

WELSH MATTERS

News and views from the Police Federation's Welsh Affairs Sub-Committee

FALLEN COLLEAGUES REMEMBERED AT NATIONAL POLICE MEMORIAL DAY

THE WELSH LEAD for the Police Federation for England and Wales (PFEW) said it was a 'privilege' to read out the roll of honour at this year's National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) service in Cardiff.

The ceremony at the city's New Theatre was attended by Police Federation representatives, police chiefs, politicians and religious leaders as well as the families, friends and colleagues of fallen officers.

With the event, which was in its 20th year, being held in Wales, Nicky Ryan was asked if she would read the roll of honour during the service.

Nicky said: "It was an honour to be asked to read out the names of those who had lost their lives over the past 12 months. I think everyone attending could see how emotional I found it, especially reading out the name of Dyfed Powys Inspector Gareth Earp."

Nicky said the service is one of the most important dates in the policing calendar.

"Police officers work extremely hard, often in very challenging, fast-paced conditions and the service gives us the opportunity to pause for thought and reflect on the sacrifices made by our fallen colleagues," she added.

"The policing family is a close-knit one and losing a colleague always hits hard. The service of remembrance reassures the families of fallen officers that their loved ones will never be forgotten.

"Of course, it was particularly special this year as we welcomed colleagues from across the UK to Wales."

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."

Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford



Welsh lead Nicky Ryan reads the roll of honour at National Police Memorial Day.

read the poem 'Remember', followed by readings from Home Secretary Suella Braverman and shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper.

This year's roll of honour included: **Inspector Gareth Earp**, Dyfed Powys 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

Sergeant Graham Saville, Nottinghamshire Police

Sergeant Paul Frear, West Midlands Police.

Petals of remembrance representing those who have lost their lives fell as Nicky told the congregation: "We give thanks to God for their courage and their dedication".

The service, on Sunday 24 September, also featured a poignant act of remembrance which 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".

Wales was represented by Dorothy Ellis whose son Adrian Ellis, a Gwent PC, died aged 29 in a road traffic collision in 1989.

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

David Taylor, the son of Strathclyde PC George Taylor (27) who died in 1976 when he was attacked with an axe, represented Scotland.

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

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

In honour of fallen officers and to mark this year's National Police Memorial Day, the Senedd was lit up in blue on the Saturday night before the service, with multiple public buildings and Force HQs across Wales doing the same.

Next year's service will take place in Glasgow.

'POLITICIANS NOW ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW POLICING WORKS'



AS NICKY RYAN, the Federation's Welsh lead, prepares to retire at the end of November, she looks back on her career and what she has achieved in her final policing role.

Sandwiched between the Welsh First Minister and the policing minister, who were in turn next to the Home Secretary and the shadow home secretary, Nicky Ryan has admitted that during last month's National Police Memorial Day there was a moment when she asked herself how she had got to be in such a position and in such company.

"It's fair to say it was a little surreal," says Nicky.

However, it is also fair to say that it was fitting that she was sat with the political heavyweights at the service held this year in the New Theatre, Cardiff as, since becoming the Police Federation of England and Wales' Welsh lead in April 2021, she has done so much to not just increase engagement between Welsh politicians, the Welsh Government and the Federation but also to ensure there is more awareness of the issues and risks facing rank and file officers.

"In terms of what I have achieved in the last two and a half years, I would say that is the most significant breakthrough. Politicians now asks questions about how policing works and we are now seen as an integral part of Welsh justice. We are part of the conversation," Nicky explains.

"I have been really focused on making sure that officers have a voice, and that their voice is listened to."

As a sign of the improved relationship between the police service and Government, for the first time this

year the Senedd, the heart of Welsh Government, was lit up in blue on the eve of National Police Memorial Day after a request from Nicky.

"That was something that I am extremely proud about. It sends a very clear message to the families of our fallen colleagues that they are not forgotten and that is very important to them, but also to everyone in the policing family," she adds.

"I must admit I felt very emotional when I got the email confirming the Senedd would be paying its respects to those police officers who lost their lives serving our communities."

Nicky, who retires in November, took over as Welsh lead at a time when everyone was still working remotely and social distancing restrictions were still in place. Her predecessor, Mark Bleasdale, had held the reins during the pandemic and saw the Federation's Welsh business area through this period so she found herself having to navigate her way through the new way of working.

Many of her first meetings with Members of the Senedd were held on Teams or, where they were in person, from behind masks.

"Everyone was just doing the best they could, and it was important for us to be able to re-engage and drive things forward," she recalls.

Nicky rose to the challenge, in her



The Covid-19 vaccine and Special Constables were among the subjects covered when the Federation's Welsh lead Nicky Ryan (right) met with Peredur Owen Griffiths, the Plaid Cymru member of the Senedd (MS) for South Wales East.

own inimitable style but grateful for the trust that had been put in her to not just set the agenda but also work her way through it.

In addition to influencing Welsh Government and forming effective working relationships with politicians and other stakeholders, she also set about making changes within the Federation, highlighting to the organisation's National Board, National Council and English colleagues, the differences for Welsh officers, working for the Home Office but within a devolved justice system where other partners were working for Welsh Government.

The increased understanding of the



► COURAGEOUS TEAM Paramedic Gareth Wood with Pc Nicola Ryan, Sgt Paul Bird, Pc Gerwyn Harris and Pc John Charlton.



At this year's national Police Bravery Awards are Nicky Ryan (second from left) with the Welsh delegation and First Minister Mark Drakeford (back row, fifth from right).

Welsh situation has led to increased linguistic courtesy, for example. Signature blocks for Federation emails are now provided in Welsh and English and the organisation's most recent pay campaign was also available with Welsh language graphics.

"These may seem like minor things, but that linguistic courtesy is critical for an organisation that has 'England and Wales' in its title but perhaps hasn't always paid full attention to the 'and Wales' part of that," Nicky adds.

As a child, Nicky had always wanted to be a police officer. She had a full grasp of 'right' and 'wrong' and, from an early age, just wanted to make a difference, to make things better.

Sadly, her small stature – she is 5ft 2½ inches and is keen to emphasise that ½ - prevented her from joining the police service when she left school.

So, she did her A levels, undertook a business course and then joined the Royal Air Force. In her words, 'treading water' until she could sign up as a probationer PC.

Her RAF years included postings around the UK and also to the Falklands but closer to home it was a re-alignment of force boundaries that actually enabled her to finally fulfil her dreams. South Wales relinquished the Rhymney Valley with Nicky's home force, Gwent, taking on responsibility for policing the area.

After years of almost non-existent recruitment, Gwent needed to take on more officers.

"It was definitely a case of right place, right time," says Nicky, who started her policing career in 1996 when she was 24.

She freely admits that it was not all plain sailing. At times, she found policing suppressed her and made her feel

contained and constrained.

"Becoming a Federation representative, the Gwent branch secretary and then the Federation's Welsh lead enabled me to flourish. I enjoy taking on a challenge, advocating on behalf of others and helping bring about change," she explains.

In terms of her own career, Nicky, who became a Federation workplace representative in 2014, is proud to have earned a reputation as a hard worker.

Nicky found one of the most difficult periods of her career came when she wanted to secure a flexible working arrangement so that she could balance the needs of the Force with her own commitment to caring for her mum when she was unwell.

She found some line managers totally intransigent, but also completely unable to see police officers as individuals, and individuals with their own needs and responsibilities outside of policing.

"There was just no flexibility at all, no attempt to accommodate my need to care for Mum and still work as a police officer. Juggling caring responsibilities with your career can be difficult, but the organisation needs to do more to help people do this," Nicky explains, "It must be incredibly difficult for two parents

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working in policing trying to work shifts, look after children and actually have any kind of life.

“I am not surprised forces are losing the skills and experience of good officers who just find they can’t get the flexibility within their role to be able to manage their personal lives too. We all understand the business needs, but there needs to be more understanding of officers’ needs too.

“We are breaking good people, experienced officers, and then somehow blaming them, not the system, when things go wrong.”

While calling for more to be done in terms of flexible working arrangements, Nicky is also keen to point out that there were some supervisors who did their best to help, who were prepared to think outside the box and show some compassion.

“Some people were just absolutely brilliant, there were pieces of kindness that I will never forget,” she says.

So, as she prepares for a life outside policing, what does Nicky think of the police service she is soon to leave behind?

“Fundamentally, I think policing is reaping the rewards of what has been sown during the years of chronic under-investment in policing, with everything the Federation warned of at the start of the austerity measures coming to fruition,” Nicky says.

“It has become a political football, but it has also become the norm for officers to be scrutinised for everything they do, with conduct investigations into decisions officers made in a split second going on for years and years, leaving officers feeling unsupported.

“But, and this has to be a good thing, we are finally seeing chief officers putting their heads above the parapet and speaking up on behalf of police officers. South Wales Chief Constable Jeremy Vaughan as National Police Chiefs’ Council lead, for instance, has spoken out positively on officer pay.”

As a parting message, Nicky confesses she has no one person in policing that she admires, as such, but she is full of praise and respect for the unsung heroes of policing; the officers who turn up, day in, day out, identify an

issue, sort it and don’t necessarily shout about it.

“There are some great officers out there, some really inspirational officers, who quietly go about their business, bring change and make a difference. I don’t think they organisation always recognises them, and they are not celebrated enough,” she explains.

Welsh co-lead and Region 7 national board member Zac Mader and PFEW post-incident lead, Region 7 national board member Leigh Godfrey will be the main points of contact following Nicky’s retirement. Zac and Leigh can be reached on:

Zac: Zac.mader@polfed.org

Leigh: Leigh.Godfrey@polfed.org



At the memorial day in Cardiff are (left to right) North Wales Police Federation chair Vinny Jones, Welsh lead Nicky Ryan, North Wales Police Federation secretary Mark Jones and Gwent Police Federation chair Matthew Candy.

WELSH GOVERNMENT ENDORSES MEDALS FOR HEROES CAMPAIGN

NICKY RYAN SAYS she is “delighted” that the Police Federation’s Medals for Heroes campaign has won the official backing of the Welsh Government.

As Welsh lead for the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW), Nicky has strongly supported the campaign, which seeks – alongside the Police Superintendents’ Association and the Prison Officers’ Association – to honour fallen officers by posthumously awarding them an Elizabeth Medal, similar to what happens in the British Armed Forces.

In September, Wales’ First Minister Mark Drakeford held an official meeting with Bryn Hughes MBE, whose daughter PC Nicola Hughes and her colleague PC Fiona Bone were murdered a decade ago. Bryn is a leading light of the Medals for Heroes campaign.

Mr Drakeford pledged his support and has now gone a step further by throwing the weight of his government behind the campaign.

Nicky said: “This is a fantastic step forward for our campaign, which simply seeks to provide grieving families with recognition that the service of their loved one is honoured and valued by society.

“TO HEAR THAT THE WELSH GOVERNMENT IS OFFICIALLY BACKING THE MEDALS FOR HEROES CAMPAIGN TOPS OFF WHAT HAS BEEN A MOMENTOUS COUPLE OF WEEKS FOR US, IN TERMS OF PROGRESS.”

“To have the support of the First Minister and now the Welsh Government, along with cross-party backing in Westminster, shows the momentum we are building. I hope we can convince the Home Office to agree to our request.”

The First Minister explained: “I wish to record the Welsh Government’s support and endorsement for [the] Medals for Heroes campaign which will recognise the sacrifice made by



First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford (left) and Bryn Hughes MBE.

emergency workers including ambulance staff, police officers and members of the fire and rescue services.”

Mr Drakeford’s announcement came after he gave a reading at [National Police Memorial Day](#) in Cardiff on 24 September.

Bryn responded: “To hear that the Welsh Government is officially backing the Medals for Heroes campaign tops off what has been a momentous couple of weeks for us in terms of progress.

“The pace has really picked up and the finish line is looking closer than it ever has done before. It’s now time for the English Government to follow suit.

“I’m extremely hopeful that one day soon, we will finally be able to give fallen officers, our heroes, the recognition they deserve.”

The announcement from Mr Drakeford came days after Ruth Jones, the MP for Newport West, voiced her support for the campaign in Parliament when she asked Chris Philp, minister of policing, to ‘do the right thing and acknowledge those who gave their lives to keep us safe?’

When asked about the campaign on BBC Breakfast, Mr Philp said it is something he is ‘pushing for’ and he is hoping an announcement will be made ‘in the near future’.

Speaking about his attendance at this year’s National Police Memorial Day, Mr Philp said: “I think their sacrifice is something we should always remember and be grateful for. And I’m hoping we can say something tangible on that point in the very near future.”

OFFICER ASSAULTS: FORCES URGED TO USE OPERATION HAMPSHIRE RESOURCE

WELSH LEAD NICKY Ryan is urging Welsh forces to take action on trauma by using the Operation Hampshire app and signing up for the latest trauma training.

Nicky says it's imperative that forces use the free trauma reporting app which was rolled out last year as part of a wider Op Hampshire programme, led by the National Police Wellbeing Service, Oscar Kilo.

The app enables simple and consistent recording of incidents of assault against officers and staff.

Nicky explained: "We already record details of assault incidents but the app allows us to capture the relevant details quickly and it means the data recorded is consistent. It also provides a greater understanding of the levels of violence used against our officers and staff and therefore provides a clear overview which will help identify specific issues and provide an evidence base to make decisions and support forces.

"WE NEED ALL THE WELSH FORCES ADOPTING AND USING THE APP TO BE ABLE TO MAXIMISE ITS HUGE BENEFITS AND PROVIDE A NATIONAL PICTURE OF POLICE ASSAULTS."

"But there is strength in numbers. We need all the Welsh forces adopting and using the app to be able to maximise its huge benefits and provide a national picture of police assaults."

Nicky also says forces should be adopting the latest Op Hampshire trauma training, a course which is now available to all officers via their force's intranet.

She added: "Physical assault is not



something we should accept as 'part of the job'. All assaults, regardless of severity, have an impact of some kind so forces need to know how best to support officers and staff."

Op Hampshire was set up to change the culture in forces in relation to supporting officers and staff and, in particular, reacting to individuals' needs.

Nicky continued: "Op Hampshire does not suggest implementing special measures for police victims; it simply provides a structure to ensure we get the basics right for our colleagues as the people who serve and protect the public. It's about getting the right support in terms of impact, investigation, longer-term wellbeing, victim care and response.

"There is a great deal of work currently being done to protect and support colleagues but forces must make the most of this work and the options that are now available.

"The police service is under more pressure and scrutiny than ever and forces must respond by taking care of officers and staff. That is the priority."

For more information on the trauma training course contact: Rachel Joint at enquiries@melearning.co.uk / 01273 499 100. Or contact the Oscar Kilo team at contact@oscarkilo.org.uk



A REVIEW OF ANNUAL FEDERATION CONFERENCE

THE WELSH LEAD for the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) says she felt disheartened after Home Secretary Suella Braverman failed to sign off a posthumous medal for fallen officers following the Welsh Government's official backing of the campaign.

Like so many, Nicky Ryan says she was optimistic that Ms Braverman would sign off the Federation's 'Medals for Heroes' campaign during her keynote speech at this year's PFEW annual conference, and admits she was left 'frustrated' when this did not happen.

"It's a shame that we weren't able to take away the news so many of us have been campaigning for," said Nicky, who recently voiced her delight that Wales' First Minister Mark Drakeford had officially thrown the Welsh Government's support behind the campaign.

"We were all disappointed, and none more so than Bryn Hughes MBE who had travelled to conference especially to talk about the campaign that he is so heavily involved in.

"The Home Secretary's speech seemed a little too scripted for my liking. I just hope that she starts to take action now and finally begin to demonstrate she does support police officers."

Speaking about the two-day online event Nicky heaped praise on the agenda, adding that it was a 'fantastic opportunity' to highlight some of the most important issues police officers currently face.

"From start to finish, there were some great discussions, debates and conversations going on, which I hope gave our members an insight into what we're doing behind the scenes to improve their Federation," continued Nicky.

"And it was great to see a few Welsh representatives getting involved too."

Day 1 of the agenda saw national Federation secretary Calum Macleod give an update. In his speech, highlighted the



The national panel.

multiple challenges today's officers are facing, including pay, scrutiny and lack of support.

Calum also helped close the conference during a live question and answer session, which saw members of the National Board take questions from viewing members.

Day 2 included the 'Industrial rights' session, featuring a short video from Steve Treharne, chair of South Wales Police Federation, who urged members to "think seriously" and cast a vote in the forthcoming ballot on industrial rights.

Steve explained that the ballot gives members a voice on whether the Federation should seek industrial rights for officers.

Across the two days, discussions and debates were held around leadership in policing, misogyny, wellbeing and retirement.

During the question and answer session that concluded the event, Nicky, who is also national Specials Constabulary lead for PFEW, was praised by national Federation chair Steve Hartshorn for her work with Specials.

"Nicky Ryan has been hosting online events [for Special Constables] and these have had a fantastic take up across the country," said Steve, before he encouraged Special Constables to get involved and, furthermore, to become a Federation representative.

This came after a viewing member asked: 'Given that Special Constables are now able to be full members of the Federation for some time, what are the plans to drive representation of Special Constables at a national level?'

National deputy chair Tiff Lynch replied: "Special Constables have a huge part to play within policing and the Federation.

"I'm so pleased to say we're getting more and more Specials joining the Federation but we still need to increase that figure. I would love to say we have 100 per cent of Special Constables signing up for the Federation."

Nicky admitted that while she missed the opportunity to network with colleagues in-person at conference, she felt the online format worked and gave all members the opportunity to be involved, wherever they were located.

"It's not easy to travel to a completely different part of the country - and for those in Wales, a different country - for a full two days," added Nicky.

"Having the event online not just saved the Federation thousands of pounds - at an extremely challenging financial time - but gave all members the opportunity to experience conference and be part of the conversation.

"It was brilliant to see so many members getting involved and sending their questions to the various panels."

ENGAGE WITH THE FEDERATION

You can find out more about the Police Federation and its work representing police officers by contacting:

Gareth Jones, chair of Dyfed Powys Police Federation - garethjones@polfed.org

Matt Candy, chair of Gwent Police Federation - matthew.candy@polfed.org

Mark Jones, secretary of North Wales Police Federation -

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