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### **WELCOME**

Welcome to the June/July 2025 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.

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# Pay award is woefully short of what it should have been



By **Tim Rogers,** secretary of West Midlands Police Federation

t the time of writing this column, less than a week has passed since the Government finally announced the police pay award for this year; the increase to our wages that will come into effect on 1 September.

I say finally because just eight days earlier we learned that we would be getting an increase of 4.2 per cent, we had been told there had been a delay and the national Federation feared that, with Parliament going into summer recess, it could be weeks before there was any certainty about our pay.

At that point, the Federation expressed its frustration, saying the delay was completely

unacceptable, and highlighting the fact that every other public sector worker's pay award had been confirmed.

While it is pleasing that the delay now seems to have only been a short-term issue, I am not sure that the announcement has taken away the Federation's frustration nor that of police officers themselves.

Personally, I am not sure if it's more galling that the pay rise is just 0.1 per cent above inflation - and let's not forget police officers' pay has fallen by around 20 per cent in real terms over the last 10 years - or that this comes on the back of the National Police Chiefs' Council's recommendation that there should be a 3.8 per cent pay increase for rank and file officers.

If our own police chiefs can't speak up on our behalf and call on the Government to pay us fairly and in line with the dangers and challenges of our role, then there is something deeply wrong.

That said, I think we do have to give our own Chief Constable, Craig Guildford, credit for speaking up ahead of the Government's spending review announcement in lune.

Mr Guildford was one of five chiefs to sign a letter to The Times newspaper predicting the

Government would miss its key crime targets if it did not give police more funding.

We welcome this honesty but would implore other police leaders to speak up - and I don't just mean chief constables. Police and crime commissioners need to find their voices too, and they must use them to be really honest about the fact that if the Government does not invest in policing, in terms of officer and staff pay and more generally, forces are going to have to make some tough decisions about the services and response we can provide to the public.

The police service is in the midst of a recruitment and retention crisis. That crisis is only getting to get worse if the Government does not wake-up to the fact that police pay does not reflect the unique role of police officers in society.

Our recruitment processes are often failing to bring in the right calibre of recruits and many are leaving just a few years in. There seem to be some who come into the service simply to gain a degree but get paid while doing so.

That is not sustainable for the police service when you consider the cost to the Force from the start to finish of the



THE POLICE SERVICE IS IN THE MIDST OF A RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CRISIS. THAT CRISIS IS ONLY GETTING TO GET WORSE IF THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WAKE-UP TO THE FACT THAT POLICE PAY DOES NOT REFLECT THE UNIQUE ROLE OF POLICE OFFICERS IN SOCIETY.

recruitment and early training process.

But it's not just the new recruits who are deserting policing. We are failing to retain many of our mid-service officers too, and they take with them not just their own experience but also their ability to pass on their knowledge and skills to those younger in service.

To give some context to the 4.2 per cent pay rise, I find myself re-reading a speech Home Secretary Yvette Cooper gave during the national Police Bravery Awards in July in which she acknowledged the 'fine line, the close margins between the miracles and the tragedies', and between the lives that officers were able to save and the lives that no one could have saved.

Ms Cooper also commented, saying she was speaking for people across the country: "We're hugely grateful for the bravery that you've shown, not just to face the really difficult things, but also then to get back up the following morning and to face it all again.

"So, thank you for doing that. Thank you for caring so much for the job that you do and thank you so much for being part of the amazing thing that is British policing. Thank you for keeping us safe."

Prime Minister Keir Starmer also voiced his support for police officers: "When faced with life-threatening risks, or an acutely distressing situation, most people would run or back away.

"But not you. You step up. You go towards the danger. You put the needs of others before your own. That's why policing truly is a job like no other. It's why my Government will always do everything in our power to support you in your vital mission.

"On behalf of our whole country, I want you to know we appreciate your skill, your service, and your sacrifice. Not just today, but alwavs."

They were indeed fine words and were appreciated by the audience.

If our efforts, our bravery, our commitment to serving the public are so valued, why does it feel that our pay award is woefully short of what it should have been?

These warm words followed by acts of betrayal are compounded by the fact the award is set against a backdrop of rising pressure, with officers supporting international security operations, tackling heightened public order incidents, and being routinely diverted from local duties - all while facing mounting workloads and trying to cope with an officer retention crisis.

The Police Federation is escalating pressure on both the Government and policing leadership as part of its Copped Enough campaign. As part of this initiative, it is urging officers to stand together by signing the digital picket line and sharing the campaign with colleagues.

# **National Federation's** statements on this year's pay award

24 July 2025

Issued following the pay award delay:

At this point in the year, we would ordinarily have received confirmation of the police pay award due to take effect in September. Unfortunately, no announcement has been made and, with Parliament now in summer recess until 1 September, it is unlikely we will hear anything further before then.

As a changed Federation, focused on putting members first, we are committed to sharing information with you as much as possible - whether it is good or bad.

The continued delay is simply unacceptable. Every other major public sector workforce has had their pay award confirmed. Yet once again, police officers who are serving under intense pressure have been left waiting. This failure does not rest with the Government alone. Chief Constables also have a responsibility to stand up for their officers and challenge a system that continues to undervalue those on the frontline.

The timing of this delay is particularly concerning. Officers are working flat out - responding to rising public order threats and being diverted from local policing to support personal visits by world leaders - and yet, with just weeks to go, they still don't know what their September pay will

As your Federation, we are continuing to fight - holding both the Government and policing leaders to account - and stepping up our Copped Enough campaign to ensure your voice is heard. We encourage all members to show their support by signing the digital picket line and sharing the campaign with colleagues.

We will continue to keep you informed as this situation develops.

Thank you, as ever, for your continued service.

1 August 2025

Issued after the Government's police pay award announcement, Brian Booth, deputy chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, said:

"Today's pay award of 4.2 per cent barely treads water, with inflation currently at 4.1

'We note that chief constables argued for a pay rise of just 3.8 per cent. We welcome the Government's decision to reject that position and instead listen to the strong case we have been making on behalf of police officers across the country.

"However, after more than a decade of real terms pay cuts, this award does little to reverse the long-term decline in officers' living standards or address the crisis policing faces. A pay rise worth the price of a Big Mac per shift won't stop record levels of resignations, record mental health absences, or the record number of assaults on officers.

"We will now ask our members whether they accept or reject this award."





West Midlands Police Federation's nominee for the annual national Police Bravery Awards was Sergeant Paul Williams. Read about his experience at the awards ceremony in London.

aul was nominated for the awards after saving the life of a woman who was being mauled in a street by vicious dogs. At the awards ceremony, Home Secretary Yvette Cooper used her speech to pay tribute to officers up and down the country, and specifically referenced Paul's heroic actions.

Ms Cooper told the bravery awards nominees: "If the stories (of bravery) tell us anything, it's the way in which all of you need to respond and be ready to respond to anything that you face.

"(Whether it's) officers in the West Midlands dealing with dangerous dogs.

"I'm hugely grateful, but I say this on behalf of people right across the country, we are hugely grateful for the bravery you show. Not just to face the really difficult things but then also to get back up the following morning and to face it all again.

"Thank you for doing that. Thank you for

caring so much for the job that you do. And thank you so much for being part of the amazing thing that is British policing. Thank you for keeping us safe."

There were words of thanks from the Home Secretary for officers' families.

She said: "Family members do so much to support all of our police family in the work they do. The policing family includes all those family members who are here, who have to get the kids to school and sort things out at home.

"They deal with the stress and the worry and provide the support so that every one of you can do your job, so please join with me in saying a huge thank you and paying tribute to these people."

Paul took his wife, Jemma, with him to the awards, and was joined by awards nominees from across the country for a reception at the Foreign Office ahead of the awards ceremony on the evening of Thursday 10 July.

He said afterwards: "It was great spending time with the officers who have done amazing things and hearing their stories.

"Getting to come to Downing Street with her, to meet the Home Secretary, and to have some time away is a really positive experience, and nice to be part of."

West Midlands Police Federation chair Jess Davies congratulated Paul on his nomination.

"We are incredibly proud of Paul," she said. "He showed the best of policing and of West Midlands Police in risking his own safety to save the life of another.

"Paul and our members are performing incredible acts of bravery and selflessness every day, and we thank them all."

Jess also thanked the Home Secretary for acknowledging the sacrifices made by family

She said: "Families ultimately go through what our members go through, sharing in the highs and the lows, and the uncertainty that comes with each shift, all while doing their own job or caring responsibilities.

"Officers don't want to take the job home with them, but sometimes family members are their only outlet.

"So, it's really pleasing to hear the Home Secretary acknowledging the enormous sacrifices that our members and their families make."

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer also spoke at the awards.

He said: "When faced with life-threatening risks, or an acutely distressing situation, most people would run or back away.

"But not you. You step up. You go towards the danger. You put the needs of others before your own. That's why policing truly is a job like

"It's why my Government will always do everything in our power to support you in your vital mission. On behalf of our whole country, I want you to know we appreciate your skill, your service, and your sacrifice. Not just today, but always."

The policing minister, Dame Diana Johnson, added: "Congratulations to every single nominee. You deserve all the plaudits and praise you receive.

"Regardless of whether you won or not, I hope you are all feeling incredibly proud of yourself. Your families, friends, and colleague are also incredibly proud of you.

> WE ARE INCREDIBLY PROUD OF PAUL. HE SHOWED THE **BEST OF POLICING AND OF WEST MIDLANDS POLICE IN** RISKING HIS OWN SAFETY TO SAVE THE LIFE OF ANOTHER. PAUL AND OUR MEMBERS **ARE PERFORMING INCREDIBLE ACTS OF BRAVERY AND** SELFLESSNESS EVERY DAY. AND WE THANK THEM ALL.

"For all that you have done and continue to do, thank you."

The Federation's national chair. Tiff Lynch. also thanked and praised officers for their unwavering dedication, never knowing what challenges they may face'.

Tiff said: "In the face of uncertainty, danger and adversity they act with courage and professionalism - not for accolades or applause, but because they truly believe in their duty to protect others.

"Tonight, as we celebrate the 30th Police Bravery Awards, we come together to recognise those whose actions have gone far beyond what is expected. The stories we share are not just examples of bravery - they are powerful reminders of the extraordinary risks officers take to keep our communities safe.

"Whether confronting violent attackers, rescuing individuals from life-threatening situations, or making split-second decisions under immense pressure, these officers have shown exceptional courage and selflessness."

# Woman was being savagely attacked by two dogs

Sergeant Paul Williams was single-crewed when he responded to a report of a dog attack and found a woman being mauled in the street by two German shepherd-type dogs. She already had serious injuries and was close to dving.

Paul got out of his car and attempted to use his Taser to subdue one of the dogs, but was unsuccessful.

The dogs charged at him, forcing him back into his car, before returning to continue their attack on the woman.

Paul got out again and this time his Taser brought down one of the dogs. The other latched onto his arm, but he managed to shake it off and get back into his vehicle.

Colleagues arrived at the incident in Yardlev in the early hours of 23 May last year to offer support and took the victim to hospital, while both dogs were captured.

The woman was in intensive care for four weeks, while Paul described his injuries, which required dressing and injections, as superficial.

At the end of January this year his courage was recognised when he was presented with the PC David Green Shield as the overall winner at the West Midlands Police Bravery Awards.

The shield is named in honour of 20-year-old West Midlands PC David Green who was stabbed to death by a mob as he tried to make an arrest during a disturbance in Birmingham city centre in 1975 when he was only 20-years-old. In David's 15-month career, he was

commended three times for his bravery.

Ahead of the national Police Bravery Awards. Paul said the event was a chance to celebrate policing and police bravery.

"We see examples of bravery all the time, and that's happening right across the country every day," he explained.

Paul added: "It's easy to make a story out of something negative or a mistake that's been made. The fact that officers are doing brave things every single day, it's often seen as just being part of the job.

"I know, as a supervisor, that officers go above and beyond the call of duty every day."

Jess Davies, West Midlands Police Federation chair, said: "We are all very aware of the threat posed by savage dogs and all too often have to deal with the tragic consequences of their attacks.

"But despite this and the very real fear of being mauled himself, Paul showed incredible bravery and quick thinking to tackle two out-of-control animals.

"In true policing style, he put his own safety on the line to protect the public. There is no doubt in my mind that his actions saved the woman's life, and who knows what else would have happened if those dogs were able to continue prowling the streets?

"Paul did a fantastic job in very frightening circumstances, and his actions made him very deserving of his nomination for the national Police Bravery Awards."

Read more about Paul's nomination.

# Officers who responded to dance class attack won national award

This year's overall winners of the Police Bravery Awards were **Sergeant Gregory** Gillespie, PC Luke Holden and PCSO Timothy Parry, from Merseyside Police.

They confronted and detained Axel Rudakubana after he killed three children at a dance class in Southport on Monday 29 July 2024.

The Region 3 award - for officers from the Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia and West Midlands forces - was won by Sergeant Kully Singh and PC Stacey Hegenbarth of West Mercia Police.

They used their police car to stop a vehicle driving at a recklessly high speed in the wrong direction on the M5.

# Coventry set to host National Police Memorial Day

ext month the National Police Memorial Day service will be hosted in Coventry for the first time in its history.

The memorial day was first held in London in 2004 and was set up by former Kent officer Joe Holness in the wake of the brutal death of his colleague PC Jon Odell in Margate in December 2000. Since then, it has rotated around the four nations of the UK, but when it has been in England, it was held in London up until 2021, when it was hosted at Lincoln

"It is an honour for the memorial day service to be held in Coventry this year," says Jess Davies, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, "We are looking forward to welcoming colleagues from across England and Wales as they come together to remember fallen colleagues but, above all, we look forward to welcoming the families those officers left behind who continue to feel their loss."

The memorial day service will be held in Coventry Cathedral at 2pm on Sunday 28 September and, ahead of the formal service, West Midlands Police Federation has invited the families of West Midlands Police officers who lost their lives on duty to a morning reception nearby.

Among those attending will be Thelma Timmins whose fiancé, David Green (pictured), was stabbed to death as he attempted to make an arrest during a disturbance on 17 July 1975. He was just 20 at the time and tragically was on a run of night shifts, which were due to finish the following night. His memory is honoured by West Midlands Police Federation which presents the David Green Shield to the overall winner of its bravery awards each year.

Thelma has attended the bravery awards and admits that, even though it will soon be 50 years since David died, it does not really get any easier.



PC David Green.

She said she knew from when she first met him that he was special: "He was so kind, gentle, respectful and attentive to me. We were only 19-years-old but we had so much in common. We loved the same music and were both sports people. We enjoyed going to Edgbaston to watch the cricket when shifts allowed. But David was a big Aston Villa fan the complete opposite to myself."

David attended Shenley Court senior school in Northfield, Birmingham which produced many cadets who then became regular officers and Thelma recalls: "There are many who are retired officers now who remember David with fondness and special memories only they will know.

"But David was very respected by anyone who knew him as he was so fair and understanding and listened to what was being said. I never saw him get angry and I can see that he took after other family members. He

had the most impeccable manners. He had a very good upbringing and his work ethic was always at a high level."

Thelma also remembers that David himself was recognised for bravery during his career with the Force and she actually witnessed him rescuing a man threatening to jump from a building in Birmingham town centre.

Despite the fact that Thelma and David had been together for just two years when he died, she remained in touch with his family until his sister, Angela, died around two years ago. David's Mum, Mary, had worked at Bournville College, and Dad, Arthur, was the chief probation officer for Birmingham.

Jess has thanked Thelma for sharing her memories of David as part of the Federation's build-up to National Police Memorial Day.

"We really appreciate that it can be difficult for someone to relive a devastating and tragic part of their lives so we are really grateful that Thelma was able to give us an insight into David's life since it was so horrifically cut short as he carried out his duties, serving and protecting the communities of the West Midlands," said Jess.

"We must never forget our fallen colleagues and their service to the Force and to the public. But, equally importantly, we must always remember the families they left behind who were left to rebuild their lives but always feeling that a part was missing."

The families of fallen officers will be joined by police officers of all ranks at the memorial day service, which will also be attended by civic leaders and policing stakeholders.

During the service, a roll of honour will be read out listing the names of officers who have died on duty in the 12 months since the previous memorial day. Relatives of four officers will light candles to commemorate police lives lost in each of the four nations of





# Force service remembers young PC

est Midlands Police Federation chair less Davies was among those who laid a floral tribute during a special ceremony at Lloyd House to mark the 50th anniversary of the death of a 20-year-old West Midlands officer.

PC David Green was fatally stabbed while on duty on 17 July 1975.

The ceremony at Force Headquarters was led by Matthew Hopley, the national police chaplain, and was attended by Deputy Chief Constable Scott Green.

David's niece and nephew - Claire Hill and Andrew Bryan - represented the family.

less said afterwards: "It was a beautiful, small ceremony. The honour guard as always added a special touch and made it even more

"I always find it really moving to see them in attendance. They are just very professional and polished, showing a real sense of pride in

our service and providing a fitting formality and solemnity to the service.

"It's so important to remember our fallen officers and the sacrifices they have made. It is sad to think that knife crime was a problem all those years ago and continues to be such a major issue now 50 years on."

Back in 1975. David was on patrol near the Rainbow Suite on High Street. Birmingham when he saw a 16-vear-old boy with a knife and tried to arrest him and confiscate the knife, according to the West Midlands Police Museum website.

The youth ran off so he gave chase and arrested him. David

was attempting to bring him back into custody



West Midlands Police Federation chair Jess Davies lays a wreath.

IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER OUR FALLEN OFFICERS AND THE SACRIFICES THEY HAVE MADE. IT IS SAD TO THINK THAT KNIFE CRIME WAS A PROBLEM ALL THOSE YEARS AGO AND CONTINUES TO BE SUCH A MAJOR ISSUE NOW 50 YEARS ON.

but was quickly surrounded by a gang of youths who jostled him and tried to free the prisoner.

Another youth stabbed David in the heart and the men ran off. He tried to give chase but, after a short distance, collapsed. A carving knife was later recovered from a flowerbed outside Rackhams.

Read more about the incident.

# Welfare van continues to benefit officers

fficers are being reminded that the West Midlands Police welfare van is available to use at major incidents, events and scenes of crime.

The van has provided welfare facilities for hundreds of officers working away from police buildings since its launch three years ago.

Bought by the Force, the van was kitted out by West Midlands Police Federation and provides a toilet, sink, hot water and kitchen facilities, including a fridge, hot drinks and snacks as well as a place to take refreshments and a break.

It can be booked in advance or spontaneously deployed and can be driven by any colleague with a standard car licence who has achieved the Force basic driver qualification.

The van is managed by fleet services and stored at their Nexus base making it widely accessible to the whole Force. A private contractor cleans and re-stocks the van bi-weekly.

How to book the welfare van:

- Complete the online hire vehicle request form on the fleet services intranet site
- For spontaneous deployments, a log will need to be endorsed by inspector or above advising that the welfare van is required. This should be where a scene is expected to last more than 24 hours
- During office hours (Monday Friday, 8am until 4pm) contact fleet services hire
- Out of hours contact transport operations.



A seating area within the van.

West Midlands Police Federation deputy secretary Chris James first came up with plans for the vehicle around four years ago after conducting a 12-month survey which revealed that between 18 and 24 officers attending the average scene of a crime were going without basic facilities.

"It became very obvious - and quite alarming - that there were numerous occasions when officers had no access to toilet facilities, nowhere to get a hot drink or other refreshments and not even somewhere to sit down for a break," Chris explains.

ANY OFFICER WHO HAS SPENT HOURS STANDING AT A CORDON OR AT A STATIC POST WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE OFTEN LEFT RELYING ON THE GENEROSITY OF RESIDENTS OR BUSINESSES **NEARBY OR WAITING FOR COVER TO ARRIVE.** 

"Any officer who has spent hours standing at a cordon or at a static post will know that you are often left relying on the generosity of residents or businesses nearby or waiting for cover to arrive.

"As a Federation, we thought converting a van into a bespoke welfare vehicle would give the Force an invaluable resource that would be of great benefit to officers in these circumstances.

"We were pleased when the Force came on board and agreed to buy the van and we then stepped up to pay for the re-fit required so that it could meet officers' needs when away from a police base.

"It has proved to be widely used and much welcomed by officers."

The van was first deployed in 2022 and was on hand when Birmingham hosted the Commonwealth Games in August that year.

The van will continue to be used at locations where police resources are expected to be needed for more than 24 hours and will provide much-needed facilities when officers are deployed to major incidents or events.



Commonwealth Games deployment.



# Force ranks second highest for mental health leave among officers

he Force has the second highest number of officers placed on mental health leave, new statistics have revealed.

A Freedom of Information request published by Police Oracle revealed 1,162 WMP officers were signed off work due to stress, anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) between April 2024 and April 2025.

This number is the Force's largest since 2018-19 and accounted for roughly 6.5 per cent of the report's national total (including Scotland) of 17,152 - itself representing an overall increase for the fourth year in a row.

Patrick McBrearty, West Midlands Police Federation's health and safety lead, immediately pointed towards the conditions faced by officers - particularly those on the frontline - as the main driver of mental health-related sign-offs.

"From what I hear from our members, it's certainly not getting any easier out there, so you can't expect the figures to go down. Sadly, I'm not surprised in the slightest," he said.

"For me, if you're looking for the biggest cause of mental health difficulties for officers, you don't need to look beyond what they're dealing with on the job every single day.

"And I'm not just talking about the distressing incidents themselves, but the actual workplace environment - there are simply not enough staff to respond to the Force's level of demand.

"We know this is true because of the time constraints placed on officers. Many of our members say breaks aren't the norm, but merely a bonus if they get the chance, and I think that sadly encapsulates the issue."

Patrick added his belief that it is this risk of burn-out which can be so mentally damaging to officers - many of whom he says have a sense of pride in completing their work at all costs which may be taken advantage of.

To fix this, he argued more emotional intelligence from managers and supervisors needed to be ingrained into the Force.

"I don't think we should accept being so

high in this report just because we are one of the biggest forces," he continued.

"As a Force, we have to react to the changing profile of officers in the Force. We now have a high percentage of young in service officers, some of whom are ill-equipped to deal with the high levels of trauma and emotion they face in policing.

"Before anything else, we need to be people first, always striving to be empathetic.

"This links into the other very clear, simple solution - funding, which I think is currently skewed. We get comparatively less for dealing with a higher population of people, and I fear we are being stretched beyond 'big enough to

Meanwhile, a factor external to the Force discussed by Patrick was policing increasingly becoming what he described as the 'everything emergency service', referring to the expectations around helping the public in jobs previously dealt with by the likes of social services and local authorities.

Turning his attention to more solutions for officers' mental fatigue, he argued many incident aftercare options within the Force could be improved and signposted better.

He was more optimistic, however, about support in place around prevention, rather

"Something I would encourage our members to do is to properly complete a stress risk assessment and make sure it is properly responded to by your supervisor. Also, always log anything relevant on the near-misses system, which is on the Force's e-safety platform.

'These two actions will create a body of evidence of your experiences at work which, ideally, will be taken on board before you end up struggling

"Beyond that, please know that if all else fails, the Federation will always be here for you. Of course, we will support you if you need time



Health and safety lead Patrick McBrearty.

away from work, but ideally, we want to help you before you're in a position where you're suffering mentally.

"So, please never hesitate to reach out to me, your nearest Fed rep or any branch official you feel comfortable talking to, because you're never alone."

The report findings - which can be found in more detail on the Police Oracle website come at a time when Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service, has recently launched its Mental Health Crisis Line.

This is a 24/7 helpline exclusively for police officers and staff and can be contacted on 0300 131 2789.





embers' views will drive forward the Federation's focus in the years ahead so that it can be truly representative and bring about the changes within policing that officers and Specials want to see, according to the new national chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW).

Tiff Lynch says that member focus can already be demonstrated by the regular FedConnect seminars which are aimed at improving the links not just between officials and workplace representatives within Federation branches but also the wider membership, alongside the already successful webinars and member roadshows.

"We are now going direct to members so we can respond to what they tell us when setting our aims and objectives, that will give us more strength going forward," says Tiff, a former Leicestershire Police Federation branch chair who officially became the second woman to hold the office of national Federation chair on 1 luly.

"We have to be truly member focussed, and to do this means full re-engagement with the membership. While I can't get out to see every single one of our 145,000 members, engaging with the membership will come in many, many forms. It's going to be about sharing more information about what we are doing and also hearing from them about what is affecting them in their work.

"Historically, we have been accused of being a talking shop, we have listened, and our approach will be clear, actively doing what's right for members and by them. The focus will be on what support they actually need to do a good job; this includes the terms and conditions they work to."

Tiff is urging members to get more involved with the Federation, find out the breadth of its work, ask questions and to even



put themselves forward as Fed reps.

"It's no good sitting on the side-lines and throwing stones," says Tiff, admitting, "We really need to raise the level of engagement with the membership and want officers to get actively involved."

A poll of the membership has identified

several areas on which they want the Federation to concentrate: officer suicide, with the Federation set to campaign for legislative change that will mean these incidents are properly recorded; pay and conditions, which is the focus of the Federation's ongoing Copped Enough campaign on pay degradation;

workloads; neighbourhood policing, already promoted by the Federation as a means of returning to the cornerstone of traditional policing; violence against women and girls and issues around uniform.

With plans in place for FedConnect to be held every year, Tiff adds: "We are inviting members from each of the Federation's 43 branches across England and Wales to attend so we can find out what really matters and showcase the work the Federation is doing, for example, the work of Suffolk Police Federation secretary Ben Hudson's work on DG6 and at the July session we also had an input from Chris Philp, the former police minister in the Conservative Government and now the shadow home secretary with those attending being able to ask questions of him."

Tiff explains that Federation member roadshows will also be held, and work is underway to make sure there is a truly two-way dialogue with the local branches, again with the aim of ensuring the members' views reach the national office and shape its priorities.

The Federation recognises there is a lack of awareness among the membership of what the Federation does, something that Tiff is keen to address.

"They know about the legal provision but often little beyond that" she explains.

But, while fully appreciating the need to reconnect with the membership and raise awareness of the Federation's work in terms of representing, negotiating and influencing, Tiff also accepts there needs to be a realignment between the local branches and the National Roard

"For us to move forward and be strong and effective, there has to be one PFEW, with one voice and one direction," says the chair, highlighting the transformation project already being progressed at Leatherhead, the Federation's national office, to look at where the organisation is going and what its focus will be.

As part of this, there will be an upskilling of reps to give them the skills and qualifications they need to better support the members, while two universities are helping develop members of the National Board and National Council to further improve their effectiveness. There is also a more detailed onboarding process, helping to introduce new reps to the Federation and to educate them about the organisation's role and purpose.

"We are professionalising individuals but, in doing that, we are also professionalising the service we are offering the membership and the Federation itself," Tiff points out.

The Federation will use case studies, polls, academics and verified evidence to ensure that the national Federation and its branches are moving as one.

"We need to look like one Federation, and



Tiff was a key driving force on the Medals for Heroes campaign and is pictured with Bryn Hughes during an appearance on a BBC Breakfast interview. Bryn's daughter Nicola, a PC with GMP, was murdered in 2012, alongside colleague PC Fiona Bone.

act like one Federation," says the national chair.

The overall aim is to make sure the Federation is a strong, united organisation, adding weight to its negotiations with the Government and senior officers.

On the latter, Tiff is calling on more to get behind the six Chief Constables who, in the run up to the last spending review, spoke out on the need for a reinvestment in policing, warning that difficult choices would have to be made around service provision if budgets were not increased.

## WE NEED TO LOOK LIKE ONE FEDERATION, AND **ACT LIKE ONE** FEDERATION.

"It simply cannot be left to the rank and file to fix the broken system within policing. Chief officers have a duty and responsibility to look after their officers and staff. They should be coming out and shouting from the rooftops that more needs to be done to invest in policing and not be afraid of the consequences," Tiff argues, while also calling on Police and Crime Commissioners to be more vocal too since they have a duty to ensure the effective running of the service, "To hear that there is no more money, quite simply isn't good enough. They have a responsibility to find the money needed to fix a police service that is in crisis.

"If they don't have the police officers, and if policing has a retention crisis, how can they be offering an effective police force for the communities they are elected to serve?"

She does believe, however, that the current retention crisis can be partly attributed to problems within recruitment, the false selling of the realities of the job with adverts featuring dog handlers, fast cars and the like, inaccurately representing the realities of frontline policing.

"Given the ever-increasing workloads, lack of time away from work to properly rest and picking up jobs off other public services, officers have quite simply had enough," Tiff points out.

"The new recruits are not staying, many have no intention of making it a career for life. others are joining just to gain a degree and we are suffering due to a huge vacuum of experience. We need a rigorous recruitment standard, fair pay, we need people with life experience to join the service and we need people who see policing as a career and a vocation not just a stepping stone to somewhere else with a degree that will have cost the police service around £180,000 when you look at the cost of advertising, training, salary and so on.

Tiff knows the Federation has a mountain to climb in terms of restoring trust in the organisation after a number of turbulent vears.

"I know we have to rebuild trust, but I believe the best of the Federation is vet to come. We will be the proactive voice of our members, providing one true voice, one strong, robust, unapologetic voice," she says.



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- Industrial disease & industrial injury



# 'Let the Federation help you': New rep outlines commitment to members

ew workplace representative Chris Milburn has highlighted openness as the key for members to get the best possible service from the Federation.

Chris, who is a PC, has already 'hit the ground running' as a West Midlands Police Federation rep, immediately getting to work supporting fellow officers in tough circumstances and fulfilling a long-term ambition in the process.

With a track record of guidance and tutorship in a West Midlands Police career which dates back almost two decades, he had been informally advising colleagues on issues around Police Regulations for many years.

This led him to first put himself forward as a rep in 2019, when an election did not materialise.

But this did not deter Chris from remaining dedicated and approachable for the benefit of others in policing.

"I'm really happy to be in this position of workplace rep and, so far, I am fully embracing the challenge - it feels good to now be able to do so," he said.

"Of course, it was never undermining the Federation's work, but I used to be seen as a bit of an expert on regs, so I would always make time for a quick chat with whoever needed some information or a sounding board.

"I got a satisfaction from doing this, so it made sense to look at doing something similar in an overarching structure and on a bigger scale. It didn't happen straight away, but now it has, some colleagues have already told me, 'I'm glad you're a rep now, Chris'. That really motivates me to be the best I can be, and I'm very much looking forward to the future."

Setting out his commitments to members, Chris described his priorities as 'being in the discipline and conduct world'.

Despite this, he is ready to support members on any issue - big or small including personal matters, as well as diversity and equality.

The 40-year-old is currently part of the Force's student officer assessment team in the Coventry Local Policing Area (LPA).



Chris Milburn.

Here, he is responsible for guiding cops fresh out of training school through their operational portfolios before they can be confirmed in rank - and he says he can help Federation members through similar moments of pressure and uncertainty.

'Throughout my career, I have been a leader and a mentor in different guises," Chris continued, "Before my current role, I worked in the Birmingham LPA as a safer travel officer, where I was part of a Force-wide team covering all modes of public transport in conjunction with the British Transport Police. I eventually became second-in-charge, and then coordinator.

"And before this, I was based exclusively in Coventry for the first 10 years of my career across neighbourhood policing and city centre response.

"I have always had my own thirst for professional knowledge, too. What I do now allows me to keep updated with what officers are dealing with on the frontline, and I think that can also boost what I'll be doing as a rep."

For all Chris' experience of being there for others in the profession, however, he has also needed to fight his own corner before.

In between his two bids to become a workplace rep, he was supported by the Federation in a misconduct case brought against him for an off-duty incident.

The matter was eventually resolved positively but, for Chris, it was the backing he felt during the process which was just as vital as the end result.

"Through this case, my Fed rep was an absolute rock of support. He kept me up to date with everything that was going on and whenever I needed an answer on something, he went away to get me it, so I wasn't thinking 'what if'," he explains.

"That was half the battle for me - it made a huge difference. This was the first time I saw the Federation in a totally different perspective, in terms of the sheer lengths it went to, to protect me. That motivated me even more to be part of the Fed set-up myself one day."

From his early days as a police officer, Chris says it was 'drilled into me' to speak to the Federation should he ever 'get into trouble'.

And he rounded off his thoughts as a new rep by appealing for a similar attitude from branch members themselves.

"Now more than ever in the Force, what I do means I see mistakes up close all the time - and mistakes are fine, but I would urge people not to cover them up and risk making them into something bigger.

"We can all get it wrong, but please don't hide it. Let the Federation help you.

"As your representative, I will relate to what you're going through, and I will do everything I can to get you back on your journey to being the best officer you can possibly be."

AS YOUR REPRESENTATIVE, I WILL RELATE TO WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH, AND I WILL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO GET YOU BACK ON YOUR JOURNEY TO BEING THE BEST OFFICER YOU CAN POSSIBLY BE.



# New crisis line will offer officers and staff confidential mental health support

olice officers and staff struggling with their mental health can now access support 24/7 through an independent and confidential crisis line.

The new service was launched in July by Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service, following a successful 12-month regional trial.

It is solely for police personnel and is aimed at those experiencing a mental health crisis or having suicidal thoughts.

Jess Davies, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, said the crisis line will give police officers and staff somewhere to turn to for help and support and could prove to be life-saving.

"We know that policing can be a very stressful and challenging profession," says Jess, "As well as facing traumatic incidents while working, police officers and staff are also dealing with the same issues that life throws at everyone else - such as financial difficulties, relationship breakdown, family illness and bereavement.

Policing minister Dame Diana Johnson said: "Our police workforce faces extraordinary pressures every day, often putting the wellbeing of others before their own.

"This dedicated mental health crisis support line is a crucial step in ensuring that those who protect us have access to the care and support they need - when they need it most.

"I am proud to stand behind our police, and prouder still that we are building a culture where seeking help is seen as a strength, not a stigma."

"These can build up and have a real impact on anyone's mental health and it's important that people know there is help available to them. No one should suffer in silence but I think in the past police officers and staff have been reluctant to admit they need support since their role is so focussed on helping others at their time of crisis.

"While the stigma around mental health is slowly lifting, this crisis line will further break that down.

"I would urge all officers to save the crisis line number in their phones so they can use it themselves if they need to or share with a colleague who they feel is struggling."

The crisis line will give police officers and staff access to counsellors trained in suicide prevention and with an understanding of policing. They will be able to provide immediate help in a crisis, keep the callers safe and stable as well as signpost them to more support based on their individual needs,



including counselling, therapy or other services.

Call handlers will share their name and then ask for information about the caller's situation. This is purely as an assessment, and this information will not be shared - it is completely confidential. No information will be shared with the Force, occupational health or line management.

A follow-up call will be scheduled If there is cause for concern regarding any caller.

Oscar Kilo will provide the service in partnership with TASC, the Ambulance Staff Charity, drawing on its experience of delivering a similar service for ambulance and fire service nersonnel.

An initial 12-month trial in the North-East region demonstrated the need for the mental health crisis line which is being launched to run alongside the specialist bereavement counselling service designed to help those affected by the suicide of a colleague.

Oscar Kilo aims to ensure that everyone working in policing has access to first-class wellbeing resources. It has developed a suicide prevention consensus statement and national suicide action plan, progressed the Police Covenant, supported the appointment of chief medical officer and advanced a national health and wellbeing strategy for policing.

As part of its Copped Enough campaign, the Police Federation of England and Wales points out that mental health crises in policing are soaring, with the profession now having the highest mental health-related sickness rates.

The Federation is campaigning for fair pay, support for frontline risks, with an allowance recognising the dangers officers face, a plan focussing on officer retention and better protection and mental health support, so officers are not forced to suffer in silence.

You can contact the mental health crisis line on 0300 131 2789.

🖊 🖊 I WOULD URGE ALL OFFICERS TO SAVE THE CRISIS LINE NUMBER IN THEIR PHONES SO THEY CAN USE IT THEMSELVES IF THEY NEED TO OR SHARE WITH A COLLEAGUE WHO THEY FEEL IS STRUGGLING.



allen officers' families met at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire for the annual Care of Police Survivors (COPS) Service of Remembrance.

West Midlands Police Federation Board Member Gemma Griffith represented the branch at the service on 3 August and Chief Constable Craig Guildford attended on behalf of the Force.

They were able to meet with the relatives of some of the Force's own fallen officers after the service and lay a wreath and single red roses at the West Midlands Police tree on The Beat, an avenue of trees at the arboretum dedicated to individual forces.

Gemma said: "The service was very moving and really brought home the risks and dangers we face as we go about our daily duties, serving and protecting our communities.

"As other people are running away from those dangers, we are the ones running in the opposite direction - seeking to help others as part of our commitment to the Force and to the public.

'Sadly, some of our colleagues pay the ultimate price for their bravery and dedication to duty and do not make it home to their families at the end of their shift. Their families are left picking up the pieces, knowing that their lives will never be the same and that they will forever miss their loved one.

"It is comforting to know that the COPS charity, which aims to help them rebuild their lives, is on hand to offer peer support, access to counselling and other initiatives.'

During the service, Gill Marshall, the COPS national president, read out the roll of honour, featuring the names of officers who had died in

**Acting Sergeant Reece Buckenham of** Hertfordshire Police who died on 29 June 2024; DC Karen Smith of Humberside Police who died on 18 December 2024;

PC Rosie Prior of North Yorkshire Police who died on 11 January 2025;

PC Michael Bruce of the Metropolitan Police who died on 14 June 2025, and

PC Ian Minett of Gloucestershire Constabulary who died on 21 June 2025.

The roll of honour was followed by a minute's silence.

Gill had earlier welcomed the congregation, which included chief officers, Federation representatives, policing stakeholders and those who had completed the Police Unity Tour (PUT).

West Midlands Police Brass Band provided background music and its vocalist Superintendent Sam Batey sang two songs during the service.

Having lost her own police officer husband in 2006, Gill reassured the families of fallen officers at the service that their sacrifice is never forgotten despite the day-to-day challenges of policing.

Three family members who had lost a police officer also gave their own readings.

Laurie Murphy talked about the impact the



death of her father - Dyfed Powys DC Roger Meyrick - in 1990 had on her. She was 16 at the time and had a sister who was 13 and a brother who was 9

Roger was 37 when he died in a head-on car crash with a lorry while he was on surveillance training. Tragically, three other Dyfed Powys Police officers also died as a result of the accident. DCs Leonid Evans, 41, and Nicholas Tabraham, 29, died on the same day while Paul Hetherington, who was 35, died 10 days later.

In a very moving speech, Laurie recalled the day when officers came to the family home to tell them of her father's death and told how the family's world fell apart.

"He was our dad and we loved him so much," she said.

Laurie explained the impact of realising that her dad had missed out on so much - seeing her get married, having three children and a grandson and following her brother's journey to being an Iron Man.

She admitted that she had found it difficult when her husband had joined Dyfed Powys Police as a police officer, but ultimately that had led to her finding out about COPS and getting involved three years ago.

Fiona Deans, sister of PC Peter Deans, 25, of Avon and Somerset Police, told of the effect it had on her when her brother died with colleague PC Jonathan Stapley on 29 December 1984 when they were in a road accident during a police chase.

She said it could be 'just as hard, just as tough' to lose an officer when you were a sibling, and welcomed the support of the COPS siblings group and the charity generally.

"It's a huge comfort to know that Peter is remembered, and I am remembered," Fiona said.

The third family member to speak was Susan Gibson, the daughter of Sergeant Edward Thomson of Strathclyde Police. He was 41 when he died on 13 January 1982 after a road accident. Susan, who was 21, had been a nurse at the time and remembered going to the hospital to see him after the accident and expecting him to survive. But sadly he died from catastrophic injuries to his chest.

Devastated by his loss, she said: "I just felt

like a big part of me had gone too."

Susan explained that she had found a lot of comfort and support from COPS, and highlighted the fact the charity gave her access to the Spectrum counselling service.

During the service, wreaths were laid by for the Office of the Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, the High Sheriff of Staffordshire, the Home Office, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, the National Police Chiefs' Council, the College of Policing, the Blue Knights, the Police Unity Tour and COPS.

West Yorkshire Chief Constable John Robins, a COPS trustee, closed the service.

He said: "We all know COPS was survivor initiated and survivor led, it will also always be survivor focussed."

Chief Constable Robins also thanked everyone involved in the remembrance service, paying tribute to families who he said had faced 'unimaginable loss' but stood united and proud in memory of their loved ones.

After the service, families and other guests made their way to The Beat to visit the force trees.

Earlier in the day, crowds gathered at the arboretum to welcome the arrival of cyclists from forces across England and Wales who had undertaken the PUT, a sponsored ride from their home forces to the service, aimed at raising awareness of fallen officers and raising funds for the COPS charity.

The 530 PUT riders to take part this year were joined as they rode in for the service by 100 members of the Blue Knights, the law enforcement motorcycle club and police motorcyclists from the fleets of several forces.

A number of West Midlands Police officers took part in the tour, forming the West Midlands Chapter with colleagues from the Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia Forces, and booked annual leave to enable them to join the event.

West Midlands Police Federation sponsored the team in support of their efforts.

Next year's COPS service will be held at the National Memorial Arboretum on Sunday 9 August.

# 'I am proud to have ridden for Paul'



retired officer who took part in the Police Unity Tour (PUT) at the weekend has described the incredibly emotional moment when he met the wife of the fallen officer he rode for.

Each cyclist riding in the annual PUT, which aims to raise awareness of fallen officers and boost the funds of the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) charity, wears a wristband inscribed with the details of an officer who lost their life in the course of their duties. At the end of the ride, the cyclists hand their wristband to the officer's family.

Former Northamptonshire Police officer Mike Jones was randomly selected to ride for West Midlands PC Paul Owen who died in a road accident in 2004, but COPS did not have any details for his family.

But, following an appeal on the West Midlands Police Federation website and social media channels, Mike was able to get in touch with Paul's wife, Michelle and arranged to meet her at the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, Staffordshire, the final destination for the 180-mile PUT which is supported by forces across England, Wales and Scotland.

Mike said afterwards: "Meeting Michelle at the arboretum was the most incredibly emotional moment. This was the first time we had met.

"When I contacted West Midlands Police Federation to try to find out more about Paul and possibly contact his family, I just wanted to feel I was riding for a real person, not just a name on a spreadsheet.

'The Federation were so helpful and put me in touch with Michelle. I have learned so much about Paul as a person and their daughter Grace.

"He sounds like such a good man with varied interests and I have no doubt that he and I would have been great friends, as it seems we share many interests and hold the same values.

"Meeting Michelle was more like meeting up with a friend I hadn't met yet, than a stranger. Without a word, we just hugged and

"This moment made the previous 194 miles in the saddle, the 10,000 feet of climbs, Beacon Hill, the aches, pains, cramps and crashes all worthwhile.

"Throughout the ride, we recalled memories of Northants colleagues we have loved and lost including, most recently, Paul Keany, Jack Watts and Alex Prentice, Jason Hill and their families who grieve them and live with their massive losses.

"Those of us who have survived and are surviving the job are privileged to be able to

ride for those who died. This was my first Police Unity Tour ride and I am so proud to have ridden for PC Paul Owen of West Midlands Police."

Paul joined West Midlands Police in 1975 when he was just 18 and served the Force for 29 years before the tragic accident that took his life at the age of 47.

Michelle and Grace say: "He proudly worked in the community as a young person's officer and dedicated his time to educating about safety and serving to protect young people across the county. He spent the last few years of his career as a Federation representative providing counsel to his colleagues.

"Paul was well loved by family, colleagues and friends and is still dearly missed more than 20 years later. We would like to extend immense gratitude to Mike for honouring Paul in this Police Unity ride and all the other officers who supported the COPS family. We are immensely proud of them all."



Mike was part of the Northamptonshire Chapter of the Police Unity Tour which was made up of 30 cyclists. Officers from West Midlands Police also took part, joining colleagues from Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia in the West Midlands Chapter.

A total of 530 riders cycled into the arboretum at the end of the tour and then joined the families of fallen officers, chief officers, Federation representatives, civic officials and other policing stakeholders for the annual COPS Service of Remembrance.

COPS is dedicated to helping the families of fallen officers rebuild their lives, through access to peer support, counselling and other initiatives such as a families' weekend.

# Bank Holiday working

In the latest in a series of features putting the focus on Police Regulations, we are re-publishing questions – and answers – about Bank Holiday working.

Remember you can find the answers to many of your queries about regulations on our website.

#### What can I claim for working on a Bank Holiday?

This depends on how much notice you are given that you are required to work.

- If you are given eight days or more notice, then payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time for the hours worked
- If you are given seven days or less notice, then payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time for the hours worked plus a day off in lieu.

Travel time of 1 hour (30 minutes each way) is applicable but only up to a total of 6 hours for duty and travel. So, if you work 5.5 hours you can claim half an hour travel, but once you work 6 hours or over you can no longer claim travel.

# I had to remain at work at the end of my night shift going into a Bank Holiday what can I claim?

A If you are required to remain at work past 07:00 after a night shift, going into a Bank Holiday you are entitled to claim a minimum of four hours' payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time, even if you work less than four hours.

If you are required to remain on duty for more than four hours, you are entitled to claim payment or TOIL (your choice) at double time for the hours worked.

### What happens if I am off sick on the Bank Holiday?

A It has been agreed that if you are booked as sick on the Bank Holiday then the sickness should apply to the whole rostered duty so any TOIL deducted for that day can be given back. This will not happen automatically so it will require the individual to request this via shared services. No certification is required.

#### I have had TOIL deducted for Bank Holidays where I would normally work more than eight hours why is that?

Everyone is given public holiday leave for a Bank Holiday. This over-rides anything else for that day. Meaning if you were due to work you start with public holiday leave and if you were on a rest day you are also shown as public holiday leave and given a rest day in lieu (as you cannot be on a rest day or a normal working day on a Bank Holiday, for everyone it is public holiday leave).

Public holiday leave is the same for all officers and is pro rata. This means that a full-time officer gets the full statutory eight hours public holiday leave for that day. If you were rostered for a shift that exceeds eight hours then you owe the Force the remaining hours. This is because leave is calculated in hours and not days as this is the fairest way to do it. The same way that an RDIL is worth eight hours so if you use it for a day that is over eight hours you have to make up the difference.

When the shift pattern is drawn up the Bank Holidays will be overlaid onto the roster so if the Bank Holiday falls on a day when you are rostered to work a nine-hour shift you will have to work the extra hour somewhere else to make your total hours back up to 2.016.

This is not something the Federation has agreed to it is simply the case that the Force now has the software (GRS) to ensure that officers work the hours they are contracted to work.

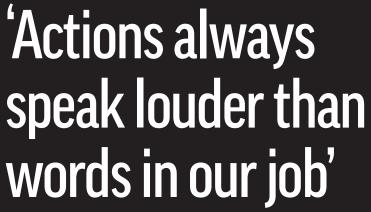
A concession the Federation was able to negotiate with the Force with regard to how they would implement this new policy was that officers could have negative TOIL balances and that these could be worked back as 'pre-planned' over-time so they would not be subject to the 30-minute deductions that would otherwise apply.

Those who work shifts longer than eight hours often feel this is unfair, however, it isn't. It is the same as when you book a day's annual leave you have to use more hours. This is because the reason you work longer shifts is because you get more rest days. If you look at the converse, officers who work five eight-hour shifts with two days off would feel aggrieved if on a public holiday they were getting public holiday leave and getting an eight-hour shift off while someone was getting the same public holiday leave and getting a twelve-hour shift off

Leave and over-time on a Bank Holiday are totally separate, because the above applies whether you work or not. Although the default is public holiday leave for everyone, the Force must still ensure that it maintains minimum staffing and if it would have been a working day according to your shift pattern you can be required to work. Due to the cost implications in most departments the Force defaults to minimum staffing and eight-hour shifts with no cross over.

However, even if you work in excess of eight hours this does not impact on the hours you owe for the public holiday leave deficit. You would just be paid for any hours you work at double time. So, if the Force did ask everyone to work their normal shifts on a public holiday they would be paid double time for the hours they work. However, they would still owe any hours over the eight given to everyone for public holiday leave to make up the remaining hours of their shift.





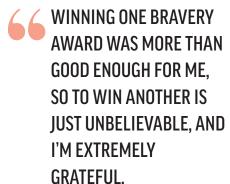
## Heroic officer discusses pride after **BAWP Awards win**

he winner of a West Midlands Police Federation Bravery Award has followed up her success with recognition at the 2025 British Association of Women in Policing (BAWP) Awards.

PC Jodie Cox clinched the bravery category at the awards earlier this summer.

Held at the Carden Park Hotel in Cheshire. the annual event showcased the best of female officers across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Jodie won the Federation's bravery award for the Birmingham area in January after leading the arrest of an extremely dangerous man in the city in May 2024.



She persevered through arson, a vitriol attack and threats to kill to ensure the offender was brought under control before he could cause further harm to her and colleagues.

Reflecting on her BAWP award, Jodie said: "It's an absolute honour to receive another award for my actions - it's difficult to put into words how much it means, but I think my best attempt would be that it means the world.

"Winning one bravery award was more than good enough for me, so to win another is just unbelievable, and I'm extremely grateful.



"To receive this one among my female peers in the police is very special. The whole ceremony was a beautiful reminder of how amazing women in policing are - I was just happy to be there witnessing it, let alone go up on stage myself and be applauded, so it was all a massive honour."

Part of West Midlands Police for 17-and-ahalf years, Jodie attended the domestic disturbance in question alongside two student officers who were on just their second day of response policing.

As the incident escalated, she and three different colleagues who had arrived at the scene had a caustic liquid thrown in their faces. All four officers later made a full recovery from their injuries at Dudley Road

But, before she could receive any medical attention, Jodie remained present to help Force back-up in completing the arrest of the offender, who was showing no signs of remorse or restraint.

"Looking back on that day, it still doesn't quite feel real," she continued. "I guess it's just the unpredictable world of frontline policing, but that doesn't take away from how challenging a job it was.

"I remember being in a lot of pain from the vitriol attack, but I knew I had to stick around to make sure the man was contained, with how violent he was and the fact he had threatened to go even further."

The 41-year-old - who was joined at the BAWP Awards by her wife, Kimberley elaborated on the meaning of her latest title as a woman in the Force.

"In a profession still dominated by men, it's so important the achievements of female police officers are celebrated," she explained.

"This becomes even more vital when there are comments from people in positions of power suggesting we are inferior to our male counterparts, which have come out recently and made my blood boil, to be honest.

"Hopefully, this doesn't make any woman in policing doubt themselves - they should always remember actions speak louder than words in our job, and that will never change.

"It's my actions which have won me these awards, along with the incredible support I have behind me. Kimberley is my biggest supporter - I don't think I could do this job without her - and my colleagues are amazing, so I would like to thank them for all the work they do too."

BEING A WOMAN IN THE POLICE ISN'T EASY. SO TO GET THIS **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** FROM THE BAWP MEANS A LOT.

Inspirational Zara wins national award

n outstanding West Midlands PC has won her second award this year with recognition from the British Association of Women in Policing (BAWP).

Zara Basharat was crowned 'Inspirational Police Woman of the Year' at the annual BAWP Awards in a ceremony held at the Carden Park Hotel in Cheshire.

She was commended for her dedication in supporting colleagues who suffer racial abuse on the frontline, shaped by her own experiences of being on the receiving end of such treatment herself.

In January, Zara's work was recognised when she was presented with the Sam Hughes Inspiration in Policing Bravery Award at the West Midlands Police Federation Bravery **Awards** 

"It was a really nice feeling to be recognised once again," Zara said. "Just like at the bravery awards, I was surrounded by so many incredible people and police officers, which makes it all even more of an honour.

"The BAWP Awards were a lovely occasion because it's a big celebration of the unique achievements of female officers.

"The reason I won my award may be closely linked to my ethnicity as a south Asian officer, but what I've experienced also has a connection to my gender.

"Being a woman in the police isn't easy, so to get this acknowledgement from the BAWP means a lot."

Zara has been subjected to racism throughout her six-year career with the Force in the form of slurs, threats and assaults.

Among the worst attacks committed against her have been the removal of her hijab, which she proudly wears as a Muslim woman, and remarks for her to 'go back to your prayer mat'.

"These incidents have caused a lot of hurt for me, and should never be accepted by anyone," Zara explained.

"But they have also made me want to be

there for other officers who may be struggling to move past that upset.

"Sadly, my experiences are not unique, and they can have an extremely isolating effect. It's that risk of isolation I want to combat, so no one ever feels they must swallow it up and deal with it on their own."

While she has already helped individual colleagues in this capacity, Zara also has plans to offer support at an organisational level.

Working with the Force's Black and Asian Police Association, she intends to create a resilience programme for ethnic minority officers and supervisors, including in-person workshops and an online toolkit on how to handle adversity such as racial abuse on the

Zara, who works on the proactive neighbourhood team Operation Fearless in Birmingham city centre, said: "We are getting closer and should be in a position to roll the programme out later this year.

'We are also collaborating with Police Now to bring a qualified resilience coach in to lead some sessions, which will be a fantastic addition to the programme.

"Having this expertise will allow us to really tailor our sessions to the attendees present, and this is where I think a gap exists within the Force -support can sometimes lack focus and therefore be inconsistent in its impact."

Zara says receiving the BAWP award has served to motivate her even more.

"Of course, awards are not the reason I do any of it - the job itself or this extra work," she

"But it is definitely nice to feel appreciated and valued for the difference I'm trying to make, and to have had that again at such a special event is something I'm very grateful

"Now, I want to keep this momentum going to make sure something tangible is in place for people like myself to feel strong, confident and empowered as police officers."



pioneering Force initiative to bridge potential gaps between the professional standards department (PSD) and police officers and staff has proved such a success that two other forces have now launched similar schemes.

The Force has around 130 standards

ambassadors who are committed to promoting a better understanding of how PSD works and, in turn, feedback any concerns officers and staff may have.

Sergeant Helen Carver, the Force lead for PSD prevention and intervention, showcased the Force's PSD prevention and intervention

work in general at a PSD conference in October last year and was later contacted by colleagues from other forces who wanted to find out more.

"I have since helped Warwickshire and Derbyshire PSDs implement their own standards ambassadors' programmes. They



both visited one of our CPD days and I shared our process with them so they could use as a basis for setting up their own schemes," says

"They have followed the same process as us. but just have small cohorts of ambassadors so it starts off being more manageable for them, in terms of the demand, and also helps ensure its valuable and worthwhile for them."

Helen came up with the idea for having Force PSD ambassadors on the back of running something similar when she worked in offender management.

She explains: "It's never been so important to drive standards and reinforce the right messaging around culture and behaviours both on and off duty. That's got to come from everyone not just PSD, so I wanted to support every one of every role and rank to be more comfortable and confident with all things PSD and have a greater confidence in challenging behaviours and being an upstander.

"Policing is tough and super challenging, and most officers and staff are working incredibly hard in their roles to provide a wonderful service to our communities, so it's important we support people in stamping out the improper behaviour which has such a negative impact on trust and confidence."

Having suggested the launch of the scheme, Helen spoke with people working in the combined Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire PSD where there is a similar approach, but without the CPD element and also with colleagues in the Force CTU which has its own ambassadors programme, to learn some of the do's and don'ts.

The Force programme has now been up and running for around 20 months, with three recruitment drives and a fourth planned for September.

"We have developed since Year 1 in that the aim and focus now is on guest speakers around police culture, welfare and behaviours with any trends and themes raised and discussed throughout the year," says Helen.

"We have also started an 'On The Panel' Live programme that asks the ambassadors to become the panel on a hearing/meeting and we offer a case to them asking them to understand the possible standards breached, mitigation, threat, harm and risk to the public and the organisation.

"Once this has all been discussed we ask the different groups to decide what outcome the subject should get and why. These are based on real life cases. This is a fabulous way of consolidating people's learning and for our ambassadors to really understand the PSD process from start to finish."

Since managing and running the standards ambassadors takes a lot of work in terms of ensuring its valuable for those taking part and supports them in driving standards and improve cultures where they work, Helen is committed to making sure the scheme is absolutely worthwhile and a positive investment of the prevention and intervention team's time.

She explains: "So far, it has not only helped enhance people's PSD knowledge to support people in driving standards it has also broken down barriers between in the 'us and them' mentality often seen with PSDs across the country.

**L** IT'S NEVER BEEN SO IMPORTANT TO DRIVE STANDARDS AND REINFORCE THE RIGHT **MESSAGING AROUND CULTURE AND BEHAVIOURS BOTH ON AND OFF DUTY.** 

"The PSD prevention and intervention team are super proud of the work we do to promote PSD and engage with people across all depts and LPAs in supporting people and helping them understand what's expected of them.

"We support people when they are managing a vulnerable situation personally that may impact their working environment. We ensure that welfare is at the heart of our work, and we are super passionate about delivering our message in a way people resonate with and understand. This helps

ensure that professional standards are everyone's business not just PSD's."

Helen is keen for the scheme to continue to evolve. Earlier this year ambassadors were asked to fill out an anonymous survey to assess whether the initiative was working in terms of driving standards since the ambassadors were asked how many times, they had guided a colleague in terms of duty to disclose, business interests, challenging behaviours or submitting referrals themselves.

'The results were positive in terms of the work our ambassadors do to drive standards where they work," Helen comments.

The survey also helped identify any knowledge gaps and any valuable topics for the next year's worth of CPD events with plans to run these every two to three months.

Jess Davies, the West Midlands Police Federation chair, has attended one of the most recent CPD sessions to find out more about how the ambassadors work and the benefits they bring.

'There was a general catch-up and a discussion on current conduct cases in the media as well as an input about the role of the Force's standards managers, designated chief inspectors on each LPA and department who are the gatekeepers for initial misconduct investigations," says Jess.

'We also had an input from Marcus Griffith from the College of Policing who spoke about the new vetting regulations in terms of issues and concerns as well as the pros. He also spoke about risk management.

"Inspector Amy Lloyd from our vetting department then talked about the realities of vetting, what is involved in the decisionmaking and so on before we all looked at some case studies in groups.

"It was a really good session, informative and engaging - educating the ambassadors and keeping them up to speed with changes, things in the press, myth-busting and so on."





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<sup>\*</sup>Terms and conditions apply. Full details are available from the Federation or Gallagher.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Correct at 30 June 2025, the premium includes the Federation administration fee and Insurance Premium Tax (IPT).

# 'You can always do good work, no matter how late in your career'

Retired officer sees out half-century in Force with long service recognition and Enable network success

he recipient of a West Midlands Police (WMP) Chief Constable's award for long service says continuing to achieve late into his policing career has made him feel thankful for spending an incredible 50 years in the Force.

Former Federation member Michael (Mick) Braycotten has experienced a momentous year so far in 2025, celebrating his 70th birthday and reaching a half-century with the organisation in which he has acted as an officer, member of staff and volunteer.

This provided him with the perfect opportunity to call time on his long association with WMP, sealing his third and final retirement from the Force in May.

But before he could sign off from active duties once and for all, Mick was recognised by Chief Constable Craig Guildford with an award which cited his 'commitment and dedication' to policing.

"At the end of an amazing journey, to receive this award made me feel really honoured," he said. "It's difficult to look back and make sense of 50 years in its entirety, because even if I try to remember everything, there will be some parts I forget.

"I grew up in Walsall and joined the police at the age of 20, because I'd heard about an ongoing recruitment drive and wanted to give public service a go.

"Although I became very keen, I hadn't spent the years before with any grand design of becoming an officer – but it clearly turned out to be an inspired decision, and one I couldn't imagine my life without."

Starting out at Thornhill Road Police Station in 1975, Mick devoted himself to the frontline throughout his 30 years as an operational cop on general duties which later became known as response.

After time as both a constable and acting sergeant, he moved over to the Force's staff body, becoming an intelligence clerk for the



anti-corruption unit within its Professional Standards Department (PSD).

It was in this colleague-conscious role he began some of the most meaningful work of his career, taking on extra responsibilities around peers with disabilities.

"I started taking notice of workstation assessments, and they made me realise how much we needed reasonable adjustments for some officers and staff in the Force," Mick explained.

"I became a member of the Force's disability support network, and from here, I, got involved with the national Disabled Police Association (DPA), where I ended up as both vice-president and secretary. I also became secretary of the Force's Enable network.

"This was all geared around ensuring reasonable adjustments for the disabled policing community in both locally and nationally – work which really resonated with me, not only because it would protect them, but the forces too."

Mick then retired for a second time in 2020, ending his 15-year staff stint in WMP's traffic process office.

By this point, however, the efforts of the DPA within the West Midlands had seen the Force become a 'lighthouse' for disability in policing.

This commitment meant there were ambitions still to be realised – ones Mick could not yet allow himself to step away from

"It had become one of the main passions of my 50 years in the police. I had to stay on as a volunteer and see our national project through to completion," he explained.

"This project was to get in place in the Force a national reasonable adjustments policy through the National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing. When we achieved that, it changed things permanently for the benefit of every officer and staff member, which I'm so proud of.

"It made me feel vindicated for staying on and giving my time for free, because it proved to me you can always make progress and do good work, no matter how late you are in your career."

Mick says he will look back fondly on his career for this sense of satisfaction it gave him as much as any accolades it earnt, such as his long service award or the British Empire Medal he received in 2019.

"It may have been a very long time in this profession, but it's still absolutely flown by. Overall, policing has been a real positive in my life – it's given me structure, purpose and ambition, and that's invaluable. I'm still in contact with both WMP Enable and the DPA, and I don't think I'll ever truly be able to switch off from what they are doing.

"When I think about the legacy of my service, I think about what I've left out there for disabled officers, because it's the colleagues who remain after you who will keep the police moving forward."



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— Helen, West Midlands Police member (2024)

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Retirement seminars: 2026 dates are released

fficers nearing the end of their police service can register to attend a West Midlands Police Federation retirement

Seminar dates for 2026 have just been released. All will be held on a Thursday as follows:

15 January 19 February 19 March 16 April 18 June 21 May 20 August 16 July 15 October 17 September 19 November 17 December.

The one-day sessions cover a range of topics including how to retire, the police pension schemes, taxation and the state pension.

They also explore next steps such as CV writing, starting a business and police officers' transferable skills as well as investments and financial planning, asset protection and post-retirement schemes for police officers, such as the West Midlands

Police Benevolent Fund.

They're aimed at members who are within three years of finishing their service and are held at the Federation offices at Guardians House in Coventry Road, Sheldon.

While the July and September seminars this year are fully booked, there are still some places available on the following dates:

14 August 16 October 11 December. 20 November

Members are encouraged to let the branch know as soon as possible if they would like to attend by emailing westmidlandspf@polfed.org

Please include 'Retirement seminar' and the date you would like to attend as well as your name, work email address, personal email address, personal phone number, proposed retirement date and any dietary requirements.

Coffee and registration for each date will



be between 8.30am and 8.45am. The seminars start at 9am and finish at 4pm. A meal deal lunch will be provided.

# New policy provides support for parents with babies in neonatal care

Parents of babies who need neonatal care will now be eligible for special care leave and full pay for up to 12 weeks under a new Force policy.

The Force provisions within the Neonatal Care Policy are above and beyond the statutory position.

Jess Davies, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, has welcomed the move.

"Having a newborn baby in a neonatal unit can be incredibly stressful and puts new parents under enormous pressure, it is pleasing to see the Force recognise this, and do what it can to support officers and staff

who find themselves in this situation," says less. "The last thing they need is to be worrving about their leave or their finances."

She added: "This policy shows the Force is committed to being an employer of choice."

Neonatal Care Leave and Pay (eligible from 6 April 2025) has been introduced for all eligible officers and staff whose babies are born prematurely or need extended hospital care after birth. They will be able to access this leave in addition to other family leave entitlements, such as maternity, shared parental, maternity support leave or adoption leave.

The leave applies to both parents, and will

provide extra time off for them and allow them to be by their baby's side at a crucial time. It will apply for every full week that their baby is in neonatal care.

A Force spokesperson said: "We've introduced this policy after feedback from colleagues. We recognise the significant impact that this experience has upon parents trying to balance work and parenting."

All supervisors, particularly those who have may have expectant parents on their teams, are being asked to familiarise themselves with the new policy.

Read the new policy.



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# Nolan goes the distance in charity bike ride

West Midlands Police officer who cycled the length of the country has thanked Federation members for their support in helping him raise more than £15,000 for charity.

PC Nolan Oakley covered more than 900 miles on his bike from Land's End to John o'Groats in just 12 days, completing the famous cycling challenge along a longer, more testing route to take scenic detours and avoid busy roads.

Nolan was joined by his close friend, Darren, as the pair completed their mission for the Life of Riley Appeal, a charity which supports the families of children with rare forms of blood cancer. The appeal was set up in memory of Riley Evans, who battled against Burkitt Lymphoma before losing his life to the illness at the age of 12.

"Mine and Darren's children both played football with Riley, and Darren is good friends with his family," Nolan explained, "Riley's story is obviously very touching – he was so young and the time between his diagnosis and passing was short, but he kept his spirits up and managed to inspire a lot of people around him.

"Doing this challenge in his name and for the charity was an honour. The Life of Riley helps families in similar circumstances to his, covering accommodation and travel costs when they have to attend specialist hospitals and organising holidays and trips for them to enjoy.

"We wanted to fundraise so this amazing cause of spreading hope and joy to these families can continue."

Nolan, who is a training officer for the Wolverhampton Local Policing Area (LPA), embarked on his cycling journey from Land's End in Cornwall at the beginning of July.

What followed was daily averages of up to 90 miles in distance and up to 6,500 feet in elevation – with the latter something the 50-year-old described as 'pretty horrific'.

"Darren and I are both keen cyclists, and distance is one thing, but I think we underestimated things in terms of hills and heights to climb. I used to like Cornwall, but I'm not so sure about it anymore," he laughed.

"It wasn't much easier when we hit Gloucester, although we were getting through it and putting more and more road behind us. By the time we got into Scotland, we were ready to take in some beautiful scenery in the Highlands. One of the best moments was riding through the Lecht mountain range, which gives you amazing views and is a bit of a milestone for many cyclists on the challenge."



After almost two weeks of perseverance, exhaustion and exhilaration, Nolan says reaching the end point in John o' Groats was the moment his emotions caught up with him.

"It was an unbelievable feeling – I got a bit choked up as we dropped down into the final descent. I remember feeling so thankful for the opportunity life had given me to do this challenge and to finally complete it," he added.

And the cop of 25 years had similar sentiments of gratitude for the support he has received through donations sponsoring his mammoth bike ride.

This backing has helped catapult his fundraiser – which is still open and can be donated to through **a GoFundMe page** – to a current total surpassing £15,000.

"What an incredible amount of money that is, which will go such a long way for the Life of Riley to continue its mission. I must place on record my thanks to every colleague who has got behind me not only with donations, but with spreading the word around about my challenge too.

"Your support means a lot, and it certainly helped me a great amount over the course of those 12 days in the saddle."



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# Are you OK? You're doing a great job and we're here

for you

he Benevolent Fund team have been posting a bespoke version of the Oscar Kilo (OK) postcards through the lockers at Perry Barr custody suite this month.

The cards feature a 'Before you go home' checklist, produced by Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service, on one side and a message from the Benevolent Fund listing its membership benefits on the reverse.

The checklist offers advice and an appeal to colleagues to check on each other and seek help if they need it, especially after a challenging shift or if their mental health is suffering.

"We are delighted to receive the support from our patron, Chief Constable Craig Guildford, and the National Police Wellbeing Service to roll out this initiative," explains Ben Fund chairman, John Williams.

"Police work, whether you are a frontline officer or a member of the police staff team, can be very challenging at times and we all know a bad day or an accumulation of bad days can play heavy on your mind after a long shift and negatively affect your mental health when you return home.

"We appreciate how hard everyone within West Midlands Police works, whether you are a cleaner, a call handler, a member of the response team, a detective, and so on. That's why we were keen to support the distribution of the 'OK' cards and produce a version that sends a gentle reminder to police colleagues that they are not alone and support is here."

PPU Commander Tony Hopkins supported the roll out at Perry Barr.

"This initiative has my full support. We have embraced the 'Before you go home' checklist here at Perry Barr by putting up posters from the police wellbeing service, however, physically distributing a personalised version that features our very own police charity that staff can keep in their locker as a reminder, only reinforces how important it is for officers and staff to become members of the Benevolent Fund and seek help if they



need it," he explained.

The postcard roll-out will continue to C3, Park Lane next month and the Ben Fund team will be available to speak to anyone who may be interested in joining or learning more about their membership benefits on Friday 15

pictured with Chief Constable Craig Guildford.

The wellbeing of serving and retired West Midlands Police officers and staff is the Ben Fund's main priority. The fund has handed out more than £50,000 in grants alone this year.

The fund also offers members residential physiotherapy and wellbeing breaks at the holistic treatment centre, St Michael's Lodge, as well as mental health support with up to eight online counselling sessions from specially trained psychotherapists.

The charity recognises that distressing life events, ill-health, injury, or financial struggles can affect its members. Only last month a grant was given to a police staff member whose wife needed a stairlift after a lifethreatening condition.

"We currently have more than 9,600 members and regularly recruit new members following presentations to student officers as part of their induction day at Tally Ho! However, we are keen to raise awareness across the various departments and reach out to all police staff as well as officers," explained the charity's general manager, Steve Newbury.

"Even if you were once a member of the



fund but decided to come out of it for whatever reason, we would appeal to you to re-join. You are very welcome to become a member again," he added.

For just £2 per month the Benevolent Fund charity provides essential welfare benefits including:

- Death in service grant of £4,000 plus £25 per month to all surviving children until they reach 18
- Grants and interest-free loans in times of hardship or distress
- Residential physiotherapy and wellbeing breaks
- Online counselling
- Sickness vouchers to support members following 21 consecutive days of sick leave
- A free will-writing service
- Exclusive rewards of shopping, days out, holidays and more
- Discounted holiday at the fund's two holiday properties in Dorset and **Dartmouth**
- Adventure days for members and their families, proving special memories. For more details visit the **Benevolent Fund**

website.





# Adventure day brings joy to police families

amilies of the West Midlands Police
Benevolent Fund gathered for another
thrilling day for their annual 'A Day to
Remember' event.

The event is the brainchild of fund chair John Williams who wanted to bring members together and give a little something back to those who subscribe monthly to the police charity.

"This year's adventure day was another great success," explains John. "The event has been running for six years now and is proving a massive hit with our members and their families year after year."

The family day was held in May at Blackwell Court Adventure, a non-profit organisation offering more than 20 indoor and outdoor activities, set in 50 acres of beautiful parkland.

"For this year's event, we decided to incorporate a new activity into the action-packed programme," added John.

"As well as the old favourites including a giant zip wire, crate stacking, tree climbing, a dual zip wire and archery, families enjoyed a non-impact game of laser tag too. It was amusing to see the competitiveness spilling out between family members and a lot of fun was had by all."

Earlier this year, members were invited to

express their interest by entering a ballot to attend the event. A total of 80 places were subsequently offered and the cost of the adventure day was paid for by the fund.

It was an early start, which included a 'meet and greet' with the Ben Fund's general manager, Steve Newbury, followed by a short safety briefing by the Blackwell staff.

Then it was straight into the day's activities. The day was rounded off by toasted marshmallows and s'mores and the Ben Fund treated everyone to an ice cream before families headed home, tired and a little dirty but very happy.

"Our intention every year is to offer a bit of old-fashioned fun, away from the daily distractions of devices and phones and provide an opportunity for families to have some quality time together. We had all ages and abilities attend and it was so nice to see everyone having such a great time," explained Steve

We received lots of lovely feedback, including these lovely messages of thanks. "Thank you so much for Wednesday. We had a really lovely day and all enjoyed the activities. We were very grateful for the opportunity to attend. It's a fab event so I can see why it's so popular."

"Thank you for the invite, the boys have not



stopped talking about it and it was great to see them enjoying life and laughing."

"We had a great time. Brilliant day and really well put together. Would love to attend again. The S'mores and ice cream were a great touch also. The kids loved it."

The event would not have been possible without the tremendous efforts of so many people. We would like to thank the staff at Blackwell Adventure for providing a great programme of activities once again this year.

A big thank you to serving officer and Ben Fund operations committee member Kay Bargewell and her volunteers for their help and to Misty for the face-painting.

Finally, thank you to all the families who attended, for joining in, being great sports and for making the day a wonderful success.

We are pleased to announce that we will be doing it all over again next year.

Further details about the events will be available on our website very soon.

Not a member of the Benevolent Fund? Why not consider joining for just £2 per month. The charity offers lots of worthwhile membership benefits.

For more information about West Midlands Police Benevolent Fund including how to join, visit <a href="https://www.wmpben.co.uk">www.wmpben.co.uk</a>





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