

Case study:
DC Denise Knox
Cleveland Police

“We often work very late and I don’t think any of this helps attract people to the role - it’s not suited to family life”

Disillusioned. Vital. Challenging. These are how DC Denise Knox of Cleveland Police describes the life of a detective.

After 18 years in the role, she feels that it is harder than it used to be. “I love it, but from my experience it’s more challenging now,” she says. “There’s a lack of resources and experience from people coming through. We’re always fighting nowadays with forensics and CPS to get stuff and it is always a battle to get somebody to court”.

DC Knox believes the work-life balance in the job is hindering efforts to recruit new staff. She says: “It doesn’t help that we work three or four weekends in our shift pattern and we need more of a work-life balance and need to maybe have two weekends off. We often work very late too and I don’t think any of this helps attract people to the role and it’s not suited to family life.”

She is clear that a detective is a “vital” role in the police force, albeit an under-valued one. “I am slightly biased, but I think it is one of the most vital roles in the police service as we get the offenders to court and are helping get justice for the victims,” she says. “We have a massive lack of training, so this needs to be better and there are no tutor detectives and new recruits are being guided by the experienced ones, which means more work for them. No courses are forthcoming and I feel now for new recruits – it’s sink or swim.

“There is no love and support coming from above for detectives and wannabe detectives. We do not feel that we are valued at the moment”.