

Federation Matters

The magazine of Hertfordshire Police Federation

Winter 2022

*Season's greetings from
Hertfordshire Police
Federation*



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Remember, you can find news updates and more information on the work of the Federation on our website at

www.polfed.org/herts

Check regularly to keep fully up to date.

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A message from the chair

By Luke Mitchell, chair of Hertfordshire Police Federation

We have had another extremely busy and challenging year and I hope everyone will get the chance to take a break and spend some quality time to relax with family and friends over the Christmas and New Year period. I know lots of our members will be working but it is important that we make the most of rest days and time off.



At this time of year our thoughts and prayers are with the families of all the police officers who have lost their lives over the past 12 months.

It is not lost on me the sacrifices that each and every one of our members makes every single day in terms of shift work, the long hours they have been asked to do this year and the things they have given up and missed out on, like family gatherings.

When I took over from Geoff (Bardell) as chair last May, I promised I would not shy away from the difficult conversations with the Force leadership team and that remains the case today.

I think it is best to be open, honest and upfront about the issues faced by police officers and how things like pay and conditions and a lack of manpower can have a negative impact on their wellbeing.

One of the first conversations we had was about the cost of living crisis and how some of our colleagues were struggling to make ends meet.

The discussions came at a time when we genuinely feared an exodus of members seeking better paid jobs elsewhere so it came as a huge relief when the Force agreed to increase South East Allowance payments to its maximum of £3,000.

But while this is good news for Hertfordshire Police Federation members, it doesn't really get close to resolving the financial pressures a lot of them are facing.

And I still think it's down to the Government to make sure police officers get properly rewarded for the unique job they do while taking into account the 20 per cent reduction in pay over the last 12 years as well as the rise in the cost of living.

Our most recent conversations have been around double-crewing and we really want to see some movement on that in the coming months.

Police Federation researchers carried out a serious

study of singled-crewed policing and the findings made for really interesting reading, not least because it highlighted the impact it had on officer stress and decision-making.

It will come as no surprise that police officers and the communities they serve all benefit from double-crewing which is why we will continue to push the Force until it becomes policy.

This year more than ever we seemed to have been dogged by criticism, most of it unfair in my opinion, from the media and some politicians with an axe to grind.

There was a brief respite after the death of Queen Elizabeth II when British policing was seen at its professional, dedicated and dignified best and our members who were involved before, during or after the state funeral should be extremely proud of themselves.

But I think it is fair to say policing and the conduct of police officers came under the spotlight like never before in 2022. There is no doubt the negative coverage in the media has added to the stresses and strains of the job and I can only hope that in the coming months the media and the public will start to appreciate and celebrate the good work that police officers do.

Sometimes we get it wrong and when that happens we expect to be held accountable and then move and learn from it as an organisation. I suppose the best and most recent example of this was the arrests of journalists covering the Just Stop Oil motorway protests.

I think the Force handled the aftermath of that really well and having spoken to everyone involved I am confident that a learning package and education will come out of it. No one individual can be blamed for what happened and I am really pleased with the levels of support that the officers involved have been given.

Because at the end of the day I know the overwhelming majority of police officers are there to help, support and guide the public and often face criticism they simply don't deserve and that can have a negative effect on wellbeing and mental health. Let's hope things start to improve on that front in the New Year.

But until then, your Police Federation is here to support you and offer help and advice on any issues or problems. Our door is always open.

So try to have a peaceful, restful Christmas and we'll catch up again in the New Year.

Welfare is our top priority

By **Al Wollaston**, secretary of Hertfordshire Police Federation

This year has been exceptional with regards to demand and the sheer number of officers we have been supporting through various different processes. Welfare has always been our number one priority and it will continue to be that way.



We took the welfare van to Birmingham for the two weeks of the Commonwealth Games and it was really appreciated by all the officers deployed for the policing operation.

Following on from the sad death of the Queen, we took the welfare van into London over the weekend of the funeral where we were able to look after the thousands of officers deployed to Operation London Bridge.

It has been great to see the welfare van out and about, giving officers access to drinks and snacks, toilet facilities and even just somewhere to take a five-minute break.

It is important for everyone to realise that we support many officers who are both victims and witnesses of conduct and criminal matters. We are not just concerned with the subject officer.

We are now seeing more and more officers coming to see us who are victims of both bullying and misogyny in the workplace. It is really worrying that officers do not feel they can go to their own management to raise the issues and we are trying to address this with senior managers.

It is so important that officers can come to work and feel that they are supported and have a safe working environment and the Federation is committed to ensure this is the case.

Bookings for our lodge and caravan will be looked at in January so I urge anyone considering booking a break to look at our website for details. They are very popular, particularly during the school holidays providing great quality accommodation at affordable prices.

All that remains is for me to put on record my thanks to all officers for their efforts during 2022. Once again, it has been a challenging year for policing, but officers have risen to that challenge to serve and protect their communities.

While many officers will be working at least part of the festive season, I hope everyone still gets the chance to enjoy time with family and friends.

Stay safe, have a great Christmas and a happy and healthy 2023.



Al Wollaston with Superintendent Kier Newman, the main mutual aid liaison officer who conducted the briefings at Hendon.



Double-crewing: Force is urged to act

Hertfordshire Police Federation has launched a campaign to get all frontline officers double-crewed.

Branch chair Luke Mitchell and secretary Al Wollaston are in consultation with the Force after Police Federation research practitioner Mary Elliot-Davies shared the findings of her recent study of singled-crewed policing and its impact on officer stress and decision-making.

Luke said: “The report from Mary Elliot-Davies makes really interesting reading. There is a lot in there that for us highlights the advantages of being double-crewed.

“We really want to push this with the Force. We are engaging with senior officers around it and likewise they are doing some work around it to better understand the merits of double-crewing.”

Luke said the research found that police officers and the communities they serve all benefited from double-crewing, which has gradually become less and less commonplace over the last decade.

“We have a young workforce at the moment

and assaults against officers are on the rise,” he said.

“Our younger members are still trying to learn their trade so being double-crewed would benefit them but also provide a better service to the public.

“And obviously when it comes to officer wellbeing, we believe being double-crewed cuts down on the number of assaults.

“There is also really strong evidence to show that officers who are single-crewed are much more likely to use their Taser.”

Luke said the report encourages senior management to give frontline supervisors the freedom to make decisions around resourcing.

“It shouldn’t be for the senior executive to dictate whether officers are single or double-crewed. Those two decisions should be made on their merits by sergeants and inspectors,” he said.

“Members of the public would receive a better service, officers would feel more supported.

“We want the Force to be brave and to trial this as soon as possible.”

New legislation will affect police drivers

Police drivers are being reminded to read a frequently asked questions document giving guidance on new regulations which are now in force.

The new regulations set out the prescribed training that will give trained police drivers the better protection in law afforded to them under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

"The new regulations will have an impact on all officers who are trained to drive police vehicles and they must familiarise themselves with the new provisions," says Tim Rogers, police pursuits and driver training lead for the Federation nationally.

"I cannot stress highly enough how important it is for them to make sure they are fully aware of the changes and how they will affect them.

"Critically, their driving will no longer be assessed by the standards of the careful, competent driver, as was previously the case, but they will now be judged by those of their careful and competent colleagues who have completed the same level of prescribed training.

"The change in the law, which means police officers' skills and professional training will be recognised, is welcomed but we are sounding a note of caution too in that we must now ensure that all drivers are 'in ticket' with their training.

"My advice to any officer who is not up to date with their police driver training is very simple - don't drive a police vehicle because if you do you could be vulnerable to prosecution."

Tim has visited a number of Federation branches around the country, explaining the changes, how they impact officers and highlighting the importance of officers only driving when they are 'in ticket'.

National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) police driving lead DCC Terry Woods has welcomed the legislative change: "I believe this is an excellent step forward for police drivers. Standardisation throughout the UK on police driving courses is essential in

providing a minimum standard to all officers and making the roads safer for all.

"I would urge officers to ensure they understand the new legislation and the importance of compliance with the relevant driving refresher requirements."

The regulations will be enshrined in law through The Road Traffic Act 1988 (Police Driving: Prescribed Training) Regulations 2022 and came into effect on 30 November 2022.

The new FAQ document has been produced by the Police Federation of England and Wales and the NPCC and aims to help officers better understand the new laws regarding their driving.

"Quite simply, the previous legislation did not recognise the training that police response drivers undertake and the tactics they may need to employ when responding to emergencies or pursuing criminals," says Tim, who for eight years has led a Federation campaign to change the laws affecting police driving.

"This new legislation is a great stride forward but, for the new test to be applied, officers must be driving for police purposes and have undertaken the prescribed training as set out in the regulations.

"Police driving schools have had months now to ensure that they are compliant with the requirements of the legislation and have undertaken self-assessment exercises.

"But the onus is on the individual officer to make sure that they only drive when they are up to date with the prescribed training as defined in the regulations and legislation."

Training must be delivered by an accredited and licensed police driving instructor, in line with the nationally set learning standards.

Officers can find the FAQs and the 'prescribed training' statutory instrument at [polfed.org/herts](https://www.polfed.org/herts) - simply look for the news article posted on 30 November 2022.



'If things don't change policing will lose more women'

The chair of Hertfordshire Women's Network is on a mission to empower and educate colleagues to ensure women feel better supported across the Force.

Frankie Westoby is using her own experiences to help tackle the issues many female officers face on a daily basis, particularly with regards to violence against women and girls, as well as the impact health conditions can have on women in the police.

As the chair of the Hertfordshire Women's Network and a single, working mum, Frankie says that while she finds speaking out for female officers 'sometimes a challenge', she is 'loving the fight'.

"I have around two to three women come to me every single week asking for support. So many great female officers are leaving their job because they are fed up with the fight, and if things don't change, policing will lose more women," said mother-of-two Frankie, a detective chief inspector and workplace Federation representative.

"As females, we shouldn't have to battle to get a work-life balance or justify a promotion."

Frankie's passion for giving female officers a voice is driven by her own experiences, as a single mum, who has worked in the police for 25 years, having originally joined the Metropolitan Police in 1997.

"When I joined Hertfordshire two-and-a-half years ago, I started to hear and see a number of things that I felt just weren't right," added Frankie.

"And it wasn't until people would come to me with issues that I really realised how many problems there were."

Frankie, whose sons are 16 and 17, says she has always worked full-time, and felt she had to return

to work after a few months into maternity leave with both children.

"I don't want people to feel sorry for me, I had no choice but to come back to work that early, and full-time. Not everyone has a partner to help out with childcare, or the



Frankie Westoby.

finances to pay for extra days at nursery," she added.

"Joining the police doesn't necessarily halt your career, but it can definitely put limitations on what you can do. I've had to choose my roles, around my family - I can't possibly do all roles, and be a present mum.

"It almost feels like women have to choose between having kids or climbing the career ladder. Do our male colleagues need to make that choice? Sadly, women have to make sacrifices - they either prioritise their work but don't have children, or they start a family and then feel they can't get promoted, or they spend time at work, but don't see their families. Whatever their situation, it's common for women to feel some sort of guilt about the decisions they've made in life.

"I want to use my experience to help my colleagues. I've experienced misogyny and sexism, and now I want to educate others to help the future of the Force.

"I want people to understand what is acceptable behaviour - even if it's well meant behaviour, it's not always OK anymore."

“SO MANY GREAT FEMALE OFFICERS ARE LEAVING THEIR JOB BECAUSE THEY ARE FED UP WITH THE FIGHT, AND IF THINGS DON'T CHANGE, POLICING WILL LOSE MORE WOMEN.”

DS launches child loss support group for grieving parents

Driven by her own traumatic journey, a Federation member has launched a support network for parents who have experienced child or baby loss as she wants to bring hope to others, educate people and lift the stigmas surrounding the taboo topic.

Hertfordshire Detective Sergeant Laura Bassett founded the Force's Child Loss Support Network after recognising there was the need for colleagues who had experienced such heartbreak to receive essential care during and after what can be an extremely difficult time.

Laura also wants to raise awareness of child or baby loss across the Force and, in particular, educate line managers as to how they can best support their teams.

"It's important that people recognise that the trauma that comes with child or baby loss might stay with people forever," said Laura, whose first child, Charlotte, died after being born prematurely at 28 weeks.

Laura, who went on to have two sons, has spoken of her own experience to not only give hope to others but to show colleagues that their career does not have to end because of what they have gone through.

"I don't want to gloss over people's grief, because everybody needs to grieve but I know I felt that sharing my story and hearing from others brought with it a sense of comfort and hope," added 41-year-old Laura, who has been in the Force for 19 years.

"We want to give people permission to grieve, to feel upset and to talk about how they are feeling.

"And it's not just women, it's vital that we support men too. Often, men feel like they aren't allowed to feel sad, because it's the woman carrying the baby but we all need to remember, they have lost a child as well.

Laura was 27 when she fell pregnant with Charlotte, her first child, due in 2008. She says

while everything initially seemed fine, she went into labour at 28 weeks.

Charlotte was born via C-section and quickly needed a blood transfusion, as she was found to have severe anaemia. Within 31 hours, Charlotte sadly died peacefully in Laura's arms.

"It was absolutely horrific," said Laura, "I didn't know what to do."

Medics later confirmed that during pregnancy, the placenta had split, which resulted in Charlotte losing two thirds of her blood, which then led to multiple organs shutting down.

"At that point, I didn't know how to carry on, let alone go to work," said Laura, who took four months of her maternity leave, before returning to the job.

“IT'S IMPORTANT THAT PEOPLE RECOGNISE THAT THE TRAUMA THAT COMES WITH CHILD OR BABY LOSS MIGHT STAY WITH PEOPLE FOREVER.”

She soon joined meetings held by the national charity Sands (stillbirth and neonatal death charity), which gave her a place to share her story and a chance to meet others who understood her emotions.

"It wasn't until I returned to work that I realised just how many people are impacted by child or baby loss," continued Laura, who admits she continued to struggle emotionally, especially following the birth of her sons Daniel (12) and Joshua (10).

"To be honest, the whole experience was a rollercoaster of emotions. I had extremely low periods, not helped by a number of other traumatic experiences, and in 2015 was diagnosed with PTSD



Laura and her sons.

(post-traumatic stress disorder)."

Having received counselling to help her deal with past trauma, Laura said she started to feel better than she could ever remember.

"After recovering, I knew I wanted to create a support group for colleagues who had been through a similar experience to me," said Laura.

Although the network has been informally supporting others for around four years, it was during this year's Baby Loss Awareness Week (9 to 15 October) that Laura officially launched the group.

"We held a memorial service, which dozens of people attended - an event I want to make an annual date in our calendars," added Laura.

"We read a list of children's names people had sent me, to remember and honour those we have lost, and we also unveiled a bench, on-site, dedicated to those children who have died."

Moving forward, Laura is hoping to hold additional events, as well as quarterly support meetings.

She said: "We're really only just getting up and running but it's a start. We're definitely turning a corner, people are speaking more about baby and child loss, and it's definitely not as taboo as it used to be.

"I want to support line managers too. Being in the police, our job is so unique, we can find ourselves dealing with some seriously difficult situations and if we're struggling with our own loss or trauma, that can be even harder.

"I want to encourage line managers to not give up on their staff but instead, please stick with them - it might be that they just need that extra support and time. It's important for line managers to recognise that birthdays and anniversaries will be difficult each year. The best way forward is to keep communicating so that any care and support can be bespoke."

Laura is also hoping that by setting up the network, it will stop speculation within the Force.

She explained: "I want to encourage all staff members not to speculate when a member of their team suddenly goes on to restricted duties. It's all too easy to ask someone if they are pregnant, and speculate about this, however, this is private to that person and, in fact, it might be that they are experiencing a miscarriage, which is why they're not able to go out on the beat or go into custody.

"I know of one officer who was asked by several officers continuously throughout her shift if she was pregnant, and she had to keep explaining that she'd just found out she was pregnant but that she was now bleeding and so didn't know if she was losing her baby. This was very upsetting for her and she'd have rather people just stopped speculating."

An intranet page dedicated to providing essential information and support for those who have experienced child or baby loss has also been created.

Federation team supported funeral policing operation



Terasa Holden (fourth from left), equality lead and full-time rep for Hertfordshire Police Federation, and branch secretary Al Wollaston (inside the welfare van) with officers deployed for the policing operation.

Hertfordshire Police Federation sent its welfare van to London to support officers on duty at the Queen's funeral.

More than 10,000 police officers were deployed on the day of the funeral itself as reinforcements from all over Britain worked alongside officers from the Met to ensure the ceremony and procession went without a hitch and the vast numbers of people who crowded into the capital were kept safe.

Hertfordshire Police sent around 100 officers to carry out patrols, security and other key police work in relation to the funeral and the period of mourning, during which hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world descended on London.

Branch secretary Al Wollaston and full-time rep and equality lead Terasa Holden spent the weekend ahead of the funeral in London with the welfare van.

Al said: "This was the biggest police operation

in British history and the branch is proud that our members were involved in such a momentous occasion.

"We felt it was very important to support and assist them in any way we could so we took our welfare van and supplied officers with a hot drink and a snack and a quiet place to sit for five minutes.

"Police officers from every force in the UK were involved and we were pleased to be there for them. Hopefully, they were pleased to see us too!"

As well as offering support to officers involved in the mutual aid operation, Al and Terasa were also able to visit Met police stations to support officers some of whom had been working 12-hour shifts for 12 days with no rest days.

The complex policing operation, which was decades in the planning, was deemed a great success.

Herts inspector reflects on policing Queen's funeral

A Hertfordshire Police Federation member who took part in Operation London Bridge after the death of the Queen has described the experience as a "one-off that will never be emulated".

Inspector Rachael Robertson joined the complex security operation on the day the Queen's coffin was flown down to London and the focus of the nation switched from Scotland to the capital.

Rachael and colleagues from Hertfordshire Police first met up with officers from all over the country at Hendon for operational briefings before getting to work the following morning.

She said: "We were there for eight days and performed various duties during that time. On the first day we were parading around Trafalgar Square and The Mall after the Queen's coffin had spent the evening at Buckingham Palace ahead of the ceremonial procession to Westminster Hall.

"We then spent the next two or three days in and around Westminster, basically where the queues were, engaging with the people who had come to pay their respects."

Rachael said the hundreds of thousands of people who queued for hours to see the Queen lying in state remained respectful and good-humoured throughout.

"The crowds were amazing," she said. "I would describe it as the most positive engagement with the public I have experienced in the 21 years I have been a police officer.

"It was an absolute pleasure. Everyone wanted to be there for the same reason - to pay their respects - they were obviously very respectful of the Queen but also of the armed forces and the police.

"We didn't encounter any negativity at all, it was

all really positive and felt very collective. It was just a very positive experience."

On the Saturday and Sunday before the funeral itself crowd numbers continued to swell but people remained good-natured as the mood grew more sombre and reflective.

"We always expected the weekend was going to be busier," she said. "We were up and around Horse Guards and I have never seen London as busy.

"I spoke to a man who had lived in London for 30 years and he said he had never known it so busy. It was still very positive but you couldn't move for the crowds."

The day of the funeral saw Rachael and her colleagues move out of central London to patrol the route of the procession which took the coffin from Westminster Abbey to Windsor Castle.

She explained: "We were on the procession route by Cromwell Road and Earl's Court in west London managing the crowds so we were lucky enough to have the cortege drive past us which was a very special experience."

Reflecting on the part she played, Rachael - who capped off an extraordinary few days when she was presented with her long-service medal that week - said she doubted the experience would ever be matched.

"It was quite easily the best week I have had in my policing career and one I can't see being emulated," she said.

"It was a one-off thing and everyone there knew they were witnessing history. Obviously there will be kings and queens in the future but I think the impact the Queen had on people during her 70-year-reign was very special and I am proud to have been involved."

The Federation provided 24-hour support to officers in London for the Queen's funeral.



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Fed rep recalls emotion of memorial day service

Hertfordshire Police Federation workplace rep Gareth Rees has been reflecting on the “emotional” National Police Memorial Day service in Northern Ireland.

Gareth joined the families, friends and colleagues of fallen officers as well as police chiefs, serving officers and politicians for a memorial service at Belfast’s Waterfront Hall at the end of September.

He said: “National Police Memorial Day is one of the most important - if not the most important - day in the policing calendar.

“It’s a day when we remember those colleagues who did not get to return to their families at the end of the shift. They will have left their homes to report for duty not knowing that they would not make it home.

“We should never forget their sacrifice and that of their families whose lives will never be the same again.

“During the memorial day service, we stand side by side with those families to show them that they remain part of our policing family.”



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Elizabeth Medal: 'We have not met one MP who doesn't support this campaign'

Police Federation deputy chair Tiff Lynch has called for top level talks with ministers in a bid to secure approval for a medal to honour officers who die while on duty.

The campaign for a posthumous award, which would be similar to the armed forces' Elizabeth Cross, is being spearheaded by Bryn Hughes whose daughter PC Nicola Hughes was murdered alongside her colleague PC Fiona Bone when they responded to a fake 999 call in Manchester in 2012.

But despite widespread support among MPs, Police and Crime Commissioners and senior police officers, there has been little indication that the Home Office is ready to give proposals for an Elizabeth Medal the green light.

Tiff and Bryn appeared on BBC Breakfast in November to discuss the campaign and why such a medal was so important to the families of fallen officers.

When asked why the UK did not formally honour its emergency services personnel who died on duty, Tiff said: "That's a good question and it's a question that we are asking and have been asking.

"It's not until you walk in the family's shoes that you get that understanding and that feeling of how much this means to them.

"There is currently no formal recognition from the state. We have spoken with numerous MPs and we have not met one MP who doesn't support this campaign.

"Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham and the PCC's office also fully support it and Philip Davies MP, who wrote an open letter to the Home Secretary, has said himself that 'we are here to make the laws'.

"Let's make this law so all emergency service workers are formally recognised for the sacrifices they actually make when they die in the execution of their duty."

Tiff said there had been "a lot of talking" but not much action and said she had no idea why it was taking so long to get an answer from the Government.

She said: "What we are asking for is someone



Tiff and Bryn with BBC Breakfast presenters Jon Kay and Sally Nugent.

from the Home Office to come and meet with us to discuss what the need is and how we can actually move this forward and get the cogs turning one way or another."

Campaigners believe emergency services workers deserve the same recognition as military personnel who are posthumously honoured with the Elizabeth Cross which is presented to relatives of those killed in action.

Hertfordshire Police Federation chair Luke Mitchell said: "We place huge demands on our police officers and emergency service workers and they deserve proper recognition if they lose their lives in the line of duty.

"The campaign is supported by politicians from all sides and everyone within policing and I would love to see the medal given official approval in the very near future.

"The police family is a tight-knit one and we look after our own so we urge the Home Office to take positive action and make this happen."

Bryn said the medal would not bring anyone back but "gives the family recognition".

He added: "I don't think it's been an intentional process that there's been no official recognition, it's just that it's not been focused.

"There's a lot of people saying we should have it and it just needs that final push to say let's go ahead."

2022

- A YEAR IN REVIEW

January

Force Wellbeing Focus Week saw officers and staff informed of the dangers of alcohol consumption. "Covid changed the way we work, nationally we have seen some issues with officers using alcohol as a crutch," acknowledged Federation secretary Al Wollaston, adding that help was available to anyone who needs it.

Hertfordshire officers took part in a Home Office video to assist the national recruitment drive. A shoot took place at the old Shredded Wheat factory in Welwyn Garden City and it involved Inspector Gemma Badat, who said: "It was fantastic. As a woman from a mixed heritage background, it matters to me that policing is more diverse and representative."

The BBC's Panorama programme found that UK roads had become more dangerous since austerity. The documentary highlighted that vehicles had become safer, but deaths and serious injuries had not reduced. This suggested that "weaker policing" was responsible. Al Wollaston commented that: "The responsibility lies with chief officers who set priorities and the Government which provides the resources."

Hertfordshire Police Federation welcomed new Government figures which showed a five per cent uplift in officer numbers since the previous year.

February

The Federation branch joined calls for multi-year financial settlements for policing. Chair Geoff



Bardell said: "We want to see the introduction of a well thought-out, properly costed and sustainable funding model which includes a multi-year settlement. The existing system is no longer working and we need a complete overhaul of the way funding settlements are reached and delivered."

The College of Policing set out three strategic priorities: boosting professionalism, improving leadership and driving consistency. Its chair, Lord Herbert, said: "Police officers deserve to have a strong professional body alongside them, support them with better training, professional development and the evidence of what works to cut crime."

The Federation welcomed a commitment from the Force to tackle mental health stigma. Branch secretary Al Wollaston said: "We have to recognise that there is still some stigma attached to mental health issues despite the vast improvements that have been made." Proposals included a commitment to improve the way data is recorded in addition to a toolkit made available by the National Police Wellbeing Service and the Samaritans.

March

The findings of a Parliamentary review into the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) were welcomed by the Federation. Chair Geoff Bardell urged the police watchdog to take on board recommendations from the Home Affairs Select Committee, which included criticism over timeliness and Professional Standards Departments (PSD) being under-funded and lacking transparency.

Geoff also called for a substantial pay rise for officers to overcome poor morale and retain staff. The Police Remuneration Review Body had recommended officers receive a minimum two per cent increase for 2022.



Meanwhile National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) figures revealed a 9.3 per cent attrition rate at Hertfordshire Police with 50 out of 535 new officers quitting early. This was above the national average of 9.1 per cent which equates to a total of 2,567 early leavers from 28,173 new recruits.

April

Steve Hartshorn was elected chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, defeating national vice-chair Ché Donald and West Yorkshire chair Brian Booth. He joined the Met Police in 1995 and had been the Federation's national spokesman for firearms and Taser.



A campaign to create a new posthumous award for emergency service workers who give their lives in the line of duty won the backing of Hertfordshire Police Federation. The campaign for a medal like the Elizabeth Cross for military personnel killed in service, was championed by Bryn Hughes, whose daughter PC Nicola Hughes was murdered alongside her colleague Fiona Bone in a gun and grenade attack by the fugitive Dale Green in 2012.

May

"I don't think it is unreasonable to expect Protected Learning Time to be made available to every officer for their professional development," said Hertfordshire Police Federation chair Geoff Bardell. He argued that it was "unreasonable and unacceptable" for the Force to expect police officers to complete assessments in their own time or on their rest days. And the formal adoption of PLT by the National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing could end calls for a licence to practise.

The branch paid tribute to Geoff Bardell as he retired from policing and his role of four years

– chair of Hertfordshire Federation. Secretary Al Wollaston said: "Geoff has been an excellent chair and I have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside him. He always went above and beyond for members." Luke Mitchell, vice-chair since 2018, was announced as Geoff's replacement. He pledged to keep pay and conditions high up on the political agenda.

The Federation held its annual conference in-person for the first time since the pandemic. Former world athletics champion Kriss Akabusi lifted spirits during an inspiring opening where he referred to police as the "glue that holds this community together."

And Priti Patel, the Home Secretary, was confronted by North Wales' DC Vicky Banks who had been forced through hardship to use food banks and borrow money from her pensioner parents. "Could you live on £1200 a month?" she asked.



June

Two Hertfordshire police officers who saved the life of a disabled man badly burned in a flat fire were nominated for national Police Bravery Awards. PCs Ashley Crowe and Matthew Henry-Randell stayed 'calm and professional amid chaos' as they carried the man away from the fire before administering life-saving CPR.

Federation chair Luke Mitchell demanded that courts make an example of those who assault emergency workers. "Our members show incredible bravery and professionalism when faced with unacceptable violence and abuse," he said. A report by the charity Transform Justice revealed assaults were still occurring despite increased penalties.

Hertfordshire Police Federation secretary Al Wollaston said he would be happy to challenge the Force over its policies on Time

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Off for Dependants (ToFD) and Parental Bereavement Leave. It emerged that most forces were misleading officers and denying basic entitlements. Al said: "Our members make huge sacrifices and are always missing important family events because of the demands of the job - every now and then we have to put our family first and we should be able to do that with the support of our employers."

Hertfordshire Police Federation called for a 'meaningful pay rise' to help officers cope with soaring inflation and the cost-of-living crisis.

July

"It's nice to see them smiling, that's my reward." The words of PC Arron Worbey who mentored young adults as part of a Prince's Trust project to transform a community garden for the elderly.

The Force had to contend with a spike in Covid-19 cases. Branch chair Luke Mitchell raised concerns about the impact on physical and mental health of members particularly those suffering from prolonged symptoms (Long Covid). "Obviously our members can't just close the doors on their duties, but they must still be protected," he said.



Federation secretary Al Wollaston welcomed the Chief Constable's decision to pay the subscription fees of Special Constables who wish to sign up for Federation membership. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act, which became law in July, made this possible. Al said: "Specials face the same risks and should have access to the same support and representation."

August

Hertfordshire Police Federation's welfare van supported officers deployed to Birmingham for the Commonwealth Games. Branch secretary Al Wollaston and full-time rep Dean Cornish provided

refreshments to colleagues from the van which also has a seating area and toilet facilities.

Chair Luke Mitchell called on the Government to allow the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) to function independently when it sets pay awards. "We were all disgusted earlier this year when MPs accepted the pay rise recommended by their review body when police officers had been subject to a pay freeze," he said. Luke added it was "unacceptable" that some colleagues were relying on food banks or living payday to payday.

PC Marcus Zost, who works on a Safer Neighbourhood Team, urged others who are diagnosed with a neurodiverse condition to believe they can get into policing. The 31-year-old, who has dyslexia and autism, also suffers with severe anxiety. He said: "There are things in place that are there to support you and help you. Be proud of who you are."

Care of Police Survivors (COPS) held their annual service of remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. The event began with the arrival of around 300 Police Unity Tour cyclists -including officers, supporters and even a Police and Crime Commissioner - Bedfordshire's Festus Akinbusoye.

September

Tiff Lynch, national deputy chair of the Police Federation, denied claims by the Policy Exchange think tank that officers are "more interested in being woke than solving crimes". She told TalkRadio that service had instead been hampered by a decade of cuts and underinvestment. "We're seeing the consequences of the actions of 2011," said Tiff.

Flags at Federation headquarters were lowered to half-mast following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. And more than 10,000 police officers were deployed for the state funeral in London, including 100 from Hertfordshire. Branch secretary Al Wollaston said: "This was the biggest police operation in British history and the branch is proud that our members were involved in such a momentous occasion."

Inspector Rachael Robertson took part in Operation London Bridge after the death of the Queen, describing the experience as a “one-off that will never be emulated”. “The crowds were amazing,” she said. “I would describe it as the most positive engagement with the public I have experienced in the 21 years I have been a police officer.”



Workplace rep Gareth Rees attended National Police Memorial Day in Belfast, describing it as “an emotional occasion.” Candles were lit by relatives of fallen officers and petals of remembrance, representing those who lost their lives, descended from the gallery as the orchestra played Abide with me.

October

Hertfordshire Federation launched a campaign for double crewing, citing internal research which found there was an impact on officer stress and decision-making when single crewed. Chair Luke Mitchell commented: “We have a young workforce at the moment and assaults against officers are on the rise.”

Police officers being affected by the symptoms of the menopause shouldn't suffer in silence, the Federation's equality lead Terasa Holden said on World Menopause Day. “The more we talk about it, the more we're able to educate ourselves, our colleagues, and our line managers,” she added. Meanwhile, DCI Frankie Westoby who chairs Hertfordshire Women's



Network, warned that the Force was losing too many female officers who are “fed up with the fight”. “As females, we shouldn't have to battle to get a work-life balance or justify a promotion,” she asserted.

Detective Sergeant Laura Bassett founded a support network for colleagues who had experienced the heartbreak of losing a child. “It's important that people recognise that the trauma that comes with child or baby loss might stay with people forever,” said Laura, whose first child, Charlotte, died after being born prematurely at 28 weeks.

November

New Home Secretary Suella Braverman was warned by 16 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) who put their names to a letter that up to 10 per cent of new officers were ‘stuck in classrooms’ rather than fighting crime on the frontlines’. They challenged regulations which require new recruits to undertake three years of study and warned this would deter the non-academically minded and older recruits.

Colleagues were urged to swot up on the provisions of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act which afford greater protection to police drivers – but only if they are up-to-date with their training. Tim Rogers, police pursuits and driver training lead for the national Federation, said: “Their driving will no longer be assessed by the standards of the careful, competent driver, but will now be judged by those of their careful and competent colleagues who have completed the same level of prescribed training.”

December

A national shortage of prison places could see inmates housed in police cells in the short-term, heaping further pressure on the shoulders of officers.

Hertfordshire Police Federation chair Luke Mitchell warned that the workaround solution being implemented by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) would soak up precious resources from policing and put officers and prisoners at risk.

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