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The magazine of Cheshire Police Federation

Summer 2026



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The magazine of Cheshire Police Federation

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Warm Words Are Not Enough



Jamie Thompson
Chair
Cheshire Police
Federation

There's been discussion recently around the future of neighbourhood policing in Cheshire, in particular the balance between police officers and PCSOs.

The PCC has raised concerns about PCSO numbers falling below the level he said was agreed as part of the policing budget. But the Chief Constable's position is that overall neighbourhood policing numbers have increased, with more warranted police officers now working within those teams.

I think there's a danger we lose sight of something important in this debate. I'll never criticise investment in more police officers. That doesn't mean I don't value PCSOs: I do, they are valued colleagues and play a really important role in neighbourhood policing.

But equally, we have to be honest about

talks about persistent reliance on goodwill, flexibility and personal sacrifice from police officers.

It talks about cancelled rest days, disrupted leave and shifts being changed at short notice becoming routine rather than exceptional.

The report described this as an exploitation of officers, and said it is out of step with a modern and sustainable workforce. This should be a concern for all of us.

Police officers understand that this isn't a nine-to-five job, there will always be major incidents and emergencies where officers have to stay on, change their plans or come in on a rest day. But there's a difference between doing that because something exceptional has happened, and building a policing model that routinely depends on officers sacrificing their own time just to keep things running.

If we're regularly cancelling rest days, changing shifts without notice, and disrupting officers' family lives to meet everyday demand, then we have to ask one question: do we actually have enough police officers?

independent pay review body. At some point, the words have to be backed up by actions.

If we genuinely value policing, we need enough police officers to do the job, and we need to properly value and pay the police officers we've already got.

The Government knows that there isn't anything we can do about this. We just have to accept our lot and move on. Which is why it's important we keep the conversations going around industrial rights. It's really important that people sign up to our Copped Enough virtual picket line. There's a reason we're not an active member of the PRRB. But the process is loaded, in that whatever it comes up with, the Government doesn't have to accept.

The PRRB is not fit for purpose for policing. We are not like any other public sector; we should return back to the consultative body and have the opportunity to discuss police pay directly with the Government.

Inspectors Let Down

It's disappointing that the PRRB was unable to

"If we're regularly cancelling rest days, changing shifts without notice, and disrupting officers' family lives to meet everyday demand, then we have to ask one question: do we actually have enough police officers?"

the difference between the roles. A warranted officer has the power and flexibility to deal with whatever is put in front of them; they can make arrests and be deployed across a much wider range of incidents and demands.

The public want visible policing in their communities, but they also want the person who turns up to have the powers to deal with the problem in front of them. Our members want strong police officer numbers as well – not because they don't value their PCSO colleagues – but because more police officers means more resilience, more flexibility, and less pressure on the officers we already have.

PRRB Report

We've seen just how serious that pressure has become in the latest report from the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB), which

And that brings me back to why I'll never criticise investment in police officer numbers. More officers gives the force resilience to deal with demand without having to move the same limited number of people around or rely on their goodwill to plug the gaps.

Pay Disconnect

There's a real contradiction when we look at the Government's decision on police pay. The PRRB talked about exploitation, morale, well-being and retention, and having considered all that, recommended a 3.9% pay award. However, the Government chose not to accept that, and awarded 3.5%.

You can't continually tell police officers how much you value them, rely on goodwill, cancel their rest days and disrupt their lives, and then ignore the full recommendation of your own

recommend any changes to the conditions for inspecting ranks, who don't have those same protections as constables and sergeants in terms of shift changes and compensation. This is something I highlighted alongside our Branch Secretary, Dave Howard, when we were interviewed by the PRRB.

While the 1994 agreement bore some of that out, that value has gone. Quite simply, it's now not worth the salary increase that they had. It's not a set of regulations that are fit for modern-day policing, particularly when we're asking our Inspectors and Chief Inspectors to do so much.

We put so much pressure and demand on them to work under a set of regulations that are outdated and represent no value for them individually. It's seeing a lot of goodwill at those levels being eroded.

To Properly Invest In Policing

Use Of Force

There's been a really important development in the change of law around how an officer's honestly held belief is assessed when they use force. Since 30 June, only the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt' can be used.

This is an absolute game changer, because every day we send officers in to deal with people who don't play by the rules. Officers face violence, get assaulted and sometimes have to make incredibly difficult decisions in a

that decision picked apart through different processes and against different standards.

This change means we now have a consistent approach to assessing an officer's honestly held belief in use-of-force cases.

If there's no evidence to disprove that honestly held belief to a criminal standard, there shouldn't be a second attempt to challenge that same belief through a lower misconduct threshold.

That offers a degree of protection for our members and a degree of certainty.

we'll be watching closely to make sure the correct standard is applied.

Officers deserve a fair process from our own force, and that should be consistent throughout the country. It's not about giving officers a free pass.

It's about giving them the confidence that if they act lawfully, honestly and in good faith, in some of the most difficult situations, the system will treat them fairly.

We'll have one standard applied properly and consistently, which will mean a fair process for every police officer.

Bravery Awards

A privilege of being the Federation Chair is getting the opportunity to recognise some of the incredible things our members do, and our trip to London for the National

Police Bravery Awards was certainly one of those occasions.

We were there to support PC Phil Burgess, who was our local overall winner of the Cheshire Police Federation Bravery Awards.

We wanted to make sure that he would remember his experience for a long time.

It started with a trip to have a private tour of Parliament, which was kindly arranged by local MP Justin Madders, and it was a fantastic opportunity for Phil and his family to see behind the scenes at Westminster.

From there, Phil had the opportunity to visit 10 Downing Street and spend some time inside there as a guest of the Home Secretary.

And then obviously, there were the awards themselves, where the Chief Constable joined us for a really important night in policing. For one evening, the focus is entirely on recognising police officers from across the country who show extraordinary courage and bravery in some of the most difficult and dangerous situations.

Taking Phil and his family to London was more than attending an awards ceremony.

It was about making sure they understood how proud we are of what he did and how proud we are of all our officers who go above and beyond the call of duty, day in, day out.

matter of seconds to protect themselves, their colleagues or members of the public.

You don't have time when you're wrestling with somebody on the street to think about how a short video clip might make you look on social media, or what somebody sitting in a hearing room two years later might make of your actions. You have to make a decision based on what you genuinely believe is happening at that moment in time, and that's why this change is really important.

For too long, officers have felt that they could act in good faith, make those split-second decisions and in a violent or difficult situation, but then have to spend years having

There should be no more having two bites of the cherry, and that matters because we need police officers to have the confidence to act when the public needs them.

Of course, officers need to be accountable for their actions. Nobody's arguing otherwise, but we need to ensure that accountability is fair. We cannot continue with the system we had, where officers were reluctant to use lawful force because they're worried that one difficult encounter could leave them under investigation for years or cost them their career.

The real test for us is how forces and the IOPC apply the changes in practice. Locally,



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A Time Of Immense Pride



Mark Roberts
Chief Constable
Cheshire Police

In July, I spent an evening at the Police Federation's National Bravery Awards, and what an evening it was. I was so proud to be there on behalf of

made me even more determined to continue improving our service to the public of Cheshire.

Excellent Performance
Our recent end-of-year figures were pretty special. We were ranked top in the country for crime outcome rates, and we had the highest charge/summons outcome rate in the UK for overall crime; demonstrating our commitment to bringing offenders to justice and protecting

where we were the only force to be graded as 'outstanding' in managing offenders and suspects, and one of only two forces to be graded as 'outstanding' for protecting vulnerable people.

These results are outstanding and I hope you are all extremely proud of the part that you have played in achieving these; whatever your role in force is, this is a whole team effort.

But we must not rest on our laurels; to keep

"At a time of increased public and media scrutiny and criticism, seeing the bravery across all areas of policing truly was humbling"

Cheshire and be supporting the truly heroic actions of our very own PC Burgess, and I was also immensely proud to be there supporting the policing family as a whole.

At a time of increased public and media scrutiny and criticism, seeing the bravery across all areas of policing truly was humbling and

vulnerable people.

Cheshire is also the best performing force for policing violence offences, stalking and harassment, sexual offences and burglary; and has some of the highest charge rates in the country for vehicle crime and shoplifting.

This follows last year's HMICFRS inspection,

providing the best service, we need to make sure that we remain focused and remind ourselves daily that our job is to protect and support people who need our help and to lock up those who cause misery and suffering.

I am incredibly proud of the fantastic work you do every day to keep Cheshire safe.



“There are so many officers who do amazing things day in, day out so it feels a massive privilege and very humbling to be singled out to be here”

A Very Humbling Experience

Congratulations to PC Phil Burgess, who was our nominee for the 2026 National Police Bravery Awards.

Phil joined nominees from across England and Wales for a reception with Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood at Downing Street, before a glittering awards ceremony.

He won the Nigel Heathcote Award for Bravery at the Cheshire Police Federation Bravery Awards in March, having fearlessly run into live motorway traffic – narrowly dodging HGVs – to rescue a man in mental health crisis.

Talking about his experience in London, Phil said: “It’s a really wonderful day – I’m struggling to find words to describe how brilliant it is to be recognised.

“There are so many officers who do amazing things day in, day out so it feels a massive privilege and very humbling to be singled out to be here. It’s genuinely lovely to be recognised and have that gratitude.”

Vulnerable Man

On Saturday 14 June 2025, Phil was singlecrewed as he attended a report of a vulnerable man who had walked onto the M53 motorway.

He recalled: “I saw the man on the motorway, and my primary concern was: ‘I need to get to him and make sure he’s safe. He’s not in a great place mentally, and he’s potentially going to do something that is going to either kill him or potentially kill other road users.”

The man was standing in the central



reservation, having already crossed two lanes of the motorway.

Phil decided to stop his police car over two lanes of traffic, as a rolling roadblock to bring cars to a halt.

He said: “I jumped out of the car, shouted towards the man, tried to get him to engage and used his name.

“But he was walking away from me, towards the traffic. Both of those lanes were still live, and I remember seeing a really fast HGV driving past.

“When you’re on a motorway, everything feels very fast and very, very scary. And then I just remember seeing an opportunity where the lane closest to me was empty and I approached him, quite hurriedly at this point.

“I figured I’d just grab him before he runs out, and hope that people see us and don’t hit us.”

The officer got the man in a bear hug and tried to get him back to the central reservation,

but the man put up a fight. They fell to the ground and the man struggled, striking PC Burgess several times, but the officer managed to get handcuffs on him.

He said: “Had he been a bit stronger, there was a risk that he could have pushed me back into the live lane of traffic, and that’d just be history.”

PC Burgess pushed his emergency button and managed to tell the control room where he was. Meanwhile two members of the public bravely jumped out of their cars and helped with the arrest.

PC Burgess said: “My girlfriend was pregnant at the time... I was able to come away from it safely... and was able to see my son.”

Incredible Bravery

PC Burgess said he wasn’t expecting to be nominated for an award for the events that day and didn’t believe it when he heard.

He said: “I did what a member of the public would expect to see in that moment. I did what I would expect my colleagues to do. A man was in dire need of help, and I was in the right place at the right time.”

Cheshire Police Federation Chair Jamie Thompson said: “This was bravery of the highest order.

“Phil’s decisive and selfless actions that day demonstrated exceptional personal courage and prevented a likely fatality.

“We are all very proud of his brave actions.”



Member-Focused Federation



Dave Howard
Secretary
Cheshire Police
Federation

I was officially appointed Federation Secretary on 1 April this year, but I was interim Secretary for six months before that.

I've been involved in Cheshire Police Federation full-time since 2019, in the roles of CAPLO and Treasurer. Since then, the Treasurer role has been incorporated into the Secretary job, so becoming Federation Secretary felt like a natural progression to me.

I am still very vocal and passionate about supporting officers through conduct procedures, and I intend to keep doing some of that work.

But I needed a new direction, so when the Secretary position came up, I jumped at the opportunity.

It helps that I've got a good working relationship with Jamie, the Federation Chair – we've worked together for a really long time, and we trust each other implicitly.

Quite often Chairs and Secretaries have to work in the weeds – they have to get their hands dirty and be strong-willed and opinionated.

I also think it helps if Chairs and Secretaries have different personalities, so that they complement each other – and Jamie and I are like that, there's that yin and yang.

I like to think that people have faith in what I'm about, how I deal with people, and how I speak to people. I have a door-always-open policy. I hope the Board has faith in what we're doing, and how we're progressing the Federation.

Not a lot needs changing within our branch; it's always functioned well because we've had strong leaders.

The Chair, Secretary, CAPLO and Wellbeing Lead are the four full-time positions in Cheshire Police Federation, and I'm happy that those are all now filled, we're up to full strength.

Supporting Reps

My main focus for the next year as Secretary is to make sure that all of our Reps – including our Board and Council – are fully trained and get to do the courses they want to do.

There are so many extra qualifications that we can gain through the Federation. Nationally, I think the Federation has been quite poor at promoting extra skills for Fed Reps. So since I came in in April, we've given it a big push.

We've got new Reps courses, conduct courses, advocacy courses, PIP courses – there are loads of options.

We encourage Reps to take the initiative and think about what kind of area they would like to specialise in.

It's also important that we look after the great office team we've got with Anne, Libby and Mark, and they are going on courses too.

We want to make sure that people feel valued and it's their Federation – it's not just 'The Secretary and Chair Show'.

Although we hold the executive positions, it's down to the Reps, Council and Board to hold the Chair and Secretary to account. We've been on a pretty good level for the past couple of years, but I think we can do better and we have started that process.

Improving Things For Members

Obviously having a strong Federation benefits our members too. If we have an open-door policy, members will be aware that Reps are always reachable, they can always get hold of them.

I'm not saying that Reps will always respond immediately; it may be a day or so before somebody gets a phone call or an email back. That's just being realistic with the workloads that people have.

In particular, the conduct world has seen a massive increase in demand and workload. Professional standards departments are getting bigger, while the Federation is not.

Here in Cheshire, we have eight conduct-trained Reps out of a Council of 27.

But the full-time Reps look after their teams, and set a strong example in terms of

communication – not a day goes by that we aren't speaking to and engaging with each other. It's a happy office and I think people like working in the Cheshire Federation – long may that continue!

The Federation is also passionate about celebrating our brave officers and continuing our annual Bravery Awards. We were thrilled to take our winner PC Phil Burgess down to London in July, and it's always a great occasion.

Issues Facing The Federation

The main issues locally are probably in the conduct world. For instance, officers being on restricted duties for weeks after facing an allegation before getting a Regulation 17 notice served on them.

There's also a problem where officers have refused to give either MG11s or duty reports to investigators, saying that the Federation has told them not to.

But I want to be clear: every cop has a duty to engage. If any officer is unsure about what they should be putting in a duty report, then there's 27 Reps around the county as well as the full-time team, so please pick up the phone, drop us an email, and check before you refuse to engage.

Both locally and nationally, the IOPC is never far from our thoughts, and investigations and processes are still dragging on too long. I've organised a meeting with our local professional standards department.

And we are meeting with the IOPC leaders so they can give us an overview of how they deal with complaints or assessments that come in to them and how their operating structure may be different from ours. We hope this might give us a clue on why timescales are so long.

Nationally, there are also the obvious pension issues, which officers are going to become more and more aware of.

The Government is going to be making changes to the schemes that all officers will be affected by, but we will be here to help communicate those changes and support our members.

**“Obviously having a strong Federation benefits our members too...
Reps are always reachable, officers can always get hold of them”**

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Tributes To Popular Cheshire Detective

All at Cheshire Police Federation are very sad to hear of the death of our colleague DC John Ryan, who passed away suddenly on Sunday 7 June.

Our thoughts are with John's family, friends and close colleagues at this time.

John, aged 60, had been a Cheshire officer for the last 30 years, and also served for 10 years as a Special Constable prior to that.

He was a career detective for 23 years, and spent 21 of those years in the Major Investigation Team (MIT).

John's colleagues have described him as a man of stature and charisma who was incredibly proud to be a police officer. He leaves a lasting legacy of dedication and professionalism and will be missed by all his colleagues.

The Constabulary flag at HQ was flown at half mast as a mark of respect.



Negative Leadership Culture

The Police Leadership Commission has published a report recommending a "root and branch modernisation" of recruitment, development and monitoring within the police service.

It highlights challenges including a scarcity of resources, excessive paperwork, and officers being "demotivated" by negative and overly risk-averse leadership cultures.

Among the recommendations in the report, its authors say that a new senior constable rank should be introduced to provide effective leadership on the frontline.

In addition, the promotion processes to sergeant and inspector should be reformed, to equip these ranks with the knowledge and confidence to lead teams and serve the public.

It also warned that police leadership is not consistently of a high enough standard and requires a fundamental overhaul – it found the system for identifying and developing leaders was too weak.

As part of the report, a survey of 19,000 sergeants and inspectors found:

- More than a fifth of new sergeants and inspectors responding to the survey said they received no formal leadership training more than two years into their role
- Most of the sergeants said their training prepared them for promotion either "not at all" (38%) or only to a "slight extent"

(34%)

- More than half (59%) of sergeants disagreed when asked if the promotion process was open and transparent
- Sergeants identified high workloads (53%) and inefficient systems or processes (51%) as the most common factors that make it difficult for them to be an effective leader
- Just 12% of sergeants and 22% of inspectors said they had received formal leadership training
- Only 11% of sergeants and 16% of inspectors had received training before they were promoted and a sizeable minority felt their general training and development had not prepared them at all for their promotion.

The report was produced by former Home Secretary Lord Blunkett and former Policing Minister Lord Herbert for the College of Policing.

Ahead of its publication, Lord Blunkett told the BBC: "At the moment, the service isn't good enough. At the moment, the morale and motivation of many of those working in the service needs a reset."

The report recommends a leadership fast-track programme, to identify, develop and accelerate those with talent and ambition to be senior police officers.

However the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) has questioned whether fast-tracked officers will gain enough operational experience before promotion.



'PSA Testing Saved My Life'

A retired Cheshire Police officer said a free prostate cancer test organised by Cheshire Police Federation last year has saved his life.

Adam Morrall joined the police in 1984 and spent his 30-year career in roads policing. After retiring from the police in 2014, he joined the National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO).

A NARPO Rep emailed Adam about free prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood tests being carried out at Cheshire Police Federation headquarters last June, funded by the Cheshire Police Group Insurance Benefit Trust.

The tests were open to all male officers, staff, PCSOs, Special Constables and NARPO Members aged 40 and over.

Life-saving Intervention

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the UK. In 2022, there were 64,425 diagnoses of prostate cancer, and around one in eight men across the UK will be affected by prostate cancer in their lifetimes.

At first, Adam ignored the NARPO email, as he didn't have any symptoms, but he later spoke to his wife and decided he might



as well get checked out. So he went to the Federation offices for the simple, quick blood test.

After being tested, men receive an email using a traffic-light system, telling them whether they have a 'green' normal level, 'amber' borderline level, or a 'red' level that needs a referral to a GP. For Adam's age, the 'red' level was 3ng/ml and over, but when he received his results the following morning, his score was 48ng/ml.

Adam went to his GP, who referred him to the University Hospitals of North Midlands. The hospital carried out scans and did a biopsy, then told Adam the worrying news that he had stage three prostate cancer.

The doctors told him they believed it was curable, but because the cancer was on the edge of his prostate, surgery to remove it wasn't an option.

So Adam was told his best path was a course of hormone therapy and radiotherapy.

In January this year, Adam began the four-week radiotherapy treatment, five days a week.

He said: "I'm 62, so I was one of the youngest men there, and there was a room full of men having the same sort of treatment, telling their stories, and it was quite humbling.

"The treatment session only lasted about six or seven minutes, and you didn't feel a thing, you're just lying there on your back, the

machine sort of took you in and guided you out again.

"But then I had some severe side effects. I was feeling very nauseous, very sick, and I knew it was working because I was told this was going to happen.

"I was offered support groups, but I had my wife and family to help me keep positive all the way through. The last day of treatment was a nice day in February and I walked out into the sunshine, and thought, 'I've done it'. I stood outside the cancer ward and I just put my hands in the air.

He added: "I still have some side effects,

"But they're not expecting that to happen."

Don't Wait For Symptoms

Prostate cancer is one of the most curable cancers if it is caught early; before it spreads outside the prostate gland, the five-year relative survival rate is nearly 100%. However, many men, including Adam, don't experience symptoms until the cancer is more advanced.

Adam said: "They do something called the Gleason score, which is a mark out of 10 [for the aggressiveness of the cancer]. When I was first tested, mine was eight out of 10. If I'd scored nine or 10, it might have been a bit

that, without the Police Federation, I would not have gone for a test because I didn't have the symptoms. So as far as I'm concerned, they saved my life.

"I now consider myself fully fit. We have a young dog, we do two hours' walking every day, and there's no real issues. I've just been on holiday. My life is normal, and I have the actions of Mark Faint and the Police Federation to thank for it."

Adam added: "Every man of a certain age should go for a PSA test, whether or not they've got symptoms, for their peace of mind. I have two brothers-in-law, and both of

"I would not have gone for a test because I didn't have the symptoms. So as far as I'm concerned, they saved my life"

including sleepless nights and hot flushes, but I'm told that they will ease over time.

"I did another blood test at the end of April, and my latest PSA test score, after my radiotherapy, was just 0.12ng/ml, which is amazing.

"I'll still do blood tests every three months, and the hospital will continue to check me. If it goes up even slightly, they'll have me back in for an MRI scan.

too late for me.

"The nurse said it was impossible to say, but if I'd come to see them a year or 18 months later, we might have been having a totally different conversation, and it wouldn't have been a good one for me."

Adam emailed the Federation's Mark Faint, Chair of the Cheshire Police Group Insurance Benefit Trust, to thank him for putting on the tests. He said: "My message to Mark was

them buried their heads in the sand.

"But one of them eventually went for the test and got a high score, and he's now going to possibly go down the same path I went down. So I urge others to please get tested if they have the opportunity."

The next PSA testing event is on Thursday 22 October at the Federation offices. To book a place, please email: Cheshire_PF@cpf.polfed.org.



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Racist Attacks Need To Stop

Cheshire Police Federation is backing the 'Protect The Protectors: Stop Racism Against Police' campaign, saying that no officer or police staff member should come to work with the fear of being racially abused or assaulted.

New figures show that, across the UK, there were 5,355 recorded hate crimes with a police officer victim in the financial year 2025-26. However the true figure is likely to be much higher, as 13 forces, including Cheshire Police, were unable to provide data to the Freedom of Information request.

In addition, many officers do not report racial abuse incidents. The campaign 'Protect The Protectors: Stop Racism Against Police' was set up by Humberside Police Federation Chair Lee Sims after he found that 50% of his force's minority ethnic officers and police staff had experienced racial abuse while on duty, yet some had not reported it. Reasons for not reporting varied from not wanting to be seen as difficult, to not believing the issue would be dealt with seriously.

The campaign aims to collect data on the scale of the issue, raise awareness of what the



those same values within our own organisation. Our people are the most important asset we have, and they should be able to come to work without facing abuse."

ethnic minority background are being targeted for assaults and abuse simply because of the colour of their skin."

Anna encouraged officers who were victims

"None of our officers, or indeed any of the staff within the organisation, should come to work with fear of being racially abused or targeted because of their background or ethnicity"

police are facing, do more to protect officers and staff, and ensure offenders are dealt with appropriately.

Anna Galloway, Cheshire Police Federation's Wellbeing and Equality Lead, said: "The welfare and wellbeing of our police officers is really important to us at Cheshire Police Federation. None of our officers, or indeed any of the staff within the organisation, should come to work with the fear of being racially abused or targeted because of their background or ethnicity.

"This is, sadly, happening across the country, and we've seen the impact it has on the ability of people to come to work, give their best to the members of the public, and have confidence in their ability to police without fear or favour.

"We do police without fear or favour here in Cheshire; we provide an excellent service to members of the public, and we should uphold

She added: "Over the years we've seen an increase in assaults on police officers, and now we seem to be seeing a trend of a lack of respect towards police officers, and targeting them for their individual characteristics.

"We wouldn't expect that kind of behaviour towards members of the public and it's only right that we shouldn't expect that kind of behaviour towards our own officers.

"These are competent officers who are out there, day in and day out, trying to do their best for members of the public. There's nothing more hurtful than being targeted because of your appearance or your ethnicity and being treated differently because of that.

"Every assault on a police officer is horrendous and it is unacceptable that a police officer is assaulted every 10 minutes in the UK.

"But we have found that officers from an

of any type of abuse or hate crime to report it and have the confidence that the force was there to support them.

She said: "One of the issues we face in force is the underreporting of incidents. Officers are reluctant to report themselves as victims, as they do not believe that they will be supported on every occasion. But we have excellent examples of support being given to officers by the force."

She added that the Federation was keen to work with the force to get a true picture of the number of hate crimes being committed against its officers and staff members.

She said: "I know that there's a real desire to support officers and see that we are recording things correctly and the right outcomes are being delivered, with people's wellbeing in mind."

Support Available For Police

Police officers who suffer racist abuse can now access an independent support network, as the charity Thin Blue Line UK joins the Protect The Protectors: Stop Racism Against Police campaign.

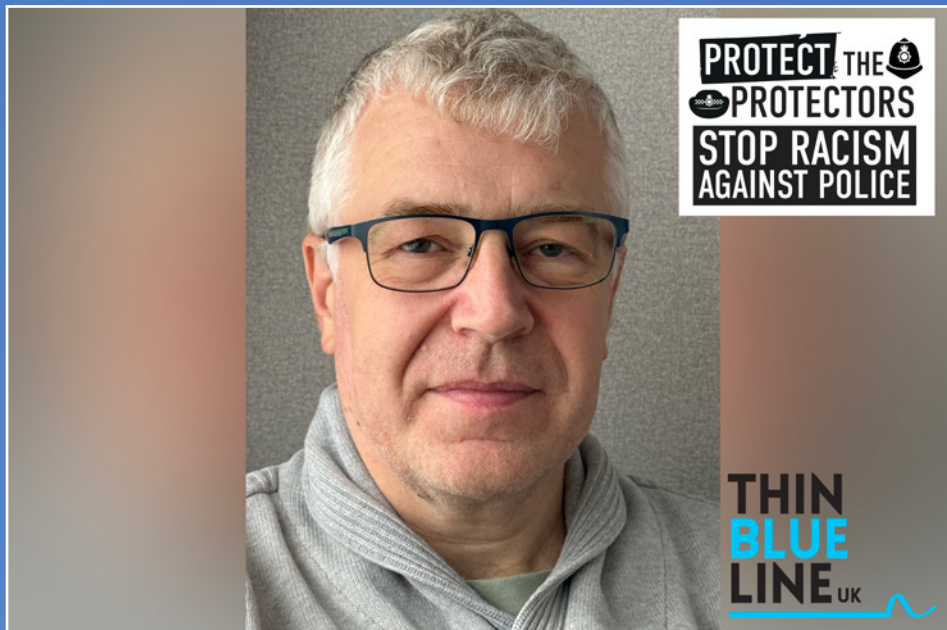
The Thin Blue Line UK is a mental health and wellbeing charity for police officers, which provides support via a confidential app, Thrive, that gives officers access to mental health and wellbeing check-ins, a mental health and wellbeing tracker, and access to trained counsellors.

It is designed to complement other mental health and wellbeing support networks, and can be used anonymously.

Gary Craig, a serving Inspector in the Police Service of Northern Ireland, set up the Thin Blue Line UK following the murders of GMP officers PC Nicola Hughes and PC Fiona Bone in 2012. It began as a Facebook page to raise awareness of what police officers do day in, day out.

Soon after, Gary decided to sell badges to raise money to help provide mental health support, before organising what has now become an annual fundraising ball.

The Thin Blue Line UK became a



really, really difficult to say you need help, because we've got this attitude in ourselves that we're police officers, it's expected of us. We try to break those barriers down and make it as easy as possible.

"Coming to work could be the one thing that's keeping you going, but as soon as you turn around to a supervisor, they could be risk averse and say 'I'm going to redeploy you'. Then that feeds into people not saying

the impact that racial abuse could have on officers' mental health.

A Freedom of Information request found that there have been 16,267 hate crimes recorded against police officers in the UK since 2022. In forces that were able to provide figures for more than one year, that reflects a 24% increase in the past year alone.

Gary described as "abhorrent" that

"You need to be able to recognise that you shouldn't be targeted like this, and that there is help out there. You shouldn't have to suffer alone in silence with that level of hatred"

registered charity in 2019.

Gary explained: "One of the big things going for the Thin Blue Line UK is that we're run by police officers, for police officers, so we built up that level of trust with our supporters and our followers.

"We had quite a good relationship with the Police Treatment Centres, which is where we found out about Thrive. They have come on board with us, and that's one of the main mechanisms of how we support our officers.

"We always want to support what is in force, and to just give police officers another option. Thrive is a fantastic option for officers.

"As a police officer myself, I know it's

anything and trying to struggle on.

"If police officers reach out to us, we don't ask any questions. If you're a police officer, or a police staff member, and you need help, all you have to do is just ask us.

"If you want to talk to us, we'll listen. I'll give you access instantly to the app, and you can get the help that you so desperately need, and nobody else needs to know about it."

'Abhorrent' Abuse

The Protect The Protectors: Stop Racism Against Police campaign was started by Humberside Police Federation, and Chair Lee Sims reached out to the Thin Blue Line UK to ask for their support, having realised

officers throughout the UK are suffering racist abuse while carrying out their duty. He said backing the Protect The Protectors: Stop Racism Against Police campaign was "hugely important".

He explained: "Being a police officer is difficult enough as it is, with the trauma that we see daily, the abuse that we get.

"But if you're getting an additional layer of abuse because of the colour of your skin, because of whatever race you are, it just galls me. It is absolutely abhorrent.

"And to think that my colleagues are getting that on a daily basis, and then not getting the help that they need. I just want to make access to proper support as easy as possible.

Victims Of Racial Abuse

"If certain officers or groups of officers are getting abuse because of something as ridiculous as the colour of their skin, then I want to put on record that we are totally opposed to this behaviour, and it needs to be called out because it's abhorrent.

"The officers involved know that there's a charity there that is able and willing to support them at the time and point of need, and whenever they want.

"And if we can make that as easy as possible for them to come to us, then being part of this campaign is hugely important to us as a charity.

"Life's difficult enough, and the job's difficult enough without having that extra level of stress. Some of the stories that have come to light because of the campaign, it just breaks my heart because it's so

uncalled for and it's so unjustified. Nobody deserves that.

"Racism now, it's not behind closed doors anymore, it just seems to be becoming more and more acceptable in certain quarters. People don't even try to hide it anymore, and I just don't think it's being challenged enough.

"I think that it's disgraceful the way some officers are being treated simply because of who they are.

"If you're taking that level of hatred home with you, and have no way to safely deal with that, that's a recipe for disaster as far as I'm concerned.

"You need to be able to recognise that you shouldn't be targeted like this, and that there is help out there.

"You shouldn't have to suffer alone in

silence with that sort of level of hatred. Because we're all human beings at the end of the day.

"People are going to take this personally. Even though they're coming from not very nice people, some of this is going to land, and some of this you're going to take it home with you, and you're going to mull it over, and you're going to be affected by it. That's not healthy.

"You need to be able to switch off when you go home from work, and you need to be able to relax properly, and having that to deal with, on top of everything else, is just an extra burden I don't think anybody deserves."

To access mental health and wellbeing support via the Thin Blue Line UK, go to www.thinbluelineuk.org.uk



Anti-Police Hate Crimes Up

16,267 hate crimes against police officers in the past 4 years

In 2025/26, there were **5,355** incidents

That's a **24%** increase in a single year*
*forces who responded in multiple years

The number of reported hate crimes committed against police officers has risen by nearly a quarter in the past year, according to new figures.

In the financial year 2025-26, there were 5,355 hate crimes with a police officer victim across 35 UK forces that responded to a Freedom of Information request.

This is up from 3,648 hate crimes against officers in 2024-25, when only 28 forces responded. Cheshire was one of the forces

number of forces responding to the FOI request had risen.

He said: "Any offences committed against police officers and staff are unacceptable. Although the rise in offences of this nature is alarming, sadly it comes as no surprise to me, as racist abuse of police officers appears to be accepted in some pockets of society, especially in the online community.

"We have seen repeatedly that officers have been abused after having the courage

work tirelessly to serve and protect their communities, and they should feel able and supported to do so without fear of abuse simply because of who they are or their beliefs. The rise in recorded hate crimes against officers is deeply concerning, and the personal nature of this abuse can have a significant impact on those targeted.

"However, it is important to recognise that increased reporting may, in part, reflect growing awareness and confidence among

"The rise in recorded hate crimes against officers is deeply concerning, and the personal nature of this abuse can have a significant impact on those targeted"

that did not respond to the FOI – saying it would be too expensive to find the figures.

Comparing like with like – only counting the forces that responded both years – this means there has been a huge 24% increase in reported hate crime over the past year.

The true figure is likely to be much higher, as large forces such as Greater Manchester Police, West Midlands Police and Thames Valley Police are among the 13 forces that did not provide data.

Humberside Police Federation Chair Lee Sims last year launched the 'Protect The Protectors: Stop Racism Against Police' campaign that Cheshire has signed up to.

Lee said the rise in recorded hate crimes against officers came as little surprise. But he added it was a positive sign that the

to speak out about their experiences, which is appalling.

"Since starting the campaign in Humberside, other Federation branches have come on board. I have immense gratitude for those that have joined us in supporting police officers and staff nationally. But as a Federation we need to raise awareness of this particular issue, and I invite all forces in England and Wales to join our campaign and support their officers."

Cross party MPs have given their support to the campaign – with MPs vowing to write to Police Minister Sarah Jones highlighting the number of officers who endure racist attacks and measures to tackle this.

A spokesperson from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) said: "Police officers

officers and staff to come forward.

"This has been supported by initiatives such as Operation Hampshire, which has actively encouraged the reporting of assaults and abuse against police, ensuring incidents are properly recorded and addressed, and consistent welfare support is provided to those affected.

"Officers are part of the communities they serve, and they are increasingly policing complex and often high-profile protests, many of which are linked to the growing polarisation of public debate, including around issues of race. This can heighten the risk of officers being exposed to hate crime.

"That said, such behaviour should never be seen as an inevitable part of the job and must not be tolerated."

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Record Mental Health Figure

A record 19,443 UK police officers were signed off work due to stress, depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the past year.

This represents a rise of 9.5% from the previous year and the figure is a huge 209% higher than when *Police Oracle* first ran the survey 13 years ago.

The figures show 316 Cheshire Police officers were signed off work over the past financial year due to stress, depression, anxiety or PTSD.

Of the forces that provided figures to the Freedom of Information request both this and last year, 60% reported an increased number of officers being signed off for mental health reasons.

The highest number of absences were reported by the UK's largest police forces – the Metropolitan Police (1,877), Police Scotland (1,414) and Greater Manchester Police (1,046).

Surprisingly, the much smaller force of Devon and Cornwall Police reported 999 mental-health absences in 2025-26, up 173% on the previous year.

At Merseyside Police, the figure was up an eye-watering 236% to 639 absences in 2025-26.

Northumbria Police (up 110%), Dorset Police (up 107%) and South Yorkshire Police (up 75%) were the other biggest risers.

These figures were released as the Government announced a £2.4 million funding package of support services, through the National Police Wellbeing Service, to help officers and staff with the psychological impact of working in traumatic environments.

As part of this, around 150,000 clinical psychological risk assessments and mental health checks will be available each year to officers and staff in operational roles. Forces will also roll out trauma-tracking

devices to record officer and staff exposure to traumatic incidents.

And a new sleep, fatigue and recovery app, ResetU, will be made available to all forces.

The funding will also support the continuation of the Mental Health Crisis Line (0300 131 2789), which officers and staff can call if they are feeling at breaking point or suicidal.

Crime and Policing Minister Sarah Jones said: "Our police officers and staff put their lives at risk and operate under immense pressure each and every day. They demonstrate exceptional courage and resilience to keep us safe, and it is crucial we protect them in return."

"As we deliver our reforms to policing, we will ensure that their wellbeing is prioritised, protected and never treated as an afterthought."

The full article and analysis has been published in *Police Oracle* [here](#).



"Our police officers and staff put their lives at risk and operate under immense pressure each and every day"

Top Tips For Student PCs

Student officers need to be organised and proactive to pass their probation but help and support is available from Cheshire Police's Student Management Team (SMT).

A Student Police Officer is generally any officer still in their two-year probationary period.

There are currently around 230 student officers within Cheshire, representing around 10% of police officers in force.

Sgt John Ellis is in charge of the team, which is made up of 12 officers who assist with performance, welfare and ensuring officers evidence their operational competency.

While student officers progress through their probation, the SMT complete regular one-to-ones, ensuring officers are performing to the required standard, evidencing their Operational Competency Portfolio (OCP) and working towards becoming a fully competent police officer.

The OCP requires the student officer to evidence real-world examples that show they can complete the basics of the policing role. Student officers must complete the OCP before they are confirmed as a substantive PC.

Continued Support

An SMT representative is based at each of Cheshire's policing units, to ensure that every officer can access support and help with evidencing their skills and abilities.

Sgt Ellis said: "Officers are assessed throughout their probationary period, however, key reviews come at the week 50, 75 and 94.

"At each review the SMT meet with the student officer and their supervisor to check on performance, attendance, welfare and ensure officers are on track with their OCP.

"Each review is different, as is every officer we meet, so the assessments and support required always varies.

"Some officers will be on track, others may be lagging behind, and it is about finding the right balance of support and motivation to spur them on.

"The officers will talk through incidents they have attended, describing their initial thoughts

and are encouraged to work through the incident using the National Decision Model.

"They will describe the information they have at the time, the risks and threats, their powers, plans and contingencies at the incident and then the action they took. There will be knowledge checks and areas for improvement set.

"This is all an attempt to embed a logical way of thinking for the rest of the officer's career. The same process is run again at week 75 and week 94, with a final detailed pass or fail assessment being completed at their final review.

"There is no denying that the current pressures and stresses on student officers are high. Student officers must hit the ground running, have workloads to manage, an OCP portfolio to complete and have their own home and social demands.

"The SMT is there as part of the Cheshire support network and I would encourage every student officer to ensure they are making regular contact with their SMT representative.

"Talk to them and get to know them. You should feel able to take any issue to them."

Time Management

The most common pitfall Sgt Ellis sees is when officers leave it too late to complete their OCP.

He explained: "The key action to take with the OCP is to get stuck in as early as possible.

"Student officers are quickly moved on from Response to the Area Investigation Teams (AIT). There is a short four-week independent period where officers really need to make attempts to obtain their searches (Section 1 and 32) and to obtain examples of dealing with conflict.

"While they can obtain these examples later in their journey, it is more difficult as they are desk based. While at that point it is easier to evidence investigative criteria, there are less opportunities for conflict and searches.

"Most officers do manage it; however, they really need to take advantage of the earlier opportunities.

"If they do find they still need conflict and searches when they are on AIT, the officers



need to be proactive, volunteer for response cover and complete nighttime economy shifts. While we will do everything we can to assist, obtaining the evidence is for them to do.

"There are always one or two officers who leave it too late and find that their probationary period needs to be extended.

"Some have good reason, but some find themselves having to explain in person why they have not completed the OCP to the Superintendent.

"The Student Management Team will do everything they can to support the student officer and avoid this, but some simply just leave it too late."

"We will always be there to listen and will try our best to help and find solutions. If we don't know the answer, we will find the person who does."

Invaluable Advice

Sgt Ellis said students need to be proactive about making sure they provide sufficient evidence to pass their probation.

He said: "My advice to student officers is don't bury your head in the sand; get out and demand operational shifts, repeatedly speak to your supervision and remind them what criteria you need. They are busy, have 50 things to do and will need reminding.

"Make sure you are targeting stop searches, taking the lead when out with colleagues, and putting yourself in conflict scenarios early.

"Make time to submit your evidence into the One File System and aim for the following

targets to keep you on track: Week 50 – 35% complete; Week 75 – 70% complete; week 94 – 100% complete."

"The majority of student officers come through this review process with no issues and will go on to be excellent officers for the rest of their career.

"Some need assistance to make that further step up and some will be knocked off course by elements outside of their control. It is about picking those officers up and getting them back on track as soon as we can."

Demanding Role

The Student Management Team do all they can to support officers in these situations,

trying to identify why the officer might not be performing and what the cause is.

This can range from welfare issues, misunderstandings with police powers, training issues, lack of confidence, pretty much anything.

On the vast majority of occasions, the issue is identified, the officer recognises it and improves, and they continue through their student journey.

However, there are times when officers are clearly not suited for a policing role.

Sgt Ellis said: "At times, it can become clear that some new officers are not suited, or ready, for the role.

"Where an officer appears unlikely to be mentally and physically fitted to the role or are unlikely to become an efficient or well-conducted officer, then that's when student officers may be considered for dismissal under Regulation 13.

"This is always a last resort but has been used on recent occasions.

"This is a demanding role with pressure and stress. Use the Student Management Team when you need us.

"We will always be there to listen and will try our best to help and find solutions. If we don't know the answer, we will find the person who does."



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Honouring Fallen Colleagues



The Cheshire contingent proudly took part in this year's 2026 Police Unity Tour, joining colleagues from forces across the UK in a three-day, 150-mile charity cycle ride, *writes Sgt Tom Grant.*

Riders set off from Cheshire Constabulary Headquarters on Friday 7 August, supported by Chief Constable Mark Roberts, DCC Mike Evans and ACC Bill Dutton, and demonstrating the force's commitment to remembering those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

ACC Bill Dutton gave a departure speech to the riders about the Care Of Police Survivors (COPS) charity and the incredible work they do.

Along the route, the team paid tribute to fallen officer PC Alice Mayo, meeting her family during a moving and poignant moment of remembrance.

The cyclists continued to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, where the team overcame chain breaks, broken derailleurs and fatigue, as well as moments of continued inspiration from Stuart Melody.

The cyclists arrived at the Arboretum on Sunday 9 August joining hundreds of officers from across the country to honour colleagues who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Through their efforts, the Cheshire team helped raise more than £7,000 for COPS. The total raise for the charity this year was more than £250,000.

Roll Of Honour

During the COPS Service of Remembrance, The Roll of Honour for the police officers and who died on duty during the last 12 months was read out.

Those remembered this year were PC Marcus Bennett, of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary; PC Francis Hawkins, of the Metropolitan Police; PC Ian Minett, of Gloucestershire Constabulary; PC Faizaan Najeeb, of Northamptonshire Police; PC Matthew Parker, of Essex Police; PC Bradley Corke, of Kent Police; PC Mark Chester, of MOD Police; PC Jess Turnbull, of Northumbria Police; and PC Alice Slominska, of Bedfordshire Police.

Speaking after the service, ACC Dutton said: "It's an absolute honour to attend for this act of remembrance, but also to recognise the work of COPS and to support the Survivors.

"People are never forgotten. It's held very deep in our hearts. We have a number of events that we hold in force as well, but this then brings it into the national arena.

"It's being part of the police family, recognising that the service given when someone joins the police isn't just that individual, but the impact that it has on all of our families.

"That impact can really be no deeper when somebody unfortunately loses their life while in the course of that duty.

"It resonates so much with everybody who

is serving today and has served. It's hard to put words how deep it penetrates into people's souls.

"We're all part of that wider cause of serving the public, and the amount of love and care that police officers give is only really possible when they've got a loving and caring family behind them and those people around them."

A Team Effort

Cheshire Police Group Insurance Benefit Trust donated £500 to Cheshire's Unity Tour riders help with their personal expenses, accommodation and refreshments.

The riders would also like to thank ACC Dutton for welcoming the team home at the memorial service and meeting PC Alice Mayo's family.

Further thanks go to everyone who came to send the riders off and welcome them home. Their encouragement and support helped make this year's tour a truly memorable and fitting tribute.

Finally, heartfelt thanks go to the families of the fallen officers, particularly those from Cheshire, for attending and sharing such a dignified and deeply moving occasion.

Their presence is a powerful reminder of why the Police Unity Tour matters: keeping the memory of their loved ones alive and ensuring they are never forgotten.

Unsustainable Work Model

8,508 rest days owed to Cheshire officers

In England and Wales, there are **817,884** owed

That's the equivalent of **2,240** years

Cheshire Police officers are owed 8,508 cancelled rest days. That's part of 817,884 rest days owed to officers across England and Wales, which is the equivalent of 2,240 years.

Unsustainable workloads are now the operating model for policing.

Police Regulations allow for two rest days a week, and many forces roster these as two consecutive days.

If more than 15 days notice is given, the officer should be notified of an alternative day off within four days (depending on the force), but this does not always happen.

Commenting on the latest FOI figures, PFEW Chair Tiff Lynch said: "Unsustainable workloads that put officers at risk are, shamefully, the operating model of policing. These figures lay that bare.

"We will not accept the continued

often dangerous job, and we recognise that cancelled rest days – particularly during exceptional demand and when difficult to reschedule promptly – have a significant impact on their wellbeing and recovery.

"The NPCC is working to shift policing away from a culture that rewards extra hours over wellbeing, and we made a number of proposals to the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB)

"Unsustainable workloads that put officers at risk are, shamefully, the operating model of policing"

But officers' rest days can be cancelled for "an exigency of the service". This is defined as "a pressing need or requirement that cannot be reasonably avoided", and includes unforeseen public order situations, court attendance and essential training.

If a rest day is cancelled with fewer than 15 days notice, the officer is entitled to payment.

erosion of officer safety and health, nor Chiefs whose only answer to this crisis is to make it cheaper and easier to take officers' rest time away.

"We have already taken enforcement action against forces failing in their legal duty of care, and we will do so again and again until the message hits home."

A spokesperson for the NPCC said: "Police officers do an extraordinary and

designed to protect the ability of officers to take rest days, to support and promote their welfare, as well as to bring clarity and reduce inconsistencies between forces.

"Our proposals seek to value planned rest and resilience, balancing the operational impact to forces with supporting officer wellbeing, and ensuring they can deliver consistent, high-quality policing to the communities they serve."

POLICE

Police Ramming Danger

In Cheshire, 10 police officers were injured after being rammed by vehicles in the past four years.

Across the UK, 457 officers have been injured in this manner in the past year – 1,120 in the past four years.

A Home Office spokesperson said: "Our emergency services put themselves in harm's way to protect us all and should be protected in return. Assaults on police officers are unacceptable and will not be tolerated."

The Home Office highlighted that, in June 2023, the CPS amended its guidance for road traffic offences so that prosecutors are directed to consider charging the most serious offences against the person when a vehicle has been used as a weapon.

But the PFEW's Roads Policing Lead, Phil Jones, said: "Unfortunately, quite often, we do not see relevant charges that reflect

the serious nature of [these incidents] and therefore it does not act as a sufficient deterrent to others.

"To use a vehicle as a weapon to ram a police vehicle is an intentional act by the offender, and therefore should be treated as such.

"Worryingly, this could be the start of a growing, abhorrent trend. I would urge police chiefs to ensure there are more consistent data sets nationally, to build a true picture of what is happening on the ground. Together, we can use this evidence to improve criminal justice outcomes and compensation."

A National Police Chiefs' Council spokesperson said: "Assaults on our frontline workers are absolutely deplorable, especially if officers come to harm when trying to keep others and the wider community safe. Policing is a stressful

job, and officers can be exposed to some of life's most challenging situations, which is why they are specially trained to try and reduce the risk to themselves and others."



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Officers Injured In Training

New figures show that 118 Cheshire officers were injured from police training from 2022-2025, as part of a collective 5,359 injuries in the UK

Senior leaders need to urgently review training standards, said Tiff Lynch, Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW).

She said: "Training is one of the most vital parts of policing, yet the latest figures should alarm anyone concerned about officer safety.

"Across many forces, officer safety training has become infrequent, compressed and outdated, with officers expected to practice complex tactics in short refresher sessions without the repetition needed to embed safe technique.

"This reduces a critical capability to a tick-box exercise, while officers face rising violence on the streets. Through our Copped Enough campaign, we have been raising concerns about officers policing in an increasingly violent environment.

"Senior police leaders must take responsibility and urgently review training standards and delivery. The answer is simple: better training, more often, with realistic scenarios, properly resourced instructors and time to practice safely."

According to the College of Policing website, Senior leaders have duties under the Equality Act 2010, Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at

Work Regulations 1999, Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013, and associated regulations that have a direct link to what they call public and personal safety training.

It further states: "Instructors must be trained to the standards of the national learning programme for public and personal safety instructors. Competence should be maintained and measured against the PPST instructor role profile."

Head of Uniformed Policing at the College of Policing, Ch Supt Andy Sidebotham, said that training was already regularly reviewed so that it remained relevant and kept officers safe.

He said: "Public and personal safety training in England and Wales is among some of the best anywhere in the world for keeping officers safe on the frontline.

"The training is kept under regular review so that it reflects the nature of what officers face today.

"New scenario-based training was introduced to better protect officers, and an independent evaluation found that when training is realistic, hands-on scenarios, there is a level of minor injury that is inevitable – and the vast majority of these are low level injuries. These include temporary redness or soft tissue strains.

"In addition to better training, forces have strengthened their recording practices so that more data is captured, including minor injuries

such as red marks.

"Scenario-based training is better at preparing officers for the unpredictable situations they face on the frontline. We continue to work closely with forces to ensure it remains evidence-based, proportionate, and relentlessly focused on keeping officers safe."

New police officers are required to complete initial training include and then "for roles that have been identified by local force policy as requiring public and personal safety training (PPST), senior leaders should ensure that those staff receive assessed refresher training every 365 days as a minimum", according to the College of Policing.

The training time for refresher PPST should be a minimum of 12 hours. The College stated: "Refresher training should be role-specific... senior leaders should ensure that refresher training is specifically tailored to both those roles that require officers and staff to use PPE, and those roles where officers and staff are not required to use PPE."

The training appears to be needed now more than ever – there were 48,888 assaults on UK Police Officers over the past year, an average of 134 police officers assaulted every day.

The latest figures from the Ministry of Justice show there were 14,768 convictions for assault against an emergency services worker in the year to June 2025, a 12% increase in two years.

PC Shelley Lister

Tell us a little bit about your policing career to date.

I have been in the police for 22-and-a-half years, all within Cheshire. I've done the usual: response, neighbourhoods, the case progression unit. I'm now on the Integrated Offender Management Unit where I look after prolific offenders and address their pathways in the hope that we can desist them from offending.

When did you become a Federation Rep?

I've been a Federation Rep for coming up to seven years. I wanted to join to try to support officers, shape any changes, to make things better for officers, and to be able to advise and direct accordingly when they're having issues.

It's a stressful enough job anyway, and then there are all the different Regulations and processes, and then the unfortunate times when officers do end up under misconduct.

So I wanted to be able to support them through that, to ensure they're not alone, to guide them in the right direction and give them the correct advice.

What does your role as the Federation Professional Development Lead involve?

I have quite a lot of dealings with probationary colleagues, because the misconduct side



ethos of the Federation forward and give important that they feel that they're human and constructive input. they have got a voice.

"You don't want to be out there feeling that you're alone and you're the only one to face this"

of things can be slightly different. Within that two-year probationary period there's a different process if they're not meeting the standards that will allow them to be signed off as a fully-fledged permanent officer.

Quite a lot of it is development, so if officers want to be put on training courses and they're not getting opportunities they will come to us and we might be able to find out why, because sometimes people just don't know where to go to get the information.

What are your responsibilities as Deputy Secretary?

To support our Secretary Dave Howard, and support the full-time team. I can sit on meetings with the senior leadership team to drive the

I have sat on meetings with senior officers if the full-time team haven't been available, and I'm always looking to develop myself.

I will support any of the full-time team with anything that is needed, and I would like to think that I can be trusted to carry that forward and do things to the best of their ability and make the right choices for them.

Why is it important for members to have fellow officers as their Federation reps?

I think it's important because we have got the rank structure, and you don't want to be out there feeling that you're alone and you're the only one to face this.

If somebody needs a little bit of a helping hand and a bit of support, then I do think it is

It's not just supporting people that are going through a difficulty with development or training, or the younger officers.

Sometimes the supervisors or inspectors will come to us and say, 'Can you help us? We've not done this process before.' It's not all about supporting the people who are in a sticky position.

But we support officers to guide them in the right direction.

Can you tell us an unusual fact about yourself?

I had a letter from Prince William and Prince Harry when they were younger. It was following the death of their mum. My dad had died a month before, so it's a little bit sad really.

The Cheshire Castle Plot

A plot by Irish, English and American Fenians to raid Chester Castle for arms and ammunition for use in a forthcoming Rising in Dublin was planned for Monday 11 February 1867.

It was devised and led by two men, John McCafferty, an American who claimed to have served in the Confederate Army during the American Civil War; and John Flood, who was a Dubliner who could be described as the 'Political Officer'.

More than 1,500 Fenians – who were members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the IRB – mainly from Liverpool, Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire and Yorkshire were to take part in the raid.

Their aim was to flood Chester by train, some being armed to intimidate defenders; and a small raiding party was to take the Cheshire Militia and Volunteers armoury in 'The Cockpit', a building in Eastgate Street from where they would be able to steal the 300 or so rifles and ammunition to distribute to other Fenian volunteers.

Now, more heavily armed, the Fenians would storm Chester Castle, which was lightly defended by the 54th (West Norfolk) Regiment of Foot with only 65 men and two officers.

The Fenians estimated that there were 14,000 rifles stored in the castle and significant amounts of ammunition. Once the arms and ammunition had been seized, the Fenians were then to return to the railway station and commandeer one or more trains to transport men and weapons to Holyhead, destroying the telegraph lines and ripping up the rail tracks behind them.

At Holyhead, they were to commandeer the mail boat and any other vessels, telegraph to Fenians in Ireland that they were coming and head for Dublin.

Foiled Plot

However, the seeds of failure had been sown the day before the raid, when an informer told Liverpool police of the plot. The immediately sent two officers to Chester to warn the local police, who acted very swiftly.

The full Chester City police establishment was deployed guarding the railway station and the city gates: 500 Special Constables were



John McCafferty

sworn in and arms issued.

Cheshire Constabulary reinforced the city police by 150 officers armed with Colt revolvers; the Militia and Volunteers were mobilised to guard the city gates and reinforce the 54th Regiment in the Castle. The 54th also brought in 70 extra men from its barracks in Salford.

As an extra measure, 400 Scots Fusiliers were drafted in and arrived later by special train from London.

As the Fenians started arriving at Chester Station before dawn on Monday 11th, they were greeted by a very different sight than they expected; police, militia and later regular army troops, a clear sign the plan was 'blown'.

Arrests And Defeat

Flood, who was at the station, sent a man back to Birkenhead station where volunteers from Liverpool were embarking, to pass the message that the plan had been betrayed.

The officer at Birkenhead started to stand men down; most officers complied but many ordinary foot soldiers still made the journey to Chester. Throughout the day, 1,500 or more men arrived by train from all over Northwest England and beyond.

This was probably more men than were expected, and these men, many armed but without the officers who knew the plan of action, marched out of the railway station and into a none-too welcoming Chester.



John Flood

Realising the plan had failed, many discarded their weapons and headed back to the station or onto the roads out of the city to eventually start walking home.

Amazingly there was not one incident of violence. Only one arrest was made for attempting to suborn troops, but the man arrested was later released without charge.

By the end of Monday, the insurgents were dispersing, although significant numbers of men were still on the streets overnight and into Tuesday 12th.

Over the next few days more than 100 men were arrested in Dublin as they disembarked from boats from Holyhead and Liverpool. McCafferty and Flood were arrested at Dublin Port using assumed names.

The Dublin Rising against the Crown forces planned for 15th February took place on 5th March 1867, but due to poor planning and leadership never got off the ground.

The men arrested were tried by a 'Special Commission' in Dublin later in the year. McCafferty was sentenced to death for Treason Felony, which was soon commuted to imprisonment for life. He was released after a general amnesty in 1871.

Flood was sentenced to 15 years transportation to Australia for the same crime. The other men were imprisoned for short periods or fined. Many were found not guilty of any crime in Irish jurisdiction and released.

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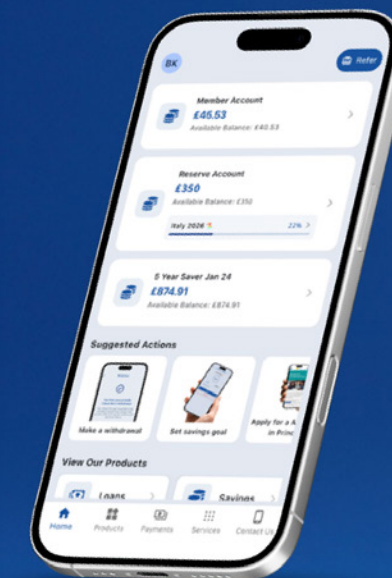
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Sergeant's Marathon Effort

Cheshire Police staff member and endurance runner Louise Blizzard has spoken about running an astonishing 31 London Marathons, one of the highest tallies by any woman in history.

Louise, who has worked in the police for 20 years, ran her first London Marathon in 1994, at the age of 18.

She said: "One of my earliest memories is watching my dad run the London Marathon in 1984 and thinking, 'That's something I'd really like to do one day.' Then when I turned 18, my dad was planning to do the New York Marathon and asked if I wanted to do it too. It was amazing, I absolutely loved it – I ran it in just under four hours."

After that, Louise got a place in the 1994 London Marathon and ran it with her dad, beating her previous time by half an hour. In 1995, she won a place in the elite women's race, which she ran in under three hours, finishing in the top 30 women.

She said: "I remember looking at the results in the newspaper the next day, and the people who finished in the top 50 were listed in bold. My dad was dead proud of me."

Even as Louise started to work for Thames Valley Police, she remained in the elite race and continued to run the London Marathon every year, alongside other marathons around the world. In 2004, she set her personal best time of 2 hours, 54 minutes and 58 seconds.

The first London Marathon Louise missed was 2010, as she was heavily pregnant, and she gave birth to her son the day after! She has only missed one other London Marathon, the Covid-delayed October 2022 race, because it clashed with the European Police Marathon Championships.

Sadly, four years ago, Louise's father died of cancer. She said: "That year I ran the marathon for him and it meant a lot. Each year, it's still significant to me."

Louise found she had the same gene alteration that her dad had, and two years ago she underwent a double mastectomy. She said: "I had the operation in the August, and the National Police Marathon Championships was in October. A girl from our force dropped out and asked if I wanted to take her place. I thought, 'It's probably too soon, but I could just



go and enjoy it', so that's what I did."

Louise says that London is "definitely" her favourite marathon: "It's such a great atmosphere, I'm really proud to have been part of it for so long. There is one lady called Barbara who's done a few more than me! But I'm just going to keep going, if I can."

She says the races haven't always been easy: "The first time I broke three hours was incredible, I was in the zone. But then I've had ones where it's been going so badly that I thought to myself, 'How on earth am I going to get to the end?'."

Louise fits running around her job by getting up very early or training at lunchtime. She added: "At weekends, I'll get up early and do my run so it doesn't impact my family too much, but they're used to it because it's just



part of me. I turned 50 this year, and I was in the European police team again this year, so I'm hanging on in there!"



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