“I enjoy trying to create a fair environment for my colleagues”

Sgt Tom Parsley has been an officer with Gloucestershire Constabulary since 2002 and became a Federation rep in 2017.

“I had several friends that were involved with the Federation and saw how they gained a greater understanding of how the Police operated and made its decisions. I was at a stage in my career where I felt ready to take on more responsibility to have an impact in those decisions.

“Since becoming a Fed rep, the thing I have enjoyed the most is my work around equality matters. I know a lot of people are more interested in the conduct and performance side of things, but I enjoy trying to create a fair environment for my colleagues. I have my own challenges, so helping to create a level playing field for all members is something I find really rewarding.

“If anyone is thinking of becoming a rep, I would say ‘be brave and put yourself forward’. Being a rep is challenging so you need to enter with your eyes wide open. But it’s a great role; your knowledge just grows, and you meet lots of different people who you may not come in to contact with in your normal role. It gives you a sense of real pride as you know you’re working hard to make a change.

“Could you be a Fed rep? Find out how you can get involved at www.polfed.org/repsatwork

A lot of the time it’s the small things that make a difference, the simple day to day things that members ask you about. e.g. what they are entitled to claim or what to do about a situation. It’s nice to know your opinion is valued and makes a difference.

“I don’t think a lot of people properly understand what the Fed really does. Some people think that as a Fed rep you’re a conduit to challenge senior management. I definitely don’t see it like that; the role is more about bringing people together and helping the organisation make better decisions. That to me is the Fed’s real strength”.

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