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Telephone: 01656 869900

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More information about the Federation, regulations and latest news items can be found at www.swpf.org

Our cover picture shows South Wales PS Ian Cameron, standard bearer at the National Police Memorial Day service. Photo courtesy of Anderson Photography.

Your Federation representatives

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South Wales officers are exceptional

By Steve Trigg, chairman of South Wales Police Federation

With the holiday season looming and the year seemingly flying to a close, it’s a good time to reflect on some of the challenges we have faced and the challenges to come.

This year saw increased focus on the dangers officers routinely face as they go about their work.

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) took a leading role in raising awareness of the problem, lobbying ministers and chief officers to ensure we fully understand the nature and number of assaults on officers and how that data can be used to influence the sentencing rules for perpetrators.

My view is that an assault on a police officer should never be acceptable and should always result in a custodial sentence for the perpetrator.

Our Chief Constable, Peter Vaughan, has signed up to the seven-point plan for officer wellbeing, with greater focus on officer wellbeing, especially in relation to mental health. There is a growing awareness that as officers work in an increasingly stressful environment, with greater scrutiny and often unrealistic expectations placed upon them, they are more susceptible to mental illness.

The Mind Blue Light campaign is one of a number of initiatives to raise awareness and reduce the stigma attached to mental ill health.

Locally we are working with the Force to increase the number of officers trained in mental health first aid and to identify suitable interventions for officers in need of assistance.

We have seen proposed uplifts in our firearms capability as well as our public protection units, which will inevitably place further strain on our already stretched front-line in the short term. But I’m assured that contingencies are in place, including further recruitment, to alleviate the pressure in the long term. This is something we will be closely monitoring and seeking your feedback on.

As you will all no doubt be aware by now, Cardiff will be hosting the Champions League finals 2018. While the event itself is perhaps not as big as the NATO summit we successfully delivered in 2014, many of the security issues are similar and it has the potential to have a huge impact for South Wales Police.

However, with funding for the policing commitment still to be finalised, it may well be that we will be expected to safely deliver the event on a shoestring, which poses huge logistical problems for a force our size.

A dedicated planning team is being put together and we shall be working alongside them to try to ensure disruption to officers’ family and private lives are considered and kept to a minimum.

Despite the challenges, I’m sure you will step up to the plate as you always do and prove yet again that South Wales officers are exceptional and showcase Cardiff and South Wales to the rest of the world.

As ever, stay safe out there.
Officer assaults: ‘not part of the job’

A seven-point plan setting out how police officers and staff should be treated if assaulted while on duty is now awaiting sign-off from the Force.

The plan follows an initiative first launched in Hampshire following a campaign by its Federation branch.

The South Wales Police plan will make the recording and investigation of assaults on officers more robust and professional and will cover:

- Improved training
- A commitment to treating and investigating assaults on police officers and staff as seriously as an assault on a member of the public.
- Keeping the officer/staff member informed and updated
- Providing support and welfare
- Giving sufficient evidence – as a result of poor evidence or personal statements, cases sent for prosecution too often fail to meet basic evidential needs.

Steve Treharne, chairman of the South Wales Police Federation Constables’ Branch Board, explains: “The message needs to go out that an assault on an officer is not to be accepted as part of their job. An assault on an officer is an assault on society and any sentence given needs to send out a strong message that acts such as these will not be tolerated.”

A national campaign calling for better protection for police officers has gathered momentum after Halifax MP Holly Lynch led debates on the issue in Parliament in October and again in November.

During the summer recess of Parliament, the MP joined West Yorkshire police for a 2pm to 10pm shift to gain an understanding of the demands of front-line policing.

Ms Lynch accompanied PC Craig Gallant and it was not long before she witnessed an event that led her to call 999 as she was so concerned for the officer’s safety. PC Gallant had pulled over a vehicle and asked the driver to get out of the car. The driver refused and within seconds a crowd of hostile people gathered around PC Gallant. The officer was forced to draw his baton to keep the crowd back and thankfully back up arrived quickly enough to help manage the situation.

Steve explains: “This is the sort of danger that you can, and do, find yourself in on a regular basis. Research has found that an officer is assaulted every 22 minutes with a total of 23,394 assaults in England and Wales last year. This may not be a definitive picture as the method of collecting data by the Home Office for police assaults can be described as poor. The Federation is currently working with the Home Office to work to a more robust method of collecting accurate data.

“Unfortunately, officers who have been assaulted often do not bother reporting or recording the incident or feel they are not taken seriously and often they even have to interview the offender themselves which can’t be right.”

It was this situation that prompted John Apter, the Hampshire Police Federation chairman, to drive through his Force’s seven-point plan. This has now been taken up by most of the 43 forces in England and Wales.

Back for police in Commons debate

A Police Federation campaign for tougher sentencing of those convicted of assaulting police officers has won backing in Parliament.

MPs resolved, after a three-hour Commons debate on police officer safety in November, that assaults on the police are ‘unacceptable’ and welcomed the work of the Independent Sentencing Council in producing guidelines that recognise the seriousness of attacks on the emergency services.

“It is about time MPs recognised that more and more police officers, police staff and other emergency service workers are being assaulted as they go about their duties serving their communities,” says Steve Trigg, chairman of South Wales Police Federation.

“It almost seems to have become acceptable with some people – including officers themselves – seeing it as part of the job. But it is not acceptable and nor should it ever be considered so. We need to see tougher sentencing of those found guilty of assaulting police officers and emergency workers so that there is a more effective deterrent.”

During the Commons debate, there was also acceptance of the Federation’s call for the numbers of assaults to be accurately recorded in order to appreciate the scale of the problem.

Officer assaults are vastly under-reported and it widely believed that it is a bigger problem than current figures demonstrate.

Before the Commons debate on 2 November Federation vice chairman Calum Macleod, national representative Mick Hume, West Yorkshire Federation chairman Nick Smart and Hampshire chairman John Apter met with a large number of Labour and Conservative MPs.

Calum said: “Today was an important step in raising awareness among MPs and the public of the risks that police officers face on a daily basis. It was also about putting in place measures to ensure that those who assault police officers are held to account by the courts and that sentences reflect those crimes - progress is, and will continue to be made.”

The Federation delegation was welcomed by Holly Lynch, Labour MP for Halifax.

Speaking at the debate, she said: “Police officers who are assaulted deserve the full backing of the justice system. Since my shift with West Yorkshire Police, I have been made aware of at least five more assaults on officers in my constituency in the days that followed.

“What shocked me, and what thoroughly depresses police officers, is that sentences handed down to offenders for assaulting the police often fail to reflect the seriousness of the crime or, more crucially, serve as a deterrent.

“We make the laws in here, but we ask the police to uphold and enforce them out there. To assault a police officer is to show a complete disregard for law and order, for our shared values and for democracy itself, and that must be reflected in sentencing, particularly for repeat offenders.”

MP Jessica Morden, Labour MP for Newport East, told the Commons about a woman who is married to a police officer who contacted her to describe how the injuries her husband sustains in the course of his work affect the family.

To stop their children worrying, the couple lie about how he sustains his injuries. She quoted the woman saying: “According to my children he is the clumsiest dad ever, as we have had to tell them ‘Dad fell over a bin chasing someone’, ‘Dad walked into a cupboard door in the station’, ‘Dad caught himself on the police car door’.

“I am tired of seeing my husband come home injured and having to lie to my children about how he sustained his injuries. I worry every time he is late home and grateful every time he returns home safely.”

The Federation has previously successfully campaigned for the law to be changed so that those convicted of murdering police officers will now be sentenced to life.

Get involved on Twitter using #PoliceOfficerSafety.

www.swpf.org
In each edition of Federation Focus we ask members for their views on a topical issue. This time, with statistics showing an increase in assaults on police officers, we asked Federation members if they had been assaulted on duty, whether they had sustained injuries, how they felt about the attack and what response they had received from the Force.

I suffered damaged soft tissue in my hand and bruising after being assaulted while on duty. I was off work for a month. I reported the assault and the suspect was not dealt with. I was angry that nothing was done but my sergeant was amazing. I was happy with my supervisor but the CPS let me down massively.

The only issue I would add is that assaults on police are overlooked and people are being assaulted but told they can expect to be assaulted sometimes i.e. kicked etc.

Kim Harris

I have been assaulted while on duty several times with the worst injury resulting in 12 stitches to my chin and a permanent scar. I was off work for two weeks. I felt very vulnerable when returning to work as the injury had been caused as a result of having half a house brick thrown at me which struck me in the face. When I returned to work I had to attend a call of youths causing problems and on arrival they started to throw stones at myself and my colleague. I remember just wanting to get out of there ASAP.

The assault took place after a Cardiff City match and I hated being in crowds for a long time afterwards.

The incident was reported but we were unable to identify the person who had actually thrown the brick.

I had one phone call from SMT at the time stating I would have support and that was the last I heard about it.

Another assault involved a bite on my forearm which resulted in an infection going all the way up my arm and neck. My son was born the following shift so I was off on leave and didn’t take sick leave. The infection grew over a few days and I didn’t want to pick up my son as I was worried I would pass something onto him. I didn’t want to have photos taken with my newborn son either as the infection was visible on my neck.

Again, I reported it and the male was charged but at court the CPS wanted to drop it. I insisted we run it and he was found guilty. I did not receive any support from the Force in relation to this assault.

Like most officers, over the years I have been punched, kicked and spat at. Luckily, they have resulted in minor injuries such as bruising. I have probably had support from my sergeant at the time asking if everything was OK but was never offered any type of support in relation to welfare or counselling regarding the two main incidents.

I think that it comes with the job that we will end up being assaulted.

PC Tim Davies

I suffered swelling to the throat as a result of being choked. I was off sick for five shifts; my first sickness in about 12 years.

After receiving hospital treatment and being told I may have to stay in as an in-patient, I realised the potential consequences of the assailant’s actions. I was close to being unconscious and the ENT doctor stated that any further swelling to the affected area could result in severe consequences. I was ordered to stay off work in case that area was struck again. This shook me up and I realised the seriousness of the assault. This affected the way I looked at my job and my family.

I reported the incident. My line manager was excellent in his support and came to visit me at home. I had no support from anyone higher than sergeant level.

PC Sean Morgans

I was assaulted on duty in 2010, suffering a broken nose, chipped teeth and a cut to my face. I was off work for two weeks after the assault and then a further three weeks post-surgery to my nose.

Initially I was fine mentally as I just thought it was one of those things but later on I felt nervous if anyone entered my personal space while I was dealing with calls. I reported the incident and a man was arrested and convicted.

I had a fabulous response from the Force, my divisional commander at the time, Chief Superintendent Mathias, rang me the same day to offer any support I needed. My shift were also extremely supportive as were the division as a whole.

Sian Dumbleton

I suffered torn knee ligaments and was off work for five months after being assaulted at work. It made me feel a bit useless to be honest as I was immobile for four months and had to rely on others to drive or take me places.

I reported the assault and was satisfied with the support I received in Force.

However, the courts do not punish the offenders in my view and will always try to drop the charge to resisting arrest.

PC Tim Cranny

I suffered bruised ribs, concussion and whiplash after being assaulted while on duty. I was off work for two days as I was not aware of the full extent of my injuries at the time.

I just felt it was part of the job. I reported the assault and was satisfied with the support I received.

Assaults on officers are becoming more frequent and more serious.

PC Emma Warner-Brindley

I’ve been spat at twice and had £25 compensation the first time. The second
5 reasons why some insurers charge you more than you think

With some car insurance, the price quoted can quickly increase.

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time occurred last week and the boy was charged.
I’ve dislocated my thumb while wrestling with a subject during arrest. I
attended hospital, was off for a couple of weeks and the person got fined a small
amount. I don’t recall how much.
SWP went through the motions of offering counselling but it was a standard
letter and far from compassionate. I wouldn’t say that I felt supported.
PC Kurt Jones

I was assaulted on duty and suffered a broken finger. I was off work for a set of
six shifts but returned to work on restricted duties as I had a splint on my
finger to keep it in place.
I hate to say it but the assault did shock me. I hadn’t been assaulted prior to
this and I think that, due to my size and gender, I had an unrealistic idea that it
would never happen.
I reported the incident and the defendant was arrested for police assault.
I don’t feel that I had any support in Force. The OIC did not contact me. I
contacted the office the following morning to update them that my finger
had been broken but the file wasn’t updated and this wasn’t reflected in the
charge. Had this been a member of the public, we would have been chasing up
the medical consent form, additional statements etc. As none of this was done,
the defendant was charged with a lesser charge.
I feel that officers aren’t treated as victims.
Female officer, anonymous.

Pay review

By Steve Treharne, Constables’ Branch
Board chairman

You should all have seen your annual pay
award hit your pay packets in September.
We received a princely increase of one per
cent which, we will certainly all agree, was a
derisory award.
The police service has existed under
significant austerity since 2010, pay was
frozen for a number of years, allowances
such as CRTP and SPP were removed and
increments were frozen while pension and
NI contributions increased.
We have certainly carried a heavier
burden than most other public service
sectors. But it’s just not in financial terms
where we have paid a cost. There has been a
significant drop in officer numbers which has,
in, turn, led into a heavier burden in
workloads and responsibilities in your day to
day role. Officer sickness due to mental
health has also increased significantly in the
past year, some of which must be
attributable to the greater pressures you are
exposed to (See below).

The Federation put forward a strong
case calling for a 2.8 per cent pay increase and
submitted evidence to back this up.
Unfortunately, the pay submission body has
changed. The previous mechanism of the
Police Negotiating Board resulted in the
Federation being actively involved in the pay
negotiations.
Now, as a result of Winsor, we have the
Pay Remuneration Review Body (PRRB)
within which the Federation no longer has a
seat around the negotiating table. The
Federation is required to submit its evidence
and this is then reviewed in line with all
other submissions from police stakeholders.
It is clear that this year the PRRB has
followed the Government mantra of
imposing a flat one per cent increase.
The police service has now absorbed one
per cent pay rises for the last three years
– against the backdrop of increases in the
private sector averaging 2.5 per cent a year.
This paltry rise clearly shows how the
Government views the hard work of police
officers each and every day.

Mental health and wellbeing

There is now a big emphasis on mental health and wellbeing both nationally and within South
Wales Police. Mental health issues are now the single biggest cause of sickness with a big rise in
the figures in the last financial year.
The current emphasis is on breaking down the stigma associated with mental health illness.
You can be sure that though once mental health is seen in the same way as physical illness then
we are going to continue seeing a year on year rise in the figures.
I am in no doubt that officers will currently be reporting physical illnesses when the reality is
that they do not have the confidence to report a mental health illness. I also feel it is no
coincidence mental health issues have increased as police budgets have reduced and we have all
been expected to do more with less. What starts with stress can develop into something more
serious if not addressed earlier.
I have looked on enviously at the Mind Bluelight initiative in England as Wales is not covered
by this. Through an FOI request to the Welsh Assembly, I have found this is partly down to the
Assembly not using the money it received from the Cabinet Office of the UK Government as a
result of the Libor fines. The Libor fines were provided to directly help support emergency service
personnel.
But we remain hopeful that Mind Cymru will be successful in this year’s round of bidding to
enable the scheme to be rolled out into Wales.
It is great to see that there is a big drive within Force to address wellbeing and I am aware that
supervisors will be provided with mental health awareness training. This will help
supervisors spot the signs of mental health illness at a much earlier time and thereby signpost
the individual to the relevant support.
I want your local Federation to go much further and have gained the support of your local
Branch Board to facilitate the training of reps in mental health first aid. The course is recognised
in 23 countries and teaches people to recognise the signs and symptoms of common mental
health issues, provide help on a first aid basis and effectively guide someone towards the right
support.
Federation reps are often the first point of contact for a colleague in crisis and it is vitally
important that reps are able to effectively support officers in the correct manner when this
happens.
While it is a positive step in the right direction to look at measures to increase the wellbeing
of all our staff, we must not embark on our journey by only treating the symptoms of mental
health. It is vital that we gain a clear understanding as to the root causes and look to address
them. Let’s put the emphasis on addressing the causes rather than treating the symptoms.
One thing you can be sure of is that your South Wales Federation will continue to fight and
support you.

Can you help John?
John Morgan is a teenager with a
mission: he wants to earn a place in the
Guinness Book of World Records.
And police officers could help him
achieve his dream as he wants to get in
the world-famous records book for
having the most memorabilia relating to
the emergency services.
John (17), who has Duchenne
Muscular Dystrophy and uses a
motorised wheelchair, has already got
hundreds of stickers from emergency
services worldwide.
But if you think you could add to his
collection by donating a cap, badge,
sticker or other memorabilia, please
contact the family through their
Facebook page – facebook.com/
jpmorgan1999

www.swpf.org
The number of days where officers will be required to work past midnight into their rest days should now decrease with the introduction of a new Force protocol following a campaign by South Wales Police Federation. Federation secretary Clare Biddlecombe has spent almost two years working with the Force planning team to secure an improvement in the way that officers are deployed for PSU and Force events.

“In the past the Force automatically selected officers to work a night shift on their rest day for these events with no thought process going into the selection of those resources,” Clare explains, “However, the new protocol, while not perfect, will be a vast improvement on how officers have been deployed in the past.”

“Officers who backfill PSU officers can no longer be required to work past midnight on a rest day, PSU officers are being deployed to police an event as opposed to being given ‘after dark duties’ and the number of deployments have been reduced.

“There is now a protocol in place of which all SMTs including local planning teams and the resource management unit are aware. This should decrease the number of days where officers are required to work past midnight on a rest day.”

Protocol for the resourcing of events/critical dates

Force event

Event or incident that requires a large number of resources (in excess of 1 PSU or 1 BDU) and cannot be safely managed in the BCU without having an impact on daily business. The centralised planning will allocate the command structure and resources from across the Force. Where specialist assets (dogs, mounted, RPU etc) are the only requirement from outside the BCU, the event remains a BCU event.

Critical event

These will be defined in consultation with the identified BCU Senior Management Team SPOCS. A policy has been introduced for the selection of PSU resources and subsequent backfill for pre-planned Force events and the selection of resources used for these and critical dates. This is to ensure consistency across the Force. Each BCU and operational department has set staffing levels in the FIRMS rostering system. SMTs can amend these levels at any time according to organisational demand.

Role of Planning/Rostering

The operational planning officer for each event will consult with the nominated commander to identify the resource requirements. The operational planning officers will then request the PSU/BDU/Aiding party resources through the Resource Management Unit (RMU). The RMU will select resources and group them according to their respective BCUs and, where possible for logistical purposes, serials into sector or neighbouring sectors. The RMU will then send the organised list of resources to the operational planner.

Resources for backfill requirement for PSU officers, local and major events and critical dates

This will include using all operational officers regardless of their usual role when backfill is needed and will be spread out equally among non-uniform and uniform departments. The RMU manager can provide analysis of the backfill shifts worked by officers to the Force Planning chief inspector when required. This will ensure duties are spread equally limiting the impact on rest day working and abstractions from normal duties. There is no requirement at this time for officers from K Division to be used for backfill.

Selection of PSU resources

RMU will select PSU resources for paid and unpaid events, mutual aid and critical dates. Unless this is outside the timeframe for publishing the rota, authority must be obtained for the cancellation of rest days. Selection of PSU resources will be in two stages and will mean selecting the most appropriate PSU officer minimising the impact on the BCU and the need to continually amend rest days. The RMU manager will produce a quarterly report to the Force Planning chief inspector outlining the number of events worked by individual PSU officers to ensure events worked are spread equally between PSU officers, limiting the impact on rest day working and abstraction from normal duties.

Stage 1

PSU officers will be selected from response shifts/neighborhood/departments (including non-uniform) up to the staffing level set by SMTs. Where the event is planned outside the published rota, a buffer will be built into these levels to allow for other events/abstractions that may arise. At this stage, the staffing level will not be breached.

- Officers working mornings/days
- Officers working afternoon/evening shift

(If officers are on second super noon shift consider using rest day officer due to two shifts requiring backfill)

- Night shift at last resort.
- If further PSU resources are required, Stage 2 will start.

Stage 2

Staffing level will be breached and backfill required. PSU officers will not be selected in the following order:

1. Officers working mornings/days
2. Officers working afternoons/evening shifts

(If officers are on second super noon shift consider using rest day officer due to two shifts requiring backfill)

3. Officers on rest day
4. Officers working nightshift.

Backfill requirement for PSU officers (prior to a published rota)

The highest proportion of PSU officers are attached to response shifts. To avoid any unnecessary backfill and the accumulation of re-rostered rest days, backfill will be arranged once resources fall below the staffing levels plus the buffer set by SMTs. Backfill will be arranged as follows using all operational resources in each BCU:

Backfill required for AM shift

- Consider changing tour of duty for neighbourhood/department officer
- Use officer on rest day (response, neighbourhood or department)

Backfill required for PM shift

- Drop back on duty AM shift officer but only if it is their second day shift and consider rest day officer or on duty neighbourhood officer to backfill their AM shift
- Use officer on rest day
- Backfill required for night shift
- Drop back on duty PM shift to nights (tour of duty will be 8pm to 5am unless resource levels dictate otherwise)
- Use rest day officer to backfill PM shift where tour of duty does not exceed midnight unless it has been identified
Stage 2 
Staffing level will be breached and backfill required. Officers will not be selected in the following order:
1. Officers working mornings/days
2. Officers working afternoons/evening shifts.
If officers are on second super noon shift consider using rest day officer due to two shifts requiring backfill.
3. Officers on rest day.
4. Officers working nightshift.

Backfill requirement for officers (prior to a published rota) 
To avoid any unnecessary backfill and the accumulation of re-rostered rest days, backfill will be arranged once resources fall below the staffing levels plus the buffer set by SMTs. Backfill will be arranged as follows using all operational resources in each BCU:

Backfill required for AM shift
- Consider changing tour of duty for neighbourhood/department officer
- Use officer on rest day (response, neighbourhood or department).

Backfill required for PM shift
- Drop back on duty AM shift officer but only if it is their second day shift and consider rest day officer or on duty neighbourhood officer to backfill their AM shift.
- Use officer on rest day.

Backfill required for night shift
- Drop back on duty PM shift to nights (tour of duty will be 8pm to 5am unless resource levels dictate otherwise)
- Use rest day officer to backfill PM shift where tour of duty does not exceed midnight unless it has been identified as being a specified Force/critical key date.

Selection of K Division resources for Force events or critical dates
Officers from this division will be used to work Force events or critical dates that have been identified. This is to offer support to local BCUs and reduce the burden on BCU staff allowing them to remain in their operational/non-operational post. The RMU manager can provide analysis of the number of events worked by officers to the Force Planning chief inspector when required. This will ensure that events worked are spread equally among departments and officers, limiting the impact on rest day working and abstraction from normal duties. Smaller departments will not be called upon as much as larger departments.

The RMU will liaise with the departmental SPOC to select the resources that will be required for the Force event or critical date. This will allow departmental SPOCs to take officers’ workloads and court commitments into consideration.
- Officers will normally work a combination of four Force events or critical dates per year
- Where necessary officers’ tour of duty will include travelling to and from their normal place of duty.
The following points must be considered:
1. The departmental SPOC will take into consideration the officer’s home address/usual place of work when considering which BCU/events they will allocate them to.
2. The above will also apply to critical dates so if the officer lives in Bridgend they will be deployed to help Central BCU.
3. The officers attached to any event will not be used for routine duties outside that event, ie ‘after dark’ duties, however, they can be re-deployed for a critical need or other event.

Individual and supervisors’ responsibilities
An alert will be sent to both the officer concerned and their supervisor informing them of a change of duty but it is the officer’s responsibility to check their rotas regarding their rostered duties. For any amendments to the above, the officer concerned must liaise with their supervisor to identify a replacement and update the rostering team and the nominated planning officer who will update the rota and operational order accordingly.
When officers are no longer required to work PSU duties or an event, the RMU will send the officer an alert informing them of the cancellation and the reason behind it. The length of notice given for the cancellation will be subject Police Regulations and this will give the opportunity for those who are no longer required to have their rest day or normal duties reinstated.

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Selection of BCU resources – response, NPD, department (uniform and non-uniform) for Force events, critical dates and local BCU events
Selection of resources will be in two stages and will mean selecting the most appropriate resource minimising the impact on the BCU and the need to continually amend rest days. The RMU manager can provide analysis of the number of events worked by officers to the Force Planning chief inspector when required. This will ensure duties are spread equally, limiting the impact on rest day working and abstraction from normal duties.

Stage 1
Officers will be selected from response shifts/neighbourhood/departments (including non-uniform) up to the staffing level set by SMTs. Where the event is planned outside the published rota, a buffer will be built into these levels to allow for other events/abstractions that may arise. At this stage, the staffing level will not be breached.
- Officers working mornings/days
- Officers working afternoon/evening shift.
(If officers are on second super noon shift consider using rest day officer due to two shifts requiring backfill)
- Night shift.
If further PSU resources are required, Stage 2 will start.
The Prince of Wales joined the Home Secretary, police officers and family members at this year’s National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) service at St Paul’s Cathedral in London.

The 13th annual memorial day honoured police officers who have died or been killed in the line of duty.

Clare Biddlecombe, South Wales Police Federation secretary, who attended the service with chairman Steve Trigg, said: "This service is an important part of the policing year, showing the families of fallen officers that they and their loved ones are not forgotten.”

Prince Charles, patron of the NPMD charity, joined a congregation of more than 2,000 people including 40 Chief Constables and a number of dignitaries.

He paid tribute to the police service in a foreword to the commemorative brochure: “For many of us, the security challenges of today further underscore the importance of the police and their ongoing commitment to protecting us all, despite the inevitable risks that they face on a daily basis.”

Amber Rudd, attending her first memorial day as Home Secretary, gave a reading and said: “The police show extraordinary bravery day in, day out, tackling dangerous situations in order to keep our families, communities and country safe. It is tragic when a police officer loses their life protecting their community and we must never forget their sacrifice.

“It is my honour to take part in National Police Memorial Day and pay tribute to the courageous police officers who have fallen in the line of duty and the families that are left behind.”

The names of officers who have lost their lives during the past year were read by national Federation chairman Steve White during the service: Constable Douglas Wiggins, Police Scotland; Constable Sahib Lalli, Metropolitan Police Service and Constable Dave Phillips, Merseyside Police.

Candles were lit by relatives mourning their loved ones and in remembrance of officers throughout the country who have lost their lives. This year’s candles were lit by eight-year-old Abigail Phillips, daughter of PC Dave Phillips; Gaynor James, mother of PC Andrew Lloyd James, South Wales Police; Andrea Irvine, widow of part-time Constable Kenneth Thomas Irvine, Police Service of Northern Ireland and Elaine Gordon, daughter of Sergeant Alan Ewen Gordon, Grampian Police.

Prayers were led by Angus Morrison, brother of DC James Morrison, Metropolitan Police; Alice Fisher, granddaughter of Reserve Constable William Wallace Allen, Royal Ulster Constabulary; Paul Bone, father of PC Fiona Bone, Greater Manchester Police and Chief Constable Alan Pughsley QPM, Kent Police.

There was silence as petals of remembrance, representing all who have lost their lives, fell from the Whispering Gallery as the orchestra played Abide With Me and the Last Post was sounded.

Inspector Joe Holness QPM, founder of NPMD, said: “For me personally, the day was undoubtedly the most poignant service in the history of National Police Memorial Day. This was my last service as national co-ordinator and to gather again where the inaugural service took place is somewhat surreal.

“National Police Memorial Day was an idea borne out of tragedy and I would never have dreamed that the charity and service would progress to have the

‘We must never forget’
standing it has today. My aim was to honour my fallen colleagues with a fitting annual service of remembrance and bring the nation together to do so.

“I extend my gratitude to everyone who attended today’s service and for their ongoing support. It was a day filled with emotion but also with immense pride, and I know it meant a lot to the families and friends of our fallen colleagues to have our patron, The Prince of Wales, with us today.”

Speaking about the service and its importance, Robin Phillips, father of PC David Phillips, said: “This service is important to us as we approach the first anniversary of Dave’s tragic death. All of Dave’s family, and the families of those other officers we have lost, gain solace in knowing that they, and the sacrifice they made, is never forgotten. It is also a comfort for those families who may have lost their loved ones many years ago to come together and draw strength from meeting others who share their sense of pain and loss.”

As part of the service The National Police Air Service (NPAS) and The Police Service of Northern Ireland together conducted a formation fly past using three of the helicopters from the National Police Air Service fleet and an Islander aircraft from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

The service is held on the last Sunday of September each year and rotates around England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

“THE POLICE SHOW EXTRAORDINARY BRAVERY DAY IN, DAY OUT, TAKING DANGEROUS SITUATIONS IN ORDER TO KEEP OUR FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND COUNTRY SAFE. IT IS TRAGIC WHEN A POLICE OFFICER LOSES THEIR LIFE PROTECTING THEIR COMMUNITY AND WE MUST NEVER FORGET THEIR SACRIFICE.”

Gaynor James, mother of PC Andrew Lloyd James of South Wales Police, lights a candle during the service.

Gaynor James is greeted by HRH The Prince of Wales.
Sergeant Richard Lea had no idea that a man with access to Samurai swords and firearms, as well as convictions for assaults on police, was waiting for him when he answered a call last December. But what the South Wales officer did earned him a National Police Bravery Award nomination.

Richard arrived unarmed at an address in Rhondda to find the man with cuts holding a knife to his own throat. But the brave sergeant engaged him in conversation and was eventually able to diffuse the situation calmly and effectively, avoiding any further injuries. Richard said he would do the same again too.

‘I didn’t really have that much time to think about it all. I was aware that it was a potentially dangerous situation but I tried to act in a way which would minimise the risk...’
PS Richard Lea with the then police minister Mike Penning.

to all the parties involved,” he explained.

Richard, who has served with South Wales Police for nearly 20 years, said, despite being nominated, he didn’t feel particularly brave at the time of the incident: “It was a tense few minutes and I was worried that the person involved was either going to stab himself or me.

“So the nomination was a great honour and surprise.”

The incident involved a repeat domestic violence victim who called police as she feared another attack by her partner. The couple had a long history of violence which was aggravated by alcohol abuse and mental health issues.

The man threatened to stab himself if officers approached and said if firearms officers attended he would threaten them with the knife so they would have no option but to shoot him dead.

He was of large build and had previously assaulted police officers. He also had access to Samurai swords and firearms.

Steve Trigg, chairman of the South Wales Police Federation, said: “ Sergeant Lea placed himself at great personal risk in order to detain this man. He was unable to request support from specialist firearms units so he showed exceptional courage, placing himself in harm’s way to protect the victim.

“Despite the risk he faced, his bravery, resilience, calmness and excellent communication skills meant he was able to resolve a tense and dangerous situation without harm to anyone.”

The 21st Police Bravery Awards were held on 14 July at Downing Street and were attended by the new Prime Minister, Theresa May and her successor as Home Secretary Amber Rudd.

Richard said afterwards: “The awards ceremony was a fantastic experience. I was obviously very nervous as it was a complete step out of my comfort zone but it was a very rewarding and interesting experience.

“I didn’t manage to speak to the new Prime Minister as it was her first day in the post and she was very busy. But it was a special occasion and a great honour.

“The evening reception was a very formal occasion in a world class hotel. Everything about it was well organised but it all felt surreal. The Home Secretary and many chief officers were there and I spoke with the then policing minister about rugby as he’s a keen player and fan.”

He added: “The highlight of the day was the reception at Downing Street; leaving through the famous front door and having photos taken there. The whole day was a very memorable one which I’ll never forget.”

A dream come true

Jacob Phillips has undergone life-changing surgery in the USA thanks to an appeal supported by both South Wales Police Federation and the Force Benevolent Fund.

Jacob (4), the son of Western PC Andy Phillips and his wife Hannah, underwent the SDR operation in May, three months ahead of the original scheduled date, thanks to the success of a £70,000 fund-raising campaign led by family and friends.

SDR helps reduce muscle stiffness in children with cerebral palsy and without the procedure Jacob would probably have been wheelchair bound by his teens.

Now, however, he is likely to be able to walk independently.

“Aafter arriving in St Louis we had a bit of a scare as Jacob came down with a cold and reaction to some pollen but everything thankfully went ahead as planned on 24 May and the operation went well,” Andy said.

“Within hours of surgery we saw and felt a difference in Jacob physically. His left foot which had really begun to turn inwards from the spasticity had returned to an almost normal position and his legs were relaxed with much more range of motion.

“On Day 3 post-op Jacob began his physical therapy, which was hugely challenging for all concerned, and in particular mobilising Jacob. He coped remarkably through it all though and we are so proud of him and his determination.”

After five days Jacob was discharged so that the family could all be together but had to return to the hospital every morning for out-patient physiotherapy for three weeks. Within two weeks he was back in his walking frame.

“Our pre-discharge meeting with Jacob’s surgeon went well and the prognosis for Jacob is that he will walk independently within two years; a dream come true,” Andy explained.

“Jacob has now begun daily physiotherapy which has seen him get stronger and he is now progressing onto canes. The progress is slow but steady. We still have such a long way to go but are so happy that we were able to do this for Jacob. We have absolutely no regrets.

“Jacob can still only walk very short distances on his canes and a little further in his walking frame but the future looks bright for Jacob thanks to all the help he has received from the community, friends and work colleagues. His strength and stamina will only ever get better.”

He continued: “Cerebral palsy will always be a part of our lives but hopefully to a much lesser extent long-term. Most importantly, Jacob is free from the chains and pains of spasticity and cramps. We would like to thank the Federation for their help and support.”
Former Welsh Secretary and First Minister Alun Michael became the first Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales in November 2012 and was re-elected in May this year.

Before standing for election as Commissioner, he was Labour and Co-operative MP for Cardiff South and Penarth for 25 years including a time as Minister of State for Policing. Alun has spent all his working life in South Wales as a journalist, youth worker, City Councillor and Chair of Cardiff Juvenile Bench.

While initially sceptical about the value of PCCs – which were the brainchild of the Conservative Government – he believes that, working in partnership with the Chief Constable, he and his team can build on the foundations already laid to make the role a success for the Force and the communities it serves.

He is keen to take officer numbers back up to 3,000 and also wants to see a more joined up approach to public services across Wales.

In this Questions and Answers feature, he tells Federation members more about his role, his plans for the future and the challenges ahead.

Q. What do you consider your key successes during your first term in office?

A. We laid the foundations for a strong partnership between the Chief Constable’s leadership team and my leadership team by working through a series of issues together. In South Wales the Police & Crime Plan isn’t “my” plan which I hand to the Chief Constable and ask him to deliver, it’s a joint plan in which the approach to the “and crime” part of my role complements the operational priorities.

I take responsibility for the Plan because it’s my responsibility in law to publish such a plan, but unless the Commissioner and the Chief Constable work as a team the real potential of my role cannot be realised. It has to complement the operational leadership of the Chief Constable and it is a totally different relationship and function compared to the former Police Authority.

Peter Vaughan and his team have risen to that challenge and between us we have designed a system in which five Bronze Boards – chaired jointly by a chief officer and a member of my team – are the engine room of decision-making, performance and change. There is no doubt that the pressure on police officers and police staff is enormous – you can’t drop the number of officers from some 3,400 to 2,800 without asking everyone to “do more with less” in an increasingly complex environment.

But demand on the police isn’t just about crime, so understanding demand, preventing and reducing demand and understanding the way the public experience crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour is crucial to success. No public service can work successfully in isolation, and we’ve made great strides in offering help to other agencies in order, together, to tackle the problems that have hit us all in the time of “austerity”. For example, I invested in getting the HelpPoint in Swansea up and running and it has helped by reducing ambulance journeys needed by 1,200 in 12 months, reduced admission to A&D by about 1,100 and on 1,300 occasions allowed police officers to be back on the street, keeping the peace in the night-time economy. The problems haven’t gone away, but Swansea is increasingly recognised as a safe place for a night out, as is Cardiff. We are sharing the cost with the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Health Board and with the Welsh Ambulance Trust and we all gain instead of adding to each other’s burdens.

On top of that, our campaign to make people aware of the dangers of giving drink to someone who is already drunk has proved successful and training for door staff to spot vulnerable people and enable the police to protect them has been a great success, and some who would otherwise have become victims of a serious assault – with personal grief and massive costs to health, the police and the courts – have merely experienced a hangover.

Together we are making South Wales safer and developing an ambitious approach to protecting and supporting the vulnerable while reducing offending. Other examples include quick action when women start to offend – the Women’s Pathfinder project – and tackling the mental health issues that result in vulnerable people ending up in a police cell because there’s nowhere else for them to be safe. All of this amounts to serious and sustained application of the principles that I put into law in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, reducing and preventing “bad things happening” while helping local authorities and the NHS as well as the communities we serve and enabling police officers and staff to focus on applying their skills and experience on those events which we cannot prevent.

Q. What were the most challenging aspects of that first term?

A. The fact that nobody really knew what the Police & Crime Commissioner was supposed to do whereas my starting point was to apply the principles of co-operation. The Minister who brought in the legislation, Nick Herbert, avoided spelling out the role saying explicitly that effective commissioners would design their own success and others would go to the wall.

My own party was sceptical to start with, but has now accepted that commissioners are here to stay. With the support of the Chief Constable I believe that we have designed a winning formula in South Wales which is now paying rich dividends in the second term.

By 2016 people were starting to see the value of the role and while I have enjoyed great relationships with each of the seven local authorities across South Wales we are now also seeing very positive engagement with Welsh Government, particularly the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children, Carl Sargeant AM, and with health and voluntary organisations. So all the time and effort invested in explaining the role, in
brining an evidence-based approach to bear and in trying to help other agencies meet their goals really is bearing fruit. But it has taken an enormous amount of hard work.

Q. Turn-out for this year’s PCC elections was much higher in Wales than in England, why do you think this is?

A. It’s probably about the links between policing and the devolved bodies. A lot of media comments are about the ‘visibility’ of the Commissioner, but I think it’s about being competent and driving co-operation and partnership rather than personal publicity stunts. If the people of South Wales know that the policing team will respond effectively and quickly when bad things happen, if they feel that they live in safe communities and that we’re involved in preventing crime and disorder and “nipping things in the bud”, and if they know that our officers and staff are embedded in communities they serve then we’re succeeding. So my role is about our work, not about me personally, and that’s why the role of my team is to join up the bits and work with Peter Vaughan’s team on an agenda of prevention, early intervention and prompt positive action, that enables South Wales Police teams to be the best at meeting the needs of their communities.

Q. How do you plan to build on your successes, and tackle any outstanding challenges?

A. The Future Generations Act is a powerful and far-sighted piece of Welsh legislation and there’s the potential for the new Public Service Boards to drive a joined-up approach to public services in Wales. As responsibility for policing is not devolved, we can’t be required to be at the table but I’ve reorganised my team to engage vigorously with these developments across the seven local authority areas in South Wales, and so has the Chief Constable.

When other services fail to respond to need – from mental health to children going missing and from litter or graffiti to bullying and online aggression – the police are the last service standing and they cope brilliantly with the pressure.

But if we can get all services to work together, nipping problems in the bud, we can reduce demand and turn the cycle of anti-social activity into the positive reinforcement of safe, confident communities and allow the police to focus on real needs. Welsh Government’s investment in additional PCSOs helps us to build on the powerful reputation of South Wales Police as being “outstanding” at engaging with our communities as well as being professional and competent in responding to crime and public order. It’s about long-term sensible collaboration, not about dramatic headlines – and it is working.

Q. During your four years as PCC do you think the number of officers should fall, rise or stay the same?

A. The Government’s cuts in police finances from 2010 forced the number of officers down from about 3,400 to 2,800 – sometimes lower due to the churn of retirement and recruitment. I want to see the number back to 3,000, as does the Chief Constable, if we can find the money to do it. I’ve increased the precept each year since 2012 with that in mind because South Wales had fallen behind the other Welsh forces and I’ve had public support for my approach.

However, the police grant has been top-sliced by the Government year after year and I’m worried about the chaotic and costly way in which the police complaints system is being “reformed” and the bureaucratic demands of the inspection regime. Now we have ministers talking about a new Police Grant formula and that introduces a new element of uncertainty. As always, we’ll do the best with what we have – but it would be nice if the Government would let us get on with the job. After all that’s what it said the role of Commissioner was going to be about.

Q. How do you plan to meet the budget shortfall?

A. There’s no simple answer, but the priorities are to maximise the investment in our people – officers and staff – who are our biggest asset, while reducing other costs and making the most of ICT to support operational teams. I will take a fresh look at the level of the precept in December when we know what the Home Secretary will provide through the Police Grant. And I’ll work with all local agencies to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and demand on local policing teams. In the last budget we were told that police finances were being protected, but the money that the Home Office passes on to us hasn’t been protected so it isn’t going to be easy.

Q. What are your priorities?

A. I’m very proud of having published last January a Police and Crime Plan that looks forward to 2021 and was put together jointly by my team and the Chief Constable’s team. The six priorities are very clear – policing, community engagement, victims, offenders and the criminal justice system, supporting our people to deliver, using our resources wisely and being joined up in terms of organised crime, terrorism and mutual support.

We’re ahead of the game in understanding how to stop bad things happening through co-operation and applying the principles of “Early Intervention and Prompt Positive Action”. We’ve not always communicated that well within the Force or to the wider public, but chief officers are making big efforts to put that right and to turn the “clear line of sight” from aspiration into reality.

It all takes time but the roadmap in the Police & Crime Plan isn’t a pretty sketch – it spells out the journey we’re on and that’s why a copy was given to every officer and staff member. We’ll be refreshing the plan by the end of the year, but that’s about spelling out priorities, not changing direction.

Q. After speaking to officers, do your priorities match up with what they see as being important?

A. Chief officers spent time this summer with local policing teams and discovered that the things they want tackled – like missing persons, mental health and pressures on the police locally – are precisely the issues that I and the Chief Constable raise with local councils and health bodies in our regular meetings. But local officers are often unaware of the efforts we are making to develop a joined-up approach and we need to communicate better.

Some initiatives do make a big difference – for instance, I invested in the HelpPoint in Swansea and in 12 months that saved 1,300 ambulance journeys and 1,100 admissions to A & E, with student volunteers and the St John’s team playing a great role. But for policing that means 1,300 occasions that police officers are back on the street keeping the peace instead of having to sit with a vulnerable and drunk person while waiting for an ambulance to arrive. It’s about releasing our officers to doing what they do best – applying their professionalism to tackling crime and keeping the community safe.

Q. How do you see the role of the PCC changing? Do you think you should have more powers?

A. The role isn’t about “power” it’s about leadership and authority – complementing the operational leadership of the Chief Constable. Ministers in the Justice Ministry have been talking about devolving responsibility for the criminal justice system to commissioners – youth justice, the courts, probation and support for victims – and that would enable me to accelerate the joined-up nature of our work in South Wales. It can’t come soon enough.

Q. How important is your relationship with the Federation and other staff associations? And how do you see this developing?

A. Very important, although there has to be a clear line between my strategic responsibilities and my focus on the “and Crime” part of the role while supporting police commanders across the Force – under the direction of the Chief Constable – to manage operational policing. That’s why my door is always open to the Fed and the unions and I honestly believe that we’re getting that approach to our respective responsibilities right in South Wales.
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Police widows calling for their husbands’ pensions to be paid to them for life, regardless of whether they re-marry or move in with a new partner, have once again met with MPs at the House of Commons to urge them to support their campaign.

Kate Hall, whose husband Colin (40) died on duty after suffering a heart attack when called to a disturbance at a West Midlands block of flats in 1987, has tirelessly co-ordinated the Police Widows’ Pension Campaign for more than two years and headed a group of 25 widows and supporters who visited MPs on Wednesday 26 October. This was the second time she had led such a delegation to lobby MPs.

“We need MPs and senior police officers to stand up for the vulnerable members of the police family; the widows and their children. A supporter of our campaign recently spoke with Home Secretary Amber Rudd and she said that she thought this had been dealt with for police widows and that she would get back to him,” says Kate, who gave up her pension to move in with new partner John when she could no longer stand living apart.

“Since securing life-long pensions for the widows of officers killed on duty, the letters of those of us left behind by the changes are being diverted away from the Home Secretary, and it’s ridiculous if she genuinely has no knowledge of our current situation. All that police widows are asking for is to be allowed to love and be loved in return without financial penalty - is that really too much to ask?

“Not a moment of our time in Westminster was wasted. As intended, we now have in place the makings of a two-pronged attack - more proactive responses from within Westminster and the support of the head of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) whose intention it is to raise awareness of our campaign among his membership.

“I don’t think that the day could have gone any better and it was well worth the effort involved.”

Kate and the campaign supporters are calling for parity with Northern Ireland where in 2014 the law was changed to allow all widows of RUC officers who died, on or off duty, to have their pensions reinstated if they had found a new partner.

Before heading to London, the campaigners arranged meetings with their local MPs in Westminster. Armed with lapel badges designed by police widow Brenda Neary to hand out and sporting campaign t-shirts, they descended on Parliament determined to get their message across.

They were supported by Mick Hume from the Police Federation of England and Wales and Steve Edwards (CEO) and Ian Potter (president) of NARPO. The first meeting was with Plaid Cymru MP Liz Saville-Roberts.

“I explained to Liz that we have reached an impasse with regard to what our MPs are prepared or able to do individually on our behalf, and that letters to the policing minister and Home Secretary are now being forwarded straight to the Direct Communications Department; as a consequence our arguments are being ignored and this exercise by itself is now futile,” Kate says.

Liz agreed to communicate with all of the MPs that were to meet with the group during the day and she did so later that evening explaining that the group were keen not only for them to sympathise with their plight, but for them to take realistic steps to address it.

She wants to know if MPs are willing to support a call for a backbench debate on the issue and has already enlisted the support of the Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales.

Other MPs to meet the campaigners included Labour MPs Madeleine Moon, Tom Watson and Gisela Stuart, Conservatives Liam Fox, Jacob Rees Mogg and Richard Graham, who secured the Adjournment Debate on this issue in February last year, the SNP’s Patrick Grady and Anne McLaughlin and Tim Farron, leader of the Liberal Democrats.

Significant support came from Nazir Afzal OBE, the chief executive of the APCC, who had clearly read the briefing document Kate had sent before the meeting and also done further research.

“He is fully on board and very little persuasion was involved; he appears to be a really genuine person,” says Kate, “He shares our concerns at the perceived inequity of the situation and has promised to make PCCs aware of these concerns.

“He thinks we have a very principled position and hopes that PCCs will be able to consider a way forward with ministers. He hopes that raising awareness will lead to a positive outcome.”

Mr Afzal promised that we will meet again early in the new year to take stock of any developments.
HSF health plan is a health cash plan offering an easy and affordable way for you to cover the cost of everyday healthcare including dental and optical care and physiotherapy as well as support for more serious issues.

It is available to members of South Wales Police Federation and their wife, husband or partner and children – up to the age of 18 – for no extra cost.

How does it work?
You pay a premium to suit you and then claim cash back for your treatments as and when you need to. It’s as simple as that.

So, for example, you may go to the dentist for a routine check-up and a filling. Even with an NHS dentist that could cost you around £52 but if you are a member of the HSF health plan you could get half or all of that back – depending on the level of cover you pay for.

Whether you opt for the Primary or Extra Cover Schemes, you also get access to HSF Assist which provides GP Advice Line, Virtual Doctor, counselling, medical information and legal advice. You also benefit from PerkBox, a web-based scheme, providing money saving offers, discounted gym membership, special priced cinema tickets, and everyday shopping discounts.

Most benefits have a three-month qualifying period and there are pre-existing health condition restrictions on all benefits with the exception of dental, optical and chiropody or podiatry.

How much does it cost?
Basic cover in the Primary Schemes can cost as little £1.10 a week or £4.77 per month up to £6.25 a week/£27.08 per month while the Extra Cover Schemes cost from £7.25 per week (£31.42 per month) to £15.50 a week (£67.17).

Corporate Schemes
The choice of cover includes:
- Dental and optical
- Practitioner (physiotherapy, osteopathy, chiropractic, acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropody/podiatry)
- Specialists and investigations including allergy testing and health screening
- Birth grant/adoption grant per child
- Hospital (general and hospice, accident, elderly and mental illness) – amounts paid per night up to a maximum of 40 nights
- Recuperation – grant after seven nights or after 14 nights

Do you want to save money on your everyday health and household expenses?
Flint House: helping to get you back to normal duties

In 2015 125 members of South Wales Police Federation visited Flint House, the Police Rehabilitation Centre near Oxford, compared with 90 the previous year; a rise of nearly 30 per cent in terms of officers requiring its services.

So far this year, up until the end of October, 112 South Wales officers have attended the centre.

Somewhat surprisingly, just 1,982* of our 2,952* officers (based on figures at 31 December 2015) actually subscribe to the facility despite the fact it offers a unique and dedicated care package designed to help officers get back to duties and normal life as soon as possible.

“I don’t really understand why any officer would not ensure that Flint House is available to them,” says Clare Biddlecombe, secretary of South Wales Police Federation.

“The weekly requested donation is a mere £1.70 per week via payroll, a tiny sum given the excellent care provided there. The cost of one visit for 12 days treatment is equal to over 21 years’ worth of donations. To put this in perspective a monthly donation is still less than three Costa coffees, or three pints of ale or three glasses of wine... whatever your tipple is.

“I would urge any serving officer in South Wales who is not a donor to Flint House to seriously re-consider.

“At a time when police officers are under an ever mounting burden of daily strain of coping with increased demands, reduced numbers, and the resultant stress and pressure caused, Flint House is a unique, first class facility there for police officers should injury, mental health issues or sickness result, not just on duty but also off it!

“The testimonials of officers who have used the facilities go to show how the team at Flint House can help people get back to full fitness and return to work.”

Demand to attend Flint House, which is in Goring-on-Thames, is continually high and already this year 2,784 serving officers from 29 forces have attended for treatment (figures up to 29 September 2016).

The physiotherapy facilities offered are all carefully designed to help the team of physiotherapists and health professionals get officers back to full health and fitness. The team carefully design an individual care programme and then call upon several physiotherapy, exercise and well-being class rooms, two gyms, a hydrotherapy pool, a 12.5 metre swimming pool and a jacuzzi spa.

The centre also offers specialist treatments including pilates, aromatherapy, hydrotherapy and varied health and well-being classes.

The Health & Wellbeing department specialises in psychological intervention and calls upon the expertise of general and mental health nurses, as well as a dedicated psychological therapist. The team partake in a now well-developed and researched resilience programme incorporating both individual and group therapy classes run over the 12-day stay to help beat burn-out and to build resilience to thrive under pressure. Treatment for psychological conditions includes those such as depression, anxiety, stress and insomnia.

Set in 19 acres of lush woodland overlooking some of the most beautiful scenery in the UK, all 158 bedrooms are fully en suite with Freeview TV and tea and coffee making facilities. Communal areas include a new refurbished licensed bar, "time tunnel" relaxation area, Sky TV lounge and quiet rooms and the centre also offers healthy and balanced, high quality cuisine daily. Recent additions to the facilities include an outdoor fitness trail and all weather fitness and recreation area.

As a registered charity, Flint House relies on the donations of serving officers to continue its work. At a time of decreasing officer numbers, this is now a significant challenge and Flint House would wish to encourage all officers to donate; not only for their own peace of mind but possibly that of a colleague also.

To find out how to subscribe please contact Kay Bennett at the Federation Office. To see what treatments and what Flint House have to offer go to the Flint House website www.flinthouse.co.uk

For an application to attend, please contact Kay at KBennett@swpf.polfed.org or telephone externally on 01656-869900 or internally 21-762.
Plan ahead for your retirement with our two-day course

By Howard Casey

It’s a privilege for me to write this article about the pre-retirement courses that are run twice a year by the South Wales Police Federation for its members.

In 2011 South Wales Police decided to cease its involvement with the pre-retirement courses stating that they were too costly to run, at the time austerity was biting hard at the police budget.

The Federation quickly took up the challenge and got involved to ensure that officers who were coming up to retirement got the best advice possible regarding health, wealth and other relevant matters to enable them to facilitate a smooth retirement from the police service.

We know that retirement from a disciplined body such as South Wales Police can be impactive on some more than others so we wanted to ensure that we gave our members (YOU!) the correct tools to help you on the next step of your adult life.

The course at times is serious and deals with very important and sometimes painful subjects. It’s a privilege for me to write this article about the pre-retirement courses that are run twice a year by the South Wales Police Federation for its members.

The course is run over two days and is currently held at Pencoed Rugby Club where all refreshments and food are provided. The course is run by the Federation and is well recommended. There is no hard sell here, at the Fed we will not allow that and have turned away companies and individuals who are seeking to sell their own products and are not independent.

We believe that you should receive generic advice independent of any financial institution’s hard sell and you can decide what is good for you and your loved ones.

Everyone’s financial situation is different and both Lifestyle & Lowndes Halsden have the experience and standing in the financial arena to help officers.

The course is run over two days and is currently held at Pencoed Rugby Club where all refreshments and food are provided. The Force allows officers to attend in duty time.

The most recent courses were at the start of November and 28 people were registered to attend. We like to keep the numbers to around 50 as it’s easier to manage although we have had 70 on several occasions previously when Regulation A19 raised its ugly head.

The seminar also features an input from Justin Hills, from Capita - our pension providers - who hands out written forecasts to those attending showing what their pension is likely to be when they retire.

Advice is given by Ken Bowden regarding the making of a will, setting up trusts to protect your assets as you grow older and lasting powers of attorney. Most cops that I know (I include myself in this when I was in my 30s working as a DC in Merthyr) don’t want to think of wills and powers of attorney as we are police officers, fit and healthy and we look after other people’s problems.

No-one wants to address the issues that are going to darken our door further down the line. Well we, the Fed, realise that you, our members, are vulnerable and we want you to be as professional in your private life as you undoubtedly are in your professional life. Hence the inputs you receive on the course.

We also include presentations about health and well-being from Ceri Bryant, our very own nurse within SWP, and Claire Bowen of Career Recruitment. They also cover CVs and job interviews. Both are very professional and experienced in their field.

Prostate Cymru which has valuable information for women not just for men.

The seminar also features an input from Justin Hills, from Capita - our pension providers - who hands out written forecasts to those attending showing what their pension is likely to be when they retire.

Tony Bishop, a retired inspector from Cardiff, gives his presentation in his own indomitable way talking about the adjustments and experiences he faced as he retired from SWP after 30 years’ service. It’s very amusing and informative giving people the skills and answers to cope with life outside the police service.

We have two presentations from reputable and experienced independent financial advisers, namely Lifestyle Financial Choices and Lowndes Halsden, both of whom are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Both have over 10 years’ experience in dealing with police officers’ financial affairs and are well recommended. There is no hard sell here, at the Fed will not allow that and have turned away companies and individuals who are looking to sell their own products and are not independent.

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If you wish to be considered to attend a course please email me at hcsey@swpf.polfed.org and I will assist you. In my absence please contact my colleague Kay Bennett on kbennett@swpf.polfed.org.

To be eligible you should be within the last 30 months of your service I would suggest.

Good luck, keep safe and I will see you soon as you plan your retirement outside the police service.
Sergeant Bob Chambers is the fourth generation of his family to serve the people of Pontypridd, South Wales, as a police officer.

“Between myself, my father, my grandfather, and my great grandfather, there have been more than 130 years of service,” he says.

The former Welsh Guardsman who served in the UK, Cyprus, Germany, and Canada, followed in the family tradition when he left the Army, taking over collar number 327 in 1988.

“I have been wearing that collar number with pride for the past 28 years,” he says.

His police career saw him serve in the anti-drugs team, the traffic division, Special Branch, counter terrorism surveillance and the serious crime squad.

“It’s been an interesting career, and I’ve loved it,” he says.

Now, though, Sgt Chambers (51) is facing life after his police career, having completed his 30 years’ service and taking into account his Army service. Sgt Chambers is being helped by experts at Career & Recruitment Services.

“Even though I’ve been preparing for it for the past couple of years, it’s been daunting. I knew of people who had left the Army with special skills, like engineers, who had taken them into civilian life. I wondered what skills I had,” he says.

Sgt Chambers is among the dozens of police officers facing the same journey who are being helped by experienced career coach Claire Bowen of Career & Recruitment Services.

He says: “You can write your CV and send it off, but it’s just one of thousands recruiters are receiving. Claire has helped me to put together an effective CV which has already impressed two recruiters who I have recently sent it to. This CV has secured me with two job interviews so far, the first two jobs I have applied for.

“It was also vital that whoever had access to information about my service record was trustworthy as much of the information was confidential. Claire’s track record with South Wales Police meant I knew she was trustworthy, and I could discuss my career with her.

“Claire is a lovely lady and very professional. She gave me the confidence to identify my skills, and talk about the industries in which I’d like to work. She also helped me identify any training or qualifications I might need.

“I can’t stress enough how important it is to work with someone who gives you confidence like that. She went through my career and said ‘Wow, Bob, you’ve done all that!’ She gave me self-belief.”

Claire’s help for police officers facing finding a new civilian career often begins at retirement seminars held by police forces like South Wales. She gives officers tips and information about their future paths, and that often leads on to one-to-one coaching as well as CV writing. Her contacts as a recruiter in all sectors of the labour market mean she can act as a bridge between her candidates and potential employers.

The former Careers Wales employment expert says: “Police officers have excellent transferrable skills like leadership, organisation, problem-solving, and communication. Often, what they need most is someone to help them identify those skills.

“I don’t just write CVs. I discuss their careers at length, look at their various options, and coach them through the interview process.

“My aim is to find them sustainable new careers. By that, I mean roles where both the candidate and employee are happy with the fit in the long-term. The best way to do that is to have one-to-one discussions and interviews, and to find out about their skills and ambitions. I’ve helped hundreds of people find jobs they want to stick with.”

Find out more about the process here: http://www.careerrecruitment.co.uk/career-coaching/

For Sgt Chambers that process led him towards the private security industry. He’s already had interest from a potential employer.

It’s not clear yet whether Sgt Chambers will be the last of his family line in the police. Daughter Molly (19) is a student and a Team GB rower.

“She’s studying Welsh at the moment, and there has been some talk of her joining the police later down the line. I’ll have to wait and see!” Sgt Chambers says.

If you’d like Claire Bowen’s help, call her on 07473 936 416.
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**Federation supports Gay Pride event**

On Saturday 13 August Pride Cymru held their annual parade and Gay Pride event in Coopers Field in Cardiff. Clare Biddlecombe (South Wales Police Federation secretary) and Ian Cameron (Federation sergeants’ representative) took part in the parade through the city centre.

The weather was hot and sunny, there were great crowds all along the route.

Speaking about the day, Clare said: “It was great to support the event and see so many members of the public cheer and show their support for the LGBT community along the way.”

After the parade which ended in Coopers Field, Clare and Ian helped on the South Wales Police stall giving out merchandise, speaking with many of those who attended, all in all a good day was had by everyone who attended.

A big thank you to Emma Sainsbury for arranging the merchandise!

**Match day boost for officers in need**

South Wales Police Federation has again bought two season tickets for both Swansea City FC and Cardiff City FC.

These tickets will be made available for every game of the season and will be offered initially to those who have a serious welfare consideration. If you have such a consideration, or know someone who has, please submit the details of the circumstances to your divisional Federation representative who will forward them to the office for consideration.

Where no such welfare consideration has been submitted, the tickets will be subject to a draw from those who have registered an interest in attending that particular game.

You can register your interest in attending individual games on our dedicated football site at [http://swpf.org/football/](http://swpf.org/football/)

Only serving South Wales officers are eligible to register.

Please register only for those games that you will be able to attend.

Registering for games on days which you are not available simply causes undue bureaucracy and wastes time. Please don’t register for the same game more than once as duplicate entries will be deleted.

The draws will take place around two weeks prior to the respective game and the winners will be informed accordingly. Therefore, please include an accurate email address/mobile number so that we can quickly contact you.

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**Top tips for separated couples on arranging time with children over Christmas**

*By Lucy Williams, lawyer in family law at Slater and Gordon*

Christmas is a time for families to come together but for those families that have separated it can be a challenging time. It is always difficult to decide who should spend time with children and when. The festive season may still be some way off but at Slater and Gordon we have already seen an increase in the number of enquiries from clients about how to divide time over Christmas.

Here are some of my top tips to help separated couples manage the festive period:

- Compromise is crucial. Christmas is a magical time where your children should be at the heart of any plans. Think about how they would like to spend their Christmas Day.
- Plan your arrangements as early as possible. This should give you plenty of time to identify and amicably resolve any potential disagreements. And if clashes can’t be resolved, then look at other options – including attending mediation, seeking advice from a family lawyer or ultimately, if an agreement really cannot be reached, an application to the court can be made.
- Before making an application to the court specialist advice from a family lawyer should be sought.
- If you do feel you have exhausted all other options and need to make an application to the court, then this application should be made as soon as possible. The courts are very busy and December is one of the most congested. Depending on how busy your local court is applications generally take anything from one to four months to be heard.
- Some separating parents choose to split Christmas Day. This tends to work best when parents live close together. If you do not live nearby then splitting Christmas Day may not be in your children’s best interests and it is often considered unfair to expect children to have to travel on Christmas Day.
- If just one parent is going to spend Christmas Day with the children, then this should be alternated next year with the other parent. If you are the parent who does not have the children this Christmas then try to re-create Christmas Day on another day such as Boxing Day so the children have the benefit of two Christmases.
- Importantly, try to relax and enjoy the time you have with the children on whatever day is it.
- After the Christmas period is over, it is important to reflect on what has and has not worked for the children. Parents should then discuss this and work together to ensure any of the same issues are not encountered again.

If you would like specialist advice from a family lawyer then please contact Slater and Gordon on 0808 175 7710 and we’ll be happy to help.
Healthcare with you in mind

The Philip Williams & Company Bupa Healthcare Scheme offers preferential rates for police officers, police staff and their families.

- cancer promise ‡
- cover for heart conditions
- fast access to consultations and treatment
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‡‡Access to eligible breakthrough cancer drugs and treatments often before they are available on the NHS or approved by NICE as long as they are evidence-based.

With Bupa cancer cover there are no time limits and all your eligible treatment costs are paid in full for as long as you have Bupa health insurance.

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These rates are inclusive of Insurance Premium Tax and are valid from 01/12/16 to 30/11/17.