

federation



West Midlands Police Federation

August/September 2019



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Welcome

Welcome to the August/September 2019 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.

Cover photo: Chief Constable Dave Thompson is pictured with Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Home Secretary Priti Patel. Government plans to recruit 20,000 new officers over the next three years were announced during the PM's visit to the Force on Friday 26 July.

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Recruitment plans welcome



By **Steve Grange**, secretary of West Midlands Police Federation

Since 2010 when the Government's cuts programme began, West Midlands Police has lost a total of 2,131 police officers.

To give that a more meaningful perspective, we have lost almost one in four (24.7 per cent) of the officers we had nine years ago while nationwide officer numbers have fallen by 20,563 to 123,171 - though we did see an increase of 766 nationally in the last year, which was nowhere near enough.

As a result of the financial constraints we have been under, forces have had to make tough decisions – some completely obvious to the public such as closing and selling off police stations to reduce overheads but others have taken place behind the scenes in terms of re-organisation and 'workforce modernisation' programmes.

But whichever way you look at, as the Police Federation warned at the outset, the cuts have had consequences; consequences that have been felt by the public who, for example, have seen a rise in violent crime and an alarming lack of the visible policing presence we know they want to see.

Those consequences have also been felt by police officers themselves. Run ragged by

trying to do more with less, we have seen more and more of our people suffering from stress and mental illness with sickness levels increasing as a result.

We have been calling for more cash to be ploughed back into policing so we can get back to doing the job we signed up to do – serving the public, fighting and preventing crime, keeping order and protecting the vulnerable.

While campaigning to become the leader of the Conservative Party, Boris Johnson's promise to recruit 20,000 police officers if he defeated Jeremy Hunt in the leadership race was music to our ears. We needed someone to help reverse the damage done to policing by Theresa May who, it has to be said, seemed intent on destroying all that is good about the police service in this country.

However, despite Mr Johnson's promises before becoming Prime Minister, I think many of us doubted he would act on them straightaway and, let's be honest, he has plenty on his plate if he is to fulfil his pledge to meet the 31 October Brexit 'deadline'.

But on a visit to the Force area, two days after becoming PM, he announced a police recruitment drive that would start within weeks and be complete within three years.

This is, of course, welcome news – not just for the police service but also for the communities we serve.

We appreciate – and it's a point acknowledged by the new policing minister, Kit Malthouse, and others – taking on 20,000 new officers in a relatively short time, is not going to be all plain sailing.

Recruitment and training facilities have been massively scaled back during years of limited officer intakes and, even if we get those geared up to where they need to be again, there are other issues to address. Police stations and police bases have been closed all across England and Wales so where are we going to put these new recruits, how are we going to equip them properly when we are already fighting for funding for equipment, such as Taser, for the officers we do have?

While I don't want to look a gift horse in the mouth, as it were, I do think we have to at least be sure the 'horse' has a leg at each corner and that it's not going to turn and bolt.

An injection of 20,000 officers into policing is very welcome but we need to see sustained investment in in the coming years if we are to properly recover from the austerity measures that have brought the police service to crisis point.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson with West Midlands Police officers graduating from the Force's intensive training programme.

Home Office backs 2.5 per cent police pay rise

Police officers have been awarded a 2.5 per cent pay increase.

The Police Federation of England and Wales said it was a 'small step in the right direction'.

It is the first time in three years that the Home Office has accepted in full the recommendations of the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB), the independent review body advising the Government on police pay.

However, national Federation chair John Apter has insisted the Government must do more to make up for years of real-term pay cuts endured by Federation members.

"Police officers have suffered nine years of pay freezes and pay caps. So, while this pay award represents the highest received since 2010, it is not what we and the Police Superintendents' Association jointly asked for – however, it is better than the derisory rise our members were given last year," says John.

"It is positive to see the Government abiding by proper process and accepting all the recommendations of the PRRB which it has failed to do for the past two years. But this must be just the start of getting police officers pay back to the level it should be."

But he continues: "Before the next pay award, the chancellor

will announce the results of the Comprehensive Spending Review – and that must include substantial, centrally-funded investment to ensure the service is fully and properly resourced, encompassing a significant, real-term rise in officer pay."

As well as the pay rise, which applies to all ranks and comes into effect from 1 September, the Government announced:

- An increase in the on-call allowance from £15 to £20 per 24-hour period for all Federated ranks
- A 2.5 per cent uplift in the dog handlers' allowance
- A 2.5 per cent uplift in London weighting, and
- No change for apprentice and degree holder progression pay, which means those joining the service will continue to receive the current incremental pay rises through their probationary period.

The Police Federation, in a joint submission to the PRRB with the Superintendents' Association earlier this year, had sought a three-year pay deal for officers with a five per cent uplift in each year to bring police pay back to 'fair levels'.

However, if the three-year deal was not considered possible, the Federation put forward a claim for a 6.2 per cent rise this year.

Police covenant

Sajid Javid announced plans to establish a police covenant to recognise the sacrifice made by police officers just days before leaving his role as Home Secretary after being appointed as chancellor in Boris Johnson's Cabinet re-shuffle,

The covenant will recognise that police officers are not employees but rather hold the 'office of constable' which comes with a high level of personal accountability and responsibility for the protection of life and property.

Mr Javid announced plans for the covenant at the Police Bravery Awards ceremony on 18 July.

"This will be a pledge to do more as a nation to help those who serve this country. It will ensure the sacrifice made by the police is properly recognised," he said.

"I'm in awe of every officer who plays their part in keeping this country safe. Rest assured, the Government has your back – and the police covenant will make sure of that."

Rich Cooke, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, has welcomed the news: "Attending and picking up the pieces of shootings, stabbings, suicides and being physically attacked yourself are happening multiple times to the same individuals

across the Force. As the latest HMICFRS report highlights, one in five serving officers and staff now have a form of post-traumatic stress disorder.

"For most bobbies, the experience of traumatic incidents is weekly or even daily. The strangulation of resources and specialisation of functions has concentrated the handling of certain types of incidents and investigations in the hands of fewer police. This makes them experts in their field but it also means that for many there is no respite from exposure to evil and trauma.

"None of us would deny that this is what we signed up to. I cannot ever recall hearing a single complaint from a police officer on that score. Most of us see policing as a vocation. Like soldiers in the army, we do what we do out of a sense of public duty, and with knife crime soaring we often find ourselves on the front-line of violent crime.

"Given all this, the adoption of a new police covenant, which former cabinet minister Esther McVey MP and the Police Federation have advocated should now be enshrined in law, is urgent and something the new Prime Minister should make a top priority.

"A covenant would provide a legal guarantee of care and support for

colleagues, recognising the unique nature of the job. And it would be the first crucial step in the long, painful journey towards restoring the policing vocation to its former standing."

The Home Secretary also gave his backing to plans for the Police Federation to extend its support to Special Constables, which will give the volunteers the option of the same protections as their colleagues.

There will be a consultation period on the plans for the covenant.

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Members can now follow us on Instagram. Simply search for West Midlands Police Federation to access our posts. The Instagram presence is part of our co-ordinated communications strategy and aims to make it as easy as possible for members to find out about our activities and engage with us.

Latest developments on pensions

The Supreme Court ruled on firefighters' pensions at the end of June refusing the Government leave to appeal the decision of the Court of Appeal which had previously held that the transitional pension arrangements for firefighters and judges were illegal on the grounds of age discrimination.

The Federation had been waiting for the ruling, seeing the issue as being linked to its own questions over the new police pension.

While waiting for the Government response to the ruling, national Federation chair John Apter called for a resolution for all public sector pensions and, after attending a pre-arranged meeting of the Pension Scheme Advisory Board with officials from the Treasury and the Home Office on Monday 1 July, days after the Supreme Court ruling, confirmed the Police Federation would bring any appropriate legal claims on behalf of members if its expectations were not met.

The Federation is asking for all protections for its members to be retained until 2022, and that affected members must be levelled up to this position.

It has also set out the following expectations on the pensions issue:

- The Government must accept that all transitional arrangements were unlawful, but it must not, while addressing that discrimination, introduce other unfairness to our members
- The Supreme Court decision applies across the public sector
- The Government concedes the existing police pensions legal claims
- It honours the promises made to those nearest retirement, and maintains the arrangements put in place

- The Government must ensure that all those subject to discrimination are remedied appropriately
- The remedy must also apply to those who have left the service.

After the advisory board meeting, John Apter said: "The Government would not be drawn into what they were going to do next, or how they would be reacting to the Supreme Court judgement. But they said they would release a statement before Parliament's summer recess begins on 25 July. This statement outlining their position cannot come soon enough." He added: "The legal case has been made by the Appeal Court ruling; now is the time for the Government to step up and morally do the right thing."

And John concluded: "If their statement does not meet our expectations, then we are prepared to lodge claims on behalf of our membership. That work has already started."



National Federation chair John Apter.



Federation agrees collective statement after national meeting

The full statement issued by the Police Federation of England and Wales was as follows:

Police Federation officials representing officers from across England and Wales – our National Board and National Council – have met over the past two days to discuss important issues affecting our members, and top of that list has been pensions.

Much has been said to the Police Federation of England and Wales, and to local Federations across the country, since the Supreme Court ruled there could be no appeal by the Government on the Judges' and Firefighters' pension discrimination ruling.

We are listening to you. We are listening to your representatives. And following our discussions over the past two days we – the PFEW and local Police Federations - publish this joint statement on the Police Federation of England and

Wales' police officer pension position.

Our stance has always been that police officers should have stayed in the pension schemes they signed up to, or better, and that remains our stance in any future discussions with Government over police officer pensions.

It was scandalous that the Government forced the changes it made to pensions back in 2012, but legally it had the power to do so. There are no negotiation rights for police officers on pensions.

Following the judges'/firefighters' ruling, the Government has said it will release a statement on the issue before Parliament's summer recess begins on 25 July. We are talking to other public sector unions in advance of that announcement and are, of course, listening to the views of all police officers, including those who are part of the 'Pension Challenge'.

We have previously made it clear we would not be paying the private legal fees



for the 'Pension Challenge'. This position remains unchanged.

Once the Government proposes a remedy – which is likely to be a protracted process and potentially affect all public sector pensions - if it becomes necessary for us to mount a legal challenge on behalf of all police officers in England and Wales then we stand ready to do so. It may be that no one has to submit claims.

The importance of fair and just pensions for police officers – who sacrifice so much during their working careers to serve and protect the public – cannot be understated. There has been much discussion over what has gone before but we now need to move forward collectively; not just as a Police Federation but as proud police officers. A collective and non-fragmented voice has the ability to be very powerful and to get the best terms and conditions it can for officers across the country.

“ It was scandalous that the Government forced the changes it made to pensions back in 2012, but legally it had power to do so. There are no negotiation rights for police officers on pensions. ”

Government will apply 'industrial remedy'

On 15 July, the Government issued a written statement in respect of the ruling on the judges' and firefighters' pensions making it clear the Government would apply an industrial remedy to the discrimination found by the Employment Appeal Tribunal. This means the remedy will apply to every worker in the public sector pension schemes, including police officers.

"What we do not know is exactly what the remedy will be

and what it means for our members, so while many will have further questions about this, we are not in a position to answer those until such time as we have heard what the resolution may be and we expect those discussions to be protracted," a Police Federation statement said.

Read the statement issued by the [Treasury](#)

Brave PCs honoured at Downing Street reception

Two West Midlands officers were honoured at this year's national Police Bravery Awards, attending one of the last official appointments of Theresa May when the former Prime Minister

addressed all the nominees at a Downing Street reception.

PCs Lorna Walsh and Adam McWalter were put forward for the prestigious award by West Midlands Police Federation after

they confronted a group of men armed with knives. They were still in training at the time of the incident in June 2018.

They joined other award nominees from forces across England and Wales at an afternoon reception at No 10 before an evening awards ceremony.

They had volunteered to change their shifts and take part in a plain clothes operation tackling prostitution when on Ninevah Road they came across a group of 20 men - one of whom was holding a knife with an eight-inch blade to the stomach of another.

The officers got out of their vehicle and identified themselves as police officers before shouting for the man to put down the knife. They drew their batons and spray but the man with the knife started to run towards PC McWalter with the knife out in front of him in a threatening manner, before being seen to discard it over a wall.

Not knowing whether the man had any other weapons, PC McWalter gave chase to try to apprehend him when a second man pulled a large knife out of his waistband and, holding it in the air, ran towards PC Walsh. PC Walsh shouted at the man to put the knife down but he ran off, following her colleague.

PC Walsh feared for her colleague's safety and screamed to warn him of the threat approaching him from behind. PC McWalter activated his emergency button and managed to keep both men in sight, even though the second offender ran at him with the knife.

Colleagues with Taser arrived on scene quickly and both men were red dotted and subsequently arrested.

This year's national Police Bravery Award was presented to PC Andrew Dear. The Warwickshire officer took the weight of a car on his back so he could rescue a severely injured man trapped in a car after a road accident.



PCs Adam McWalter and Lorna Walsh outside the gates at the end of Downing Street before the afternoon reception.

'I've made memories I will never forget'



Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick with the two brave West Midlands PCs.

Getting a glimpse of the world beyond the famous black door of No 10 Downing Street proved to be a truly 'awesome experience' for West Midlands Police Federation's bravery award nominee Lorna Walsh.

And the brave officer admitted she found the experience of attending the bravery awards overwhelming at times, though that didn't stop her taking 'selfies' as she got photographs with a number of well-known faces including Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick and DIY SOS host Nick Knowles, who is a vocal supporter of the police.

"The reception at Number 10 was amazing! I'd only ever seen it on the TV before. I was amazed at how much smaller it was in real life. We stepped out of the taxi at the gates and there were members of the public and press taking our photos. It was quite overwhelming. We were ushered through the gates and had our names ticked off as we went through," explained Lorna whose special guest on the day was fiancé Tony O'Donnell, who is also a serving West Midlands officer.

"I remember thinking, this is completely bonkers, I'm standing in Downing Street

waiting to go in to Number 10 and I was about to walk through the same door as Sir Winston Churchill – one of my personal heroes. As if a knife confrontation in the middle of Handsworth had turned into this.

"I felt proud to be representing my force at such a special and significant event. I was amazed by the portraits inside of our previous PMs and that we were overlooking Horse Guards Parade, something else I only even see on the TV for Her Majesty The Queen's Trooping of the Colour and the like. It was a truly awesome experience."

Lorna continued: "All of the nominees were ushered into one of the state rooms to have our official photo taken with the Prime Minister. The room was very grand, with high ceilings, huge portraits of royalty and other dignitaries. We were all ready to be photographed when Mrs May walked in and said 'Good afternoon everybody'. I had a flashback to when I was at school when the teacher walked in and I had to stop myself replying in some sort of chorus, 'Good afternoon Prime Minister'.

"The PM spoke to the officers sitting directly either side of her for approximately 10 minutes before making her official

address to the room. The lasted maybe five to six minutes before she left so I didn't get the opportunity to speak with her personally. My highlight of the afternoon was feeling like I was walking through history and that I was part of Mrs May's last official reception as PM. We were there for approximately two hours in all and it was certainly a very special moment which I'll never forget."

During the evening ceremony, West Midlands Chief Constable Dave Thompson, who accompanied the nominees along with West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke, introduced Lorna to policing and fire minister Nick Hurd MP who shook her hand and congratulated her on her nomination.

"He was very friendly and jovial and Mr Thompson told him I had a bit of a thing for collecting celebrity selfies. At that, Mr Hurd called the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Cressida Dick, over to our table and said to her 'This officer would like a selfie'. I wanted the ground to swallow me up. She laughed but was very happy to pose for a photo," said Lorna, who missed out on a selfie with Home Secretary Sajid Javid as she had nipped out of the room as nature called.

Nevertheless, she did manage to add to her collection and also enjoyed meeting the other special guests at the ceremony.

"I got one with Nick Knowles who's a huge supporter of the police and regularly attends these awards evening and another with Mark Durden-Smith, the TV presenter who hosted the awards. Both spent some time talking to me, congratulating me on my nomination and asking if I was enjoying the evening. Talking to these high profile celebrities who were in awe of me just as much as I was in awe of them was a true 'stand-out' moment for me. I thought I'd wake up any moment and it would all be a dream," said Lorna.

Looking back on the incident that led to the two officers' nomination, Lorna said the evening had started as usual with four officers across two plain cars working in plain clothes tackling local issues such as prostitution and anti-social behaviour around the Handsworth corridor.

Lorna was with Adam McWalter in the second car in stationary traffic waiting for

Feature continued on Page 10

the red lights to change when they saw a large group of men spilling out of a local restaurant to the left of them. They could see that there was some pushing and shoving and things were getting heated.

Adam then said: "Look, he's got a knife".

They could see one man was holding a large kitchen knife to the stomach of another man and quickly got out of the car.

"Adam was drawing his Parva, I drew my baton which is the way we were taught in Personal Safety Training. I didn't really think too much about what was unfolding in front of us and, although we were shouting at the man to drop the knife, I could tell that English wasn't his first language so I was concerned that he didn't understand our commands and, of course, because we weren't in uniform, he might not even believe we were police officers," said Lorna.

As the incident became more heated, one of the men initially ran towards Adam with the knife but then ran past him discarding the knife over a nearby wall.

"Knowing Adam, the way I do and, having dealt with a number of jobs with him involving knives, I knew instinctively that he would give chase. We didn't know that another male present at the scene had another knife so as Adam started running after the first male, I didn't realise that another male was running straight towards me holding out another knife," said Lorna.

"I swung my baton to knock the knife from his hand but he was out of reach. I screamed to Adam to make him aware of the oncoming threat behind him but I didn't know if he heard me. I felt physically sick when I heard Adam push his emergency button to call for more back-up and I shouted to my colleagues in the other car that one of the men have gone after Adam and that he had a knife.

"That's when we all scrambled to locate Adam and detain the two armed men. I certainly didn't think I was being brave at the time. I'm a police officer and I swore an oath to 'prevent offences against people and property' and with the right training and confidence you just do it without thinking. I



DIY SOS host Nick Knowles with the two West Midlands officers at the awards night.

also have 100 per cent trust in Adam too and we've always got each other's back.

"Given the same set of circumstances, I would do the same thing again. To ignore something like that would be a total neglect of duty. If I was to drive past and not deal with it and then hear that someone had been injured or even killed I would never be able to live with myself and I would certainly have to step down from the office of constable, 100 per cent."

Luckily, Tony, who is a Force dog handler and former personal safety training instructor, is completely understanding of her role and the risks she faces.

"He's always had faith in me and actively encouraged and supported my decision to 'get out on the streets' after spending nine years in the Force Control Room. I don't think he was too surprised by my actions as he was aware that I had already gained a bit of a reputation for attracting 'trouble,'" she said.

But Lorna's parents were concerned: "My mother is very religious and believes in the

power of prayer. She always prays that I'll come home safe and although she was worried about us getting into trouble she and my father were very proud of my actions but said that had it have been them in my shoes they might have ran the other way."

Despite the nature of the incident, Lorna remembers feeling very shocked and overwhelmed when she received a call from West Midlands Police Federation's deputy chair, John Williams, telling her she had been nominated.

Having not long woken up after a nightshift, she recalled: "My palms were getting a little bit sweaty and I was telling my Tony to turn the TV down as I couldn't quite believe what I was hearing. I remember asking John if he had definitely called the right person. I was just doing my job!"

Now coming to terms with the reality of it all, though, Lorna says: "The main thing I took away from the evening was seeing how humble every single officer was. Every officer in that room was 'just doing their job'. All typical 'British bobbies' with one main aim, 'to prevent all offences against people and property' and stay true to the oath we swore when we became constables.

"Every officer present that evening did their home forces proud and I, for one, was immensely proud to not only share the evening with my fiancé, Adam, his wife Amanda but all the other nominees too. A special thank you to Rich Cooke, our West Midlands Police Federation chair, for his hospitality and for looking after us while in London, and also to Mr Thompson for sharing the evening with us. I've truly made some special memories I'll never forget."

“ Mr Hurd called the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Cressida Dick, over to our table and said to her "This officer would like a selfie". I wanted the ground to swallow me up. She laughed but was very happy to pose for a photo. ”

'I did what I felt was right'

Adam McWalter says he never expected any kind of recognition after the incident especially as, in his mind, he did what every officer would do.

"I didn't think this incident was any different to what happens day in, day out across the Force and up and down the country. However, once it had sunk in, I was hugely proud of the recognition and the nomination, albeit still feeling like I didn't deserve it," he explains.

All the same, he certainly made the most of the experience, even managing to have a brief conversation with Home Secretary Sajid Javid during the awards evening.

"He praised myself and Lorna for the nomination and expressed his gratitude for the job we do. Although brief, it was great that he took some time and made the effort to speak to the nominees at the awards," says Adam.

"The evening ceremony was incredible. To see and listen in awe of the acts of bravery that had received nominations from all the forces was special. It's very hard to put the experience of it all into words. However, the main theme that seemed to run throughout the awards and, in fact, the day as a whole, was that the officers involved said they were 'just doing their job' or 'it's just part of the job'.

"When you listen closely to the citations of why some of the nominations were there, they definitely went way above and beyond the call of duty. To be sat in a room with those officers, to meet some of the officers and hear their story first-hand and again, to share that experience with those close to me, was a moment that won't ever be forgotten."

Despite thoroughly enjoying the evening ceremony, Adam says it was the afternoon reception at Downing Street that turned out to be the real highlight of the occasion.

"To be able to have that opportunity is not one that will come along very often, if again

at all, so it was very special to be able to enjoy that moment. The whole experience was very surreal, but to share that moment with a close friend and colleague and her partner and most importantly, with my wife, was something that I will always cherish," he explains.

"As well as it being a very prestigious event to be a part of, it was fantastic to be stood in a room full of officers of varying lengths of service and ranks from all over the country who had all been involved in their own acts of bravery, all of which seemed braver than what I did in my incident. It was very humbling to be a part of that."

Looking back on the incident, Adam admits there wasn't really time for him to think before reacting.

He recalls: "After changing our shifts to deal with a community concern to then be faced by what was an incident with the potential to escalate much further, any thoughts are fleeting at best. When I saw the first male with the knife to the stomach of another man, I knew that something had to be done to prevent any serious injury as it was clear the offender was not afraid to use it.

"Once myself and Lorna had identified ourselves as police and the male decided to run, knowing that the other male was uninjured, there was only one thing in my mind and that was to detain the male. As I was running after the male, I could hear footsteps behind me and believed them to be Lorna's or another of my colleagues who were in the car ahead of us. However, I heard a scream and, as I turned while running, I saw a second male chasing after me with a knife.

"I knew I had to get more officers towards me and so I pressed my emergency button, making sure I got out the way of the second male to stop him attacking me. He caught up with the first male and I kept them in sight as they walked away, however, the second male



Chief Constable Dave Thompson (centre) with PCs Adam McWalter and Lorna Walsh and their awards.

turned and ran at me a second time with knife to keep me away from them being detained. Once other officers arrived, we were able to detain both males and recover both knives. It's only after the incident, once the adrenalin has subsided, that you start thinking what could have happened. During the incident, the only thoughts were to keep members of the public safe and then myself. The adrenalin did the rest.

"It was just instinctive. There were definitely no thoughts that anything I was doing was being brave. Ultimately, I did what I felt was right at the time and what I did was what any other officer would do."

Given the same set of circumstances, Adam admits he would do the same thing again, even though, like any other officers family, his loved ones were concerned when they heard about the incident.

But Adam is the sixth generation of his family to be in the police service, with multiple family members from different generations so their worry is eased slightly with a strong understanding of the job that a lot of families may not have.

"My wife worries probably slightly more than most but we have an understanding which eases that worry while I am at work," he adds.



All the bravery nominee with Prime Minister Theresa May in one of her final official duties.

'I have a pretty good idea of how colleagues feel' says new conduct lead

'Do not panic' – that's the first bit of advice full-time West Midlands Police Federation conduct lead George McDonnell offers to members served with a Regulation 15 Notice.

Secondly, he advises officers to accept the notice, read it carefully and not comment.

"The notice will say it is notification that an allegation has been made against them," George explains, "It is purely that, an allegation and 95 per cent are not proven or admitted. Thankfully, we are moving away from dishing out Regulation Notices for every matter as the Force's Professional Standards Department is more open to mistakes being made by officers that can be rectified by extra learning. Clearly, the more serious matters will still need the service of a Regulation Notice."

On receiving a notice, members should call George or one of the other representatives on the Federation's Conduct and Performance Liaison Officers' (CaPLO) Committee to seek initial advice.

"This will often go some way to reassure the officer and, at the very least, explain the process and what it is the officer can expect at every stage should further enquiries continue," he says.

George, who is secretary of the CaPLO Committee, now shares the Federation's full-time conduct role with Dave Hadley following the retirement in June of conduct stalwart John Tooms.

But he has five years' experience as a Federation representative under his belt, specialising in conduct cases from very early on during his Federation career.



West Midlands Police Federation conduct lead George McDonnell.

He has also had experience of being subject to a complaint, recalling: "I think it took 18 months from the start of the investigation until its conclusion. This culminated in a police notebook entry and an apology for not getting the whole sorry episode concluded quicker. It certainly impacts on your everyday life; family, friends and almost everything you do or say at that time.

"Having been investigated and having found the whole experience daunting, I have a pretty good idea of how my colleagues feel.

"I think it's really important to take the time to make a call to let them know you

haven't forgotten about them. It is really not that hard."

What he finds more challenging, however, is ensuring the line between officers making an honest mistake and being deliberately bad is maintained.

"But," he concedes, "At times, we do have to accept that officers may get things wrong and they are not fallible. In line with the recommendations put forward by Lord Taylor in 2012, we have to embrace learning and there is an argument that we should all be on a development plan throughout our careers.

"We are awaiting the introduction of new conduct regulations which further embed this learning and development ethos but we welcome the stronger emphasis to be placed on performance requiring improvement.

"These should further concentrate minds in relation to officer learning and move away from the blame game that officers have suffered for years."

George believes the Independent Office for Police Conduct has started to move forward in terms of being more transparent, more accountable and more informed about what police officers do in their very varied and complex roles.

The Federation is making the most of quarterly meetings between the IOPC and other regional conduct representatives at which any concerns can be raised, either in individual cases or where a number of officers are subject to a joint investigation.

Anything from timelines to personnel will be discussed and, if feedback is required, this is acted on.

"This has undoubtedly gone some way to improve the relationship between the IOPC and the Federation. It is certainly not perfect but it is a whole world away from where we were four to five years ago," says George.

But, he also argues officers need to play their part in helping improve performance.

"We all need to continually reflect on self-performance, ask whether we could have done something differently or better. As a Federation, we have to drive that reflection but also continually hold the investigating authorities to account on behalf of all those

“ Supporting colleagues throughout the entire process was rewarding as was challenging unfairness, offering re-assurance where it was desperately needed and managing realistic expectations. ”

who have been investigated or are under investigation.

"We also have to encourage those same authorities to conduct their business more expeditiously, be more professional and to adhere to the same standards against which we are often measuring our officers."

George joined the Force in October 2001 and was posted to response for five years, listing a rewarding posting to the professional development unit as a highlight, along with receiving several Commander Commendations.

He first became a Federation workplace representative in January 2014, formalising a role he had found himself undertaking quite by chance.

"Being one of the older PCs, I would tend to give advice to my younger colleagues on a regular basis anyway, so it seemed a good idea at the time," George explains, "Having listened to a number of trusted friends and colleagues as to my suitability, I decided to stand and was given a considerable amount of support across the LPU."

He soon found he enjoyed the rep's role, but it was not without its challenges.

"Supporting colleagues throughout the entire process was rewarding as was challenging unfairness, offering re-assurance

where it was desperately needed and managing realistic expectations," he says.

"Obviously being able to deliver good news was great but clearly doing the opposite was not enjoyable at all. However, I found I could put things into a perspective so that the officer can think straight and not go on believing the world is about to end.

"Negotiation is a challenge in itself as is bringing people with you when they really do not want to. Communicating with people who struggle to communicate is difficult and managing officers' expectations is a huge challenge."

As he became more involved in supporting colleagues, George admits he started to struggle to effectively commit to the dual role of front-line response and Federation representative and made the switch Force-wise to the Stechford Investigation Team.

"I was carrying out Federation work before and after my tour of duty and would often attend meetings on my rest days. I was asked to support a colleague with a misconduct matter but was made aware that, in order to do this, I would need to undertake training for this role. I was a very busy rep so asked the then secretary of the CaPLO committee if she would support this

and she agreed," George explains.

"The more I did, the more knowledge I acquired and the more interested I became."

About 18 months after joining the committee, the secretary was due to retire and George, having ascertained he would be supported by colleagues, successfully stood for the full-time role.

With a number of other jobs before joining the police and also a varied policing career, George believes his life experience stands him in good stead in the role.

"I am led to believe communication is a strength of mine though I'm sure there might be a few that disagree. I also have enthusiasm and the willingness to put my colleagues first," he says.

With John Tooms now getting to grips with retirement, George, Dave Hadley and the CaPLO committee are now looking ahead.

"Over the next six months, the next year and beyond, we will be striving to maintain an enthusiastic, hard-working committee and continue the good work put in place by John," he explains.

"We want to improve where we can and also be more proactive in getting the message out to our members as and where the current trends are harming them and their families."

Taking a proactive approach

The Federation's conduct and performance leads have adopted a proactive approach to educating members about their obligations in terms of the Standards of Professional Behaviour.

In the first of what will be a series of member updates, George McDonnell has emailed all members warning them about two issues that have been causing issues for officers – social media and messaging, and contacting victims of crime.

The update read:

Many of you will know Dave Hadley and I are the full-time West Midlands Police Federation conduct and performance leads. As such, it is part of our role to support officers throughout every stage of the conduct process. But also feel it is important to help advise members in terms of matters where we can see that officers are continually getting themselves into difficulties.

For some time now, we have been aware of a steady increase in members falling short of the Standards of Professional Behaviour in relation to two

issues and these are of real concern. The first concerns officers' use of social media and the second is in relation to contacting victims of crime, outside of the working day and for no real policing purpose.

Therefore, can I ask you consider the below:

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MESSAGING

I appreciate 99.5 per cent of you are probably wondering why this e-mail has landed in your inbox as this does not apply to you. I imagine you are also concerned that colleagues need to be reminded about the content of their mobile phones, messengers and social media to name a few.

But, all the same, I think we should perhaps all consider what is appropriate to own, store or share with others and also bear in mind the Chief Constable has made it very clear that officers who receive and forward content – not just those who send the original message, for example – will leave themselves extremely vulnerable.

It is no defence for an officer to argue that they believe the content is part of a private conversation or that they shared it

with friends and family and not colleagues.

[This view is supported by the case involving 10 Police Scotland colleagues.](#)

CONTACTING VICTIMS OF CRIME

When officers have engaged in verbal or physical contact with victims of crime for anything other than a policing purpose then they can expect to be dealt with accordingly.

Using personal mobiles, messaging Apps and social media to contact victims of crime, who are often vulnerable, will be brought to the attention of our PSD or the IOPC.

These cases can often conclude at a conduct meeting at the very least with the more serious allegations going forward to conduct hearings or even Crown Court.

Falling foul of the regulations on this are easily avoidable and there is clear [guidance](#) on what is and is not acceptable.

We are more than happy to discuss any of the above in confidence.

'It is okay not to be okay': ACC discusses Motor Neurone Disease diagnosis

Assistant Chief Constable Chris Johnson has vowed to do all he can to raise awareness of the support on offer to officers and staff with disabilities after being diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease.

Chris has welcomed the 'simple and cheap adaptations' the Force has made to allow him to continue carrying out his role for as long as he possibly can but also wants others to come forward if they need extra support.

"I am aware that there are low numbers of people working within policing who declare having a disability, a fraction of the general population. We are made up of a cross section of the communities we serve and this level cannot be right," he explains.

"I want to raise awareness of the support that is on offer and the approach taken for those who need support so that it helps to reduce the fear that they may have of coming forward. It is completely understandable that people who fear for their and their family's future may not want to come forward but it is not right. It is okay not to be okay.

"I think that there is much better and more open approach to disability across policing than there has been in the past. There have been some terrific national campaigns about hidden illness and, in particular, mental health which has changed the environment to one where people are much more willing to come forward and ask for help. I also think that support services are in place to help managers to identify and refer

where appropriate."

He recognises the Force is working hard on this area as part of its diversity and inclusion plan with its EnAble Disability Carers' Association having received national recognition for its work in supporting colleagues with disability and their carers.

"While we are not perfect by any means, there is a genuine desire to improve. Some people might say that I have only received the support I have been given because I am an ACC. I would say that it is available to everyone and the reason why I am speaking out is I would like to encourage more visible role models, making this part of the conversation, providing help for staff to enable them to spot signs within their teams and efforts to normalise the support available."

Chris (52) became ACC in April last year, 28 years after first serving as a Birmingham beat bobby, and just six months later was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND), a terminal illness affecting the brain, spinal cord and nerves that ultimately stops muscles working.

"The diagnosis was a low point for me and my family," he said, "I was worried about how this would affect my life, my income and my career. The whole chief officer team have been wonderfully supportive as has the Police and Crime Commissioner. The personal support from the Chief and Deputy at a difficult moment was, for me, a leadership moment of truth; their support, understanding and kindness helped me and my family at a

difficult moment. I have also had useful personal support from the MND Association and Primrose Hospice to help with practical support that focuses on living well."

He has been touched by the reaction he has received since news of his illness was made public: "The kindness and support from people inside and outside of policing has been humbling and has helped to raise awareness of MND."

And he has welcomed the Force's efforts to enable him to remain in a role he loves.

"Sometimes it's the little things that make the most difference. This has definitely been the case for me. I have been provided some flexibility on how I work with remote access and ability to work from home at times," Chris explains.

"To help me manage my symptoms I have overnight ventilation. This means I am not able to perform on call during these hours. Talking in long sentences can be challenging so gaining people's understanding and patience as to how we manage some of my portfolio business also helps. All of this has been captured in my West Midlands Police Reasonable Adjustment Passport (RAP).

"The bottom line is these small changes allow me to contribute to policing and keep coming to work. As my disease is progressive, I am sure I will need to revisit my RAP but at the moment this works well with me being able to continue to contribute. There is useful information and support available and I have been well supported."

Chris, who doesn't have a family history of policing, decided to join the Force based on his experience of meeting police officers while working in the construction industry. He was attracted to policing by a desire for a varied career but wanted to help protect vulnerable people, to arrest and challenge those who sought to hurt others but also to have fun.

While he was able to get through the recruitment process at his first attempt, he says he would probably have continued in construction if he hadn't.

During his first day out with his tutor, Chris arrested a man at a burglary in progress, a memory that has stayed with him throughout his career, recalling: "I will never

“The diagnosis was a low point for me and my family. I was worried about how this would affect my life, my income and my career. The whole chief officer team has been wonderfully supportive as has the Police and Crime Commissioner. The personal support from the Chief and Deputy at a difficult moment was, for me, a leadership moment of truth; their support, understanding and kindness helped me and my family at a difficult moment.”

forget the feeling of detaining a burglar at the scene."

But, he says, he didn't set out with a burning ambition to become a chief officer.

"I have always sought to be the best I can be as a leader in the role I have," Chris explains, "I firmly believe that if you focus on your people, your communities and delivering a service that your family will be proud of, it helps you to develop and grow. You know when you are ready to take on the next role or rank with confidence."

He says his career has included 'so many highlights', admitting that is the fantastic thing about being a police officer – whatever the rank.

"Whether it's as a PC out arresting suspects or supporting our communities, leading teams or being a NPU Commander, there are so many opportunities," Chris says.

"I have also led some brilliant teams delivering transformation across critical parts of the Force from delivering new capabilities such as Mobility to the design and delivery of the Force's neighbourhood policing model. Currently, I lead the operations portfolio which is great privilege and have begun the planning for the Commonwealth Games due in 2022."

And what advice would he give to a new recruit joining today?

"To enjoy yourself, look after yourself and your team and make sure you continue to remind yourself why you joined which will be to protect the public, to support those who need your help and to prevent crime," he concludes.

ABOUT MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE

A person's risk of developing Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is around one in 300, according to the Motor Neurone Disease Association. While it can affect adults of any age it is more likely to affect the over 50s.

The charity estimates up to 5,000 adults in the UK are affected by MND at any one time.

MND describes a group of diseases that affect the nerves (motor neurones) in the brain and spinal cord that tell your muscles what to do.

With MND, messages from the motor neurones gradually stop reaching the muscles. This leads the muscles to weaken, stiffen and waste. MND can affect how you walk, talk, eat, drink and breathe.

MND is life-shortening and there is no cure. Although the disease will progress, symptoms can be managed to help achieve the best possible quality of life, the charity says.

ACC presented with Queen's Police Medal



Assistant Chief Constable Chris Johnson has been presented with one of the top honours in policing – the Queen's Police Medal (QPM).

Chris was presented with his medal by the Vice-Lord Lieutenant for the West Midlands, Dr Beverly Lindsay OBE OD, at a ceremony in Birmingham which was also attended by Home Secretary Sajid Javid, the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Mohammed Azim, Chief Constable Dave Thompson and Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson.

But, despite the dignitaries in attendance, the ACC says the most

important people there were his proud family, including his wife and their children. "It was a truly wonderful and special day as I was able to share it with my family; a day I hope my children will treasure and remember," he explains.

Chris found out he had been awarded the QPM the week before the presentation ceremony on 13 July. It honours his 'remarkable contribution' to policing in the West Midlands.

He says: "Being appointed Assistant Chief Constable was a hugely proud moment for me – I wasn't sure it would get much better but receiving this award, especially as it's nominated by police colleagues, is certainly on a par with that.

"When I got my MND diagnosis I was determined it would not define my policing career. I've served the people of the West Midlands for almost three decades; it's what I've achieved over those years that I'll reflect on and it's humbling to now have royal recognition.

"It's been a genuine honour to have worked with West Midlands Police for so long and I intend to continue doing so for as long as is physically possible."



ACC Chris Johnson is pictured (above left) being presented with his QPM by the Vice-Lord Lieutenant for the West Midlands, Dr Beverly Lindsay (OBE OD). Pictured at the awards presentation are (left to right) the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress Councillor and Mrs Councillor Mohammed Azim, the Vice-Lord Lieutenant, the ACC, then Home Secretary Sajid Javid and Chief Constable Dave Thompson.

Reasonable Adjustment Passports: supporting a diverse workforce

The Force's Reasonable Adjustment Passport (RAP) has been re-launched as part of its first Workplace Adjustment Policy.

The policy outlines the adjustments that can be made for officers and staff with disabilities or long-term conditions as well as those with caring responsibilities and sets out clearly the responsibilities of the Force, line managers and the individuals involved.

It aims to provide awareness and information about what a reasonable adjustment is and sets out how to request adjustment with flow charts illustrating the process.

EnAble Disability and Carers' Community (EDCC), a Force staff association, is on a mission to make sure all staff are aware of the new policy and the RAP to make it easier for all those who have agreed reasonable adjustments in place.



"The passport provides a mechanism for staff to request a reasonable adjustment and also serves as a living record of any adjustments that have been agreed between them and their line manager," explains Trudy Gittins, investigative team training supervisor from Organisational Learning and Development, deputy chair of EnAble and a West Midlands Police Federation workplace representative.

"They can then take the passport with them if they move around the Force or change line manager, guaranteeing continuity of any arrangements. It removes the need for further explanation or re-negotiation of adjustments in the future. Staff also have the opportunity to review and reassess their needs on a yearly basis or sooner if the needs arises, with their line manager, ensuring their needs are being met.

"For line managers, it ensures they are providing the support that is legally required and puts a process in place for increasing support and understanding of staff, reducing the likelihood of mental illness, improving staff retention, general productivity and job satisfaction. The RAP also covers carers' needs within the organisation and staff who



Pictured are (left to right) Mick Braycotton (EnAble), Chief Constable Dave Thompson, Lillie Abbot (EnAble chair), Zoe Miller, HR manager at Jaguar Land Rover, Gary Haywood (EnAble), Lee Bennet (EnAble), Trudy Gittins (EnAble) and Anthony Burnett, the Force's head of diversity and inclusion. as the Force was awarded the highest level of Disability Confident status, 'Leader'.

have long-term conditions not covered by the Equality Act such as the menopause."

The passport, which is a living document and should be reviewed regularly, is part of the Force's commitment to provide support, advice, guidance and signposting to officers and staff and aims to increase staff confidence in the workplace which, in turn, results in increased job satisfaction, better quality of service, public confidence and a stronger community.

The passport has six parts covering the employee's wellness at work, absence,

returning to work, a declaration, emergency contacts and a manager's supplementary section.

While changes can be made to the RAP following a review, expert advice from third parties, such as occupational health advisers, Access to Work or IT specialists will be sought before these will be agreed and put in place.

EnAble is hearing many positive stories from staff who have an RAP in place, with many of the adjustments put in place having no cost at all to the Force.

"It can be as simple as flexing a shift or

Disability facts

People are disabled under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal day-to-day activities.

'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial, for example, it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed

'Long-term' means 12 months or more, perhaps a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

'Normal day-to-day activities' is defined as something you do regularly in a normal day. This includes things like using a computer, working set times or interacting with people.

Carers' facts

If you're looking after someone who is elderly or disabled, the law will protect you against direct discrimination or harassment because of your caring responsibilities. This is because you're counted as being 'associated' with someone who is protected by the law because of their age or disability

moving a desk nearer to a window," says Trudy, "On my last team I had five RAPs in place for team members ranging from supporting someone suffering due to the menopause to a carer looking after their disabled Mum.

"By formally recognising the need to support the individuals with reasonable adjustments and positive action, it improved their morale and maximised their potential. The officer who was the carer also used her RAP when she moved onto a new department.

It meant that she could give her RAP to her new supervisor to read and digest so that they could receive her onto the department in the full knowledge of her situation and what support they needed to put in place for her to do her new job.

"This mitigated going through explaining everything in fine detail again and the uncertainty of re-negotiating new working arrangements. The process made it easier for both the officer and the new

supervisor."

As part of the re-launch of the RAP, a reasonable adjustment officer is now in place. A number of dyslexia champions are also available across the Force to offer support where necessary.

More information on the new Workplace Adjustment Policy and RAP can be found on the D & I Portal and from the EnAble Disability and Carers' Staff Network or D & I team.

About the RAP

The purpose of the RAP is to:

- Ensure the individual and the employer have an accurate record of what has been agreed
- Minimise the need to re-negotiate reasonable adjustments every time the employee changes jobs, is re-located or assigned a new manager
- Identify the impact on others
- Provide employees and line managers with the basis for discussions about reasonable adjustments at future meetings.

The RAP allows employees to:

- Explain the impact of their disability, condition or caring responsibilities on them at work
- Suggest adjustments that will make it easier for them to do their job
- Offer further information from doctors, specialists or other experts
- Request an assessment by occupational health, Access to Work (AtW) or another expert to identify possible reasonable adjustments that may be suitable in their specific role
- Review the effectiveness of the adjustments agreed
- Explain any change in their condition or circumstances
- Be reassured that their manager knows what to do if they become unwell at work and who to contact if necessary
- Know how and when their manager will keep in touch if they are off work because of illness or a disability related reason.

It allows managers to:

- Understand how a particular employee's disability, condition or caring responsibilities affect them at work
- Explain the needs of the business within the Force
- Explain the Force attendance policy and reasonable adjustments
- Recognise signs that an employee might be unwell and know what the employee wants you to do in these circumstances including who to contact for help
- Know how and when to stay in touch if the employee is off sick
- Consider whether employee needs to be referred for an assessment by Access To Work (preferred), occupational health or another adviser to help both parties understand what adjustments are needed
- Review the effectiveness of the adjustments already agreed
- Explain any change in the employer's circumstances.

Reviews

The maximum period between any RAP is no longer than 12 months. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that reviews are carried out unless otherwise agreed.

The RAP may be reviewed and amended as necessary with the agreement of both parties:

- At any regular one-to-one meeting
- At a return to work meeting following a period of sickness absence
- At six monthly and/or annual appraisals or as agreed
- Before a change of job or duties or introduction of new technology or ways of working
- Before or after any change in circumstances for either party.

About EnAble

EnAble Disability and Carers' Community (EDCC) is a team of diverse volunteers from across the Force with a passion and common purpose to influence policy and procedure while also supporting and guiding employees.

Its aim is to create a working environment to maximise staff's potential – for their benefit but also for the benefit of the Force and the communities it serves.

Due to the work of the EDCC, West Midlands Police is now seen on a national level as a 'shining light' around disability, having recently won the coveted 'Positive Cultural Change' award in the Disability Smart Awards with the Business Disability Forum.

The other two finalists were global, multi-national organisations, which again highlights how far the Force, led by the EDCC, has come.

As part of the work to promote positive cultural change, partnerships have been

forged with external organisations. EnAble has worked with Jaguar Land Rover and the Department of Work and Pensions to complete a journey through the three levels of the Disability Confident Awards and achieved Level 3 Leader status, being only the second force in the UK to obtain this level of award and the first Metropolitan force.

The EDCC works alongside WMP staff who are subject of disability, wellbeing and caring issues to identify the challenges that they encounter during their working day.

Once these have been identified, EDCC organises consultation sessions to obtain staff-led ideas to help overcome any difficulties and then liaises with managers and the diversity and inclusion Force leads to obtain feasible, simple, cost-effective and legally compliant solutions.

In the past staff with different abilities have felt stigmatised, isolated and not valued. In some cases this has led to absenteeism and low morale. But different abilities are now valued and welcomed as their abilities are seen as a positive for the business.

There has also been a noticeable increase in staff members coming forward to speak about and declare the difficulties they have previously hidden from the organisation due to fear of being isolated and excluded.

This more open and accepting atmosphere has enabled staff to feel comfortable in coming forward to share their differences and encourage others to do the same. In turn, increased knowledge and training around disability and difference has meant that supervisors are now more comfortable in raising issues with staff that were previously left unaddressed.

To sum up the passion and achievements of EDCC, Neil Chamberlain, WMP director of commercial services, says: "EnAble performs a nationally recognised service in supporting all of those staff within the Force who are faced with the challenge of disability or have the responsibility of supporting or caring for their loved ones. Their work is comprehensive and compassionate and really helps those wide groups of staff at both their times of need and with ongoing support and guidance."

PUT cyclists brave the rain for COPS

If a bike ride of more than 200 miles over two days was not enough to contend with then heavy rain certainly added to the challenge faced by the three representatives of West Midlands Police who took part in the annual Police Unity Tour sponsored bike ride to raise funds for the charity Care of Police Survivors (COPS).

But, despite the wet weather, the trio – Chief Constable Dave Thompson, West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke, and Force academic researcher Gill Wall – were left in no doubt that their efforts had been worthwhile when they heard fallen officers' family members talk about the lifeline offered to them by COPS at the charity's annual remembrance service on Sunday.

"The bike ride was definitely testing at times," said Rich, "I think covering that distance was always going to be a bit of a trial but the weather certainly made it even more difficult. I just kept in mind who we were riding for and that kept me going.

"Having changed out of my cycling gear, which was absolutely wet through once we came to the end of route, it was quite moving to listen to those who spoke during the service to explain how COPS had helped them through their darkest days. I am really pleased to have been able to support the charity's work and, in turn, offer support to fallen officers' families."

Through COPS, the families of fallen officers and police staff are able to support each other while the charity also provides access to counselling services to help survivors rebuild their lives. Each year it holds a survivors' weekend for fallen officers' families culminating in a remembrance service at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

Ahead of the service, those taking part in the Police Unity Tour ride, including representatives from forces across England and Wales who set off from various points across the country on Friday, followed the Blue Knights motorcyclists into the arboretum where they were greeted by a raincoat-clad and umbrella-holding crowd.

The service, held in an open-sided marquee, was attended by Steve Grange, secretary of West Midlands Police



West Midlands riders (left to right) Chief Constable Dave Thompson, Gill Wall and Rich Cooke with another member of the PUT team.

Federation, and the West Midlands Band also performed.

It was opened by the national president of COPS, Gill Marshall, who was widowed when her husband died on duty in 2006 when their two daughters were two and four.

"COPS is a wonderful organisation," she told the congregation as she thanked everyone for supporting the charity.

Gill spoke of how COPS had helped her rebuild her life, with the support of other fallen officers' families through the charity, giving her 'a sense of belonging in the

darkest of moments'.

That was a similar theme for the other family members of fallen officers who, as is the norm for the COPS service, gave accounts of their own experiences.

This year's speakers were: George Parker, son of PC Andy Parker (30) of North Wales Police who died in a motorbike crash on his way home from a night shift on 23 September 2005; Angela Morgan, fiancée of DC Gary Freeman (36) of Derbyshire Constabulary, who died along with DC Anthony Thornley when their vehicle was in collision with a lorry on 19 August 1994;



Gathered at the West Midlands Police tree on The Beat at the arboretum.

Greg Lashmar, son of PC Brian Lashmar (39) of the Met, who also died in a crash on his way back from night duty, on 24 January 1989, and Donna Cox, sister of PC Jo-Ann Jennings who was 23 when she was killed in a patrol car responding to a disturbance on 12 November 1989.

George, who was three when his father died, told those gathered at the service about the good times he and other officers' children had at Drayton Manor during the COPS survivors' weekends and discussed the firm friendships they formed.

He also praised the Police Unity Tour cyclists saying that he hadn't realised how much it would mean to him to be presented with a wristband bearing his father's name by a PUT cyclist and urged everyone in policing to tell colleagues about COPS' work.

George finished his speech by paying tribute to his Mum, Kate: "She's an amazing woman. I am so proud to have her as my Mum."

Angela's speech began with her talking about the night 'the love of her life' died, acknowledging that she had got the knock on the door that no-one wants.

"Gary went to work that morning and didn't come home," she said, adding that her world was shattered with his death had left her heartbroken and nearly broke her. At the time of Gary's death, COPS was not in existence so she didn't have the support network she has since been able to forge through the charity.

Angela read out a letter she had penned to Gary, telling him that in the early days

after his death the grief was overwhelming and she felt she was in a wilderness.

"You missed so much," she told him, adding that him not seeing their son grow up was the greatest sadness of all.

Greg had just turned 14 when his father died and admitted keeping a lot of his emotion inside.

"I was the man of the house, I had to be the strong one," he said.

His grief nevertheless left its mark. Having heard a bugler play The Last Post at a funeral, to this day he can't bear to hear it played.

He had initially not engaged with COPS but was encouraged by the charity's founder, Christine Fulton, to do so around four years ago when Paul Spencer rode the PUT for Greg's father. That led to a 'teary hug' that allowed him to let out some of the built-up emotions and speaking to other families who had lost officers made him realise he was not the only one to feel how he did.

Donna gave an emotional, but at times light-hearted, tribute to her older sister, best summing it up by saying: "I just miss her."

She now takes part in the Police Unity Tour and this year, the 30th anniversary of Jo-Ann's death, rode the extra 79 miles from Essex Police HQ.

During the service, Denis Gunn, past president of COPS, read out the names of the officers added to the roll of honour since the last COPS service in July 2018:

Special Agent Nole Remagen (42) of the United States Secret Service, who died on 17 July 2018, two days after suffering a



Wreaths honour fallen officers.

stroke while on presidential protection duty in Scotland;

PC Joseph Cooke (39) of the Met who injured his shoulder while making an arrest. While having surgery on the injury, five months later, he suffered a brain injury which proved fatal on 25 December 2018;

PC Daniel Clayton-Drabble (24) of Thames Valley Police, who died in an accident as he drove home from work on 26 December 2018;

PC Kevin Flint (52) of Thames Valley Police who died on 15 January 2019 when his motorbike was in collision with a car as he drove home from work; and

PS Colin Michael Fox of the Metropolitan Police who died on 1 May 2019.

The service also featured two songs performed by soloist Diane Whyllie and the laying of wreaths led by a Staffordshire Police Cadet.

After the service, which was closed by Sir Peter Fahy, the COPS chair of trustees, guests headed to The Beat, an avenue with a tree dedicated to each force, to pay a further tribute to their fallen officers.

Feature continued on Page 20



West Midlands Chapter of the Police Unity Tour - the chapter included representatives from the Warwickshire, West Mercia, Staffordshire and West Midlands forces.

Patience and encouragement

Riding into the arboretum on a wet and surprisingly cold July morning proved to be a particularly special moment for West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke.

"Seeing the people who'd taken the time to greet and thank us was great. I came in with a Staffordshire sergeant who'd had a knee injury so was happy for her to have made it in a big personal achievement," says Rich.

Rich was honoured to have laid the wreath on behalf of West Midlands Police Federation to honour fallen officers at the start of a memorial service at West Mercia HQ Hindlip on the Friday morning before the West Midlands Chapter of riders, which included cyclists from the West Midlands, Warwickshire, West Mercia and Staffordshire forces, set off.

He soon got into his 'stride' with the cycling.

"I needed to get used to the group dynamic and learning to cycle 'within yourself' at times as opposed to being used to cycling alone and purely to your own parameters. The group was mixed ability and there were some challenging hills through Shropshire so patience and mutual encouragement was a must," Rich explained.

"The marshalls and organisers were brilliant, making sure we were safe and regularly fed and watered. Without their hard work, it would have been impossible.

"Saturday and Sunday were a complete wash-out. The Chief lent me his gilet as I hadn't bargained on the downpour. I was still freezing and wet so was glad whenever we were moving as it kept me warm."

Remembering Force's fallen officers

Each of the 460 riders who took part in this year's Police Unity Tour wore a wristband bearing the name of a fallen officer.

Where possible, at the end of the ride, the cyclists presented the wristband to the officer's family.

Rich Cooke rode for West Midlands PC Ramin Tolouie who died, aged 40, on 16 October 2011 when his motorcycle was in collision with a car as he rode home from duty.

Gill Wall rode for West Midlands Police Federation workplace representative PC Mick Chapman who died on 14 April 2014. He suffered a heart attack having cycled into work for a late shift. He was 48.

About COPS

Care of Police Survivors (COPS) supports the families of police officers and staff who have lost their lives on duty.

It provides practical and emotional support ensuring survivors have the help they need to cope with such a tragedy, and that they remain part of the police family as they rebuild their lives. It arranges local and national peer support events and also works with Winston's Wish and RedArc to provide counselling and specialist bereavement support for families.

The charity was founded in 2003 by survivor Christine Fulton MBE and the late Jim McNulty, a detective with Strathclyde.

Find out more at www.ukcops.org or please follow @ukcops on FB and @UK_COPS on Twitter.

'A magical weekend'

Force academic researcher Gill Wall has called the Police Unity Tour 'a magical weekend' with the awful weather failing to dampen spirits.

But the tour was not without its challenges.

"The pain of the hills and the heat on Friday and the far too frequent shouts of 'close the gap' as my little legs struggled to keep up, quickly dissipated. The camaraderie is something special as is the support from the marshals - after my chain fell off I felt like Geraint Thomas being brought back to the peloton by super-domestique Wout Poels," says Gill.

"The readings of family members during the service never fail to bring a tear, and it was an honour and privilege to pass my rider band to Mick Chapman's Mum."

Benevolent Fund's exciting steps towards charity status

Members unanimously voted in favour of the Benevolent Fund becoming a charity at the annual general meeting.

In the coming weeks, a full application will be submitted to the Charity Commission with the objective of becoming the West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund, a registered charity, by 1 January 2020.

The fund has thanked everyone who attended the AGM which was held on Friday 12 July at Guardians House, Sheldon.

Fund chair John Williams, deputy chair of West Midlands Police Federation, opened the meeting by firstly sharing the exciting plans to move from a limited company to a registered charity.

Members were asked to cast their vote on two special resolutions;

1. **Moving from a limited company towards a charity status**
2. **Changing the WMP Benevolent Fund name to West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund.**

John went on to explain the recent changes to the management committee with PC Darren Neville, a Wolverhampton Police Federation workplace representative, and Gina Lycett, a member of police staff in corporate communications, joining the board.

There has been a steady increase in membership over the last year, with members roughly split 50/50 between serving and retired officers and a membership of nearly 7,000.

Here's a brief summary of how the Fund has supported its members over the last 12 months:

- **Just under £38,000 in grants to help serving and retired members through difficult times**
- **Just over £17,000 donated to widows and children of deceased officers**
- **Over £13,000 has helped members with convalescence and rehabilitation. More members are attending the excellent well-being facilities at St Michael's Lodge**
- **Over £5,000 in high street shopping vouchers have been given to members off sick through injury or ill health**
- **Unfortunately, it paid out £3,500 for a death in service of a serving member**
- **And finally, £25,000 in interest free loans was approved for members who weren't able to borrow money from any other source.**

Since the last AGM, the Benevolent Fund has continued to develop in a wide range of



Members at the annual general meeting at Guardians House.

areas, including;

- **A second holiday home in Dartmouth, Devon for members to book at discounted rates**
- **Expanded benefits at St Michael's Lodge to include alternative therapies focusing on mindfulness, stress management and enhancing well-being.**

Plans for the future

Being busy is what we the fund does best and it intends to busy itself even more in the months ahead.

Here's a preview of some of the things planned:

- **A family fun day at Blackwell Adventure for members and their families**
- **A theme park trip for the fund's widows and orphans in partnership with the Alton Towers charity, Merlin's Magic Wand, and**
- **The application to the Charity Commission to become a registered charity.**

It is also hoped to increase the level of benefits for all members over the next 12 months. This must be both affordable and

sustainable and also meet the needs of all members, from teenagers to people in their 100s.

The fund welcomes any ideas and will endeavour to keep members informed of any major plans.

Finally, thank you to members for their continued support and monthly subscriptions. Without the members, the fund wouldn't be able to provide assistance year on year to those who need it. Thanks also to the Management Committee and Board of Directors, as well as Federation representatives who refer their members to the fund.

Find out more about the many benefits of joining the fund by visiting the [Benevolent Fund website](#).

The fund will also keep members up to date with the application to the Charity Commission.

Not a member of the Benevolent Fund? Both serving officers and police staff are welcome to join. Monthly subscriptions to the fund are just £2 and are taken straight from salary. [Join online](#).



West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund



The wellbeing van support team.

Wellbeing van promotes welfare message

More than 250 people took up the opportunity to visit a wellbeing van while it was in the Force area at the beginning of July.

The van, provided by the National Wellbeing Service, visited Coventry Central, Airport Operations, Wolverhampton, Perry Barr and Solihull for a day each from Monday 8 July through to Friday 12 July.

The locations were selected as sites where the travel to Tally Ho and Lloyd House for wellbeing and information events can prove difficult for some officers and staff.

Lorraine Horner, Force wellbeing manager, explained: "We had over 250 people attend the van over the five days and the feedback was once again really positive from all who attended. We were able to provide important advice on fitness testing and training for the fitness test as well as give advice on psychological support for



Getting advice in the wellbeing van.

officers and staff who visited the van themselves and give them tips on helping their team members.

"The wellbeing van is due to return to the Force for week commencing 16 September and we are in conversation with the National Wellbeing Service on when we can have the van in future. There are also

plans for additional wellbeing events in the autumn."

During the latest visit, the wellbeing team were able to help people in the following ways:

- **Health and fitness advice - providing height, weight, blood pressure measurements and healthy lifestyle support**
- **Employee support team - promoting good mental health and counselling advice**
- **Employee benefits team – talking about the new 'My Benefits' platform and what benefits are on offer.**

Representatives from Sodexo, the Force's BWell and benefits partner, were able to demonstrate the wellbeing website as part of BWell while the Force chaplaincy service was on hand to provide support and promoting how the multi-faith team can

“ We were able to provide important advice on fitness testing and training for the fitness test as well as give advice on psychological support for officers and staff who visited the van themselves and give them tips on helping their team members. ”

help everyone.

Police Mutual and Police Credit Union attended to address financial support and wellbeing and the events were also backed by Force branches of the unions and HR.

Visitors were offered refreshments and could also take away a number of giveaway items.



The Force chaplaincy team were on hand to offer support.



Officers took the opportunity to collect information.

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New book honours fallen officers

For the first time, the National Police Roll of Honour has been published in book form.

The new book, the UK Police Roll of Remembrance 2019, was launched in London on 8 July and is available to buy for £25.

It lists the names of officers who lost their lives on and in the line of duty in chronological order, with indexes by both police force and individuals' surnames. The book also includes milestones in policing history to set the deaths in a historical context.

It contains 4,372 entries from the earliest recorded police death - Constable Richard Clynton who was murdered on 28 January 1547 - to PC Kevin Flint (52) of Thames Valley Police who was killed in a motorbike crash on 15 January 2019 as he returned from work.

There are also expanded profiles of more than 50 officers.

West Midlands Police Federation's chair Rich Cooke and secretary Steve Grange were among those to attend the launch of the event along with representatives of other Federation branches across England and Wales. Corinne Brazier and Steve Rice from the West Midlands Police Museum were also in attendance.

"This book provides a fitting tribute to all fallen officers," says Steve Grange, "While the online Roll of Honour has long been seen as an excellent source of information, this book offers a really tangible tribute to them."

Sid Mackay, trustee of the Police Roll of Honour Trust, has been pleased with the response to the book with some Federation branches already buying copies to present to the families of fallen officers. West Midlands Police's Museum has also bought a number of copies which are available to buy.

The Police Roll of Honour Trust is the only official source of the United Kingdom's Police Roll of Honour. The roll includes both historical and contemporaneous records of fallen officers.

Founded in March 2000 and now incorporated by Royal Charter, the trust maintains a database which can be accessed online and supports ongoing research to ensure accuracy and relevance.

It helps provide and maintain memorials

including statues, memorial gardens, books of remembrance, plaques and other appropriate memorials nationally and locally.

Royalties from the book will be used to continue the Police Roll of Honour Trust's work.

You can order a copy of the book, which costs £25, from Amazon and through the Roll of Honour Trust [online shop](#) or you can buy a copy from the Force Museum.

West Midlands officers

The 39 West Midlands Police officers who have died on, or in the line of duty, since the Force was formed in 1974 are listed in the book.

The first listed is PC David Brown who died on 26 July 1974 when his patrol motorbike was involved in an accident. He was 31.

The last is PC Michael (Mick) Chapman, a West Midlands Police Federation representative, who was 48 when he died on 14 April 2014. He had cycled into work but became ill. Despite being rushed to hospital, he suffered a fatal heart attack.

There are also two entries for the former West Midlands Constabulary.

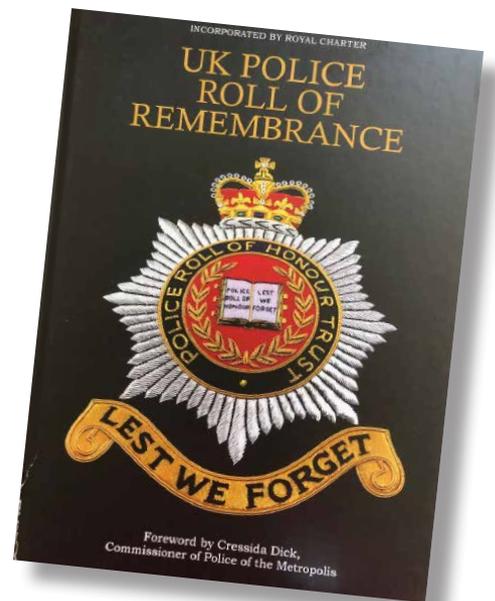
PC Leslie Harrod (46) suffered chest pains while on mobile patrol and died in hospital on 8 December 1971 while PC Michael Round was 22 when he died in a road accident on 27 November 1972 while on a police motorcycle course.

The Birmingham City Police Force has 42 entries starting with PC John Balance, aged 48, who was on duty at a concert hall and was crushed by a stampede when trying to help evacuate the hall following a fire being spotted on 5 May 1855.

The Force's last entry was PC Terence Hall (21) who was killed when his police car was in collision with a lorry on 28 February 1973.

Seventeen officers from the Coventry City Police are honoured, the first of those was PC Reuben Needham Dickinson who was killed when he fell off a ladder while cleaning the station windows on 17 November 1906. He was 52. The last Coventry City officer listed is Special Constable Harold Leslie Lowe (37) who was killed on 10 April 1941 during an air raid.

Four officers from the former Wolverhampton Borough Police are also honoured: Special Constable John Watson



(57), who died from heart failure on night patrol duty on 23 May 1915; PC Albert Willits (24) who was shot on duty on 18 January 1925; PC James Bakes (48) who collapsed and died on duty on 19 October 1963 and DS James Stanford (40) who was stabbed to death by a borstal absconder. He was posthumously awarded the Queen's Policing Medal for gallantry.

The Wolverhampton Night Watch also had an entry for Watchman Richard Cooke who was killed on 25 January 1822. His age was unknown but he was fatally struck on the head by a stone while intervening in a street affray.

There are two officers included for the former Dudley Borough Police - PC Harry Stanton, who was 22 when he was found dead on a railway on his beat in suspicious circumstances on 28 January 1929, and PC William James Lowe who died on 24 January 1940, aged 42, after suffering an injury while removing a dead body.

Two Birmingham Night Watch officers are listed including the earliest name on the West Midlands Police Roll of Honour - Watchman Robert Twyford who was shot in 1806 and finally succumbed to his injuries aged 54 on 22 November 1814 - and Watchman Thomas Stych (40) who died on 19 November 1936 after being badly beaten on duty.

There are also two officers from Birmingham Parks, a little known about former force from Birmingham. PC William Percy Savage choked to death while on duty on 5 June 1914, aged 30, and PC William Thomas Corbett (35) was struck by lightning in Calthorpe Park while on duty on 24 July 1925.

Police strike centenary event

A total of 120 officers from Birmingham – and more than 2,000 nationwide - were dismissed during the police strike of 1919.

Now, 100 years after the strike, two commemorative events have been organised at the Steelhouse Lane Lock-Up which was in use from 1891 until as recently as 2016.

At the first event, on Saturday 3 August, a new book 'Out of the Blue: Police Strike 1919' was launched during a strike themed open day. During the evening, from 5pm – 7pm, there was also a talk about the strike.

Then on 16 September a second open day will be held at Steelhouse Lane giving visitors a further chance to look around, find out more about the strike and buy a copy of 'Out of the Blue' which tells the story of events leading up to the strike and about the strikers themselves.

Items from the Force's museum will be on display while children will be able to take part in a quiz and treasure trail.

Money from the ticket sales and items sold in the shop will help plans for a permanent police museum at the lock-up.

The organisers are also seeking photos or memorabilia from Steelhouse Lane and would like to hear from anyone who worked at the lock-up or their families. They are also very keen to hear from relatives of the police strikers.

Tickets for the centenary open days are £5 for adults, £3.50 for children aged 5 to 12 and free for under 5s. Tickets for the talk on 3 August are £10.

For any queries, [email the museum](#) [Find out more](#) about events at Steelhouse Lane and buy tickets.

The strike – a brief summary

By **Corinne Brazier**, subject matter expert, Force heritage project

In 1915 former Metropolitan Police Inspector John Syme started a union to tackle police corruption after he was dismissed from the Force after a long chain of events stemming from his handling of an incident involving two of his officers.

This union morphed into the National Union of Police and Prison Officers (NUPPO) and John was deposed after the other officials deemed his campaign against the Met was unproductive to their wider cause, with significant grievances about police pay, allowances and working conditions.

In the summer of 1918, NUPPO called a strike. Over half of the 12,000 Met officers went on strike and a good number of the City of London Police. They marched to Downing Street and met with the Prime Minister who agreed to their demands for significantly improved pay and allowances, better working conditions and promised a review of policing.

All the strikers were allowed back to work. NUPPO also claimed the Prime Minister - Lloyd George - agreed to recognise the union but he always stated it would be reviewed once the war was over.

By July 1918, the Desborough Committee had released its report recommending considerably increased wages and the introduction of the Police Federation. Its recommendations became the basis of the Police Act 1919.

NUPPO called another strike, this time



A museum archive photograph.

stating it was about recognition and not letting the Government crush a trade union, but it was nowhere near as successful as the first – largely because all officers had just received a £10 back pay settlement in anticipation of the new wages which were backdated to April. Higher weekly wages were to follow soon after.

There are rumours that many more officers went on strike in Birmingham but snuck back on duty when they realised it was failing, which is probably true.

In total, 120 officers in Birmingham took part in the strike, half of the Liverpool police

(around 950 officers) and significant numbers of much smaller Merseyside forces, like Birkenhead, and around 1,000 in the Metropolitan Police.

All were dismissed and none were reinstated. In Liverpool there were widespread riots and the Armed Forces were called in to regain control of the streets, including bringing the Navy into the Mersey!

NUPPO campaigned for years to get officers reinstated and a committee set up around 1925 eventually recommended it was not practical but recommended they were all given back their pension contributions.

The Russell family - a policing history

By **Steph Russell**

My husband Stan Russell's great grandparents were George Harry Russell (known as Harry) and his wife, Mary Elizabeth Harris. In the early 1900s they were beer retailers at 157 Moseley Street, just opposite Moseley Street Police Station.

By 1911 they had moved just up the road to the Hen and Chickens public house at 128 Moseley Street. They lived here until Harry's death in 1925, aged 65. They had four sons and six daughters, but sadly two of the girls died very young. Two of their sons worked as barmen at the Hen and Chickens, Fredrick Charles and my husband's grandfather, Stanley Edwin.

In 1910 Harry and Mary's oldest daughter, Nellie Lavinia, married Thomas Mooney, a policeman at Moseley Street Police Station. Thomas was dismissed after the police strike in 1919. Nellie and Tom had a grandson who joined the police force in 1957.

In 1914 Harry and Mary's second daughter, Edith Agnes, married Jack Allen, also a policeman at Moseley Street Police Station. Jack was also dismissed after the police strike in 1919.

In 1916 Harry and Mary's third daughter, Beatrice Alice, married Henry (known as Harry) Paragreen, who was also a policeman at Moseley Street Police Station. Beatrice and Harry's daughter, Joan Elizabeth, was born in 1917 and then sadly, in 1918, Harry



Photo of police swimming team. Taken between March 1913 and November 1918 by Seaman's Studio, 16 High Street, Market Hall, Birmingham. Henry Paragreen is second from the left, front row.

Paragreen died in the Spanish flu epidemic.

In 1922 Beatrice married William (known as Billy) Woodyatt, who had also been a policeman at Moseley Street Police Station. Billy had been in love with Beatrice from before she married Harry in 1916.



Photo of William Woodyatt. Taken between June 1902 and March 1912 at Moseley Street Police Station. William is first on the left seated.

In 1936 Harry and Mary's youngest daughter, Elsie Marjorie Doris (known as Mollie), married William Henry Robinson (known as Robbie) who had also been a policeman at Moseley Street Police Station. Mollie and Robbie had a very long courtship because Mollie wouldn't leave her parents and Robbie, as a police officer, couldn't live on licensed premises.

After Harry Russell died in 1925, his wife, Mary, and Mollie left the Hen and Chickens and took over an off licence at 189 Lodge Road, Winson Green, Birmingham. Mary died in 1936 and, at last, Robbie and Mollie were able to marry.

William Robinson served in the Army between 1909 and 1919, he then joined the Birmingham City Police on 20 August 1919, just after the police strike and he worked for Birmingham City Police until he retired. We believe he worked at Steelhouse Lane Station towards the end of his career.

Mollie and Robbie's daughter, Christine, married a Swedish policeman and they have a grandson in the police force. When I talk about Robbie and Mollie Robinson having a grandson who is still a serving police officer, I think it might have sound like he is the son of their daughter Christine May Robinson born 1943 when, in fact, he is the son of

their other child, John Russell Robinson born 1938.

John Robinson's son is a serving police officer. He was a Special in Warwickshire from 1993 to 1995. He then joined the Metropolitan Police in 1995 and from there he moved in 2004 to Somerset and Avon Police, where he is still based.



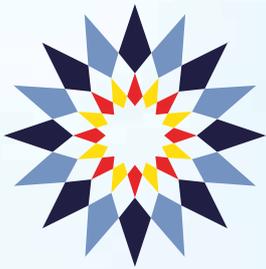
Paul John Robinson – Avon and Somerset Police.



Russell Robinson – Avon and Somerset Police.

William joined the Force just after the police strike but it never caused any problems in the family, I would think a lot of the policemen from Moseley Street Police Station would have popped into the Hen and Chickens and Molly and her parents were there until 1925, when sadly Harry died suddenly. All the sisters and their husbands remained very close for the rest of their lives. Unbelievably, Harry and Elizabeth Russell had four grown-up daughters, who between them married five policemen from Moseley Street Police Station, well worthy of a story in its own right!

Continued on Page 29



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GeorgeBurrows 

Historical milestone

Jack Allen

Jack was born in Mancetter, North Warwickshire on 3 June 1887. Before joining the Birmingham City Police on 3 August 1909, Jack had been a miner. His starting wage as a police officer was 25 shillings a week.

During his time as a policeman, Jack was awarded several gratuities for courageous conduct. He served in the Army from 9 December 1915 and re-joined the Birmingham City Police on 27 January 1919.

At the time of the strike, Jack and his wife, Edith, had two children, Stanley John Henry, aged four, and Elsie Sarah, aged two. A third child, Grace, was born to Jack and Edith in 1928. Jack was dismissed from the Force on 8 August 1919, for participating in a police strike which must have come as a terrible blow.

We believe that all the men in the Birmingham City Police had joined the strike but at the last minute at a meeting in London the strike was called off. There wasn't time to inform the men on the first shift and these were the only men dismissed.

At the time of the strike, Jack and his family were living at 182 St Andrew's Road, Small Heath. After being dismissed from the police force, Jack set up his own coal haulage business at 29 Mona Road, Small Heath and he and his wife, Edith, also ran a shop at 209 St Andrew's Road, Small Heath, very close to Birmingham City Football Club.

On the 1939 Register, Jack describes himself as a coal dealer master. Jack died at home on 6 September 1942 at 21 Wichnor Road, Solihull, aged only 45 years. He was buried at Brandwood End Cemetery, Kings Heath, Birmingham. Jack is remembered on the Roll of Honour in the Police Museum.

Thomas Mooney

Thomas was born in Skipton, Yorkshire on 7 March 1881. In 1901 he was still living at home with his parents in Skipton and his occupation was millwright. He joined the Birmingham City Police on 1 February 1902. Thomas was complimented in police orders and awarded several gratuities for courageous conduct and on 2 May 1917 was awarded the first stripe of merit.

Thomas did have one blemish on his police record. On 3 October 1904, he had his leave stopped for being drunk on duty. At the time of the strike in 1919, Thomas and his wife, Nellie, had four children, George J. J. Mooney, aged seven years, Winifred Mary C. Mooney aged six, Lilian M. C. Mooney, aged five, Olive M. E. Mooney, 10 months. A fifth child, Veronica H. R. Mooney was born to Nellie and Tom in 1922. It must have been a great shock for Thomas to be dismissed on 4 August and at that time it wouldn't have



Photo of the wedding of Thomas Mooney and Nellie Russell, 3 October 1910. All four sisters, two brothers, parents and Harry Paragreen are on the photo, plus the second man from the left is Joe Harris a, policeman. The policeman in uniform centre back is unfortunately unknown but the man to his left is Joe Phillips, another policeman.

been easy for him to get another job.

Thomas did become a chocolate maker at Cadbury's in Bournville, Birmingham and he worked there for many years eventually becoming the night watchman at the factory.

His grandchildren still remember him bringing home misshaped chocolates in a blue sugar bag and how excited they were. Thomas and Nellie lived most of their married life at 11 Belgrave Terrace, Soho Road, Handsworth where Thomas died, aged 76 in 1957. He is buried at Handsworth Cemetery.



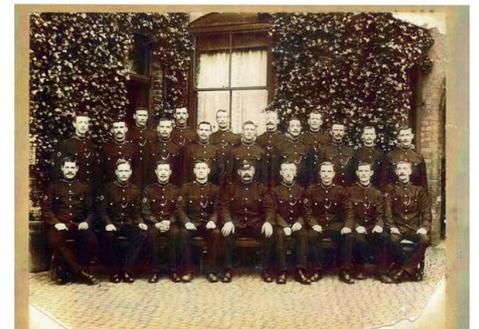
Harry Paragreen – back row, far right. The second one, with Harry Paragreen, last man on the back row, looks like it could be a first aid course.

Anthony Dutton, a grandson of Thomas Mooney, was in the Staffordshire Police Force from 1957 until 1969.

Jack and Thomas were both very good police officers, working very long hours, dealing with the likes of the Peaky Blinders and their very low wages were not enough to keep a family. I would think they were a great loss to the Birmingham City Police.

Corinne, I hope you find our family story interesting, I think it is a true reflection of a hard-working Birmingham family of 100 years ago.

I would like the credit to be given to my husband, Stan Russell, the great grandson of Harry and Mary Russell, and his cousin Miriam Watkins. Miriam has been the custodian of the family archives for many years. Most of the photo and memories were passed to Miriam by her mother, Joan, the daughter of Harry Paragreen, the policeman who died in the Spanish Flu epidemic.



Back of Moseley Street, Thomas Mooney possibly back row centre or far right.



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Thank you thank you THANK YOU Thank you THANK YOU Thank you thank you THANK YOU Thank you

Our Federation reps and officials are keen to offer help, advice and support to all members.

It is always satisfying to find out that they have been able to make a difference. Here are some messages of thanks we have received in recent months.

Praise for Fed rep

I've just chaired a misconduct meeting whereby (Federation representative) Dawn Murkett represented the officer.

Can I just say that the Reg 22 Notice was excellently written? It was a pleasure to read, if pleasure to read is the right phrase when talking misconduct! It was professionally written and captured the pertinent points. The arguments were well structured and compelling.

Dawn made her representations in person at the hearing and the way she spoke and represented the officer was nothing short of superb. Her summing up was succinct while emphasising the points as chair she wanted me to consider.

From my interactions with Dawn today, she is a credit to the Federation.

Superintendent Jenny Skyrme, Force response

Email of thanks to Steve Grange, branch secretary

As xxxx's line supervisor, I'd like to personally thank you and the Federation for the support that was given to him during the initial Independent Office of Police Conduct investigation while he was on a roads policing duty last week.

It goes without saying that the support and advice was most welcomed in what was for xxxx a very worrying and stressful situation.

Thank you.

Member details withheld

Email of thanks to George McDonnell, conduct lead

Could I please express my gratitude and appreciation to George McDonnell for the highly professional assistance he has provided me over the past 19 months.

Back in October 2017, a colleague alleged I had assaulted him while off duty at a police retirement function. This investigation meant I was interviewed under caution, CPS advice was sought, a DCI reviewed the investigation upon CPS refusal to provide advice, there was a superintendent's review following the victim right to review the decision to NFA the matter and there was a subsequent PSD investigation into possible breach of professional standards in relation to the Dignity in the Workplace Policy.

Despite the PSD investigators stating they did not believe I had a case to answer, the case was referred to a misconduct meeting by the appropriate authority. In May 2019 a superintendent chaired my misconduct meeting where it was found I had no case to answer and no further action was to be taken.

October 2017 to May 2019 was the most challenging period of my 10-year career within West Midlands Police. Having never had so much as a complaint against me, to then be subject of a criminal and PSD investigation meant this was a distressing time, and one I had never envisaged or experienced before.

I contacted George as soon as I became aware of the allegation and, despite having never spoken to him prior to this call, he was extremely professional, engaging and supportive from the outset.

George has then been ever-contactable when I needed advice and support. Going through the emotions of anger, upset and disbelief, I found George a highly knowledgeable colleague I could contact at

any time to answer my queries or simply to rant at about the situation.

George explained each of the many stages of the investigation as it developed from one farce to another and his calming, compassionate and sometimes blunt manner put me at ease and provided a previously unknown insight in the world of police conduct, disciplinary and investigation procedures.

George has made himself available to me by telephone, email and in person when required and his expertise should not go unnoticed. George ensured I received legal representation at the interview and despite George and the legal representative sharing my opinion that this allegation was 'utterly bonkers', he nonetheless treated it with the respect it required as it had the potential to end my career. This helped me to focus on the allegation rather than treat it with the contempt I believed it deserved.

I am extremely grateful for the support George has provided me since that initial call to him back in October 2017, I would like you to pass on my appreciation and thanks to him.

Member details withheld

Email of thanks to Chris Cooper, member services, team leader

I can only thank you so much for dealing with this so swiftly.

Jon at Jaguar called me and explained this to me and that you had made contact with them.

All is sorted now.

So, thanks again to you and if you can pass on my thanks to your contact at Jaguar also.

It is very much appreciated.

Member details withheld

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Force boxers take on American challenge

A team of Force boxers have just returned from America where they took on the Los Angeles Police Department.

The 16-strong team, made up of officers across the Force, were in the States for four days in July to take part in the bouts which took place in Montebello.

They sadly lost 10 – 4 but didn't go down without a few triumphs.

Claire Hankinson won the main event, outboxing her LAPD opponent Dre and all team members did the Force proud.

"All of the team worked really hard. True warriors, they were knocked down and all got back up. It was a proud day for West Midlands Police and the determination was incredible," says team member Cassie Owen.

In addition to Claire and Cassie, the boxers were: Matthew Goodwin, Michael Tate, Sam Turland, Lee Wiggins, Laura Niblett, Jon Goode, Dave Basterfield, Jon Symes, Sunil Bedi, Mike O'Hara, Chris Cadman, Suki Sarai, Aaron Behan, Chris Abbott, Rich Churchill, Alex Roobottom, Ryan Bullock, Lee Howkins, Paul Jukes and Richard Bird.

Sunil, a force response officer in Wolverhampton and qualified coach, helped set up the team alongside Rich, a

neighbourhood sergeant in Walsall, after receiving the support of Chief Superintendent Mike O'Hara.

The LAPD matches were sanctioned by the California State Athletic Commission (CASC) meaning all boxers had to weigh in the day before their bouts and meet strict regulations.

The support team was made up of Aaron, Rich, Richard, Nev Abbott, Cassie, Laura and Ryan who were all working behind the scenes.

The boxing club - which consists of police officers and staff from across departments – began in 2013 when a Force team took on a squad of firefighters in aid of Cauldwell Children's Charity.



The team at the Los Angeles Police Academy.

Members meet up to train in Wolverhampton as regularly as they can.

Check on the club's progress by following the **@WMPboxing** Twitter account or visit the West Midlands Police Boxing Club page on Facebook.



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Have you severed financial ties with your ex?

By **Lorraine Harvey**,
principal lawyer in
family law at Slater
and Gordon



Many people mistakenly believe that a divorce alone breaks all financial claims with their former spouse, but this isn't the case. Only a financial order can sever these financial ties, and not having one in place will leave you vulnerable to a potential claim being made against you even after the court has granted the decree absolute.

A financial order can be made by consent or imposed upon you by the court. You can obtain a financial order in a number of different ways. The route you take will largely depend on how amicable your relationship with your ex-spouse is and the level or complexity of matrimonial assets to be divided.

Mediation

If relations remain amicable between you and your former spouse, mediation may be the best option. Mediation involves attending joint (or shuffle) sessions with a mediator for assistance. For mediation to

be successful, it needs to be entered into willingly, with both parties prepared to make some compromises.

If agreement is reached at mediation, your lawyer will draft a financial order (made by consent) to be lodged with the court for approval.

Financial disclosure

The exchange of full and frank financial disclosure provides both parties with full transparency as to the extent of the matrimonial pot in order for negotiations to begin. If there's any uncertainty as to the value of assets, such as the family home or pensions, experts may need to be instructed.

Once all the relevant information has been gathered, your lawyer will advise you as to what a reasonable settlement might be. This provides a starting point to negotiate with your ex-partner to try to reach an agreement. Once an agreement is reached, your lawyer will draft a financial order (made by consent) to be lodged with the court for approval.

Financial remedy proceedings

If mediation or negotiations are unsuccessful, you will need to issue financial remedy proceedings. The court will provide both parties with a strict timetable for the proceedings, which includes a date by which

you and your ex-partner must exchange full and frank financial disclosure.

There will be a First Directions Appointment (FDA) for the judge to consider if any further information needs to be gathered following the exchange of financial disclosure.

At the second hearing, the Financial Dispute Resolution (FDR), the judge can give an indication as to what they believe a reasonable settlement might be. Both parties are encouraged to reach an agreement at this stage. However, if an agreement is still not possible, the court will list a contested Final Hearing. A different judge will hear the Final Hearing and make a final decision, imposing a financial order onto the parties.

Conclusion

If you're going through a divorce, or got divorced a number of years ago without getting a financial order, it's important that you seek legal advice. Your ex-spouse may still have a financial claim available against you.

If you would like specialist advice from a family lawyer please contact Slater and Gordon on **0808 175 7710** and we'll be happy to help.

In your last three years' service?

A number of spaces are available on the West Midlands Police Federation retirement seminars.

The seminars are aimed at officers in the last three years of their service and aim to prepare them for life outside the Force, financially and generally.

Among the topics covered by the facilitators at the one-day seminars are:

- **Managing change and uncertainty**
- **CV writing and interview techniques**
- **Transferrable skills**
- **Pensions and the state pension**
- **How do I manage money and these financial changes?**
- **Budgeting**
- **Starting your own business**
- **Taxation**
- **New horizons - what's next?**
- **Savings, investments and finances, and**
- **Protecting your wealth.**

Seminars are being held on

12 September, 17 October, 21 November and 19 December.

To book, [email the Federation office](#) with 'Retirement seminar' and the date you wish to attend in the subject line. Include your name, work and personal email address, phone number, proposed retirement date, number of places required and dietary requirements in the email.

Dates have also been agreed for next year's retirement seminars:

Thursday 23 January
Thursday 6 February
Thursday 12 March
Thursday 9 April
Thursday 14 May
Thursday 11 June
Thursday 23 July
Thursday 20 August
Thursday 24 September
Thursday 22 October
Thursday 10 December.

Book early to avoid disappointment.





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