



Derbyshire
Police
Federation

Police Officers Representing
Police Officers

News & views

SPRING 2021 News and views from Derbyshire Police Federation

A portrait of a woman with short blonde hair, smiling, wearing a white short-sleeved police uniform shirt with a black tie and black epaulettes. The background is a plain, light grey wall.

**Welcome to
Derbyshire, Kate**

– See Pages 10 and 11

Chair's foreword



By Tony Wetton, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation

Welcome to the spring edition of our members' ezine.

This edition gives a round-up of recent news affecting officers and also puts a focus on one of our workplace representatives who has shared his story of suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

His comments, and the underlying issues raised in our focus on detectives, strengthen our campaign for more to be done to support officer wellbeing and I am pleased to see that the Police Covenant is a step closer to being introduced (see facing page).

I do find it ironic, however, that on one hand the Government, in setting out plans for the covenant, is making clear its

commitment to enshrine the physical and mental welfare of serving and former officers in law, but on the other is failing to give frontline officers any priority in the vaccine roll-out programme.

The Federation has campaigned on members' behalf on this issue and appeared to have the support of the Home Secretary. Yet, the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation has steadfastly stuck to its guns – insisting that moving through the age brackets is the best way forward.

Under this approach, it is frustrating to say the least that I, at the age of 53, will be called for the vaccination before many of my younger colleagues who are working on the frontline, despite the fact that I am working at home and can control my exposure to the virus. Frontline officers do not have that luxury but will not be protected for months. I have said it before but I will repeat it again: I am sure that cannot be right.

I have written to all Derbyshire MPs about this issue, pointing out that giving frontline officers, particularly if forces were to administer the jabs themselves, would have a very limited impact on the national roll-out programme.

Police officers have been on the frontline throughout this pandemic, facing an unseen enemy and putting their health, and that of their families, at risk. They cannot social distance while arresting someone, they are often the first at a scene but will then be joined by other emergency service workers, who will have had the jab, they go from job to job during their shift, possibly passing on the virus as they go, and they are regularly spat at and coughed over by people claiming to have Covid. If this doesn't make them a priority for the jabs, then I am at a loss to understand why.

Force funding

Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton has welcomed confirmation from Derbyshire's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) that there will be a precept increase, which means the Force can continue its drive to recruit more officers and also improve policing services across Derbyshire.

With an increase of 6.62 per cent on the police precept element of council tax, the budget will be set at £202.63 million over the 2021/22 financial year, which is up £12.75 million compared to the last 12 months.

Tony backed the PCC's efforts to get the extra funding, following years of Government cuts for the service.

"I'm pleased to hear that the Force will benefit from the next budget," he said, "The Government has embarked on a three-year programme to increase officer numbers across England and Wales by 20,000 over a three-year period and this does have cost implications for forces themselves.

"This past financial year, we've managed to recruit 79 new officers within Derbyshire. Not only will the extra money raised by an increase in council tax mean we can keep officer numbers rising but the increase in budget will help us to invest across a number of service areas."

[Read more.](#)

Officers need "clarity" on pensions, says Federation

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) says officers approaching retirement need "clarity" on their pension options.

Responding to the public consultation on pensions reforms, Alex Duncan, national Federation secretary, said it was positive the Government had now chosen to implement the remedy to the discrimination found in the implementation of the 2015 police pension scheme through the deferred choice underpin option, which the Federation [recommended in October 2020](#).

But he said it meant a further delay for those members close to retiring who "need and deserve" answers.

Alex said: "While it is positive that the Government has chosen to use deferred choice to implement the remedy, it is disappointing that those who are due to retire soon still don't have the clarity they need and deserve to be able to make a decision about their retirement.

"We will be involved in the consultation on the primary legislation and will be seeking legal advice on certain aspects of the implementation throughout the process.

"In particular we are scrutinising the updated Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that no unjustifiable discrimination is caused as a result of remedying the existing discrimination," he added.

[Remedy Q and A – 11 February 2021. Find out more on the Federation's survey hub.](#)

New guide to terms and conditions of service

The Police Federation has issued a new Quick Reference Guide (QRG) to officers' terms and conditions of service.

The new guide replaces the issue dated July 2020 and reflects the removal of the bottom pay point for sergeants as well as the extension to paid maternity leave and adoption leave and to Targeted Variable Payments.

The QRG is supplemented by the most recent set of Frequently Asked Questions on matters where clarification on practices during the pandemic were given.

[Read the QRG. Covid-19 FAQs.](#)

New bill brings wellbeing and legal protection for officers

Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton has welcomed a new criminal justice bill which will provide better welfare and legal safeguards for officers.

The bill, unveiled in Parliament on 9 March, includes a Police Covenant following extensive campaigning by the Federation, along with other new measures to support officers, police staff and their families.

And Tony called for the Government to underline its commitment to supporting officers by allowing them to have their coronavirus vaccines as soon as possible.

Tony said: "As a Federation, we've been campaigning for a Police Covenant to recognise the unique role our members perform and to support and protect them in their line of duty.

"I welcome the establishment of a covenant, and other measures in the bill that support my colleagues and recognise their sacrifices and bravery.

"But why wait until the bill becomes law to give real, tangible support to officers

that they need right now?

"The Government can emphasise its commitment to the police today by moving frontline officers up the queue for the vaccine to ensure they're protected against this potentially deadly virus."

Alongside the establishment of the covenant, the bill legislates to double the maximum sentences for those convicted of assaulting emergency workers in England and Wales to two years – something the Federation has been campaigning for.

The new bill allows Special Constables to formally join the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) after years of the organisation campaigning and regular discussions with the Home Office, Association of Special Constabulary Officers (ASCO), the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) over the issue.

It also gives better protection to police officers involved in driving incidents, with the introduction of a new test to assess their standard of driving. The test permits

courts to judge the standard against a 'competent and careful peer' with the same training, rather than with a member of the public.

Tony said: "It's pleasing to see so many of the issues on which we've campaigned as a Federation included in this bill. They will make a real difference to officers on the ground."

The measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, formerly the Police Powers and Protections Bill, were also welcomed by the national chair of the Federation.

John Apter said: "This bill contains a number of important changes we have been campaigning for over many years to give greater protection to police officers, and recognise the unpredictable, dangerous and demanding job they do.

"This is the first step to bring these changes into law; we must grab this opportunity and ensure the bill brings about a positive, meaningful and tangible difference for our colleagues."

Kirsty features in International Women's Day interview

As part of International Women's Day, national chair John Apter spoke to Derbyshire Police Federation secretary Kirsty Bunn about her work to ensure the Force's women officers could attend female only sessions for the Job Related Fitness Test.

Kirsty, who was equality lead and a Federation rep for 11 years before becoming secretary three years ago, was asked about her success in changing the format of the fitness test for female officers.

She explained: "I'd been aware of problems around the fitness test for a number of years after the Winsor review brought in the compulsory job-related fitness test in 2014.

"This gained momentum and interest from myself and the issue became more prevalent in Derbyshire a few years ago when a considerable amount of older

females were failing the test and this saw them put on restricted or non-operational duties by some commanders. This caused a lot of anxiety because they felt they were fit but couldn't complete the test to show they were. I was told it was the stress on the day and that older females were more body conscious so they didn't feel comfortable carrying out the test with other people.

"So along with the equality unit, who have been very supportive, I started a pledge to the officers that we would do what we can to give them the opportunity to do the test in a 'safe environment'. We've been able to do female only fitness tests for around the last two years and I am aware that this has had a dramatic effect on the amount of females who have passed the test and therefore not been restricted, so it has had an effect on policing as a whole in Derbyshire which is positive."

[Watch the full interview.](#)



Derbyshire Police Federation secretary Kirsty Bunn.

Allan reveals how PTSD affected his career

Driving home after being on duty at a football match in Loughborough one evening in April 2019, Allan Guy witnessed a crash between two buses at a set of traffic lights and immediately sprang into action.

One of the drivers had been thrown from the bus and was face down in the road 30 feet away. Allan expected to find that he had died, but he had survived the crash so he put him in the recovery position. He left another passer-by to tend to him while he turned his attention to the passengers on that bus as he feared the vehicle could catch fire.

He was able to switch off the engine with the emergency button and, assessing the passengers, first helped an elderly couple who had been injured and automatically began triaging other people.

Once the paramedics had arrived on the scene, he spoke to the police officers who had responded to the incident and then set off to continue his drive home to Derbyshire.

"I got in the car and drove about 200 yards," explained Allan who is a Derbyshire Police Federation workplace representative and also its conduct and performance lead, "But I didn't feel very well. I pulled onto a garage forecourt and got out of my car. But then I must have blacked out because the next thing I remember is being on the floor at the side of the car and since I was on the far side of the vehicle no one had even seen me collapse.

"I then went into the garage, bought a coffee and set off for home again. When I got there, and despite being covered in blood from the scene of the crash, I just sat in the chair in my lounge until my wife came in and basically sent me to bed.

"I thought I had just been over doing it and on the Monday I went back to work and thought I would be OK."

But he was far from it. Uncharacteristically he started falling out with colleagues, thinking they were 'out to get' him and even put in complaints about other officers' behaviour. When it got so bad that he felt he could literally punch a colleague through a window, he had the sense to walk out of work and take some time off sick. This was in June 2019.

Allan has been with the Force for 27 years, five as a Special and 22 as a police officer. For 18 years of his service, he worked



Allan Guy.

in the football unit, often being the first one to get involved if violence erupted.

"But I started to get really irritable, I thought people were against me, that they were talking about me. I was starting to feel a bit paranoid," he explains.

Luckily, his wife, Sharon, previously a mental health nurse recognised the signs of severe burn-out and he was also assigned a Federation representative, to help him access help and support.

"Everyone seems to push you towards it

being anxiety or depression" says Allan. So he had six sessions with a counsellor from Red Arc, a service available to subscribers to the Derbyshire Benevolent Trust Group Insurance Scheme.

But it was only when he was referred to a psychiatrist in Nottingham – and at this point he had barely been able to leave home - that he was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"People tend to think this is focussed on one incident but in my case it built up over

time, with a series of incidents having a cumulative effect and leading my mental health to suffer," he says.

Allan has since been supported by Sharon Brennan from the Force who was able to help him recover through cognitive behaviour therapy.

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“People tend to think this is focussed on one incident but in my case it built up over time, with a series of incidents having a cumulative effect and leading my mental health to suffer.”

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Although unable to return to football policing, he initially went to work in an HQ department in January 2020 before becoming a reactive officer at Ilkeston working on 999 jobs. He has learned not to overdo it and regained his love for policing.

But he knows there are other officers who are dangerously close to a tipping point.

“People need to be more aware of their mental health,” says Allan, “I can see people now who are in a bad place – they just don’t look right and it’s difficult when you can see them going down that road. Before, I was always the first one to react if things looked like they were going to get violent at a football match but now I am much more calm and relaxed. I can see what is going to come and I stand back and assess the situation.”

Wellbeing support available

The Federation can access a wide range of wellbeing support for officers.

And Tony Wetton, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation, urged members to get in touch if they needed help or support, or just someone to talk to.

“No one should suffer in silence. We appreciate it can be difficult to accept you need support but taking that first step and talking to someone can be the first step to feeling better,” says Tony.

“Members can contact the Federation office, the full-time officials or their workplace representatives. There is always someone to turn to.”

[Access mental health support services](#)

Mental wellbeing: support is available

The chair of Derbyshire Police Federation says the emotional impact of the coronavirus pandemic cannot be underestimated and that officers should not suffer in silence with poor mental health.

Tony Wetton wants to remind police officers and staff of the Mind Blue Light Programme which has responded to the effect of the pandemic on frontline workers by offering specialist support and advice.

Mind has also worked in partnership with Shout, the Samaritans, Hospice UK and The Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge to develop easily accessible [Frontline webpages](#) and an [Infoline](#) offering a range of tailored mental health information, tips and tools.

“The mental and emotional impact of

this pandemic can never be underestimated,” said Tony, “Our members, along with other emergency workers, have been on the frontline of the nation’s response to Covid-19 and continued to provide a service in extremely difficult circumstances which none of us could have foreseen.

“Many people will be suffering with mental health issues now or could do so in the future and police officers are not immune so now, more than ever, we need them to know there is support available and there’s no shame in asking for help.”

The Blue Light Programme was set up by Mind in 2015 to offer unique round-the-clock advice and support for frontline workers and emergency responders. It campaigns to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

Free guides available

Officers were encouraged to see Time to Talk Day as an encouragement to open up about their mental health.

Time to Talk Day at the start of February, highlighted the need to talk about our own wellbeing and to check in on others, something that is more important than ever right now.

Police Mutual has created a free guide, which includes information about mental

health and supporting others, as well as links to relevant charities and contacts.

This year’s Time to Talk Day fell in Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week, which is held annually to highlight the importance of children and young people’s mental health.

[Learn more about Time to Talk Day. Read the children’s mental health guide.](#)

PTC offering remote services

The Police Treatment Centres (PTC) are offering officers, who subscribe to the centres, the chance to access a new remote physiotherapy service online.

Sessions will be delivered by video or, for members who don’t have access to a computer or the internet, over the telephone.

Any care or treatment advice will be provided at the appointment or emailed afterwards and any follow-up will be arranged as normal.

The remote service is suitable for members who find it hard to travel or have dependents making a residential stay difficult.

And it has been particularly useful during the Covid-19 pandemic since the two centres are currently closed.

Mark Oxley, PTC head of clinical

services, said: “We’ve invested in a video platform called Attend Anywhere, which we believe offers the best clinical experience for remote physiotherapy consultations. Initially, this was a necessity due to the obligation we have to carry out a remote consultation with all patients before we consider a residential admission.

“The platform has been so useful and successful that we’ve expanded its use to include virtual outpatient treatment for all our donors.”

Find out more by visiting the **[Police Treatment Centres website.](#)**

- It costs £7.80 a month to subscribe to the PTC and access the range of rehabilitation services it offers. **[Sign up to subscribe.](#)**

'Policing can be grim': look after each other

Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton has urged members to take time for their wellbeing during the coronavirus lockdown.

Tony wants officers to be more open about their mental health and to look out for their colleagues who may be struggling with their own issues during the pandemic.

"Officers are only human," said Tony, "They already have so much to deal with in terms of their day-to-day policing role, before being on the frontline during the pandemic and policing the latest lockdown.

"Add to that the fact my colleagues will have their own worries away from work, such as the health of loved ones or their finances, and you can see how stress and anxiety can become an issue.

"We would urge members to take time to look after their own wellbeing, and to look out for their colleagues. We know it's a tough time, but we can all play our part in supporting each other. And where an officer needs further support, the Federation is here to help them find that."

Tony's comments are echoed by Glyn Pattinson, chair of the Police Federation's National Detectives' Forum (PFNDF), who encouraged officers to be more open about their wellbeing to help them deal with the

demands of policing – particularly during the pandemic in a blog posted on the national Police Federation's website.

"We are all finding it tough right now, in every force, in every discipline," said Glyn. "And if now isn't the time to recognise the signs and show simple acts of kindness, I don't know when is."

In the blog, Glyn said policing needs to recognise the demands and personal impact of dealing with serious and disturbing crime and he also highlighted the demands placed on over-stretched detectives.

He said: "Unsurprisingly, policing can be very grim at times. No officer I know signed up thinking it will be easy, but while we embrace what we face with pride and the overwhelming will to protect the public we serve, it shouldn't come with the expectation that we can all cope with anything and everything. We can't. No one can.

"Recognition must be given to officers and staff throughout policing for the constant commendable work they do and their unwavering nerve – particularly throughout the pandemic."

Glyn continued: "Every detective I know wants to do the best job possible but there simply are not enough of us. Demand is

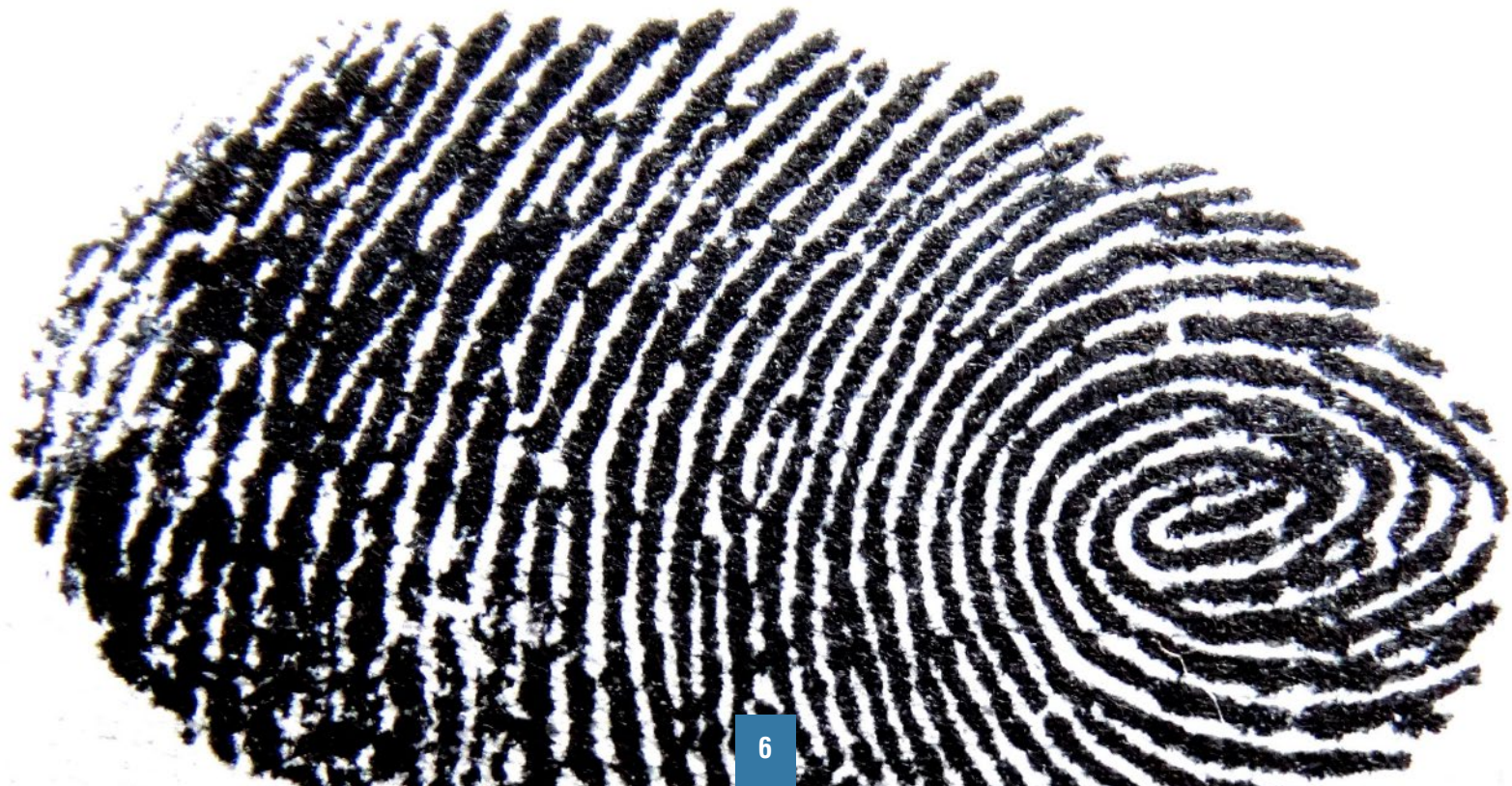
outstripping resources and colleagues are working excessive hours, forgoing rest days, sacrificing time with their families and simply not getting enough rest.

"The sad thing is that this is a normal working week for most, severely impacting on physical and mental wellbeing. It's hard enough trying to process and cope with traumatic criminal investigations, but this is in addition to supporting scared and distressed victims, working with partner agencies, the Crown Prosecution Service, and seeing a number of legal processes through to completion to bring some form of closure for those affected.

He added: "Officers tend to put their own welfare last and the misconception by many that officers can forget what they have seen once a case has finished and swiftly move onto the next – or rather juggle several cases at once – only adds to the strain. All of this is cumulative and lasts a lifetime.

"We need to get better at supporting each other – recognise when we are struggling, talk more openly about wellbeing and listen. There are sources of support out there, but we need to see cultural change and we all have a role to play in that."

The Federation put the focus on detectives throughout January.



Justice for the victim is the biggest reward, says Force detective

Obtaining justice for the victim is one of the most rewarding parts of the job, says Derbyshire detective Alex Edwards.

Having joined the Force almost 17 years ago, DC Edwards has shared his experience of his role as part of a month-long Federation focus on the role of detectives.

"For me, the most rewarding part of the role is victim engagement, seeing a job through from start to end and obtaining justice for the victim," he begins.

He became a detective in 2010, to help develop his career. Since then, he says things have changed quite a bit.

"Technology has come a long way in the last 10 years. It has altered way we work, with us having laptops and mobile phones replacing our pocket notebooks. This assists greatly when investigating crime," says Alex.

"The new shift pattern has vastly improved the work-life balance and, although we are currently in a pandemic, morale is high in the office."



Detective explains dual pressures of workload and supporting victims

The pressures of trying to do the best for victims of crime and keeping up with the workload make her role challenging at times, says one Derbyshire detective.



Trainee

Detective Constable Julie Shaw, based at Buxton CID, says she joined the police over eight years ago to help people, investigate crime and achieve the best outcome for victims. So she finds it difficult when she feels unable to help a victim as she would want to.

Julie, who is also a workplace Federation representative, explains: "Currently the biggest challenge for me is keeping on top of the workload. We deal with long, complex and serious investigations and it is important to me that I do this to the best of my ability for the victims in my cases. But sometimes I feel this is difficult to do and this weighs heavily with me.

"Also, the new disclosure changes which have been introduced this year will increase the work involved in obtaining a charge; understanding these changes and putting them into practice will take time and I don't want to get it wrong and end up messing up a case."

Julie says while she has received training and Force support, particularly from her sergeant, the workload issue is not easily solved.

"We cannot just say no to taking on crimes which should be investigated by CID. The best way to improve the workload issue would be to have more detectives. I

know the Force is trying to address this and I also understand that current numbers just cannot support the right number of staff to deal with demand in all departments at the same time. Basically, we are borrowing from Peter to pay Paul almost on a cyclical basis."

Julie joined CID in April 2019 and completed her detective training in December last year. She has yet to complete her portfolio which will be the final step to becoming a substantive PIP2 detective constable. She says she tries not to work longer than her shift hours due to shifts already being long, but she will finish anything outstanding at the end of a shift set or before rest or leave days.

"We have periods where we can be late a few times on the trot but then we will have a lull," she explains, "When we're late due to dealing with prisoners it is often very late, for example, last Monday I was working a 12-10 shift but, along with two colleagues, finished at 2.45am.

"But the most rewarding thing is investigating crimes thoroughly and getting the right outcomes for the victims by bringing the suspects to court to answer for whatever their actions have been. That sounds a bit clichéd but it's genuinely true."

Although Julie says she does not currently feel that her role is affecting her mental health, she admits to occasionally feeling overwhelmed.

"Mostly I have learnt to leave work at work. I am part of a very supportive team and we are very open with each other on the whole so if one of us is feeling like we are drowning, we help each other out if possible," she explains.

"I do feel that my physical health has suffered a little as I am very static during the day and the longer shifts make it more difficult to access my local gym sessions, especially now they are limited to being

online sessions.

"I sometimes feel under pressure because the burden of responsibility we have to our victims and suspects is large that it can be overwhelming. I sometimes feel that the expectations to progress investigations while keeping numerous things updated with every last thing we do, and think about, to justify what we are doing or to prove we are doing our job properly and deal with live jobs, is onerous.

"A colleague describes it as spinning plates and there are only so many we can spin at once."

As for the pandemic impact? She explains: "It has introduced home working which I have found really difficult and consequently I tend to come to work more, ensuring the office isn't too full when I do. It has also introduced different practice such as taking statements over the phone and less face-to-face contact with victims. I have two victims of sexual offences who I haven't actually met in person.

"Speaking to solicitors online has proved challenging at times and wearing masks while interviewing makes it difficult to properly read the person you are questioning. Likewise, in interview rooms where social distancing is possible, the distance actually makes it difficult to have the right impact on the person you are interviewing.

"But we just get on with it. We cannot, and should not, try to change it in the current circumstances as people's health is more important.

"Each and every department in the Force will, I am sure, have similar issues of too much work, too many expectations from the public, the management, the Government and CPS, to name just a few, and not enough people to do it and currently we are trying to do it all on shifting ground.

"I feel it when the police are criticised as a whole for what they are trying to do right now and, while frontline cops have it hardest in that respect, we are all affected by it."

Detective reveals pressure of the role

As part of the national Federation's month-long focus on detectives, their role and its unique pressures – one Derbyshire detective says one of the biggest challenges is disclosure.

The detective, who wishes to remain anonymous, explains: "The pressure of making sure you have all the disclosure correct is quite heavy because cases can be lost purely on that if it hasn't been done correctly.

"Another challenge is getting it right and being seen to get it right. There is a lot of work that goes into any investigation and having all of that right and trial-ready is a lot of pressure on you as you want to be able to do the best for your victims.

"These issues can be overcome with self-discipline and checking, checking and checking again!"

A detective since 2005, the officer of 29 years' service, said they joined up because they were 'born wanting to be a police officer'.

"I've no idea why because none of my family were in the job. I just knew that was what I wanted to do and my parents didn't question it, just accepted it," they explained, "I've always had a very strong sense of right wrong and loved television programmes like Juliet Bravo and The Bill which just made my need greater!

"I wanted to help people solve their problems and make a positive difference in someone's life and the attraction of having

a job where you never knew what you were going to be doing next was preferable over a nine-to-five job."

The detective said they wanted to join Special Branch but had to become a detective to do that. They reluctantly applied after being encouraged to do so by DI John Smedley and, after being accepted, started at Derby North CID at St Mary's Wharf where they were tutored by Nick Clayton.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time there and dealt with some brilliant jobs so was really glad I'd applied. When I started in CID in 2002 we were on 'unofficial on call' late shifts which meant you couldn't have a drink and had to sleep with your phone under your pillow! Detectives were always called out to rapes and serious crimes and your eight-hour shift would then start from when you were called out which was usually in the early hours.

"There was also an unspoken expectation that you would always remain on duty to finish your job off. There was no handing over to the next shift – so there was a lot of over-time done. Also, when I first started in CID there was no social media. Oh, the good times without that!"

When the detective left Special Branch, they found many changes, including the role of social media on investigations.

They explained: "Things had changed significantly. There was no 'unofficial on call', detectives weren't called out in the night to attend rapes, there was work-life balance and people predominantly went home on time. Also, social media played a huge part in investigations and all files were computerised.

"I used to regularly work beyond my shift when we were on eight-hour days. Finishing at 4pm meant I could easily stay until 6pm to catch up with files or anything if I needed to, and get ahead, but since we have moved to 10-hour shifts the prospect of staying at work for an extra couple of hours doesn't appeal.

"Some live jobs do require us to work late, including prisoners at other stations and foreign forces when they have to travel back to their home station at the other end of Derbyshire. I also occasionally tend to do

some work at home on my rest days if I have a lot on and need to catch up."

The most rewarding part of the job?

"Getting a good result at court for a job that you have put a lot into," they explained, "I've been involved in a lot of cases but there are three that stand out to me – all rape offences - which involved a great deal of work over long periods – but to be able to say I helped that victim get the justice they deserved is absolutely priceless and means the world to me. It's a feeling that can't be understood unless you have been through it; it yields an immense feeling of satisfaction.

"The pandemic has, of course, altered the way I work. It has made everyone more aware of everything and given us all OCD in cleaning – which isn't a bad thing in a police station! However, I count myself very lucky to have a job and to be able to still carry on working in this pandemic when so many people haven't and can't."

The detective added that they don't currently feel under pressure but have in the past: "Some jobs we have involve all hands to the pump but when the initial excitement has passed, it is allocated and as an OIC you are left to finish it off. Some of these jobs require an extraordinary amount of work and when tasks are coming in left, right and centre, you feel unable to provide the attention because of the relentless requirement for that attention – hence why I sometimes feel the need to work at home in order to catch up.

"But I choose to do that and I do know that if I went to my sergeant for assistance, it would be provided, although most officers are in the same boat. I don't often feel under pressure at work but I do know that I can talk to people about it if I need to."

There is no plan for the detective to return to uniform but they said they would, and could, if required to do so: "We have all been issued with uniforms should the situation become such that we are required to do so. This doesn't frighten me. I enjoyed my time in uniform and, while I haven't been on section for many years, I'm sure I would quickly adapt."

“I used to regularly work beyond my shift when we were on eight-hour days. Finishing at 4pm meant I could easily stay until 6pm to catch up with files or anything if I needed to, and get ahead, but since we have moved to 10-hour shifts the prospect of staying at work for an extra couple of hours doesn't appeal.”



Federation chair backs calls for officers to receive "thank you" payment

Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton believes officers should be awarded a thank you in recognition of their efforts during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) has asked for officers to receive the one-off payment, in addition to a three per cent pay rise, as part of its annual submission to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB). The submission is made in conjunction with the Superintendents' Association.

"Our officers have remained on the frontline throughout the UK's response to this pandemic so they thoroughly deserve some kind of recognition and appreciation," said Tony.

"They continue to face immense pressure, working hard to keep communities safe, helping to protect the NHS and all the time putting themselves and their loved ones at risk from the virus.

"Their job is unique and challenging at the best of times but the last 10 months have been particularly difficult. We know that the Government has put in place a pay freeze for much of the Public Sector and has directed the independent pay review body to observe that but it is absolutely clear that

police officers deserve better than that. They deserve a 'thank you' for their contribution to getting the country through the pandemic. It would go some way to improving morale and recognising their critical role in the nation's response to Covid-19."

Alex Duncan, national Federation secretary, said asking for an increase in officer pay after the public sector pay freeze announcement may seem pointless but was necessary.

He explained: "Police officers have been at the forefront of this pandemic and continue to put themselves and their families at risk, working long hours every day to keep the public safe during these unprecedented times."

The Federation also questions the Government's pay freeze decision when the Spending Review awarded forces with budgets to include officers being recognised for their work during the pandemic.

The Federation will seek the three per cent pay rise for all officers and a 'thank you' payment on the basis that an uplift is feasible and that the private sector has rewarded key workers with a similar payment.

Dates released for female-only fitness tests

Further dates have now been released for the Force's female only Job-Related Fitness Tests up until the end of July, with Covid-19 restrictions in place.

With numbers reduced due to the ongoing pandemic, there will be no more than three runners and two trainers at any one time during each test.

The two-day fitness tests will take place either at Ripley or Chesterfield on the following dates:

Ripley: 6/7 April

Ripley: 13/14 April

Ripley: 17/18 May

Ripley: 27/28 May

Ripley: 14/15 June

Ripley: 23/34 June

Chesterfield: 14/15 July

Chesterfield: 19/20 July.

Derbyshire Police Federation secretary Kirsty Bunn, who helped secure the women-only fitness tests more than two years ago, said: "We've worked hard to reintroduce these tests after they were initially put on hold due to the Covid-19 crisis.

"It's really important that we offer women-only tests, after the Federation and Force's Equality Unity were made aware that

many women were feeling apprehensive about taking part alongside their male colleagues."

Both nationally and locally the pass rate for female officers is lower than that of male officers, so the women-only tests aim to combat the anxiety of participants.

"We believe taking the tests alongside their male colleagues definitely influenced how women felt about it," Kirsty added, "We are not seeking any preferential treatment for women and want it to confirm that the standard of fitness test 5:4 is not being compromised.

"These tests simply offer an alternative to women officers who want to be in an all-female environment, which they may be more comfortable with."

Women who want to continue to take the fitness test in mixed groups can still opt to do so.

If your JRFT is due and you would like the opportunity to attend one of these sessions, please send an email to Force Training with the date of your training and stating your preference for a women-only test.

The Operational Training Team can offer support and advice to anyone concerned about the test.

New recruits



Derbyshire Police Federation chair Tony Wetton has welcomed an uplift of 67 officers to the Force as a 'positive start' to the Government's three-year recruitment programme.

Tony says the extra officers are a valuable addition to the Force as it continues to face the unprecedented challenges of policing the pandemic.

He was speaking as new Home Office figures show there were 1,894 officers in Derbyshire Police as at 31 December, up from 1,827.

[Read more.](#)

Charity fund-raiser

Annual cycling fund-raiser Back on the Beat is returning this May and has gone virtual.

In light of the ongoing pandemic, organisers are giving riders the option on taking on the challenge from the comfort of their home while raising money for the charity Police Treatment Centres (PTC).

Federation members are being encouraged to sign up to this year's event, which challenges participants to ride 100km in seven days.

This year's fund-raiser, which usually takes place at the PTC in Harrogate and around North Yorkshire, will run from 10 to 16 May, giving riders seven days to complete the challenge.

The PTC has two centres but both are currently closed due to the pandemic, although remote support is still available to its subscribing members. They support the police family with physical and psychological injuries, conditions and illnesses.

Participants can sign up for Back to the Beat individually or as a group and those who complete the event will receive a medal. Entry to the ride is £10, with all riders or teams pledging to raise a minimum of £100.

[Sign up here.](#)

New Deputy Chief Constable tells how 'give it a go' attitude landed her in the Force

Once a university student who thought she 'would have a go' after spotting a police stall at a career fair, Kate Meynell is now 30 years into a successful career in policing with her latest accomplishment being appointed as the Force's Deputy Chief Constable.

"I have never regretted the decision to become a police officer and I feel fortunate that I have a career where, for the most of it, I have actually enjoyed coming to work," says Kate, who originally joined Nottinghamshire Police in 1993, with her first posting being to Bulwell.

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“I am a firm believer that a combined effort of a team is one of the most powerful assets the police service has and I value being part of it.”

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"I was extremely naïve when I joined," she adds, "I really had my eyes opened. Although Bulwell was a small station, it was very busy and gave me a good grounding in police work."

Looking back at where it began, Kate admits her first arrest was not the smoothest.

"I was with my tutor and it was a shop theft, and I was nervous and, in fact, I got confused," she explains, "I initially tried to arrest the store detective until they stopped me and told me the suspect was sitting on the other side of the room."

Kate spent her early career in uniform, on



The Force's Deputy Chief Constable Kate Meynell.

response and neighbourhood teams. She soon became interested in investigation, resulting in her spending most of her service in investigatory roles.

The majority of her working life has been spent with Nottinghamshire Police, but Kate

has also worked as head of crime in Northamptonshire. She spent a number of years in EMSOU Major Crime as chief inspector and superintendent working as an Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) on a number of homicide investigations.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a police officer," she says, proudly adding: "I take great pride in my role as an SIO in leading some very difficult and challenging homicide investigations. Bringing offenders to justice for the victims will never take the pain away for family and friends but does provide some sort of comfort."

Kate admits she feels a sense of responsibility in getting justice for the victims of crime and works hard to ensure the Force learns from each case and improve their response to a victim's call for help.

Her passion for the role and ambition to make a difference is reflected in the numerous projects she has been involved with. She worked with the communications team at Leicestershire to help produce Kayleigh's story, which illustrated the dangers of online grooming to young people and was shown in schools across the nation. Kate was also part of EMSOU-MC when it

“The Federation has a strong history of protecting the rights of its members and I have witnessed the support it provides on a number of different occasions. The presence of committed and knowledgeable reps across Derbyshire should reassure officers they have a need for the support of the Federation.”

was first implemented, which has helped the region improve its response to homicides.

Of course, the job can be testing too, with Kate explaining: "I have felt under pressure and challenged by what is in front of me but I have people around me to support me, which means I have been able to meet all challenges head-on."

"I am a firm believer that a combined effort of a team is one of the most powerful assets the police service has and I value being part of it," added Kate, who confesses that she has spent most of her career ensuring that she makes the most of any opportunities that come her way."

Kate also acknowledges the support she and her colleagues get from the Federation too, referring particularly to their recent campaign calling for officers to be given priority during the Covid-19 vaccine roll-out.

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"The presence of committed and knowledgeable reps across Derbyshire should reassure officers they have a need for the support of the Federation."

Despite being a newcomer to the Force, Kate explains that the Federation has already made regular representations to her about a number of issues her team face.

"This provides me with a valuable insight into how officers are feeling as well as understanding the impact of decisions and working practices upon them," says Kate, who alongside her duties as Derbyshire's DCC, has also taken on the role of Covid lead.

"It's taken a lot of my time. Covid-19 has meant that we have had to change working practices, enforce regulations and operate in a completely different way," she says.

"Covid-19 has been with use for over a year now and there is still a way to go, the longevity of the issue makes it feel like a real slog."

Kate says the rules and regulations that are frequently changing has proved difficult, adding: "There is often very little time to understand these or to relate to our communities."

"However, I never cease to be impressed at how police forces have responded to the challenges, along with the personal sacrifices and commitment individuals have made. I am really proud and privileged to be part of that response."

Despite the ongoing pandemic, Kate says she has really enjoyed transferring over to the Force: "There is a lot of good work going on in Derbyshire Police, being performed by dedicated and committed individuals."

"I still feel like there is a lot for me to learn and I look forward to my future with

the Force."

Kate intends to implement a performance structure to enable her team to understand where they are performing well and where there are potential issues.

"Performance management for many has negative connotations but I think it is important that we understand what our performance looks like," Kate explains, stressing that the role of an officer has changed significantly over the past three decades.

"We need to ensure that we continue to work to improve our understanding of the needs of victims and how to provide the best possible service to them, this will also have a positive impact on trust and confidence of our communities," she continues, "It is important that we understand these demands to equip our workforce to deal with them through personal skills development, technology and training."

"I have been impressed by the analytical work that has been undertaken and the information that is now available to help target our work and understand the demand and risk."

"The challenge now is to ensure everyone understands how to access this information and use it to inform their work."

So, through all of the highs and lows, what is the best advice Kate has ever been given? She recalls a sergeant telling her not to try to cover up any of the mistakes she made.

"He said, come to me and I will help you sort them out," she adds, "He went on to say he would not be as sympathetic if I made the same mistake twice."

"Specific, I know, but I genuinely believe that we should be honest when we have done something wrong and acknowledge our mistakes in order to learn from them."

“I never cease to be impressed at how police forces have responded to the challenges, along with the personal sacrifices and commitment individuals have made. I am really proud and privileged to be part of that response.”