



# **PAY CRISIS PUTTING OFFICERS UNDER PRESSURE**

**MORE DETAILS ON PAGE 3**



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## Time for reform of the way police pay is decided

BY DARREN HARRIS, CHAIR OF SUFFOLK POLICE FEDERATION

### Welcome to the latest edition of the Suffolk Police Federation members' magazine.

It will come as no surprise that the main talking point in this issue is our call for a 17 per cent pay rise which we believe would be a fair offer and bring us back into line with public sector colleagues who perform other frontline roles.

Our pay claim is based on statistics from an independent think tank called the Social Market Foundation (SMF) which found that police pay had fallen by 17 per cent in real terms between 2000 and 2022.

The figure also takes into account rising inflation and the cost of living crisis which has left many of our members struggling to make ends meet - the Chief Constable of our neighbours in Essex says some of his officers are using a food bank set up in a police station.

It also recognises that, unlike our colleagues in the fire or ambulance services, police officers are unable to use the last resort of industrial action to press home our demands for fair pay and that is something the SMF believes has caused our wages to lag behind the others.

That is clearly unfair and the irony of police officers being asked to fill in when other emergency services personnel go on strike is not lost on our members.

I think the time has come for root and branch reform of the way police pay is decided and also of the mechanism underpinning the annual police funding settlement. We discuss both issues in the magazine.

Another major crisis facing the police service is the shortage of experienced detectives and how we can try to encourage more uniformed officers to transfer to CID.

Our branch secretary, Ben Hudson, appeared on TalkTV in his role as chair of the Police Federation National Detectives' Forum and gave a very eloquent description of the challenges his members face and possible solutions to serious issues around high caseloads and endless bureaucracy. You can read more about Ben's interview with Ian Collins in the magazine.

On a more positive note, the unique role of the Special Constabulary was also highlighted by TalkTV as part of its Police Week broadcasts.





# Federation calls for 17 per cent pay rise for officers

Suffolk Police Federation chair Darren Harris says members feel “betrayed” as new research reveals they’ve had a 17 per cent pay cut since 2000.

Darren says members are sick of the contempt in which they’re held by the Government as the research revealed police officers pay has slumped compared to other workers in the public and private sectors.

Now he’s joined the calls for a minimum 17 per cent pay rise for officers to bring them back to where they were at the start of the century.

His comments come as new figures from the Social Market Foundation (SMF) think tank revealed that pay for UK police officers declined by 17 per cent in real terms between 2000 and 2022.

According to the report, police wages have failed to keep pace with other emergency services workers, public sector workers, and all workers in general.

The report said that all these groups saw their pay rise in real terms over this period by a total of 1 per cent, 14 per cent, and 5 per cent respectively. The research showed MPs’ salaries saw a 4 per cent rise in total over the period.

Darren said: “This report makes for stark reading and our members will feel betrayed that their pay has, in effect, been slashed by 17 per cent since 2000.

“Many of our hard-working officers are now struggling to make ends meet as the cost of living crisis continues to bite, and members are sick of the contempt they’re held in by this Government.

“Other sectors are using their lawful right to strike and industrial action to improve their pay and conditions, but those avenues aren’t open to our members. Instead, we’re expected to police picket lines, an irony I’m sure isn’t lost on them.

**“Enough is enough. It’s disgraceful how police officers are treated and that has to change – starting with a pay award that not only reflects inflation and the cost of living but the decades of decline and the unique role we play.”**

The SMF report said officers’ decline in pay was likely to be linked to the restrictions on their right to strike compared to all other workers, including other emergency service personnel.

It also found that police constable starting salaries have lagged behind earnings as a whole across the economy by a considerable amount.

SMF has calculated that if these real-term trends continued over the next five years, police pay would see a further real-terms decline of four per cent by 2027 compared to private and public sector worker pay, which is expected to rise over the same period.

A key factor in police pay discussions is the P-factor which SMF has suggested should be offered in addition to its findings.

The P-factor is an element of police pay that reflects the unique responsibilities police officers experience relative to other comparable roles.

This includes their risk of exposure to physical and psychological harm, alongside the restrictions that are placed upon their private lives.

The P-factor payment does not feature in SMF’s report, highlighting that the actual figure of degradation of police pay is even greater.

National Federation chair Steve Hartshorn labelled the research a “wake-up call for policy-makers”.

[Chief Constable speaks out on officer pay](#)



# 'The system is not changing fast enough'

## Fed member who's resigned after 25 years speaks out



"I cannot see where I fit into the Force anymore at my age, and how sad is that after all this time?" says Suffolk Police Federation member Becky Webster who has made the 'difficult decision' to resign after 25 years.

The 48-year-old sergeant, who works in the Neighbourhood Partnership Team, claims 'the opportunities that were once there, are not there anymore', as she calls out the system for not being able to keep up.

Becky says there seems to be a 'one size fits all' box for officers to fit in now, as she explains how the values of the police no longer match hers and reveals her worry that the Force will 'lose experienced officers' if it does not change.

"I've had a brilliant time over the past 25 years, but things need to change - and they are not changing quickly enough," said Becky, "And it really saddens me. It frightens me to think about the future of policing.

"It took me eight months to make the decision to hand in my notice - it definitely was not an easy one to make."

Becky recalls how she was initially driven to join the police by her ambition to help people.

**"I know it might sound like a cliché but I just wanted to help people, plus, I didn't ever think I'd be bored in the job - thanks to the diverse nature of policing,"** continues Becky.

"Unfortunately, though, I feel the system has become unsupportive - not the people, the system within it. The system

just is not moving fast enough, and the opportunities that were once there are not anymore."

Becky tells how the promotion process has failed her, despite years of 'really hard work'.

"You really commit to the job and take years working really hard to progress. You put yourself through exams, and intense PDRs, and do anything you can to showcase your value," explains Becky, who filled the role as acting inspector for two years, and despite 'proving' herself in the job, was 'unable to get over the line because of an exam'.

**"And then it all comes down to an exam and one hour in front of a board. I felt like I was too old to be going through the process again."**

The challenges Becky felt when she experienced menopause also contributed to her decision to leave the Force, she recalls.

"I don't think the challenges that come with menopause are recognised enough - like brain fog or hot flushes," she added.

"I believe there are no - or hardly any - allowances for how our bodies, as women, change. And that is quite sad really. I personally lost all my confidence, I started to feel like a total failure. It's a horrible feeling, because, while I love my job, the daily tasks being asked of me were becoming really difficult. And it felt like the system wasn't able to adapt to suit my circumstances.

"I have a family, three teenagers at home, and to be honest, it all got

too much. The inflexibility of the organisation just doesn't allow the system to look at people as individuals, with their own needs. And it's not just women, it's men too - women just seem to be better at reaching out and talking about it."

Becky says that now felt like the 'right time to move on' and 'start a new career'.

"I have my own experience, but everybody's is different. People's personal circumstances change, and that happens in a job - it's just the way the police don't seem to be able to adapt to those changes," Becky said.

"Wellbeing is huge and if the Force doesn't start looking after people's wellbeing, then there won't be a workforce anymore. People will start to leave.

**"I haven't been treated badly, I know I've been supported by my direct line managers but the system itself needs to be modernised."**

"I can no longer see where I fit in within the Force anymore. And the sad thing is, when I revealed I was leaving, I had so many others getting in touch with me, asking for advice and telling me they're also unhappy."

Becky says she is now sharing her story in hope of helping others. She ended: "If I can help to make some sort of change or make life in the Force that little bit easier for others, then that is what it's all about."

# Caseloads and paperwork remain a challenge for detective



Caseloads and paperwork remain the biggest challenges for detectives, according to Suffolk Police Federation secretary Ben Hudson.

Ben, who is also chair of the Federation's National Detectives' Forum (PFNDF), said disclosure rules and the process of getting files to the Crown Prosecution Service left officers bogged down with administrative tasks.

Speaking on TalkTV as part of the channel's Police Week, he said:

"Detective workloads are huge and there are competing demands.

"Detectives are predominantly in the office or out and about making inquiries but are also carrying huge caseloads for cases which could go on for six or eight months or sometimes take more than a year to investigate."

Ben said disclosure rules and data protection guidelines made their jobs even more difficult.

**"The biggest challenges are caseloads and paperwork and the amount of administration needed just to get a simple charge,"** he said.

"In 2021 new guidance came in from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and that is what we have to abide by in order to put a file in for a charging decision.

"The rules set out by the Attorney

General govern what the Director of Public Prosecutions has to issue for the CPS and ultimately it means that, because of the Data Protection Act, we are having to spend far more time sitting at desks across policing in order to redact personal information from the files we hand over.

"So, where we have people on body-worn video that aren't involved in the case, their privacy is at stake so they have to be blocked out.

"If we take someone's phone, which we do in most cases, of all the contacts in that phone and all the people that have contacted them there might only be one person involved in the case and all the others have to be redacted so personal information isn't being shared.

"It's a huge job. Technology can only do so much because we have to look at it and identify it so one of the things I am leading on nationally for the Police Federation is to seek an amendment to the Data Protection Act to create a 'data bubble' for the police and the CPS."

Ben said there was a national shortfall in detective numbers and that uniformed colleagues no longer jumped at the chance of a transfer.

He said: "Becoming a detective requires an additional exam and sometimes that, from an educational perspective, will put people off.

"But also, to be a detective you are roughly taking a £1,200 pay cut because of the difference in not working nights and the shift allowance you get for that as a uniformed cop.

**"One of the things we are looking to address nationally is pay parity so we can try to ensure we can keep people interested in becoming a detective.**

"There are not enough detectives across the country. We can't attract people to move from their uniformed roles into detective jobs but what we have been able to do really successfully is attract new people into policing. I think we should be really proud of the way we have been able to attract people who didn't necessarily want to wear a uniform into policing so they can serve the community, help victims and do a job that they really enjoy as a detective."

[Read more.](#)





# International Women's Day: Fed rep reflects on life as a pregnant probationary officer

To mark this year's International Women's Day, we caught up with Federation rep Helen Self, as she reflects on her 27-year career, shining a light on what life was like being the first female student officer to have a baby during her probationary period.

Rewind back to 1996, when the now 49-year-old joined Suffolk Constabulary. She was 22 at the time, and during her probationary period, fell pregnant with her first child.

Nearly three decades later and Helen tells how she and her husband, who is a now retired dog handler, managed to juggle full-time work with a newborn.

"I think my claim to fame is that I was the first officer to fall pregnant during their probationary period and return to work," said Helen, who had the couple's second child in 2000.

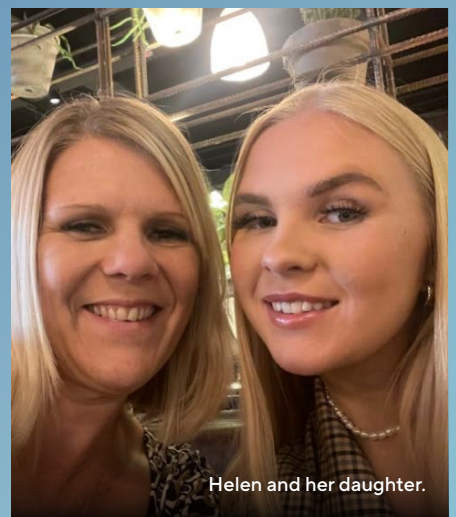
"Fortunately, I was really looked after by my colleagues and managers but every day I look back and think, how did we manage? It was really difficult to start with.

**"My husband and I were like ships passing. He would finish in the morning and then I'd go to work, having a quick handover of the kids.**

"Some days, if they desperately needed a dog handler to work on a call-out I would go home - during my shift - and be with the kids, to sit with them, until my husband returned, then I would go back to work.

"Let's just say the mum guilt was very real. Those late-night shifts meant I couldn't do bedtime, or not being able to make the kids' assembly. It was hard but it definitely made us stronger, as a little unit."

Helen, who was recently elected as the Federation's third full-time rep, said International Women's Day is all about celebrating the females across the Force and their accomplishments.



Helen and her daughter.

“Every woman has their own story and their own challenge, today is all about them,” continued Helen, who is a member of the local Women in Policing Group and the Carers’ Group at Suffolk, as well as the national Menopause Group.

“The job is very different now to what it was when I joined. As time progresses, I feel there are more opportunities for women. There are certainly more females in senior positions, including our very own Chief Constable.

**“But what still needs to be looked at is the challenges that women experience as they get older, especially surrounding menopause.”**

“I struggle with my fitness, in fact, I failed the fitness test last year and had to work harder to pass which I have now done. As an older woman, I’m not as physically as fit as my younger colleagues and forces need to adapt.”

Helen says that with her two children both grown adults now, this is her time to focus on her career.



Helen and her son.

She ended: “I really enjoy my role as a full-time Fed rep. This is my time now - my husband’s retired and my daughter has just gone off to start her own career. It’s time for me to focus on myself.”



## National deputy chair shares her story

On International Women’s Day, Tiff Lynch, the first female deputy chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, shared her inspiring story.

Tiff Lynch joined Leicestershire Police as an 18-year-old at a time when the Force didn’t usually admit anyone under 21.

It was clear from that day back in 1995 that she would have an exciting career ahead of her.

Her roles in the Force have included: beat officer, response driver, tactical support group, informant handling and firearms.

Tiff first sought help from the Police Federation of England and Wales when she needed them most, progressed to chair of the Leicestershire branch and has since progressed to become deputy chair of the national Federation, working closely with chair Steve Hartshorn.

But Tiff’s biggest challenge came after she was flicking through Twitter one night and found a tweet from Sky Sports News presenter Jacquie Baltrao encouraging women to self-check for cancerous lumps. Tiff immediately found two of them and began a battle which put her career firmly on the back burner.



[Watch Tiff’s video](#)





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# Renewed calls for police funding reform

Suffolk Police Federation chair Darren Harris has renewed his calls for police funding reform after the 2023/24 settlement was announced.

**Darren spoke out after the Government raised this year's settlement by £287 million to a total of £17.2 billion.**

A lot of the extra funding will come via council tax precepts which local Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) have been given the power to raise to the maximum levels.

Policing minister Chris Philp told the Commons: "Because of the way we are allocating the funding between PCCs who deliver frontline services, versus money spent by the Home Office centrally, the amount of money being received by PCCs will go up by over a half billion, it'll go up by £523 million.

"I would, of course, want to remind the House and to remind PCCs that before they turn to local taxpayers to increase

their contributions, it is important for PCCs and indeed chief constables to seek efficiencies and maximise productivity before increasing levels of tax."

Many PCCs, including Suffolk's Tim Passmore, have already indicated they will seek to raise the precept by the maximum allowed under a change in the rules introduced by this Government.

Critics accused the Government of handing responsibility for the police budget to the council taxpayers.

And shadow Home Office minister Sarah Jones said the grant funding "is down in real terms" and blamed the Government for "further burdening local taxpayers instead of dealing with inflation and properly funding the police".

Darren said: "I supported the PCC when he announced he wanted to raise his precept to its maximum level and I urged our members to do the

same because it was important that the Force received adequate resourcing.

"But the whole funding model is in need of reform from top to bottom and we want to see this annual settlement replaced with something more sustainable and longer term.

**"Forces should have the confidence to plan a long-term policing strategy that goes beyond the 12 months their budgets currently allow, so a different approach which removes the variables and financial uncertainties, is needed."**

Mr Passmore said the extra funding was needed to maintain an efficient service and provide the resources required to manage demand as effectively as possible for both the Force and the people of Suffolk.

## Survey findings 'difficult reading'

Suffolk Police Federation chair Darren Harris says members are sick of the contempt in which they're held by the Government.

Darren was speaking as a stark new report revealed the poor morale and dissatisfaction with pay and conditions, and the frustration members feel towards the Government.

The annual pay and morale survey carried out by the Police Federation and involving members across England and Wales found that 94 per cent of Suffolk police officers don't feel respected by the Government.

More than half of respondents (55 per cent) said their personal morale was low or very low, with 97 per cent saying that how they're treated by the Government was a major factor. Pay (83 per cent) and how police are treated by the public (80 per cent) were the other main reasons.

The survey gathered responses from 406 rank and file Suffolk officers, around 30 per cent, and found that 88 per cent of respondents feel morale in the Force is low or very low.

**[Find out more.](#)**

# 'I've gained so much as a Special'

A Special Sergeant 'who has always had an appetite for policing' has told how gaining unexpected spare time during the Covid-19 pandemic prompted him to train as a volunteer in the Force.

Inspired by his father and stepmother, who both worked as officers, Martin Ruddy (53) has been volunteering with Suffolk Police for just over 12 months.

The qualified pilot, who works as a general manager at National Air Traffic Services (NATS) at Stansted Airport, said when he saw Suffolk Constabulary was calling for volunteers, he 'jumped at the opportunity'.

**"There's a real crossover of learning between volunteering and my professional role. I've gained so much already as a Special, and equally, have been able to transfer my skills across the Force, especially as a sergeant,"** said father-of-two Martin.

"Working with the police has taught me so much, especially when it comes to people psychology, social interaction and inclusion. I manage up to 50 people in my professional job, and this continuous learning is

definitely having a positive impact on my role as a manager.

"I've been working in the same career for 30 years, and you get to a certain level in life where the job becomes slightly more relaxed. Volunteering as a Special has taken me away from the comfort of my office - it's taken me into a whole new world.

**"It's like I've started a whole new job. I've gone back to basics, out on the streets - and it's invigorating. Every day comes with its own challenges and that's what drives me forward."**

Martin, who also has a level five in coaching, says the qualification helps him better understand and manage his team as a Special Sergeant.

"Although I'm only in the infancy of my role as sergeant, my new responsibilities mean volunteering with the Force isn't just about responding to incidents anymore - it's about supporting my team, whether that's helping junior officers progress or being there for career Specials like me, when they need it," he added.

Martin explained that becoming a Special had exposed him to a range

of different people, who - despite all coming from various backgrounds - each share the same enthusiasm for volunteering with the police.

"My most memorable moment since becoming a Special is this one particular shift when I was driving back to the station with a colleague and we spotted an argument outside a pub," Martin recalled.

"Upon intervening, the offender actually ended up assaulting my colleague. At that point, I went to full protection mode - and following the incident, my colleague expressed how grateful he was that I was there to support him."

As soon as it was announced in the summer of last year that Specials could join the Police Federation, Martin did.

**"I welcomed the decision to allow Specials to join the Federation with open arms. It provides you with a level of security and protection, especially if an accusation is ever made against me. I feel confident that the Federation will offer me the support and guidance if I ever need it,"** he ended.

## SPECIALS HAVE UNIQUE ROLE IN POLICING, SAYS CHAIR

Suffolk Police Federation chair Darren Harris has spoken of his admiration for Special Constables nine months after they were allowed to subscribe to the Federation for the first time.

Darren said Specials had a unique role in policing and said it was only right they were able to access the support and representation of the Federation.

He said: "The campaign to allow Specials to join the Federation was a sign of just how much esteem

they're held in within policing and of their contribution to the police service.

"Specials hold the same powers as regular police officers, working alongside them to prevent and detect crime and protect the public.

"They come from different backgrounds and bring different life experiences, perspectives, and skills that benefit the Force and provide links to the communities we serve and protect.

"And they face the same threats as

regular officers, which is why it's absolutely fantastic that we're now able to access the same support and representation from the Federation as full-time officers."

Darren's comments echo those of Federation Welsh affairs and Specials lead Nicky Ryan, who described them as an "amazing asset" to policing and said the key roles they play should be properly acknowledged.

[Read more about Nicky's views on the Special Constabulary.](#)





# Take a break at our luxury lodge

Suffolk Police Federation is offering members the chance to book a relaxing low-cost break at its new holiday home, Meadowlark.

The holiday home gives members the opportunity to take a well-deserved break and recharge their batteries without having to break the bank on an expensive holiday.

Meadowlark, which sleeps up to eight people, is on Kelling Heath Holiday Park which is set among 300 acres of woodland and rare open heathland in an area of outstanding natural beauty near Weybourne on the North Norfolk coast.

There are brilliant beaches at Weybourne, East Runton, Cromer, Sheringham, Wells and Holkham and the holiday park is less than 30 miles from Norwich and its shops, bars and restaurants. Visitors who

want to spend more time at the holiday park can take advantage of its top-notch on-site recreational and leisure facilities which include a health and fitness club featuring gym, indoor and outdoor pools and tennis courts (six leisure passes are included free of charge).

The lodge has three bedrooms: one with a king size bed, one with two full size singles and the third with two smaller singles.

There is also double-sized sofa bed in the living room.

The lodge is fully equipped and furnished to an exceptionally high standard.

Meadowlark can be hired by members of the Suffolk Police Federation and subscribers to the Group Insurance Scheme on a first come, first served basis.



[Find out more](#)



# SUPPORTING INJURED OFFICERS

**Plans to create a new service offering support, help and advice to injured police officers have taken another step forward after a successful second virtual focus group meeting.**

Wounded Blue Line will be a one-stop shop which provides injured frontline workers with vital information and guidance on issues such as benefit entitlement, what they can claim while off work, what help is available to them and how it can be accessed.

The project is being spearheaded by Police Federation national wellbeing lead Belinda Goodwin and her Staffordshire branch colleague Claire Bond who hosted the most recent online event.

They want the network to become a safe environment for injured officers and their families to talk openly about their own experiences, setbacks and goals so invited guest speakers to share their stories.



## '13,000 NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICERS'

Labour's Yvette Cooper has promised an additional 13,000 neighbourhood police officers and a guarantee of community patrols if her party wins power.

The Shadow Home Secretary set out her ambition in a keynote speech at the Institute for Government and said the £360 million cost would be met through shared procurement and efficiencies.

In her speech, the Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper promised to restore the "bobby on the beat" with a named officer for each community.

An advertisement for Barker Gotelee Solicitors. The background image shows a person's legs in blue jeans and red rubber boots standing on a path, with a small, scruffy dog sitting next to them. The dog is looking towards the person. The text is overlaid on the image.

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# Planning maternity leave? Read our guide

The Police Federation of England and Wales has developed a calculator for members to work out how much maternity leave and pay they are entitled to.

The calculator allows officers to enter a due date, or dates for other scenarios such as early birth, extended maternity leave, or sickness for pregnancy-related reasons in the weeks prior to their due date.

Darren Harris, chair of Suffolk Police Federation, explained: "Welcoming a new child into your family should be a happy time but it can be stressful if you are unsure of what the time off will mean for your household budget. We have developed a useful tool that will help you to plan for every eventuality, and I hope members make use of it.

"If an officer takes maternity leave early, things can become complicated, and forces sometimes

get it wrong. So please be prepared but also turn to your Federation rep or the branch if you need any help or advice."

Maternity rules operate differently for police officers than for other pregnant workers. Officers, for example, are eligible for both Police Maternity Pay and Statutory Maternity Pay but are only entitled to police maternity leave, not statutory maternity leave.

The Federation has also prepared a booklet to guide members on what to expect during pregnancy, while on maternity leave and when returning to work, as well as setting out entitlements available to partners.

[Read the booklet and access the calculator.](#)



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