

# federation



West Midlands Police Federation

April/May 2019



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# Welcome

Welcome to the April/May 2019 edition of *federation* - the magazine for members of West Midlands Police Federation.

We are always on the look-out for good news stories so please get in touch if you have something to share with colleagues. It does not have to relate to your policing role – though we are definitely interested in hearing about what's going on around the Force. Do you have an interesting hobby or perhaps you are involved in sport locally, as a player, a manager, a coach?

Just get in touch and let us know.

We would also be interested to hear what you would like to see featured in your magazine.

**Cover photo:** The Knife Angel comes to Coventry - see Page 6 for full story.  
Photo courtesy of Dean Wainwright Photography.

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# Fed conference cancelled after cyber-attacks



By **Rich Cooke**, chair of West Midlands Police Federation

**2**019 was supposed to be a year of celebration for the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Set up in 1919, the Federation was planning to mark its centenary, look back on its successes and acknowledge some of the difficulties it has faced over the last 100 years while also looking ahead

to the future.

But while all those involved in centenary celebrations have focused their minds on fitting ways to mark such a milestone, no-one could really have foreseen that a major crisis was in the offing and one of epic proportions described by our national chair as 'crushing'.

On Thursday 28 March, the Police Federation announced that it had been forced to cancel its annual conference. One of the key events in the policing calendar, this year's conference was due to be held in Birmingham's ICC on 11 and 12 June.

But two weeks after the second of two cyber-attacks on the Federation's IT systems, news broke that the conference had been shelved since it would be impossible to deliver the event without its IT infrastructure.

National chair John Apter has said the decision to cancel conference was an emotional one for him to take both professionally and personally but explained: "We cannot deny that the Federation as a whole is in crisis – the priority is our members and re-establishing day to day business."

The cancellation of conference is, of course, hugely disappointing. The conference gives Federation delegates the chance to hear speeches from Government ministers - usually including the Home Secretary - and other police leaders, find out more about policing work away from

their home forces and also network with officers across England and Wales and beyond.

But, the national chair is right when he says that members' needs have to come first and we must channel all our energies into re-establishing day to day business. It is hard to see how the event could have been successfully staged given that at the time of the decision to cancel it we were just nine weeks from the planned opening day.

As I write this, we are still far from a state of business as usual though.

The first cyber-attack, in early March, seemed to only affect the Federation's headquarters in Leatherhead but the second, a couple of weeks later, extended beyond HQ to the majority of local branches.

I must stress that there is no indication at this stage that any data has been taken but nevertheless the Federation's IT systems – including our own – have been brought to a standstill.

A criminal investigation has been launched and we are assured that everything is being done to get all our systems back up and running securely again.

But, of course, with no IT, data, files, website and emails, it has been difficult for the national Federation and individual branches to function.

Business recovery experts have said under normal circumstances it takes at



least four to six months to recover from a cyber-attack. But, of course, our situation is worsened because we had two attacks and are in the midst of what has been described as a 'lengthy and complex' criminal investigation.

The Federation is working with the National Crime Agency which is leading a criminal investigation into the matter, the National Cyber Security Centre and cyber-security experts BAE Systems.

But in the meantime, we are doing our best to maintain our usual services to members and we will keep you informed of progress.

### National chair's comments in full

In a statement published on Twitter, John Apter, who was working towards his first conference as national chair, said: "We have come through a lot in the last 100 years and we will get through this but it was only right that we took the decision to cancel this year's annual conference as all efforts need to focus on getting business as usual back up and running, to restore member services and support.

'We have to prioritise what is achievable now and in the coming weeks and months, and we have to be realistic. Supporting members is our primary concern.

"Work behind the scenes has been relentless and investigations are continuing into what has been a crushing experience for the whole Federation network.

"Experts in business recovery have stated that under normal circumstances it would take at least four to six months to recover from a cyber-attack – we have had two and are in the midst of what will be a lengthy and complex criminal investigation.

"Annual conference was due to take place in nine weeks' time and it would not have been possible to deliver this without our IT infrastructure.

"We cannot deny that the Federation as a whole is in crisis – the priority is our members and re-establishing day to day business. This is not a decision I have made in isolation. I have taken on board lots of advice and, although a painful decision, I do feel this is the right one in the circumstances. I would also add that although Brexit and its potential impact on policing has not been a deciding factor in this decision it has been a consideration.

"As national chair, this has truly been an emotional decision for me, both personally and professionally but the priority is our members and the day to day business."

# PCC unveils plans for 200 extra officers

A further 200 West Midlands Police officers will be recruited over the next two years.

Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson has confirmed police officer numbers, which were due to total 6,539 in 2021, will now rise to 6,739.

Recruitment will begin shortly.

The PCC said: "By driving further efficiencies and making cost savings I have been able to deliver 200 more police officers for West Midlands Police.

"These officers will make a difference to tackling violent crime in the West Midlands. Despite the huge efficiencies made by the Force, these additional officers will not make up for the more than 2,000 lost since 2010. West Midlands Police has faced cuts to its budget from Government of £175 million over the last nine years.

"I will continue to campaign for a better funding settlement for West Midlands Police."

Rich Cooke, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, has welcomed the PCC's commitment to increasing officer numbers but has also called on the Government to invest in policing so that the Force can further increase officer numbers and make up for years of under-investment.

"The Federation warned at the start of the Government's cuts programme that there would be consequences. Those consequences have been felt by the public, who have commented on the lack of policing presence and seen a rise in crime, and also by our officers who are struggling to cope as there are just not enough of them to go around," he explained.

## Taser is needed by all front-line officers

Established front-line police officers need to be trained in the use of Taser and issued with the devices before any roll-out to student officers.

That is the view of West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke who was responding to a statement from police minister Nick Hurd on the decision to allow student officers access to Taser.

Rich explained: "We want all our front-line, and potentially custody, officers to have Taser. However, only around 40 per cent of officers will actually be issued with one after the present uplift within the Force. So this Government decision is rather academic.

"We need our established officers to be trained in the use of Taser and issued with them before we can even think about getting our student officers trained. Fundamentally, I see no reason why student officers shouldn't be trained to use Taser but, as with so many other things, it's a question of priorities particularly when police chiefs are struggling to match reduced resources with increased demand due to the Government's cuts programme."

The decision has also been hailed as a 'victory for our members and for common sense' by the national chair of the Police Federation, John Apter.

John said: "Taser is a vital piece of protective equipment and the Federation has long campaigned for all officers – including those within their probation - who want to carry it and who pass the assessment criteria to be able to.

"The current make-up of the police service means that in some areas student officers form large percentages of the front-line emergency response and neighbourhood teams so it is only right that they should be given the opportunity to access this equipment which is proven to protect them and the public."

But, with no Government funding for the shift in policy, he went on to warn that there must be a significant, centrally-funded investment specifically for Taser provision.

"Chief officers should be able to make vitally important operational decisions such as these based on the safety of their officers and the communities they serve, rather than the need to balance columns on a spreadsheet," the national chair concluded.

A package for training student officers has been drawn up by the College of Policing but chief constables will decide if their student officers will be given access to Taser.



# An angel with a powerful message



Standing at 27 feet tall, the Knife Angel was created by artist Alfie Bradley at the British Ironworks Centre in Oswestry using more than 100,000 knives surrendered in nationwide amnesties.

It serves as a memorial to those whose lives have been affected by knife crime and was created as a national monument against violence and aggression.

The Knife Angel began touring the UK last year and, having already visited Hull and Liverpool, came to Coventry in mid-March. It is sited outside the city's cathedral where Bedworth based photographer Dean Wainwright was able to capture his front cover shot of two officers taking in its poignant message.

"I had gone to look at the Knife Angel as I had heard a lot about it and wanted to see it for myself. The rollercoaster of emotion that surrounds you is immense with it towering above you and the names and inscriptions of families who have lost loved ones on some of the knives," Dean explains.

"The officers pulled up and I seized the opportunity to take some photos of the respect they were showing, reflecting on what they see day to day. I managed to have a brief chat with them and took a few more photos before they moved on, as they did some firefighters arrived to look at the angel."

Dean posted the image on Facebook and has seen it shared across the world.

In his post, Dean wrote: "I took this photo Thursday evening outside the cathedral of two local police officers taking a moment to reflect on how something that could cause so much damage to so many lives now looks as stunning as this. 100,000 knives removed from the streets of the UK.

"I urge you to pay a visit to see this, stand and look at it, not just in its physical form but what it stands for, people have described feeling a rollercoaster of emotions and each person feels something different.

"It has stirred so many thoughts in my mind, what does the image say to you? I don't want to hear 'police officers wasting time and should be out catching criminals' because you don't know their story, they





were there for moments before moving on.  
 "Please NO MORE KNIFE CRIME."

Dean says taking the image was tricky as the bright spotlights proved challenging but he was keen to capture the shot at the expense of a little of the quality he would normally aim for.

"It was the content that has made it so popular with a reach on Facebook of more than 1.3 million now and more than 10,500 shares. I have been contacted by people from all over the world asking if it could be used in knife crime projects in Australia, America and Spain as well as all over the UK," he explains.

But perhaps one of the best responses came from the artist who created the sculpture with Alfie Bradley contacting Dean to tell him he thought it was a fantastic photo.

Dean has been a keen photographer for several years particularly enjoying taking pictures of wildlife. He volunteers as a photographer at local wildlife parks but also does wedding photography, sporting events, dance shows and so on.

He is also a FA Youth Football coach and has recently attempted to raise awareness of knife crime through social media and football safeguarding officers within youth groups as there is nothing offered by the Football Association for this.

The Knife Angel will be at Coventry Cathedral until 23 April 2019.

Thanks to Dean Wainwright Photography for allowing us to use this image.

[www.facebook.com/deanwainwrightphotography](http://www.facebook.com/deanwainwrightphotography)

# Knife crime soars

**K**nife crime across the West Midlands Force area rose by 19 per cent in the 12 months to September 2018, according to the latest crime statistics.

The figures released by the Office of National Statistics show that between October 2017 and September 2018 there were 3,108 offences involving a knife or bladed instrument across the Force, and in the previous 12 months there were 2,615 offences.

Broken down further, the figures revealed that 44 per cent (42 offences) were attempted murder, 22 per cent (1,715 offences) were robbery, and eight per cent (73 offences) were threats to kill.

Nationally, knife crime rose by 13 per cent in the same time period.

The figures also show there was a 26 per cent increase in violent offences, 17 per cent increase in robberies and 20 per cent rise in sexual offences.

Overall crime in West Midlands increased by 10 per cent, compared to the national average of eight per cent.

Rich Cooke, chair of West Midlands Police Federation, commented: "We seem to be living in a society where some people think it is acceptable to carry a knife and to use it on someone else. It isn't and it never will be. Yet, while we are operating at our limit thanks to the Government cuts to our funding, it feels like our hands are tied and we are struggling as a Force to properly tackle knife crime."

"These latest figures are extremely worrying, not just for the public but also for our officers who are the ones who have to attend the incidents and are faced with the threat of a knife. Our officers are doing their very best to tackle crime and protect

the public, but despite this more and more people are getting hurt in violent offences.

"These incidents can have a real impact not only on the victims themselves, but also on the communities where the crimes take place and the victims live."

Nationally, murder and manslaughter are at their highest levels for 12 years and violent offences have increased 19 per cent overall, prompting national Federation chair John Apter to claim the public has been let down despite the best efforts of police officers to fight crime.

"Society just isn't as safe as it once was, and although the police service is doing everything within its power, we are swimming against the tide and it is the public who are being let down," John explained.

"The murder toll has increased from 649 deaths last year to 739, an annual increase for the fourth consecutive year. This represents thousands of families and friends grieving all over the UK. The NHS says that hospital admissions in England alone from knife-related offences soared to 4,986 over the past 12 months.

"This is a terrifying picture for our communities whose lives are being blighted by violent crime on a daily basis. Yet we have a Government whose own Violent Crime Strategy omitted to mention that the number of police officers has plummeted by around 22,000 since 2010, 80 per cent from the front-line. This is not a coincidence; we need more boots on the ground to help combat this epidemic."



# Force uses emergency stop and search powers

**C**hief Constable Dave Thompson has vowed to implement extensive stop and search powers for the foreseeable future, in response to a surge in knife crime.

He also pledged to continue extra patrols with additional officers in areas of Birmingham offering communities visible reassurance after the murders of three teenagers within days of each other.

He said: "Immediate and intensive action is needed to prevent this current crisis from continuing. My officers have been given extensive powers to search people without the need to suspect they are carrying weapons.

"I recognise this will upset some innocent young people, but I fear the carriage of weapons in the current environment is growing, often through fear, and we can take no chances.

"For our young people, their families and communities we need to stop this emergency quickly. Without specific areas or people to target that means blunt action to prevent violence. That is what we will do.

"Violence builds into the summer months and we will need to apply intensive pressure for a sustained period. We will be courteous but firm."

He is also urging parents to have conversations with their children to take an active interest in where they are and who they are with. He said: "Arguments and disagreements build on social media or are overheard on the bus and in school or college. We need you to play a part in telling someone if a fight or trouble is brewing or if you hear someone has a knife.

"If you spot trouble ask the police or local authority for help. I do not want to arrest young people if we can avoid this. We need to target the people who make our children feel unsafe. You have to be part of the solution to this problem."

Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson has supported the use of Section 60 stop and searches and called on local communities, councils and other agencies to help stop the violence.

He explained: "I am also doing all I can to

drive efficiencies at West Midlands Police and put those savings into increasing officer numbers. This will not be of the scale to make up for the over 2,000 officers we have lost since 2010, but will make a difference on the ground.

"This should also be a time for reflection from the Government. As well as supporting our efforts to take a public health approach by funding an expansion of the Violence Prevention Alliance, they also need to ensure that there is a long-term solution to West Midlands Police's budget issues.

"It cannot be right that West Midlands Police serves a slightly larger population, and has similar threat levels than Greater Manchester, but has a budget that is £22.2 million smaller. These long-term funding issues are an important part of the fight against violent crime and need to be addressed too."

“Immediate and intensive action is needed to prevent this current crisis from continuing. My officers have been given extensive powers to search people without the need to suspect they are carrying weapons.”



# Stop and search powers needed to tackle knife crime epidemic

Emergency stop and search powers need to be introduced nationwide to halt the knife crime epidemic, Rich Cooke, chair of West Midlands Police Federation has argued.

Rich was commenting after the Force introduced Section 60 powers – which allow officers to search suspects without needing specific grounds – after three teenagers died in 11 days following knife attacks.

“The feeling among officers is that the operation is paying dividends across the city... arrests are up, and dangerous weapons have been removed from the streets,” he wrote in a column for the Daily Telegraph.

Rich was also critical of Prime Minister Theresa May who claimed there was ‘no direct correlation between certain crimes and police numbers’ and agreed with national Federation chair John Apter who has called the PM ‘delusional’.

“How can the Government not see that there is a link between a fall in officer numbers and an increase in knife crime? We have lost the visible policing presence on our streets, neighbourhood policing, and the vital links it provides with our communities, has been decimated and we are struggling to keep the public safe,” he wrote.

“I appreciate it’s not as simple as just increasing police numbers but it would certainly be a good starting point, particularly with an increase in the use of stop and search. We then need to look at re-building relationships with communities and working in partnership with other

“ I appreciate it’s not as simple as just increasing police numbers but it would certainly be a good starting point, particularly with an increase in the use of stop and search. We then need to look at re-building relationships with communities and working in partnership with other public sector and community organisations to get to the roots of this issue. ”

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The country’s top police officer, Metropolitan Police Commission Cressida Dick, also said the Prime Minister had got it wrong on knife crime.

She explained: “I agree that there is some link between violent crime on the streets obviously and police numbers, of course there is, and everybody would see that.”

John Apter, who has been interviewed by many media outlets on the issue, has called the knife crime epidemic a national crisis.

“Policing has been stripped to the bone and the consequences are clear - splashed across newspapers front pages and TV news bulletins; children being murdered on our streets,” he said.

“What makes this all the more sickening

is that it was predicted. This is the true cost of austerity that we warned of but were ridiculed for doing so. Theresa May herself accused the Police Federation of ‘crying wolf’ when we highlighted our concerns. Those concerns have become a reality but still the Prime Minister fails to accept the harsh truth.”

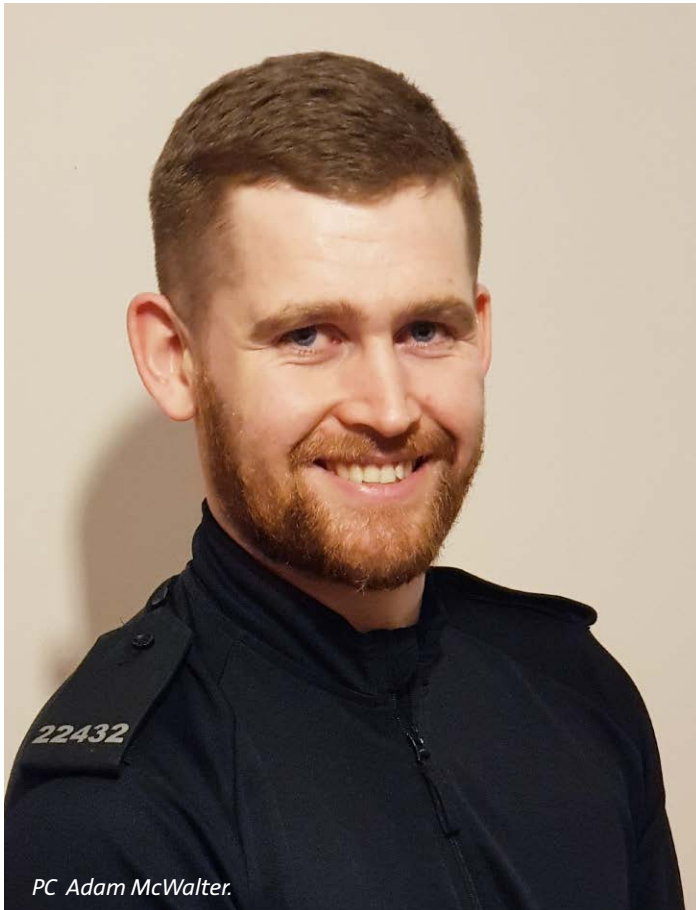
He added: “What we need now is less talk and more action, fewer policies and more police officers - boots on the ground, out there on our streets making a real difference, protecting our youngsters. Yet politicians, who have it in their power to make this effective and meaningful change, choose to merely tinker around the edges with new-look ASBOs and catchy hashtags.

“The public deserve better, they need our so-called leaders to step up and lead, to stop the bloodshed and end this criminal waste of young life.”

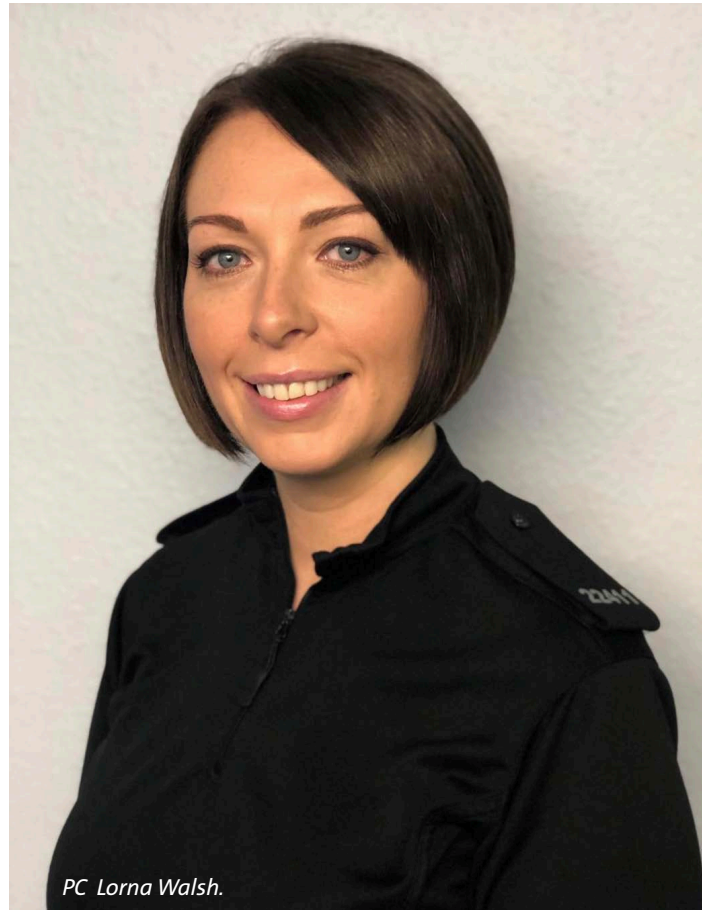
Home Secretary Sajid Javid chaired a roundtable with chief constables to discuss the crisis and also later met with the national chair of the Federation.



# Student officers nominated for Police Bravery Awards



PC Adam McWalter.



PC Lorna Walsh.

**T**wo West Midlands officers who were still in training when they confronted a group of men armed with knives have been nominated for a national bravery award.

PCs Lorna Walsh and Adam McWalter were still student officers, when on 15 June 2018, they were left fearing for their own safety.

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

The officers got out of their vehicle and identified themselves as police officers before shouting for the man to put down the knife. They drew their batons and spray but the man with the knife started to run towards PC McWalter with the knife out in front of him in

a threatening manner, before being seen to discard it over a wall.

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

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

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

In their nomination, Inspector Ahmed write: "Both officers have described the incident as the single most scariest moment of their police career and where they genuinely feared that they might not make it home that night to their families.

"I am proud to say that not only did their training kick in but their basic survival instincts ensured they demonstrated great communication and team work which prevented them from not only getting hurt but prevented another member of the public getting seriously injured."

PC Walsh and PC McWalter have been nominated for the Police Federation's annual Police Bravery Awards. This year's awards ceremony takes place on 18 July in London. It honours some of the finest officers in England and Wales who have performed incredible acts of bravery, while on or off duty. The event is now in its 24th year.



# Here For You annual report highlights Federation's work in 2018

**W**est Midlands Police Federation's annual public value report has been published – and outlines our work on behalf of members in 2018.

It has been a busy year for the branch and all the key facts and figures have been brought together in the Here For You report to give a snapshot of all that has been achieved on behalf of members.

There are updates from all areas of the Federation's work including conduct and performance, personnel and equalities, health and safety and professional development.

The report also reveals how many conduct meetings the Federation has been involved in, supporting members and offering advice and guidance at a most difficult time for them.

Federation branch chair Rich Cooke comments in his summary for the report: "West Midlands Police Federation is committed to representing and supporting members with a firm focus on their health, welfare and wellbeing, in both a physical and mental sense.

"The Government's austerity measures and cuts to police budgets have put the police service under pressure as it tries to do more with less. Our communities have suffered and are increasingly aware of the effects of a reduced visible policing presence. But our officers are suffering too as they try to effectively meet ever-rising demand despite there being fewer and fewer of them to go around."

He continues: "We have been at the forefront of the Federation's Protect the Protectors campaign which in November

2018 led to the new Assaults on Emergency Service Workers (Offences) Act coming into effect. The act creates a new aggravated offence of an assault against a member of the emergency services and doubles the maximum sentence for these cowardly and despicable acts from six to 12 months. It is hoped this will act as a stronger deterrent and send out a clear message that assaults on officers – and other blue light workers – will not be tolerated. Nevertheless we are still seeing far too many incidents in which our members are assaulted while doing their job.

"The campaign also called for better protective equipment and I have been very vocal in calling for the Force to provide Taser – and training – to all of our officers who wish to carry the devices. In December, the Force announced a further 998 officers will be equipped with Taser, bringing our total Taser-trained officers to 1,441, which is about half of our front-line officers so I will continue to keep up the pressure on this.



"Meanwhile, we are also working as a Federation, and through its Health and Safety Committee in particular, to address the growing problem of officer stress and this is another issue that we will continue to raise during 2019."

Secretary Steve Grange gives an overview of the year and explains; "There were four key themes to my work during 2018 – the Federation elections, maintaining the quality of service we offer members, officers' pay and, perhaps linked to that, issues around retention and recruitment."

The report was published at the end of March. Printed copies are available from the Federation office on request and an electronic version of the report can be found on the Federation website: [polfed.org/westmids](http://polfed.org/westmids)

“ West Midlands Police Federation is committed to representing and supporting members with a firm focus on their health, welfare and wellbeing, in both a physical and mental sense. ”

# Members will get the best support from the Federation

Custody Sergeant Dave Hadley has been subject to both disciplinary and criminal proceedings during his policing career, experiences, he believes, give him the ideal background to support colleagues facing similar inquiries.

For almost four years, Dave was away from active duty while he was involved in a death in custody case. He was acquitted of all charges.

After five years as a workplace representative, Dave officially becomes a full-time West Midlands Police Federation conduct lead in June when John Tooms retires.

But, thanks to the support of the Chief Constable, will start in the office at the end April to ensure a smooth hand-over.

His motivation for becoming a rep in the first place was borne out of a desire to give something back to the Federation, having been thankful for the support he had received when he had found himself the subject of such intense scrutiny.

"I felt almost obliged to give back to the Federation something tangible to 'repay', I

suppose, what the Federation did for me and the others involved in the proceedings I was subjected to," he explained, "Helping our colleagues through some of the most stressful times imaginable has made this the most rewarding role I have ever had the privilege to carry out."

With an obvious interest in the discipline arena, Dave was elected to the Conduct and Performance Liaison Officers (CaPLO) Committee in December 2015 and attended the Federation training course in January 2016. He has since supported numerous officers through conduct cases.

As a result, when John announced his retirement, Dave didn't hesitate to put himself forward for the full-time role, feeling he had the right skillset and experience.

He said: "I'm passionate about helping those who are going through what I personally went through. I have empathy for members, a positive outlook and I will work hard on their behalf.

"I feel it is a real strength that I can say 'I have been through what you are going through'. I can also hand on heart reassure

## FORCE CAREER

Dave joined WMP in October 2000. His first posting was on the F3 OCU at Holyhead Road where, as a response officer, he also had a beat from Crockets Lane, Handsworth up to West Bromwich Albion's The Hawthorns Ground.

"Unfortunately, I was away from active duty between September 2003 and August 2007 following the death in custody of Michael Powell. I appeared as one of the defendants in a criminal trial at Leicester before being acquitted of all charges," he said.

Dave went back to work at Stourbridge response on the old J2 OCU where he began acting up as a sergeant before being promoted to substantive sergeant in 2009.

He applied to become a custody sergeant shortly after and went into the newly-formed CJC department in April 2010. He has been a custody sergeant ever since.

"I felt almost obliged to give back to the Federation something tangible to 'repay', I suppose, what the Federation did for me and the others involved in the proceedings I was subjected to. Helping our colleagues through some of the most stressful times imaginable has made this the most rewarding role I have ever had the privilege to carry out."

people that they will get the very best support from the Federation."

Nevertheless, Dave is under no illusions that moving from the workplace representative role to a full-time conduct lead role is not going to be without its difficulties and appreciates that he has big shoes to fill.

"It will certainly be a challenge to adjust to life without John Tooms, it is no exaggeration to say that what he doesn't know isn't worth knowing, he has been such a big part of the CaPLO team that he will be a tough act to follow," he explained.

"However I'm really fortunate to be able to rely on George McDonnell as the other full-time lead. George is also massively experienced and someone whose advice I



“ In the long-term, I hope to be able to build a reputation as an expert in all matters CaPLO. ”

really value – I’ll no doubt need to draw on that as I find my feet as a full-time rep. We’ve been really lucky in the West Midlands to have had John and George guiding the ship so ably.”

While following in John’s footsteps is one concern, Dave is also aware that officers are finding themselves in hot water over their use of social media and is keen to ensure that members familiarise themselves with the new Force policy in this area.

“I don’t think officers always grasp the consequences that can follow from the things they are willing to share or comment about while online. I would encourage everybody to have a read of the Force social media policy. Officers are just getting themselves into unnecessary difficulties, mainly because social media has become so embedded in everyone’s lives that they just don’t seem to see that they are exposing themselves to scrutiny,” he said.

Nationally, the Federation has been putting pressure on both Force professional standards departments (PSD) and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) to put an end to long, drawn-out investigations into officers’ conduct.

It also wants to ensure that the new ethos of learning and development rather than punishment is taken on board when the new conduct regulations come into force later this year.

Dave is keen to keep on top of both of these issues once in post.

“In the short-term, I am really keen to try to make in-roads with the IOPC and PSD to ensure that the timeliness of investigations into the conduct of our members is more of a priority; something which I know John and George have also advocated,” he said.

“I’m also really focused on building on the knowledge and experience I’ve already gained and continuing to build on the relationships I have with the solicitors and lawyers we use regularly.”

And Dave added: “In the long-term, I hope to be able to build a reputation as an expert in all matters CaPLO.”



## Dave cooks up success after MasterChef appearance

Suspended from work Dave Hadley became hooked on the chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall’s River Cottage television series and developed a love of cooking that led to him appearing on TV himself as a contestant on the BBC’s ever-popular MasterChef.

But while his progress in last year’s series of the show was thwarted by a fall-out with a pasta making machine, Dave still has a passion for cooking and has set up a pop-up event called ‘Dave Hadley’s Seasonal Supper Club’ which has seen him take over the kitchen of a local café or bar on Saturday evenings through the year to prepare and serve gourmet dishes for around 30 diners.

“I was making wild mushroom ravioli when I had the disagreement with a pasta machine so didn’t get past the cliff-hanger decision to go through from the first round,” said Dave, “I had been a fan of MasterChef for years, I always thought I would try to get on but I waited until I thought I had enough knowledge and skill to give a good account of myself.

“It was a fantastic experience, it didn’t go as well as I’d have hoped but I wouldn’t change it for the world. They have around 40,000 applications to get on so to get through the selection to be in the final 56 who appear on TV is a bit of an achievement in itself I reckon.”

Sadly, he didn’t get to properly meet the two presenters, John Torode and Greg Wallace, saying: “As a contestant, you only really see them as you do on TV - they keep

completely separate otherwise. You would have thought they would pop their heads in before filming but they don’t. You see them and the kitchen for the first time as you walk through the doors into the studio.”

Part of the reason he was disappointed not to have made it further in the competition was that he had developed his own take on a local speciality that he wanted to show off.

“We were given briefs for the next rounds, I was given ‘comfort food’ as a brief by Grace Dent, the restaurant critic. As a Black Country lad, I could only do one thing – faggots. I spent a ridiculous amount of time perfecting the recipe and look of the dish but I never got the chance to cook it,” Dave says.

He did, however, get himself noticed in the first round as he caused a bit of a stir by wrapping a tea towel around his head, explaining: “It was really hot in there!”

And, despite crashing out in the first round, Dave has clearly retained his love of cooking, with a signature dish of pan-fried duck breast, mustard mash and red wine jus.

If you want to try out any of his dishes, check out his ‘Dave Hadley’s Seasonal Supper Club’ Facebook page and book a table – but you will need to be quick, they sell out within minutes.

“They have gone from strength to strength and I have loved doing them as it’s given me a chance to be creative with my cooking,” he says.

# Rich takes on biking challenge to support COPS



Last year's Police Unity Tour cyclists.

Perhaps in common with many people, Rich Cooke seems to be able to get each year off to a good start in terms of improving his fitness and keeping his weight under control but then finds it goes a little awry in the second half of the year.

So, inspired by seeing the Police Unity Tour cyclists arrive at the National Memorial Arboretum for the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) memorial service last year, the West Midlands Police Federation chair has taken decisive action to break that cycle.

Rich will be joining the West Midlands Chapter of the Police Unity Tour this year and come July will be embarking on a 180-mile cycle ride over three days to raise money for COPS, the charity dedicated to supporting the families of fallen police officers and staff. Chief Constable Dave Thompson has also signed up to take part.

"For me, the motivation is two-fold," said Rich, "Quite simply, I wanted to get fit and lose weight. I seem to have got myself into a bit of a habit. In the first half of a year, I am

really active and then as the year goes on I let it slip.

"I have followed this pattern for years, it's amazingly predictable and I yo-yo in terms of my weight and fitness as a result so I wanted to tackle that.

"But, added to that, I am also a big supporter of both the COPS service in July and the National Police Memorial Day later in the year as I feel it is very important that we honour the sacrifice of those who have given their lives in serving policing and their communities.

"COPS is a great charity and provides a real life-line to those families devastated by the loss of a their loved ones so I really wanted to do something to support their work."

A keen runner, Rich usually runs regularly, picking up his exercise as each new year begins, but puts his inability to maintain his efforts into the second half of the year down to picking up an injury that usually stops him pounding the streets and clocking up

the miles.

"I am really into running," he says, "But I always get to a really good level of fitness before I succumb to one injury or another and once I stop running that's when 'the rot' sets in. I like to eat, I like a drink and that never stops so once the running stops I am in trouble."

So, on 28 December this year, with his commitment to the PUT in mind, Rich started to build up some pedal power and by the middle of March he was completing regular 10-mile routes and even had a 55-mile ride under his belt. As an added bonus, he had shed a stone in weight.

He still has a way to go though in terms of preparing for the tour which will start on Friday 26 July and end at the arboretum in Alrewas, Staffordshire on Sunday 28 July.

Last year, the West Midlands Chapter's route took them across Herefordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

Other chapters – made up of police officers, police staff and other supporters – made similar tours before all groups came together to ride into the arboretum to join the families, officers of all ranks and other invited guests, including PCCs, civic dignitaries and Federation representatives at the memorial service which marks the end of the COPS family weekend.

Each rider wears a wristband dedicated to the memory of a fallen officer and, where possible, they present this to the officer's family at the end of the tour.

Rich was encouraged to take part in this year's PUT by West Mercia Police Federation secretary Steve Butler who was one of 29 riders with the West Midlands Chapter last year.

Last year's team included West Midlands Police officer and avid road cyclist Stu Collins. The Force was also represented by recently retired Chief Inspector Kerry Blakeman who rode for his father, PC Kerim Blakeman, and Sean Walker, a police staff member, riding for his father, PC Mac Walker.

Gill Wall, a member of police staff from Lloyd House, formed part of the seven-strong support team. In addition, officers from other forces in the chapter, rode for fallen West Midlands Police PCs Michael Chapman, Anthony Salt and Deborah Harman-Burton.



# Survey reveals officer stress

**W**est Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke says years of cuts and under-investment have left the Force 'over-stretched and under-staffed'.

He was speaking as the national Federation's new Officer Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey revealed that 84 per cent of members in the West Midlands feel there are not enough officers to do the job properly. That is slightly less than the national figure of 90 per cent.

The survey, published on 13 February, also found that 73 per cent of West Midlands Police Federation members feel their workload is too high or much too high. Nationally, that figure is 72 per cent.

And 79 per cent of respondents indicated they had experienced feelings of stress, low mood, anxiety or other difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the last 12 months, in line with the national figure.

Rich said: "This is an important survey but it makes for concerning reading. It shows that our service is over-stretched and under-staffed leaving us unable to effectively meet the needs of our communities.

"Years of cuts have taken their toll on the service and on individuals, who are increasingly feeling the stress and strains of policing on a shoestring. Something has to change. The Government has to recognise the invaluable work of our members and invest in policing so we can properly protect the public."

The survey, which is the only national policing survey of its kind, was carried out by the Police Federation of England and Wales, throughout August and September last year.

More than 18,000 officers from the rank of constable to chief inspector gave their views on the demand currently experienced by the service and how this has affected them. This is the second time this survey has been conducted, the first being in 2016, with 884 responses from West Midlands Police, representing a 14 per cent response rate.

Nationally, the results show:

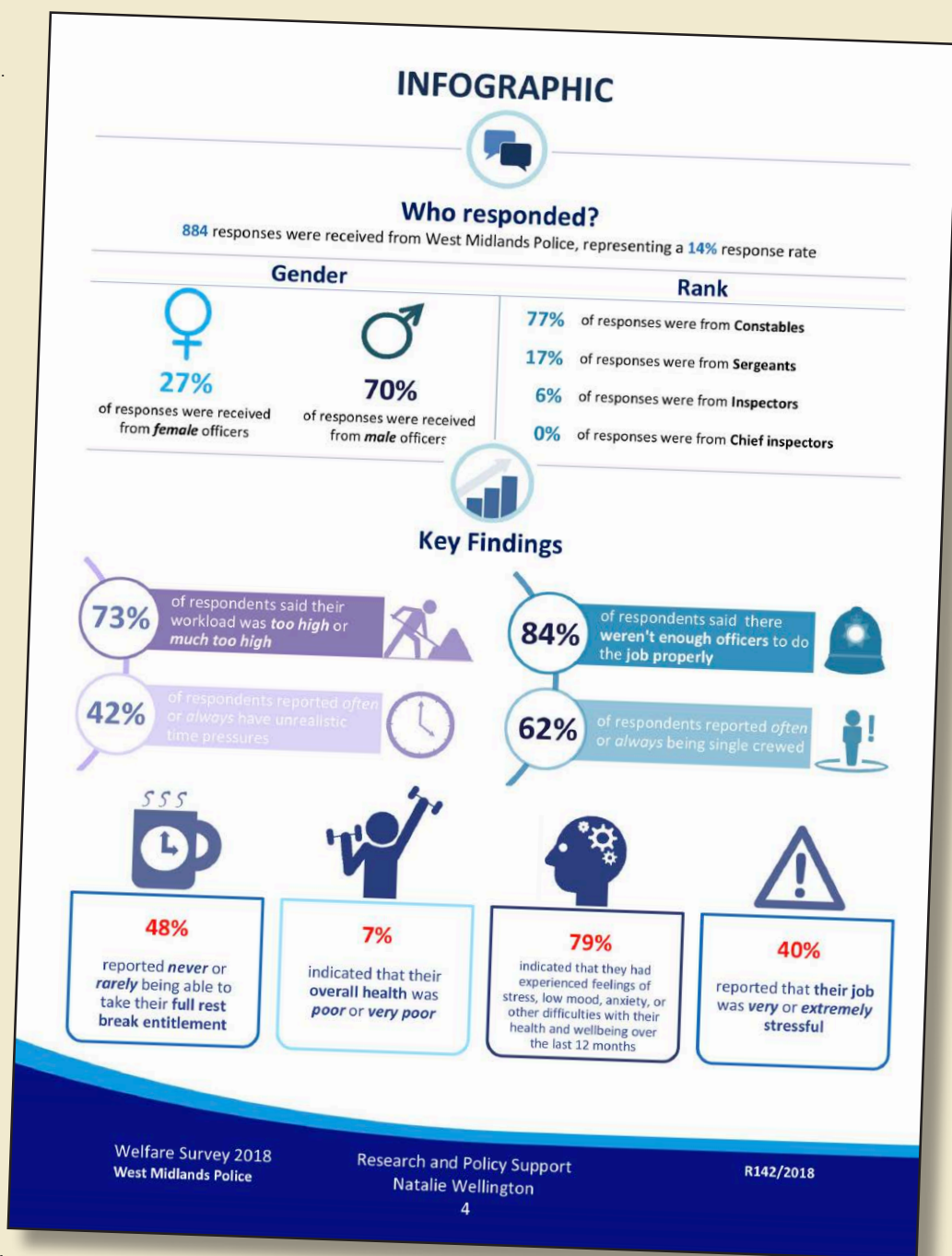
- **Almost nine out of 10 (89.8 per cent) officers say that there are not enough of them to manage the demands faced by their team or unit.**
- **Almost every police officer has been exposed to at least one traumatic experience in their career, with 61.7 per cent saying they had experienced at least one of these types of incident in the last 12 months.**

- **79 per cent of officers say they have felt feelings of stress and anxiety within the previous 12 months with 94 per cent of those saying these difficulties were caused or made worse by their job.**

National Federation vice-chair Ché Donald said: "The police service's most valuable resource is its people and these results should be a huge red flag to the Government, chief constables and the public. Officers are stressed, exhausted and consistently exposed to things people

should never have to see – and these results show just how much it is taking its toll."

He added: "I compel the Home Secretary who claims he gets policing to read this report and act on it and when he is finished reading it, share it with the Treasury. We need more money, more resources and more officers, so this public safety emergency can be addressed, and the pressure on officers eased before it is too late. The once revered British model of policing is currently on its knees and facing extinction, we need to act now to save it."



# Home Office 'lack of respect' for police pay review

The Home Office's late response to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) shows officers a lack of respect, says West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke.

Rich says the submission would do nothing to instil confidence in Federation members after coming more than a month later than expected.

He said: "The Home Office has shown a distinct lack of respect by making everyone wait a month for their response. And now it is here, it is barely worth waiting for and, quite frankly, shows a distinct lack of respect.

"It does not fill anyone with any confidence that the Home Office is taking the process seriously."

The Federation put forward evidence of the need for a three-year pay deal, comprising of a five per cent uplift in police officer pay this year, in 2020/21 and again in 2021/22, as a start on the road to remedying years of below-inflation pay awards.

However, if the three-year deal was not considered possible, the Federation also put forward a claim for a 6.2 per cent rise this year with an increase coming into effect from September 1.

Details of the pay claim were part of a joint submission to the PRRB with the Superintendents' Association.

But in its PRRB submission the Home Office said it will only make £70 million available. This equates to a pay rise of just 1.3 per cent if spent over a 12-month period, and less than the recent 2.7 per cent increase

awarded to MPs.

National chair John Apter said: "Even the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has done better than 1.3 per cent, as its submission includes options of up to 4.5 per cent this year. Given that the NPCC say this, maybe we can take some hope from the fact the Home Office states it will 'undertake another assessment of affordability'.

"We have written to the PRRB to express our anger, disappointment and concerns. However, the Home Office submission itself and its lateness will do nothing to instil confidence in police officers that it takes seriously the pay review process."

The Federation and Superintendents' Association's recommendations were:

**Recommendation 1:** The PRRB require the NPCC to set out a full and proper project plan for pay reform, including a workable level of detail, within a set period.

**Recommendation 2:** The PRRB insist that the Home Office, NPCC, and staff associations determine which elements of the pay reform should be prioritised, as the NPCC have not actioned this since last year.

**Recommendation 3:** In the interests of openness and transparency, and achieving appropriate expenditure from the public purse, a full cost benefit analysis of the existing Assessment and Recognition of Competence (ARC) process is undertaken. Only if it can be proved to be worth the overlay in terms of cost and time, should the NPCC proceed with plans for a Higher Skills assessment point linked to pay. Further,

consultation regarding any payment associated with the Higher Skills assessment must be undertaken at the Police Consultative Forum (PCF), and a full Equality Impact Assessment undertaken before such assessment is linked to pay.

**Recommendation 4:** Regarding the targeted bonus payments introduced last year, while the bonus payments should continue for now, there must be an opportunity to review: the circumstances under which they are paid; the impact on equal pay; and the guidance around their use, perhaps by incorporating more standard criteria.

**Recommendation 5:** A review is undertaken including both the London and SE Allowances, but that in the meantime the discretionary element is removed from the SE Allowances; all SE Allowances are set at the upper limit permissible (currently £3,000); and that both the London and SE Allowances are uprated in line with inflation.

**Recommendation 6:** We recommend an across the board pay uplift for the next three years. We seek a deal of five per cent in Year 1, followed by five per cent in each of Years 2 and 3. This would enable the NPCC to demonstrate a commitment to move towards the overall rectification of the gap between current pay level and just pay levels. Should a three-year settlement not be considered possible, then we seek a one-year deal of 6.2 per cent.

**Recommendation 7:** The PRRB should reject completely the NPCC proposal regarding Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) and Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) progression pay. DHEP progression pay is not within the remit letter. In the meantime, we believe those on the PCDA scheme should progress along the existing constable pay scale, in the way that all other entrants do.

**Recommendation 8:** Regarding on call, in absence of a full review of the allowance usage and amount, as sought by Winsor, the PRRB, and the staff associations, officers should be paid the same rate as staff members: £29.17 per day. Further, we believe this should be paid to all rank.

“The Home Office has shown a distinct lack of respect by making everyone wait a month for their response. And now it is here, it is barely worth waiting for and, quite frankly, shows a distinct lack of respect.

It does not fill anyone with any confidence that the Home Office is taking the process seriously.”



# Simple choice on spit guards

The Federation's national chair has been praised for challenging the human rights organisation Liberty over 'ill-informed' comments about spit guards.

John Apter published an open letter to Liberty in which he states: "The act of spitting phlegm or blood, or biting an officer is degrading and disgusting. The police have a duty of care to protect the public and the use of spit guards does not just protect officers but also protects members of the public. My advice to those who don't want to have a spit guard applied is don't spit or bite, it's quite simple."

John's comments came after Liberty issued a statement about the roll-out of spit guards by police forces across England and Wales.

Liberty said: "At least 30 police forces in England & Wales now use spit hoods. They

are dangerous, degrading and unjustified. They have no place in the future of policing and must be relegated to the past."

But West Midlands Police Federation chair Rich Cooke, who has welcomed the national chair's comments, said that while people insist on biting and spitting at officers, the spit guards should continue to be issued by forces.

"For me, it's very simple. If you don't want to wear a spit guard, don't spit at police officers or bite them," he explained.

"All too often our officers are finding themselves the victims of these disgusting attacks and they have a right to protect themselves."

John has invited Liberty to attend a training session on the use of spit guards and to discuss the issue further but, so far, the offer has not been taken up.

He also pointed out the effectiveness of spit guards, telling Liberty: "Prior to spit guards being issued, a person who was biting or spitting at officers would either be put on the ground or restrained with their head forced down. The application of a spit guard uses less force and prevents the act of spitting or biting from continuing. Officers will always have to justify their use. Your blanket statement that spit guards must not be used offered no alternative, it would either be use more force or for the officer to allow themselves to be spat at or bitten."

"I have heard some say that police officers should try to talk to the offender to prevent them from spitting or biting. I'm afraid the real world is not that simple and many of those individuals we deal with are violent and would use any opportunity to inflict harm on a police officer."

## 'It was disgusting. I had spit dripping off my face'

Anyone in any doubt about the effect being spat at has on officers should perhaps consider the stories of two West Midlands officers told to delegates at the Police Federation conference in 2017.

But, of course, similar stories could be repeated by officers from forces across England and Wales.

West Mids PC Mike Bruce was interviewed by conference facilitator Ian Collins on a panel which also included the Labour MP for Halifax Holly Lynch who was an early champion for the Police Federation's Protect the Protectors campaign on officer assaults.

Mike, who endured injections, medication and 'six months of worry' after being spat at told conference he had 'spit dripping off his face' after an incident outside a pub in Holbrook, Coventry in April 2016. His colleague, PC Alan O'Shea, had blood spat in his face when he came to help.

It was the start of a long process of tests to make sure that neither officer had contracted HIV or Hepatitis B or C and also led to PC Bruce's two children, aged one and nine at the time, requiring blood tests too.

"Myself and Alan were just about to go off duty when we heard an almighty scream of a back-up call over the radio from a response officer," said Mike, "When we arrived, I saw a colleague struggling with two men, a father and son.

"I pulled the father away and he started throwing punches and kicking me. We went on the floor and I was trying to restrain him but he turned round, looked me in the eye and spat in my face. It went



in my left eye and down my mouth. I had spit dripping off my face. It was disgusting. I would rather have been punched in the face.

"PC O'Shea came over and was acting as a peacemaker. The guy had a bit of blood in his mouth and spat that blood in Al's face."

He added: "We were carted off to hospital because it went in our mouths and eyes and was treated as a needle injury. We had injections and medications to stop the onset of possible HIV and Hepatitis B and C.

"There was six months of worry. Within my first month of medication, the GP told me I tested positive for Hepatitis B, which later proved to be a false reading. At the time, my whole world caved in. My wife and I were thinking about having a third child and I thought we were never going to be able to do that because of a positive test. My one and nine-year-olds had to have blood tests and Al and I went back every two weeks for

more blood tests.

"If there was legislation in place for the prisoner to have a blood test, it would have stopped all of that worry but he is under no obligation. He was charged with assault on me and Al. He got a suspended sentence and had to pay me £250 and Al £500.

"These spit guards are solely there so that if someone is spitting or trying to bite, there is something there to protect us. I would invite politicians to come out with us and see what goes on. It's about getting out there and educating them."

While the Force – along with others across the country – has now issued front-line officers with spit guards, it would seem that some people still need convincing that officers should have the right to protect themselves from these attacks.

# 'Be willing to learn and improve' – head of PSD advises officers

Chief Superintendent Chris Todd fully understands he might not be one of the most popular officers in the Force right now.

But, despite that, he says he still finds his role as head of the Professional Standards Department fascinating – even if it's all a long way – and possibly far less exotic – than his initial policing career with the Royal Hong Kong Police.

The PSD role is not one he sought out and he believes it can be something of a poisoned chalice. However, he also believes he has the right skills for the role and that since taking up the post in October last year improvements have been made within the department.

"I have a strong sense of justice and a desire to continually develop, personally and professionally. Being able to shape and lead a department that seeks to deliver organisational justice and enable the Force to deliver the highest standards of professionalism is a great opportunity," Chris explains.

"I like to think that the Professional Standards Department does three key things; we inspire trust and confidence in WMP; we develop organisational learning; we keep the workforce working as effectively as they can.

"I think we are doing OK. I would hope that I will never be complacent and we have plenty of work to do in some respects but I do think we are continually improving in each of these areas. If we are, then we should see the Force delivering against its over-arching vision effectively and we should all be proud to be working for the best

organisation possible. I feel that way and I hope many reading this will feel the same too."

Despite feeling comfortable with progress within PSD, he has found some aspects of the role challenging from a more personal perspective.

"It has been difficult seeing colleagues who you have known for some time in a very different light. Even in the short time I have been here I have seen colleagues I have worked closely with in the past moved out of the organisation under quite shocking circumstances. It is the right thing to happen in such cases, but nevertheless, very uncomfortable," Chris says.

He heads a team which, relative to other forces, is quite small. There are around 70 people in the main department and a few more in the counter-corruption team which is one of the main areas of responsibility along with investigations and vetting. Cutting across these areas are the prevention and intervention team, business support and misconduct support teams.

There is a recommendation from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) that PSDs should equate to about one per cent of the workforce and similar sized forces have exactly that proportion but the West Midlands Police team is smaller at just 0.75 per cent of the workforce.

Chris is happy with that: "I think we do pretty well with this resource and if I asked for more I know I would simply be taking them away from other areas of policing. So we can manage with what we have especially given the quality of the individuals we do

have here."

He also accepts that colleagues will be a little suspicious of those working in PSD, explaining: "I think it is natural that people will be cautious about what we do, but we quite literally have an open door policy here and encourage people to come in and understand better what exactly we do and see what an incredibly friendly bunch there are here.

"Someone once heard about our open door policy and decided to test it by walking down the length of the office, touching the far wall and walking out again. They were wearing their ID and so all they were met with from our team was a smile and a greeting. I am sure we all want to work for an organisation that is as professional as it possibly can be. That is all the Professional Standards Department is about – helping us all seek continual improvement and be professional in all we do."

The team's performance speaks volumes. The latest figures from the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) show the average number of days taken by the Force to finalise complaints was 158 (1 April to 31 December 2018) compared with 227 the previous year.

This, Chris says, is down to the re-organisation of the department and some changes to processes to improve the efficiency of investigations. The vast majority of complaints are handled within PSD rather than through Neighbourhood Policing Units and other departments where the officers and staff subject of the complaints are working.

"This means that the workload of



colleagues outside of PSD is lessened and, because the investigations are not being dealt with on top of an unconnected day job, as they would be when we push them out to those other colleagues, they naturally get processed more quickly," Chris explains.

"We also investigate less which means that we can cut through those that we do investigate more quickly. Some of this is about reducing overall levels of complaints and some of this is because we actually deal with significantly more now by way of 'service recovery'.

"We simply speak to the person making the allegations and often resolve the matter without complaint by just explaining what has gone on in more detail. Our colleagues often deal with matters in very stressful and dynamic circumstances and don't have the opportunity to explain to everyone at that time what exactly is being done for what reason. If we can add that later and bring about some satisfaction then we will do."

The same re-organisation and changes to process have also led to the number of days taken to locally resolve allegations falling from 123 the previous year to 83 last year (1 April to 31 December 2018) – making the Force 13th in the country.

"The more we reduce overall numbers of complaints and the more we can resolve through service recovery, then the more effective we can be at local resolution and the more efficient we can be with those cases we do need to investigate fully," says Chris.

In addition, the number of allegations per 1,000 employees has also drastically reduced – down to 65 from 124 and compared to a national figure of 196 and Chris hopes by introducing prevention and intervention these numbers will fall further: "We would hope that these reductions are an indication of this happening already but we are

“ I think it is natural that people will be cautious about what we do, but we quite literally have an open door policy here and encourage people to come in and understand better what exactly we do and see what an incredibly friendly bunch there are here. ”

cautious in celebrating this as we need to be sure the public retain full confidence in reporting as well and that we don't underestimate the seriousness of those allegations that do remain, in many cases."

With new conduct regulations due to come into effect in October, Chris feels his team is well prepared for the change in culture they are aimed at embedding within forces through an emphasis on learning and development rather than punishment.

PSD is already working with the People and Organisational Development (POD) team to ensure robust systems are in place to record, monitor and review development plans as much more work is identified very quickly as an opportunity for learning rather than a conduct issue.

He is keen to see the new regulations take effect.

"I would like us all to embrace development plans as part of our continual professional development as we have done historically and not associating them with sanctions resulting from an allegations. As a Force, we want to embrace a culture of

learning not blaming wherever possible and the new regulations are geared up to support this ethos," Chris states.

"The work with POD is crucial. I think we should all be developing our 'WMP Conversations' now with our teams and our line managers, and continual professional development through the use of improvement plans can be part of this. We will work with POD towards developing those processes and systems that support this, but in the meantime we should all be looking to develop that culture of learning not blaming through leadership across the organisation. It is a key part of what we do now in PSD and the introduction of the prevention and intervention team is indicative of that."

Having joined the police in Hong Kong in March 1990, Chris transferred to West Midlands Police six years later but says he almost fell into a policing career by accident.

"I went out to Hong Kong looking for excitement and the glamour of living in the Far East. The job was a secondary consideration if I'm honest but, once I started, I found I loved policing and have never looked back, hence my decision to join WMP when returning from Hong Kong before the hand-over to China," he explains.

While in Hong Kong, he specialised in counter-narcotics work but back in Birmingham started out as a beat bobby before spending time as a response officer and detective, on investigative and surveillance work on the Force Crime Unit and then a sergeant and DS in another area of Birmingham. He has also served on the National Crime Squad as a DS and DI and then within the Serious Organised Crime Agency and National Crime Agency while working his way through the ranks to become a superintendent. On promotion to chief superintendent, he returned to Force where he has been Birmingham South Commander, head of intelligence and now

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the head of PSD.

He has a reasonably long list of career highlights and describes his time in Hong Kong as 'special years' although working in Birmingham also had its own appeal.

Chris recalls: "Surveillance work was like a red letter day every day. Being commander in Birmingham South where I live, my kids went to school, where I studied at university on first arrival in the Midlands many moons ago, where I met my wife, where my kids were born at the QEH meant I had such an emotional investment in the area I was responsible for and was special too.

"Also being tactical firearms commander for the close protection team when the Queen came to open Grand Central was quite cool too, watching the crowds flock while I stood a few yards away from her all day was a great privilege."

But, in common with most other officers, there have been low points.

"My very good friend from Training School at Ryton was killed on duty in Leicestershire in 2002. He left his wife and his two kids who were only nine and three at the time. Although we went to separate forces after training school, we had stayed close all those years," says Chris.

While he had never previously been subject to a complaint – or never anything that went further than initial scoping – he has had to give an account for a death in custody and more recently he has become subject of a serious inquiry which is ongoing so he can't expand upon the nature of it.

He is taking it in his stride and believes it won't do him any harm as head of PSD to experience the process from the other side.

"Officers and staff often deal with difficult matters in challenging circumstances and can become subject to such inquiries regardless of their professionalism. When tragedy regrettably befalls some of the people we come into contact with, the process is necessary to help families and loved ones understand exactly what happened and hopefully enable them to make sense of such tragedy," Chris says.

So what advice would he give to an officer subjected to a complaint or investigation?

"Be willing to learn and improve. Even if you've done nothing wrong, having the humility to reflect on how this set of circumstances came about will make you a better professional next time around. Where there is learning to be had, embrace it. I have regrettably seen some colleagues try to cover up for relatively minor indiscretions. Getting things wrong now and again is human, being dishonest, however, is incompatible with being a police officer," he says.

## Working together

Chris Todd has praised the 'healthy relationship' between PSD and the Federation and says he shares Fed reps' concerns about the timeliness of conduct investigations and the effects long drawn-out cases have on officers and their families.

The Federation has regular diarised meetings with PSD to work through cases and sits on internal stakeholders' engagement groups and external independent advisory groups to help scrutinise PSD work and hold it to account.

Chris is full of praise for West Midlands Police Federation's full-time Conduct and Performance Liaison Officer (CaPLO) John Tooms who retires in June.

"This is probably a good opportunity to say how well John has supported colleagues across the Force over the years as he is in the process now of managing his hand-over as his retirement fast approaches. I know he is still here for a bit yet, but this publication certainly won't come around again before he does retire, so I'd like thank John for his continual support and, on behalf of your members, for the consistent but appropriate challenge and scrutiny that he has rightly applied to PSD to ensure that collectively we have developed the professionalism of WMP," says Chris.

But he believes PSD and the Federation need to keep continual professional development in mind to allow for further improvement.

"I think we just need to keep talking and keep challenging each other appropriately. The one area we do need to focus on though now is about identifying early on those opportunities for learning that don't need to go through a misconduct process before we pick up that learning," Chris argues.

"Sometimes this needs humility and a diversion from the adversarial processes that necessarily underpin the criminal and

misconduct proceedings. But the vast majority of our cases end up in learning outcomes anyway, so the sooner we can identify the likely outcome and recognise the area for development, the more misconduct proceedings we can negate in the future. Working together on this will be vital."

Recognising the impact of investigations on officers, he adds: "We all want to work for the most professional organisation that we can and if we have bad officers and staff, sometimes we need to move them out of the organisation. However, the vast majority of our cases do not result in that outcome. If we leave a process hanging over a colleague unnecessarily or do not treat that colleague well and keep them informed throughout, then we can do our colleagues a great deal of harm.

"We are really conscious of this and don't take decisions to proceed to misconduct proceedings lightly. Improvement in these areas were highlighted earlier and this is good news, but there is more we can do and still too many officers waiting too long to see allegations resolved. I said before that keeping the workforce working is one of our priorities, and this is what this is about.

"We also work very closely with the Independent Office for Police Conduct as many of the more serious cases are led or directed by them. We are trying to influence there as well so that the learning not blaming culture is universal and so that they understand the impact that an unnecessarily long investigation has on colleagues and the service we then provide to the public."

Chris concludes by paying tribute to the outstanding work carried out by Federated officers.

"I know too well they are doing exceptional things in often difficult and challenging circumstances in the interest of public service. Thank you," he says.

“We all want to work for the most professional organisation that we can and if we have bad officers and staff, sometimes we need to move them out of the organisation. However, the vast majority of our cases do not result in that outcome. If we leave a process hanging over a colleague unnecessarily or do not treat that colleague well and keep them informed throughout, then we can do our colleagues a great deal of harm.”



# Supporting you

Thank you  
THANK  
thank YOU  
Thank YOU  
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THANK

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

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

The reason I'm sending you this email is because the Federation and my representative, Dan Wood, has massively helped me, and still is helping me, get through, what I can only describe as the worst point in my life.

I feel at the minute that I'm forever in debt to the Federation and if there is anything I can do differently or say to help this the Federation or anyone then please let me know and I promise I will! I was in a cohort where a lot of students didn't take up the opportunity to join the Federation, thank God I did!

I would like to say THANK YOU to the Federation and a massive THANK YOU to both Dan and George (McDonnell)!

Again, thank you and all the best.

*Member details withheld*

In May 2018 I was told I was subject to a gross misconduct investigation.

I was told my Fed rep would be George McDonnell and he would be in touch upon his return from holiday. From the moment I met with George I felt at complete ease with him and immediately knew that he would fight my corner for me with the highest integrity and passion yet also tell me when I needed calming down or I was wrong about things.

I trusted George and his judgement throughout this awful time for me and I'm so glad I did. His advice and actions were spot on.

During this time within a few months of each other, I had been told of this investigation, moved LPU's - causing logistical issues for me and my family, was torn away from friends and colleagues, some of whom I had worked with for more than 10 years, lost out on a job which I had been working 10 years towards, and which I was within touching distance of, and, to top it off, I lost my Dad.

To say life couldn't get any worse would be an understatement. I suffered, and suffered greatly. My marriage was on its knees due to this investigation and I was really struggling to keep it all together. However, George knew almost instinctively when to phone me and when not to. Each phone call gave me a huge personal lift and reassured me that the investigation, my interests and welfare were being well looked after by him.

George has fought and fought for me when our backs were against the wall and I felt like giving up. If it wasn't for him and his efforts, I wouldn't be in the police now as I firmly believe I would have given it all up.

I can't speak highly enough of George. He has become more than a Fed rep, to me he has become a friend and someone who I trust implicitly.

The fact that all allegations against me were found not proven and were 'no further actioned' ( rightly so ) is a testament to him as a Fed rep, a person and his dogged determination for justice to be done.

He is, in my opinion, a credit to the Federation and you should be very proud of this man.

*Member details withheld*

To Cliff Tomkinson, West Midlands Police Federation equality lead

Both me and my wife are very grateful for all you have done and you are more than welcome to use my message. I know you went beyond what most people would have done.

*Member details withheld*

# 'An experience like no other'

## – Andy joins Special Olympics Torch Run



*The team.*

**A** former West Midlands Police officer was one of 10 team leaders for the final leg of the Law Enforcement Torch Run which toured the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ahead of the Special Olympics in Abu Dhabi in March.

Andy Watson, who transferred to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in 2005, said taking part in the event was 'out of this world'.

"We travelled through all seven Emirates of the UAE with the Flame of Hope. Any apprehensions were soon lifted. The people were so friendly, the sites and scenery were amazing. Some of the venues, such as the Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, were incredible," he explains.

"As a team leader I was responsible for my team of 10, nine police officers from around the world and one Special Olympics athlete. It was my role to ensure that as a team we were where we needed to be, pass on any information and help my team to have the best experience that the final leg had to offer. I had to make sure we carried out our mission with the 'Flame of Hope' and competently achieve our goals.

"We started in Abu Dhabi and then took the flame around all seven Emirates culminating in the cauldron being lit from the flame at the opening ceremony in Abu Dhabi in front of several thousand people. We also incorporated the Solar Polar Plunge into this journey. This involved jumping into an icy cold pool in the middle of the desert!"

But while the experience in itself was worthwhile, Andy also raised £2,000 in sponsorship while the total raised by all runners – 100 officers from all over the world – was \$390,000. Last year, globally, the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) raised more than \$56 million.

The money raised will help support Special Olympics athletes at a local level all the way to helping them attend and compete



*A welcome message.*

in World Games.

Before joining West Midlands Police in 1994 Andy was a registered nurse.

"The best job I had was caring for young adults with Down's Syndrome and other intellectual disabilities. The caring nature of the patients and the love shown by them was overwhelming at times. I loved the placement, it didn't feel like work at all," says Andy, admitting that he had never heard of the Law Enforcement Torch Run while policing in England.

"It is a worldwide police charitable organisation that raises money for, and awareness of, the Special Olympics. Soon after transferring to Ireland, I attended an open day held by the PSNI LETR. I was hooked and felt it was a way to give back something to the people who I had got so much from through caring for them. Since that initial open day I have been on the command server as both secretary and treasurer, the role I currently hold.

"I was lucky enough to be selected by the programme here to attend the Final Leg Torch Run in 2017 for the Special Olympics Winter Games in Austria. As one of 100 torch runners, we carried the Flame of Hope around Austria prior to the opening ceremony, helping to spread the word of awareness and inclusion.

"As a result of the way I carried myself in Austria, I was asked to return for these Summer Games in Abu Dhabi as one of 10 team leaders. There is an immense feeling of pride carrying the Flame of Hope along with Special Olympics athletes. Seeing the joy on their faces gives a feeling that is second to none."

While at the Special Olympics, Andy managed to watch some of the football competition.

He recalls: "It was great to watch the athletes playing. The standard was very high. You could see the pride in each and every



*Andy Watson and the Flame of Hope.*

player at representing their countries. All played with the Special Olympics motto on their mind, 'Let me win, but if I can't win, let me be brave in the attempt!'"

While there were no family or friends out in Abu Dhabi to greet Andy when he had completed the run, the events were streamed live on the internet and ESPN showed events to a worldwide audience of millions of people.

Andy explains: "My wife and children are very proud of the work I do with the LETR/ Special Olympics and are very supportive. She would say it brings the best out of me!"

He describes the event as 'an experience like no other', adding: "Strangers that are thrown together with a common goal and bond together to become close friends. The sites and culture were new to me and all very exciting. The weather was amazing. The reason the Games were in March was to avoid the extreme heat of summer. But it was still very warm and plenty of sun cream was applied."

While the 'incredible' opening ceremony was incredible, a highlight for Andy was an impromptu game of beach volleyball played during down time one day. The two teams were mixed with athletes and the torch runners.

"It was great fun and showed just how good unified sport can be. The joy on the athletes' faces was priceless and amazing to see," Andy says.

He is urging officers from across the UK to get involved with the event since it's a worthwhile cause and spending time with the athletes watching them flourish and grow is rewarding.

There is an LETR programme in its infancy within Police Scotland and Andy would happily talk to anyone officer seeking more information or interested in getting involved or maybe setting up a new programme. You can contact Andy at [aww4177@hotmail.com](mailto:aww4177@hotmail.com)



# Discounted seaside breaks for Benevolent Fund members

Dates are still available for members of the Force Benevolent Fund to stay at its holiday homes in Devon and Dorset.

So, if you are a member of the Benevolent Fund and fancy a wonderful week away at a great discounted price visit the online calendars on the holiday home web pages at [www.wmpben.co.uk](http://www.wmpben.co.uk) for more details. Hurry though, as weeks will be booked on a first come, first served basis.

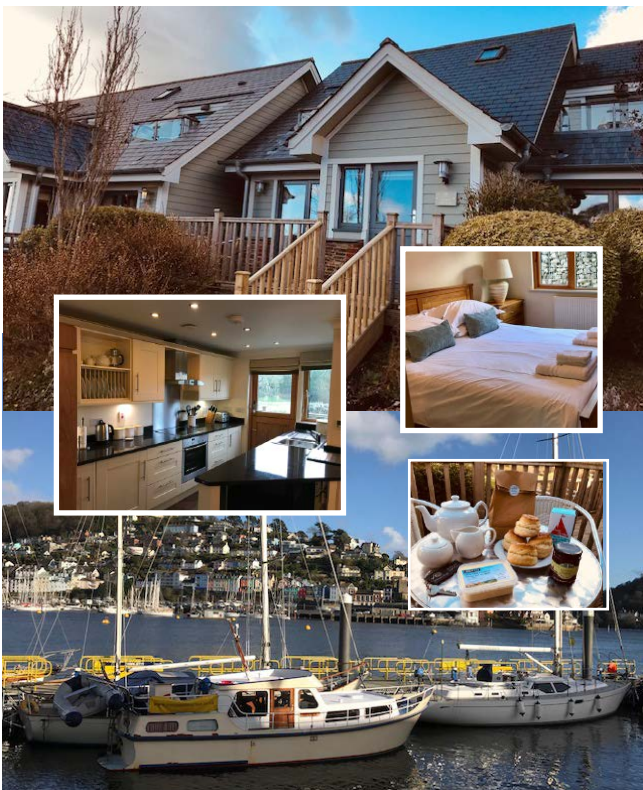
New joiners to the Benevolent Fund can also apply for a stay as long as they have been a member for six months before the

requested week to stay at either of the holiday homes.

Members who have already been to one of the holiday homes before can still book to stay for any of the remaining weeks on the online calendar.



## COURT COTTAGE, DARTMOUTH



This quaint, two-bedroomed residence is on the luxury Hillfield Village self-catering holiday estate in Devon. Set in an idyllic spot, it's the perfect location for visitors to explore the many glorious beaches and pretty nearby towns.

For more details and to book your stay visit

<https://www.wmpben.co.uk/our-benefits/court-cottage/>

## PEELS RETREAT, DORSET



Just steps away from the sea and in the Dorset town of Weymouth, this three-storey townhouse offers members and their families (including dogs) a great base to explore the Jurassic coastline.

The property sleeps up to six people with a garage for one car. For availability and how to book visit

<https://www.wmpben.co.uk/our-benefits/weymouth-holiday-home/>

# Police pensions: an overview

The police pension has always been regarded as a key element of an officer's pay package.

But the launch of the latest police pension – which is a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme – in 2015 caused many Federation members concern and, while the Federation did not launch its own challenge to the scheme, many officers joined a private action led by solicitors Leigh Day.

The Federation is now taking fresh legal advice after the Court of Appeal ruled in January this year that the Government's changes to pensions with regard to judges and firefighters were discriminatory on the grounds of age.

National Federation secretary Alex Duncan has since published a blog on the issue (see right).

## The police pension schemes

Federation members are in one of three schemes – the Police Pension Scheme 1987 (1987 Scheme) which was available for members who joined before 6 April 2006, the New Police Pension Scheme 2006 (2006 Scheme) for those who joined between 6 April 2006 and 31 March 2015 or the 2015 (CARE) scheme which came into effect on 1 April 2015.

The 2015 scheme was one of the biggest changes to police pensions in history, taking officers away from final salary schemes like the 1987 and 2006 schemes. Primary legislation was used to avoid a 'no worsening' provision contained within the Police Pensions Act 1976.

## How did the Federation react to the CARE scheme?

The Federation could only engage in consultation - not negotiation - over the introduction of the 2015 scheme.

It unsuccessfully argued it should only apply to new recruits but supported the use of transitional arrangements to improve the position for as many members as it could.

At the time of the launch of the 2015 scheme, more than 49,000 members received full protection and remain in their original scheme, while a further 18,000 have tapered protection, which means that they have gradually been moved over or will be in the future from the 1987 or 2006 scheme to the 2015 scheme.

There was an extension of those covered by full transitional protections and also those within four years of full protection received tapered protection, therefore avoiding a 'cliff edge' scenario. This enabled

more members to be covered than was the case in the Home Secretary's initial proposal.

Pensions accrued in the 1987 or 2006 schemes before being moved over to the 2015 scheme are protected.

The Federation ensured officers can retire at 55 from the CARE scheme (with their pension actuarially reduced from age 60).

## Why did it not mount a legal challenge?

The Federation's legal advice strongly advised that a challenge was unlikely to succeed and it also supported the transitional arrangements.

## What does the latest court ruling say?

Previously in the Employment Tribunal (ET) in the judges' case, it had been found that the introduction of the transitional protections was not a legitimate aim and that even if it had been, the means of achieving it were not proportionate. Subsequently, in the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) it had been found that while the introduction might have been capable of being a legitimate aim, because of the unique situation (including tax implications) of the judges, the test of proportionality required had not been met.

Previously in the Employment Tribunal in the firefighters' case, the introduction of the transitional protections had been found to be a proportionate means to achieve a legitimate aim of social policy. Subsequently, in the Employment Appeals Tribunal it was found that, while it was a legitimate aim, the ET had not applied the more rigorous test of proportionality required under UK law and therefore proportionality of the means was not proved.

The Court of Appeal concluded that in both cases the ET and EAT judges had - on one point or other, and to one degree or another - misdirected themselves as to the applicable law. It went on to state that there is no conflict between UK and EU law and that, while the Government does have a broader discretion to adopt and implement a social policy, in order for it to constitute a legitimate aim there needs to be a rational evidenced justification for the change rather than a mere reliance on visceral instinct. The Government had failed to provide a rational explanation for the discriminatory treatment and provided no evidence to substantiate their reasons. Instead in attempting to defend its actions it had produced only generalised



assumptions not based on any factual foundation, which was not good enough.

Consequently, the ruling is that in the absence of evidence required to justify its actions the Government had failed to establish that the introduction of the transitional protections constituted a legitimate aim, and therefore the transitional arrangements were directly discriminatory on the grounds of age.

In the judges' case it also found that there had been indirect discrimination on the grounds of sex and race. In the firefighters' case, the only difference was that - if it had been necessary (which in the light of its decision on age discrimination the court felt it was not) the decision on proportionality would have been referred back to the Employment Tribunal.

## What are the possible remedies?

The Court of Appeal did not rule on the remedies to be provided but rather remitted the decision on that back to the Employment Tribunal.

Since 2015 protected firefighters and members of the judiciary along with protected members of other public service schemes, including the police, have been benefiting under the terms of the transitional arrangements, the basis for which have been enshrined in the regulations governing their pension schemes, and in doing so have accrued further pension under the existing schemes.

Due to protections on accrued benefits provided under law, it is not possible for the Government to now remove those further benefits accrued by protected members since 2015. Nearly half of Federation members have benefited from this.

On the face of it, it could be argued that one remedy is that those members who were not benefited by the transitional arrangements should be treated in the same manner as those who were, by providing them with accrual under their old schemes between 2015 and now. But, bearing in mind that this decision of the Court of Appeal potentially has impact right across the public service, the implications in terms of cost alone for the Government are huge. It seems likely, therefore, that alternative remedies would be sought. The Federation is taking legal advice as to what remedies might be lawful.

Should the challenge ultimately succeed in the final court, there would also be huge implications in terms of practicalities such as necessary changes to regulations, and unpicking administratively what has happened since April 2015. It would also have implications on the funding of the relevant schemes, which might in turn lead to further changes for the future. Also, the Government will have failed in one of its stated aims, being the controlling of public spending, and this may have implications that go far wider than the relevant pension schemes.

Due to the vast implications, both financial and practical, it seems likely that the Government will seek to mitigate the impact by arguing that compensation for the discriminatory treatment should be provided in some other form rather than reinstatement.

The Government is appealing the decision to the Supreme Court.

#### **Where can I find the pensions calculator?**

After lobbying by the Federation, in March last year, the Home Office launched a pensions calculator which allows officers to find out their projected pension at retirement.

The calculator can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-pensions-calculator>  
**Further details**

You can find out more about the police pension schemes on the national Police Federation website at [polfed.org/fedatwork/pensions.aspx](http://polfed.org/fedatwork/pensions.aspx) where there is a FAQ document, details of all three schemes and other background information.

#### **Scheme administrator**

The police pension schemes are administered locally by each police force. If you would like further help or advice, please contact the West Midlands Police pensions' administrator at [pensionsgroup@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:pensionsgroup@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

# Do not rush into pensions decisions

Federation members are being urged not to rush into making decisions about their pensions.

Writing a blog update on the current situation with public pension schemes, Alex Duncan, the national Federation general secretary, said he understood officers' frustration but felt it would be irresponsible for him to speculate on a possible outcome.

"Currently, our recommendation to members is to not rush into taking decisions and/or actions. The police pension schemes remain better than alternatives," he wrote.

"Our understanding is that those representing the police pension challenge group are inviting officers who are not currently signed up with them to do so now. Our advice is to wait. The Government's recent moves suggest that it is planning to take action across the public sector.

"This means it is possible that only the judges' and firefighters' cases will be heard in court, as the police pension challenge case has been stayed. In those circumstances, any remedy will cover all impacted members.

"Even if this proves not to be the case, we believe it would still be possible to lodge a claim. However, we are not taking claims, and any choice to do so remains a personal matter."

The Government announced in January it will not be taking further action to rectify the public service pension cost cap breach due to the 'uncertain impact' of December's Court of Appeal ruling that the

transitional protections provided for older judges and firefighters amount to unlawful discrimination.

This decision means the higher accrual rate for all existing members of the CARE scheme that would have been put in place is now on hold until the judges and firefighters' case has concluded. The Government has applied to the Supreme Court for leave to appeal the decision of the CoA, and a decision on whether this is being granted is expected in early summer.

"It is our view that the suspension of the cost cap breach remedy suggests that the Government is moving towards an 'industrial resolution' that would apply across public sector pension schemes, in keeping with the potential outcome of the judges' and firefighters' claims," the secretary explains.

And he adds: "We cannot predict what will happen next: whether the Government's application to appeal will be accepted, or how they will choose to deal with the potential outcomes of the case. We were in the process of getting legal advice following the CoA ruling, but the cost cap announcement has changed the situation significantly.

"We need to consider all possibilities, one of which could be the removal by the Government of transitional protections from a future date, but before April 2022 when they are due to come to an end. This is a very complicated situation with a number of possible outcomes, and we are working hard to gain further insight and provide further guidance as soon as we can."





# Pensions timeline

### MARCH 2011

The final report of the Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, led by Lord Hutton, is published. Lord Hutton called for comprehensive reform in order 'for public service employees to continue to have access for the foreseeable future, to good quality, sustainable and fairer defined benefit pension schemes'.

The Government accepts Lord Hutton's recommendations as a basis for consultation with public sector workers.

### MAY 2011

Home Secretary Theresa May announces at the Federation's annual conference that she has asked Thomas Winsor to consider police pensions in the second part of his Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions.

### DECEMBER 2011

Danny Alexander, the chief secretary to the Treasury in the coalition Government, sets out plans to change public service pensions, with the aim of saving money for the taxpayer.

### MARCH 2012

The second part of Thomas Winsor's review has a section on pensions, including backing Lord Hutton's call for a 'normal pension age' of 60. The Home Secretary writes to the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) with proposals for the 2015 CARE Scheme. The Federation, as part of the staff side of the PNB, chooses to engage in the consultation to improve the proposed terms rather than fight the introduction of the scheme, as the Home Secretary can implement the original terms of the proposal regardless.

### JUNE 2012

Federation general secretary Ian Rennie – as Staff Side Secretary – responds to the Home Secretary raising concerns such as the unique nature of being a police officer; and the unusual features of the police pensions to reflect the unique nature of policing.

He suggests the new scheme should only apply to new recruits and highlights concerns about the 'significantly too high' proposed level of member contributions, and the proposed pension ages.

The Federation seeks legal advice on the proposal for the new scheme, including on the legality of the introduction of the scheme bearing in mind the Police Pensions

Act 1976 says that any pension regulations made under that act could not worsen the position for serving members.

This advice said there was no legal basis to challenge the introduction of the scheme.

### SEPTEMBER 2012

The Home Secretary outlines the CARE scheme, including improved transitional arrangements and access to the pension from age 55.

The Federation issues FAQs on the new scheme.

### APRIL 2013

The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 is enacted. Section 18 prevents further pension being earned in the two existing schemes from 1 April 2015, other than in line with transitional arrangements. It also bypasses the 'no worsening' provisions of the 1976 act by enabling the 2015 CARE scheme to be created under new primary legislation.

### SEPTEMBER 2013

The Federation continues to receive legal advice around a possible legal challenge.

### NOVEMBER 2013

Home Office Circular 14/2013 contains more details about the new scheme and the transitional arrangements. The Federation issues FAQs.

### OCTOBER 2014 - FEBRUARY 2015

The draft Police Pensions Regulations 2015 are issued for consultation and the Federation continues to seek legal advice.

### MARCH 2015

The Police Pensions Regulations 2015 are laid before Parliament, only 27 days before they were implemented.

The Federation issues FAQs on the new scheme.

### APRIL 2015

Officers without transitional protections are moved over to the 2015 CARE Scheme. Officers with tapered protection are moved over as their tapered protection ends.

### AUGUST 2015

FAQs are issued by the Federation on the 2015 CARE Scheme legal position.

### OCTOBER 2015

The Federation publishes a video FAQ in which general secretary Andy Fittes answers a range of questions on the 2015 scheme.

A group of officers instruct lawyers Leigh Day and form the Pensions Challenge Group. The grounds for their challenge to the transitional protections goes against the legal advice the Federation has received. A response is issued explaining why the Federation is not backing this challenge.

### AUGUST 2016

The Federation issues FAQs on the purchase of additional benefits.

### JANUARY 2017

An employment tribunal brought by judges rules that the Government's transitional pension arrangements for judges amount to unlawful age, sex and race discrimination because they could not be regarded as being a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The Federation details the possible implications for police pensions.

### FEBRUARY 2017

The Fire Brigades Union's (FBU) employment tribunal rules in favour of the Government, saying the discrimination inherent in the transitional arrangements was justifiable as they were a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The FBU announces it will appeal.

### MARCH 2017

The Ministry of Justice says it will appeal against the ruling in the judges' employment tribunal. The Federation issues further FAQs.

### DECEMBER 2018

The Police Federation seeks fresh legal advice after the Court of Appeal ruled that the Government's changes to the pension schemes of judges and firefighters were discriminatory on the grounds of age.

### JANUARY 2019

The Police Federation issues a briefing paper in response to the latest Court of Appeal ruling on the judges' and firefighters' pension challenges.

# Roadshow's next stop Perry Barr

The successful West Midlands Police Federation Roadshows continue in April with a visit to Perry Barr.

The roadshow will be held in the atrium at Holford Drive from 10am until 3pm on Tuesday 30 April.

Member services providers will be available to talk to members and discuss the services they can provide.

Officers will be able to discuss any concerns they have with Federation representatives who will also be attending.

Free Federation merchandise will be on hand and there is no need to book - just turn up on the day.

You can also enter a prize draw to win a £50 Amazon voucher, look out for flyers locally.



# Are you in the last 18 months of your service?

Spaces on our popular retirement seminars are booking up fast – and if you want a place on one you are being urged to book quickly to avoid disappointment.

The next available dates for officers to attend are:  
**18 July** and  
**15 August.**

All seminars are held at our offices - Guardians House on Coventry Road, Sheldon and officers are welcome to bring along a spouse or partner.

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

- **Managing change and uncertainty**
- **CV writing and interview techniques**
- **Transferrable skills**
- **Pensions and state pension**
- **How do I manage money and these financial changes?**
- **Budgeting**
- **Starting your own business**
- **Taxation**

- **New horizons (what's next?)**
- **Savings**
- **Investments and finances**
- **Protecting your wealth**

The day starts at 9am, finishes at 4pm and includes a buffet lunch.  
Further dates in 2019 are:

**12 September**

**17 October**

**21 November** and

**19 December.**

To book, email [westmidlandspf@polfed.org](mailto:westmidlandspf@polfed.org) with 'Retirement seminar' and the date you wish to attend in the subject title.

Include your name, work and personal email address, phone number, proposed retirement date, number of places required and dietary requirements in the email.

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**For further information contact the Federation office on  
0121 752 4900**

or

**Call Warren & Co to find out the dates for each location**

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# Going through a divorce?

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Principal Lawyer  
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We've been working with the Police Federation for over fifty years – longer than any other firm. No one understands better the unique pressures of police work and how to protect your rights – including your pension. If you're going through a divorce, we offer a free initial consultation, a divorce fixed fee package of £350 plus VAT and Court fees and discounted hourly rates plus we give you access to some of the country's best family lawyers.

If you think we could help, call us on **0808 175 7710**

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# The five stages of divorce

## - what to expect when going through a divorce

By Joanne Green,  
principal lawyer in  
family law



### Separation

Separating from a spouse is never easy. It's a time of emotional upheaval for both parties and especially disrupting for any children involved. As well as the emotional challenges faced during separation, there are also the challenges surrounding the practicalities of separation, such as residency and finances.

In the first instance, it's in the best interests of everyone involved to ensure that immediate discussions post-separation remain as amicable as possible. The benefit of keeping matters civil cannot be understated. It may be preferable for any discussions to take place in a neutral environment, rather than in the matrimonial home and discussions should never be in the ear shot of children.

### Mediation

Going straight to court doesn't have to be the only option after separation, as mediation can help to sort out differences around money, property and children.

Mediation gives both parties the opportunity to sit down and, in their own words, put their side of the story across in a safe and neutral environment.

The mediator can encourage you to think about things from another perspective and to compromise in order to reach a conclusion that everyone is happy with. They will listen and help you communicate with your ex-partner effectively, and will remain

impartial - not taking sides.

### Divorce

If you're satisfied that your marriage has irretrievably broken down, divorce proceedings can be made through the Family Court to formally bring the marriage to an end.

There's currently no such thing as a 'no fault divorce' under UK law. There's only one ground for divorce and that's the marriage has 'irretrievably broken down'. This has to be proved by the person who starts the divorce petition, known as the 'petitioner', by establishing one of the following facts:

- 1. Adultery:** The petitioner finds it intolerable to live with the respondent as a result of them committing adultery. Adultery is voluntary sexual intercourse between a man and a woman and therefore this fact cannot be used in same sex marriages or civil partnerships.
- 2. Unreasonable behaviour:** The petitioner cannot live with the respondent as a result of their unreasonable behaviour.
- 3. Desertion:** The respondent has deserted the petitioner for at least two years.
- 4. Two years' separation (with consent):** The respondent accepts divorce proceeding on the basis that the parties have lived separately for two years.
- 5. Five years' separation (no consent required):** Parties have lived apart for a period of five years.

### Finances

Often one of the most complex matters for people to deal with is the finances. Whatever the length of the relationship, the basic steps people should take are simple and following legal guidance cannot only help in maintaining an amicable relationship

with your former partner but also keep your legal costs to a minimum.

While obtaining your decree absolute, (the document you receive from court which legally ends your marriage), is the ultimate goal in a divorce, this doesn't deal with the matrimonial finances. There's an entirely separate process that must be followed to ensure no further claims may be made by your former spouse against your finances.

The divorce process is instigated by the presentation of a petition to the court, however, any application for a financial remedy will require a separate application.

### Children

The first concern for parents who decide to separate is the arrangements for the children, with a key issue being how children are told about their parents' separation and how they are best supported through it. Then the question arises of how the children's time will be divided between parents once they have established separate households.

Arrangements for children can be one of the most difficult and emotive issues for separating parents and, as a consequence, the same arrangements are frequently the source of more serious and profound disagreements. It's crucial, when addressing arrangements for the future, to do everything possible to limit the stress and anxiety generated for the benefit of both the adults and children.

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

# Would you like a free Financial Health Check?



Let the Federation help you with a free confidential one-to-one Financial MOT.

Your meeting could help you manage the financial issues that may arise throughout your police career and into retirement.

If you're struggling to understand what workplace benefits are available to you and your dependents, George Burrows could help. They have arranged for Caroline Harris, a financial welfare specialist with over 25 years' experience, to work alongside the Police Federation and provide detailed information on the range of pensions and schemes available to you.

Contact the Federation to arrange your free, confidential one to one support.

# 0121 752 4900

Appointments take place at Guardians House

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GB1445/FP251-2018/V2

See what your colleagues say:

"Not only did she help me to understand how the new pension will affect me but she also helped me save money!"

*Wayne Bennett, serving police officer, 2018*

"Visiting Caroline Harris was well worth the time. She helped put my mind at rest with informed information rather than guess work"

*Ian Skidmore, serving police officer, 2018*

"Caroline cleared up any doubts about my pension and helped me understand my tax code better, which has resulted in a tax refund. I highly recommend any officer who is close to retirement come and speak to her."

*Simon Shippam, serving police officer, 2018*



GeorgeBurrows 



# New COPS chair

Former Greater Manchester Chief Constable Sir Peter Fahy QPM (pictured centre) is to become chair of trustees at Care of Police Survivors (COPS) – the charity that supports the families of



police officers and staff who die on duty.

Sir Peter took up the post in March when Jan Berry QPM (pictured right) – the former Police Federation chair – stepped down after five years in the role.

Sir Peter has long supported COPS but following the murders of GMP PCs Fiona Bone and Nicola Hughes in 2012 decided to become more involved and became a trustee in 2014.

He said: "Those left behind when an officer dies on duty can feel isolated, alone and completely lost, the support that COPS provides can absolutely help rebuild those lives.

"I am stepping into a vital role in the support community for those affected by the death of an officer, or member of the police staff, while on duty. There is only so much that establishment channels can do in the long-term help they provide – COPS is there for as long as needed and that makes a huge difference."

Also pictured is COPS chief executive Tim Buckley (left).

# Albert Hall concert will help COPS

The British Police Symphony Orchestra (BPSO) is celebrating its 30th anniversary with a concert of popular classics at the Royal Albert Hall in May.

And part of the proceeds from the event on Saturday 11 May will go towards Care of Police Survivors (COPS), the charity dedicated to supporting the families of police officers and staff who have lost their lives on duty.

Featuring more than 670 performers drawn from the police service throughout the UK, the programme will include a medley of TV themes from some of the best loved crimefighters, music from James Bond and works by Sibelius, Quincy Jones and Wagner.

The Albert Hall will be filled with more than 5,000 blue flashing lights during a performance of Rick Wakeman's Dance of a Thousand Lights while the concert will feature the voices of more than 400 choristers, pipe-bands and fanfare brass.

Staffordshire Chief Constable Gareth Morgan, a BPSO trustee, said: "The passion and love for the BPSO from its membership is clear for all to see. We will deliver a brilliant event."

Proceeds will be split between COPS, Youth Music and the orchestra itself.

Tickets start from just £19 and can be purchased from the BPSO's website.



# I am able to have peace of mind for the future

Irwin Mitchell's family team has a wealth of experience in dealing with separation, divorce and financial matters. They have a long history of acting for members of the police force, with extensive expertise in police pensions and resolving disputes in relation to children arrangements.

The team can guide you through the legal process of dealing with your case and represent you in court proceedings, if necessary.

Initial advice is available free of charge at Irwin Mitchell in Birmingham.

[irwinmitchell.com/private](http://irwinmitchell.com/private)  
Birmingham Family team: 0121 214 5278

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# Protection for you and your family



The West Midlands Police Federation group insurance scheme offers a range of personal protection\* for you and your family, at attractive group rates.

Visit the Federation website for details:

[www.polfed.org/westmids](http://www.polfed.org/westmids)

Or call us on: **0121 752 4900**

Cover includes:

- £130,000 Life Assurance with 20% advance on terminal prognosis and £3,000 Child Death Grant
- £15,000 Critical Illness cover with £3,000 for children
- Best Doctors®
- Personal Accident - 24 hour cover with lump sum and weekly benefits
- Worldwide Family Travel Insurance
- Sickness benefits
- RAC Motor Breakdown -  
- Roadside, Recovery, At Home, Onward Travel and European Motoring Assistance
- Mobile Phone / Gadget cover



**All for £24.60\*\* per month!**

*...isn't it time you joined?*

\* Terms and conditions apply. Full details are available from the Federation or George Burrows.

\*\*The premium quoted is correct at 1 January 2019.

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# Finance theme for Did You Know?

The Federation's Did You Know? campaign focused on finance-related issues throughout March.

A theme is chosen each month, based on questions that the Police Federation of England and Wales receives from members. The aim is to highlight key issues and to make sure serving officers know exactly what they can claim as part of their role.

Launched in November, the campaign has already focused on annual leave and rest days.

During March the campaign looked at the allowances and expenses you can claim for doing your role, and topics included NHS medical costs incurred while on duty and pension buy-back.

National Federation chair John Apter told members: "I am really pleased that the Did You Know? campaign, which is fundamentally

about you understanding your rights, is now being rolled out across England and Wales."

He adds: "Police regulations are not there to be cherry-picked. They are not a nice to have. They are the rules we must comply with. They are your rights.

"Please help us to educate all police officers about what your rights are. The Did You Know? campaign will, hopefully, share some valuable information over the coming months."

For more information in the campaign, including FAQs, visit the **Did You Know?** page. Follow **#KnowYourRights** and **#DidYouKnow** on Twitter to join the discussion.



**Not all police officers are aware of their basic entitlements**

This campaign aims to spread awareness of officer rights and the support available



[polfed.org/didyouknow](http://polfed.org/didyouknow)  
#KnowYourRights

Kerry Lees-Russell,  
Associate Solicitor

Contact your dedicated force representative  
Kerry Lees-Russell today on  
**0845 6347 999**  
e-mail [police-divorce@gorvins.com](mailto:police-divorce@gorvins.com)  
or visit us at [www.gorvins.com/wmp](http://www.gorvins.com/wmp)



## Legal Services for West Midlands Police

With 20+ years' experience working with the police, Gorvins Solicitors, have been a leading provider of legal services to the Police Federation and all its members. Whatever level of support you require during the divorce process, we can help.

**Cost effective:** Fixed fees and discounted rates for officers, police personnel and families

**Expert team:** Specialists in police pension treatment on divorce and dissolution

**Prompt service:** First appointment free and no matter is too small

### Other Legal Services

- Wills, trusts and probate
- Employment law
- Residential conveyancing
- Personal injury claims (on or off duty)
- Dispute resolution matters



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS



NARPO is a rank-free association of retired police officers, dedicated to improving benefits for its members.

## NARPO has Branches across West Midlands:- Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Walsall, and Wolverhampton.

- **FREE ADVICE** – Pensions, Benefits, Computing, Taxation;
- **MEMBER SERVICES** – Welfare Support, Car, Health and Travel Insurance, Car Purchase, Domestic Appliances, Trusted Legal Advisors, Mobile Phones, Travel Discounts, Job Opportunities + National/Local Websites, National Magazine, Branch Newsletters;
- **SOCIAL EVENTS** – Keep in touch with old friends and colleagues.

Annual membership fee deducted from pension:- £20.64 in 2018.

### ARE YOU RETIRING SOON?

Join on-line [www.NARPO.org](http://www.NARPO.org), or for more information, contact the secretary of your preferred Branch:-

**Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Walsall:-  
Wolverhampton:-**

[www.NARPOWestMidlands.org](http://www.NARPOWestMidlands.org)  
[www.NARPO-Wolverhampton.co.uk](http://www.NARPO-Wolverhampton.co.uk)

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[www.firstcallmortgages.net](http://www.firstcallmortgages.net)



# West Midlands Police Federation Workplace reps - April 2019

Location	Collar	Rep(s)	Posting
<b>Airport</b>	776	Chris Cotton	Operations
	8322	Scott Davies	Operations
<b>Bilston</b>	4331	Lisa Bird	CTU
<b>Bournville Lane</b>	9533	Mark Hambling	Intel
	20186	Paul Welch	Force Response
	5456	Winston Christie	Force Response
	115	Archie Murphy	Force Intel
<b>Bloxwich</b>	1284	David Keasey	Response
<b>Brierley Hill</b>	6889	Chris Smith	FCID
	4575	Stephen Green	FCID
	9694	Roy Teague	Force Response
<b>Cosford</b>	8346	Paul Swan	Learning & Development
<b>Coventry</b>	3426	Alan O'Shea	CV - NHF
	2162	Dawn Murkett	NPU Coventry
	1329	Jason Sayers	Learning & Development
	4368	Julie Fleming	NPU, Stoke and Wyken
	6886	Narinder Sidhu	PPU
	6886	Check locally	CTU
<b>CTU - rep details not for publication</b>			
<b>Digbeth</b>	6329	Simon Wheeler	NPU
	21420	Suky Bagri	Learning & Development
	633	Sean Gilsean	tbc
	20643	Matthew Fitzgerald	NPU
<b>Harborne</b>	8129	Warren Hines	Investigations -FCID
	2504	Donna Moore	FCID
	133	Eakbinder Kaur	FCID
	1978	Deano Walker	Birmingham Partnerships
		Check locally	CTU - Operations
<b>Nechells</b>	1687	Pete Snape	BWC & S - NHT
	7658	Matt Minton	Response
	6219	Lorayne Brown	Force Support
<b>Oldbury</b>	9878	Dave Hadley	Custody
	9898	Jason Durnall	FCID
<b>Park Lane</b>		Barrie Punshon	
	7665	John Stolz	CJC
	6979	Jon Nott	Investigations - FCID
	4993	Rod Rose	Investigations - FCID
	5008	Karen Geddes	NPU
	3000	Nick Simpson	Neighbourhood Co-ordinator
	667	Dan Wood	NPU
<b>Shard End</b>	1188	Steve Temperton	Response
	5512	Gary Haywood	Response
	698	Richard Ansermoz	Neighbourhood Task Force
	5456	Winston Christie	Force Response
<b>Stechford</b>	6557	Stuart Whitehead	Birmingham EAST
<b>Steelhouse Lane</b>	29965	Dan Chappelow	ROCU
<b>Tally Ho</b>	2593	Adrian Ford	Learning & Development
	5454	Trudy Gittins	Learning & Development
<b>Tipton</b>	29997	Mike Horton	Force Support Unit
	20428	Christopher James	Force Support
<b>Wednesbury</b>	1876	Giles Dean	NHT
	8345	Jean Brennan	Information Management
<b>West Bromwich</b>	1353	Stephen Parkes	PPU
	9233	Darren Neville	WV Organised Crime and Gangs
	5287	Sarah Thomas-West	WV - NHT
	21287	Lee Hayward	Force Response
<b>Guardians House</b>	3895	Steve Grange	Secretary
	9270	Rich Cooke	Chair
	8474	Tim Rogers	Dep secretary
	6906	John Williams	Dep chair
	1265	John Tooms	CaPLO
	4132	George McDonnell	CaPLO
	5583	Cliff Tomkinson	P & E
	5139	Peggy Lamont	Regional

# You protect us. **We protect you.**

At Slater and Gordon, we understand that police work can be challenging and stressful, but with us by your side, dealing with legal issues needn't be.

For over 50 years, we have been defending, advising and representing thousands of police officers just like you.

With offices throughout the UK, we are the only firm to offer a full range of legal services to the Police Federation.

## Legal services:

- Crime and misconduct allegations
- Personal injury claims - on or off duty
- Family law
- Employment law
- Police pensions
- Wills, trusts and estates

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## GET IN TOUCH

**0808 175 7805**

**24h Criminal Assistance number:  
0800 908 977**

**[slatergordon.co.uk/policelaw](http://slatergordon.co.uk/policelaw)**

