federation. After the Normington Review which reformed the organisation, we’re at the start of an exciting new era,” added Zuleika.

‘He looks so cool – that’s what I want to do’

Dave Blundell served on the Federation’s National Board during the centenary year and feels privileged to have defended colleagues and ensured they were not bullied out of the service.

He has a particularly vivid memory of seeing a Greater Manchester officer with black hair and a black moustache, driving a Ford Capri in the 1970s. “At the time I thought he looked so cool in his liveried-up car,” laughed Dave, “I thought that’s what I want to do.”

He moved to London in 1987 to join the Metropolitan Police. “I grew up in a small town near Stockport, so living in London was brilliant,” he said.

“Those days we had a truncheon and handcuffs and we wore a tunic – there was no body armour or CS spray but we had numbers and would act as a pack to bring down a larger animal. It was common for people to be taking steroids and some of the suspects were enormous. I was armed with the foolishness of youth and it was a matter of pride for me, not to let a suspect get away.”

Dave mourns the loss of the police station canteen, which was a place of camaraderie, advice and support where officers could share the burdens of the job. He joined the Federation in 2013 as an Inspectors’ rep after seeing colleagues being treated badly. “Some found it harder to deliver or had personal problems and they were treated very badly,” he said. “I decided to fight their corner.”

Reflecting on 100 years of the PFEW, Dave added: “Officers’ pay, the hours they work, how they are dealt with over misconduct, whether they are bullied out of service or how they are treated if they become injured or ill – the Federation has influenced all of these for the better.”
‘If not for policing, I might have become a maths teacher’

Karen Stephens is Secretary of the National Detectives’ Forum and a National Federation rep.

Growing up in a part of Manchester that “wasn’t the best”, she also spent time in the care system and believes her early experiences have helped her to empathise with people – a useful attribute for a Federation representative.

Karen nearly pursued a career as a maths teacher but hated the idea of being stuck in a classroom. Instead she joined Hertfordshire Constabulary a day before her 20th birthday.

“I lived with the other cadets above a police station in rooms that were pretty disgusting – you wouldn’t put anyone in those conditions now,” said Karen. “I discovered some new accommodation at another station that wasn’t in use and I talked a superintendent into letting us move there.”

Her policing career was cast into doubt in 1999 when she was falsely accused of an inappropriate relationship with a criminal. Karen said: “The 18 months that this hung over me were the most stressful of my life. There were times I thought about walking away but I had a brilliant solicitor and great support from the Police Federation. When it was over my local chair suggested I should become a rep and use my bad experience positively to help others.”

Karen joined CID in 2003 and became a detectives’ rep four years later. She is proud to have been able to highlight the pressures that detectives are under, both as a result of cutbacks and the mental stress of repeated exposure to horrendous cases.

She added: “The centenary is a great milestone for the Police Federation. As long as people continue to become reps for the right reasons – to help people and not for their own importance – the future will be bright.”

‘I dislike bullies – being a Fed rep allowed me to represent colleagues’

Growing up in Wigan, there was a lack of jobs. John Partington thought about joining the army or the Fire Brigade but settled on the police service. Today, he is the Deputy National Secretary of the Police Federation of England and Wales.

John said: “I joined the Metropolitan Police aged 20, back in 1996. I got to see the tail end of a style of policing from the 1970s and 1980s, before Sir Paul Condon came in as Commissioner and changed the culture. There was no body armour at that time. No PAVA spray, old fashioned radios that didn’t work and risk assessments were non-existent.

“Previously I’d only been to London for a daytrip, so it was exciting working in the capital. I started in Croydon, which was a busy patch. We wanted to make arrests and there were no shortage of officers in those days.”

John was promoted to sergeant and dealt with the impact of knife crime, drugs and public hostility. In 2008, after becoming an inspector, he became a Federation rep.

“I have a dislike of bullies and being a rep allowed me to represent colleagues and argue against the management. I had some wins, representing people who were demoted or facing dismissal. When the Met wanted to abolish the chief inspector rank, we fought it and got them to reverse the decision.”

As Deputy National Secretary for the Federation since 2018, he has been involved in negotiating new misconduct regulations with the Home Office and attempting to shift the emphasis towards learning and development rather than punishment. He is also involved in work around police pensions.

John added: “I think we should get more recognition from the Government as a statutory body, and 100 years does give us that gold seal.”
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