

FEDLINE



Remembering fallen colleagues - see Pages 6 and 7



Speaking up for Cambridgeshire's Federated ranks



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View from the chair

By **Liz Groom**, chair of Cambridgeshire Police Federation

Welcome to the autumn edition of our members' magazine, giving you an update on the issues affecting you at work.

This edition features coverage of the annual National Police Memorial Day service which was held, as usual, on the last Sunday of September. What was unusual this year, of course, was that none of us were able to attend the service in person and, instead, we were encouraged to watch an online service.

With messages from HRH The Prince of Wales and the Prime Minister, this virtual service provided a fitting tribute to fallen officers and showed their families that their sacrifice was not forgotten. Please read the full coverage of the memorial day event on Pages 6 and 7.

Since the summer edition of this magazine, we have said a fond farewell to our long-serving secretary, Oz Merrygold, and we wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement. He has worked tirelessly for the branch, supporting and advising members and will be sorely missed.

In the months leading up to his retirement, Oz has helped prepare his successor – Scott Houghton – for taking over the reins. You can find out more about Scott in a feature on Page 4.

I would also like to urge as many members as possible to take part in the Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey which is being carried out among Police Federation branches across England and Wales.

A national report on the survey findings will be collated by the Police Federation and will be used as evidence in its dealings with the Government and other stakeholders. But, if we receive sufficient responses from members in Cambridgeshire, a Force level report will be compiled and this can prove to be a critical tool for us when we represent members' views in our meetings with the chief officer team and with senior managers.

I appreciate that we can all feel a bit surveyed out at times but please try to find the time to respond. All members were sent a link to the survey when it was launched but if you cannot find your link, please just email the Federation office at cambridgeshire@polfed.org and we can send that over to you.

Officer welfare is of paramount importance at any time but I think the pandemic has really taken its toll on officers who have been in the front-line of the nation's response to Covid-19.

With ever-changing restrictions and guidelines to work to, officers have done their best to adapt and to help protect the public. But that has, at times, come at a cost. It has been staggering to find that officer assaults have continued to increase and almost unbelievable to think that some individuals have weaponised coronavirus by coughing and spitting at officers while claiming to be infected. Thankfully, the Home Secretary is seeking to double the sentences available to the courts when dealing with these offenders. But we need the courts to use these sentences.

Take care, and stay safe.



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New secretary keen to develop reps' roles and skills

Scott Houghton says his priority as Cambridgeshire Police Federation's new secretary is to develop the skills of the branch's workplace representatives so they can better represent and support members.

He admits he is relatively inexperienced in the role but is determined to learn quickly.

"The members are my number one priority," he said, "So, one of my focuses will be ensuring our reps are sufficiently trained and supported so they feel valued which in turn ensures they can effectively support and advise our members. We have the level four and six accreditations reps can work towards as well as continuous professional development processes and I hope we can all generally try to work together in a smarter way for the benefit of the members."

Scott says a personal challenge is giving up policing for the role.

He has been a serving officer for almost 18 years, working on reactive policing as a PC and sergeant, in CID as a DC and DS, in neighbourhoods as a PC and in intelligence as a DS.

"In terms of adapting to the new role, I think the biggest challenge is getting used to the fact I'm not a proper police officer anymore," he said. "Although the role itself is invaluable to members and the Constabulary.

"Also, disagreements with senior management figures could be challenging but most of my previous staff will say I quite enjoy that challenge."

He added: "I've enjoyed every minute of my almost 18 years. And I've been lucky enough to be awarded three divisional commanders' commendations during this



time. Most recently, I've spent five years in the intelligence department where our investigations have meant close to 100 years for our most serious criminals, including serial burglars, high end Class A drug dealers and violent offenders.

"I can honestly say that, although there have been some bumpy times, I haven't had any real low points. I am a glass half full character, and this helps."

He added: "I've given up a job I absolutely love in the Intelligence world to come to the Fed full-time and I hope I can continue and to shape the future of the

Cambridgeshire branch.

"I've listened to feedback from members who, in fairness, have mixed views of the Federation nationally. My aim is to try to raise the profile of our reps and the Federation in general."

Scott, who will also be the branch conduct and performance liaison officer (CaPLO), became a Federation rep himself around 2016.

"I had a member of staff who was being investigated both criminally and through misconduct," he said. "I saw the good job branch secretary Oz Merrygold did to help him through this and thought I could get trained and help out officers during this really difficult time."

Scott said that he has learnt a lot from Oz as he adjusted to the new role.

"I feel a bit more comfortable now as it felt very strange at the beginning, but I am lucky to have learnt from Oz who has so much experience," he explained.

"I think it's a vital role that Oz has performed for many years. We have similar backgrounds in crime and, although I have a long way to go, I hope I can fill the huge void left when Oz retires later this year. I'm relatively inexperienced but have a good work ethic," Scott said, "I'm hugely enthusiastic, a hard worker and keen to learn I believe."

"My biggest asset is my communication skills which are hugely important as a rep. I'm used to managing small teams and, as secretary, I will need to bring the reps together to make the branch more effective."

So, what are the biggest challenges facing the Federation, the Force and policing in general?

"For the Federation it's without doubt the pension issues," said Scott. "I've been caught in the middle of this. We have several thousand members so working towards a good outcome is important."

"For the Force, I think the retention of staff may become an issue. With the career now 40 years, I believe a lot will come and go. The Policing Education Qualifications Framework will be challenging also."

"And for policing generally, I think the public microscope is on policing so we need to maintain our standards to the maximum, as I know we do. Without doubt, policing is getting tougher."

He added: "I strongly believe the Federation both locally and nationally do an incredible job and are maybe not seen in as high a regard as they should be."

“ I’VE GIVEN UP A JOB I ABSOLUTELY LOVE IN THE INTELLIGENCE WORLD TO COME TO THE FED FULL-TIME AND I HOPE I CAN CONTINUE AND TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE BRANCH. I’VE LISTENED TO FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS WHO, IN FAIRNESS, HAVE MIXED VIEWS OF THE FEDERATION NATIONALLY. MY AIM IS TO TRY TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF OUR REPS AND THE FEDERATION IN GENERAL. ”

Federation survey – make your voice heard

Cambridgeshire Police Federation members are being encouraged to have their say on policing during the pandemic in an important new survey.

The Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey, being carried out by the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) provides members with the chance to help shape Federation policy on a range of issues and describe how they've been impacted, including policing the Covid-19 crisis.

Cambridgeshire branch chair Liz Groom said: "It's important we get a clear picture of how our members feel about policing during the pandemic and how they've been impacted.

"This survey also builds on previous Demand, Capacity and Welfare Surveys and will identify trends that we can then help to address with police leaders.

"It's a really important survey and will enable us as a Federation to spell out to the government and the Home Office the issues that are affecting officers.

"Please take the time to have your say."

It's the third Federation Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey and aims to give an accurate assessment of the challenges facing policing.

As well as questions around the pandemic, it also examines the plan to recruit an extra 20,000 officers by 2023.

The last Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey in 2018 found that in Cambridgeshire the average job satisfaction rating was 3/10, 79 per cent of respondents reported frequent single crewing and 64 per cent reported never or rarely taking their full rest



break entitlement.

Some 84 per cent said their workload was too high, 87 per cent there weren't enough officers to do the job and 87 per cent indicated they had experienced difficulties with their health and wellbeing over the previous 12 months.

National Federation chair John Apter said: "I can't tell you how important it is we get as many responses to this survey

as possible. It's important for people like me and your local Fed reps to have that information on how you felt you've been treated during this pandemic, not only by policing but by Government and others, so that we can take that to the leaders within policing and also to Government."

Members who have not received a link to the 2020 survey should contact the Federation branch for further information.

“ THIS SURVEY ALSO BUILDS ON PREVIOUS DEMAND, CAPACITY AND WELFARE SURVEYS AND WILL IDENTIFY TRENDS THAT WE CAN THEN HELP TO ADDRESS WITH POLICE LEADERS. IT'S A REALLY IMPORTANT SURVEY AND WILL ENABLE US AS A FEDERATION TO SPELL OUT TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE HOME OFFICE THE ISSUES THAT ARE AFFECTING OFFICERS. ”

Police Covenant welcomed

A decision by the Home Secretary to enshrine a Police Covenant in law has been welcomed by Cambridgeshire Police Federation chair Liz Groom.

Liz said the covenant would be a big step in improving the support and protection for officers.

"There will be a focus on protection, health and wellbeing, for serving and former police officers and staff and support for their families, which is to be welcomed," Liz said.

"Our members carry out a unique job and put themselves in harm's way every day in the line of duty, not least during

the ongoing pandemic.

"It's only right that they should be offered the help, support and protection they need to be able to carry out that duty for the benefit of us all. Our members will welcome the benefits of this covenant and the support that it gives them," she added.

The covenant creates a statutory duty for forces to support police officers and places a requirement on the Home Secretary to report annually to Parliament.

John Apter, the chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW), said: "This covenant will mean much more than words to serving or former police

officers. It recognises the unique position they hold in society and the fact they very often put their lives on the line.

"The benefits of this Police Covenant will be welcomed by the entire policing family. We would therefore like to thank the Home Secretary for her enthusiastic support and for turning PFEW's campaign for a covenant into a reality."

It follows a campaign by the national Federation which included a public consultation process that found more than 90 per cent of respondents backed Government plans for a covenant.

Prince of Wales pays tribute to fallen officers

Cambridgeshire Police Federation chair Liz Groom says this year's National Police Memorial Day (NPMD) service showed the policing family at its finest.

The annual remembrance service came two days after Metropolitan Police Sergeant Matiu (Matt) Ratana was shot dead at a Croydon custody centre.

Liz said: "It's always a moving and emotional day, but more so this year coming so soon after the tragic death of Sgt Ratana. That incident served to remind us why National Police Memorial Day is such an important occasion for the policing family and the country to remember those who have given their lives in the line of duty.

"A lot of work went into ensuring the service could go ahead, despite the pandemic.

"Our fallen officers represent the very best of policing and I think NPMD showed the policing family at its finest, coming together to remember family, friends and colleagues."

This year's service had been due to take place at Lincoln Cathedral but was held online because of coronavirus restrictions. The annual event commemorates and honours the lives and service of police officers killed in the line of duty.

This year the tributes were led by HRH The Prince of Wales, patron of NPMD, who made an address ahead of the online service.

Prince Charles said: "I particularly wish to remember those officers who have so tragically lost their lives since we met in Glasgow last year.

"The dreadful incident in Croydon on Friday is the latest heart-breaking evidence of the risks faced by our officers daily.

"I would like to send my deepest sympathy to the families of each of these officers who have given their lives."

“ WE WERE DETERMINED TO STILL PAY TRIBUTE TO FALLEN COLLEAGUES THIS YEAR, WE JUST HAD TO DO IT IN A DIFFERENT WAY. AND PERHAPS IT WAS FITTING THAT THE COMMEMORATION TOOK PLACE AT HOME BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE OFFICERS ARE MISSED AND LOVED THE MOST. ”



HRH The Prince of Wales.

The Reverend Canon David Wilbraham, the National Police Chaplain and co-ordinator for NPMD, led the online service.

He said: "The Trustees of National Police Memorial Day would not let this day pass without finding a solution to honour loved ones, friends and colleagues lost in service.

"Today is so important to the many who make the annual journey to join to support each other and commemorate those who gave us their all. Not being able to meet physically leaves a void, especially for those whose pain is life-long. I am immensely proud that we pulled together to try to fill that void with our online service and I thank the families who contributed.

"This is an honourable day and a

poignant reminder of the dangerous nature of policing. We stand in virtual solidarity to pay our respects."

Priti Patel, the Home Secretary, gave a reading of The Beatitudes and expressed her personal gratitude to police officers and staff for their "selfless work", adding that those courageous officers who made the ultimate sacrifice would "never be forgotten".

The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, sent a video expressing his support and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, gave a blessing.

John Apter, national Federation chair, said: "Policing comes with a huge amount of risk and this is at the forefront of our minds, even more so following the devastating news on Friday when our colleague in the Metropolitan Police was killed.

"National Police Memorial Day ensures that police officers who gave their all are never forgotten. We must always remember them – their commitment and ultimate sacrifice to public service.

"Every day police officers selflessly put themselves in harm's way for the sake of others – I thank them, and I am proud to represent them."

The British Police Symphony Orchestra



Lissie Harper lights a candle as national Federation chair John Apter looks on.

played 'I Vow To Thee My Country', with more than 60 musicians who recorded their contributions while in isolation.

Speakers from the four corners of the UK talked about what the memorial day means to them.

They included Louie Johnston, son of Reserve Constable David Johnston of the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross, who was taken in 1997, aged 30.

He said National Police Memorial Day was an occasion to "look past the uniform and to celebrate the character, the memories and the special place that our loved ones will always have in our hearts".

Jayne and Lowri Davies, the widow and daughter of PC Terry Davies of Gwent Police, who died in 1990, aged 34, recalled attending the inaugural NPMD, not knowing

what to expect but finding it a "wonderful day" and a source of comfort. Lowri is now a serving officer with Gwent Police and wears her father's collar number.

Rumbie Mabuto, widow of DC Joe Mabuto of Thames Valley Police, who died in 2016, aged 42, said the event is something her family looks forward to each year.

She said: "We're grateful for the support we receive and hope everybody will be able to meet again next year."

Donna Alcock, widow of PC John Alcock, of Grampian Police, injured in 2003 and who died in 2017, aged 54, said: "When they say police are a family there is no truer statement."

Candles were lit to represent the four nations of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and to remind everyone of the flame of

devotion and commitment, exemplified by those whom the service remembers.

England was represented by Lissie Harper, widow of PC Andrew Harper of Thames Valley Police, who died on 15 August 2019, aged 28. Lighting a candle for Wales was Rebecca Davies, daughter of PC Terry Davies of Gwent Police, and for Northern Ireland, Louie Johnston. Scotland's candle was lit by its Chief Constable, Iain Livingstone QPM.

One of the last images of the service was a reminder of the Book of Remembrance which pays tribute to the almost 5,000 British police officers who have been killed or died on duty or as a result of duty since the first recorded death on duty of an officer in 1680.

The National Police Memorial Day was founded in 2004 by retired Kent police sergeant Joe Holness and is supported by the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Sunday's service can be viewed at: www.nationalpolicememorialday.org

Next year's service is scheduled for Sunday 26 September at Lincoln Cathedral.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Roll of honour

The service included a tribute to all officers who have died since last year's National Police Memorial Day.

PC Chris Miller, Metropolitan Police
Special Constable Resham Singh Nahal, West Midlands Police

PC Matthew Lannie, South Yorkshire Police

PC Nick Dumphreys, Cumbria Constabulary

DC Jonathan Mark Hicken, Dorset Police

PC Roy Buggins, Police Scotland

PS Matt Ratana, Metropolitan Police.

Those who have died as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic were also remembered.

Sergeants react as 'armed' man attacks police cars

Sergeant Dan Bramley and Sergeant Nick Ashton-Jones did not hesitate to act when they saw police cars parked in the rear yard of a Cambridge police station being smashed up.

Even though they did not have any PPE and without a thought for their own safety, they rushed out of the station to tackle a man who had a hammer in one hand and a firearm, which later turned out to be an imitation, tucked into his belt.

The two officers have now been put forward for the national Police Bravery Awards by Cambridgeshire Police Federation.

Their Federation chair, Liz Groom, said: "These two officers were at Parkside Police Station when they realised this individual had entered the rear yard and had attacked six marked police cars resulting in smashed windscreens and other damage.

"They were not wearing any PPE as they were not expecting to be immediately deployed but seeing the damage this man was causing and not knowing if anyone was in any immediate danger they didn't have any time to put on any protective kit.

"This police station is immediately opposite a large public space and tourist area called Parkers Peace and directly next to the station



Sergeant Dan Bramley.

rear yard are residential properties and a public footpath so they feared that members of the public could be put in danger.

"They bravely ran towards danger, risking serious injury or even worse at the hands of this man. At this time, they were unaware that the firearm he was carrying was an imitation. Luckily, they brought the incident to a safe conclusion."

On seeing the officers approaching, the man swapped the hammer into his other hand and went to pull the firearm from his waist band but lost his grip and dropped it.

PS Bramley approached the man who then threw away the hammer. The brave sergeant, who has 14 years' service with the Force, tackled him to the ground and was helped by PS Ashton-Jones who had 30 years' service and has now retired.

The man was released without charge and sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

The annual Police Bravery Awards, sponsored by Police Mutual, honour some of the finest officers in England and Wales who have performed incredible acts of bravery, while on or off duty.

This year's ceremony, which was due to be held in London in July, was postponed due to the pandemic, but will be staged on Thursday 15 July 2021. A total of 94 brave officers from forces across England and Wales have been put forward for an award.

John Perks, chief executive officer of Police Mutual, said: "Police Mutual is, as always, proud to be supporting the National Police Bravery Awards in its 25th anniversary year. Despite having to postpone the original ceremony, your courage was never forgotten and it goes without saying to all of the nominees from 2019 that your commitment to keeping the public safe in the most demanding of circumstances shows unlimited bravery and resilience.

"This is something each and every one of you should be immensely proud of, as I and all of my colleagues at Police Mutual are on a daily basis when we see how hard your roles can be. We very much look forward to meeting you in July 2021 for the ceremony and our chance to give our thanks in person."

John Apter, national chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, said: "We are incredibly proud of all the nominees from across England and Wales. The actions of these courageous officers provide a small snapshot of the amazing work our colleagues carry out day in and day out.

"When everyone else is running for safety, it is police officers who run towards the danger. PS Dan Bramley and PS Ashton-Jones exemplify this incredible bravery. Without any protective kit, they ran towards a man armed with a hammer and a realistic firearm. They had no way of knowing the firearm wasn't real – and risked their own safety in order to protect the public and their colleagues.

"As a Police Federation, we wanted to make sure these brave officers receive the recognition they deserve in the year their actions were meant to be celebrated. We look forward to seeing them all in person – and revealing regional and national winners - when the time is right in 2021."

“ WHEN EVERYONE ELSE IS RUNNING FOR SAFETY, IT IS POLICE OFFICERS WHO RUN TOWARDS THE DANGER. PS DAN BRAMLEY AND PS ASHTON-JONES EXEMPLIFY THIS INCREDIBLE BRAVERY. WITHOUT ANY PROTECTIVE KIT, THEY RAN TOWARDS A MAN ARMED WITH A HAMMER AND A REALISTIC FIREARM. ”

Assaults up

Cambridgeshire Police Federation chair Liz Groom has called for offenders who attack police officers and other emergency service personnel to feel the full weight of the law.

Her comments come as new figures from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) show a staggering 29 per cent increase in assaults on emergency services workers in the four weeks to 30 August compared to the same period in 2019.

A report by the NPCC said: "It is thought the rise may be driven by increases in common assaults on police constables, including suspects spitting on officers while claiming to be infected with Covid-19."

Liz commented: "Any attack on an emergency worker is unacceptable but to see a 29 per cent increase during the pandemic –

at a time when we need them the most – is sickening.

"Our members have been on the front-line throughout this pandemic, protecting the public and the NHS, and to see Covid-19 potentially being weaponised against them is appalling.

"I hope that these thugs feel the full weight of the law to send out the message that this cannot go on."

The NPCC figures show that crime trends have returned to close to pre-lockdown levels. After a 28 per cent reduction at the height of lockdown, police recorded crime is three per cent lower than in the same period in 2019.

Mental health incidents were up five per cent in this reporting period, the NPCC said, reported rape saw a four per cent rise and domestic abuse incidents increased by seven

per cent.

The national chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, John Apter, said: "The recent return to pre-Covid crime levels comes as no surprise, as during lockdown there were fewer people out and therefore less opportunity to commit crime.

"Regrettably, I am not surprised either to see the rise in the number of call-outs for mental health incidents. This has been steadily increasing year on year and the police are often seen as the first port of call when people need help.

"My colleagues will continue to do their job to the best of their ability but, as I have said many times before, there is no magic box of extra officers waiting to be opened and undoubtedly policing will struggle with this increased demand."

Officer assaults: maximum sentence to be doubled

The Government has agreed to fast-track an increase in maximum jail sentences for assaults on police officers.

The Police Federation has campaigned extensively for longer sentences for assaults on all emergency workers and the new law will double the maximum term from 12 months to two years.

Cambridgeshire chair Liz Groom has welcomed the move: "This is what our Protect the Protectors lobbying has been all about. Attacks on our officers and our blue light colleagues are totally unacceptable so I hope the increase in sentencing sends that message to those individuals who think it's okay.

"We need the courts to hand out the toughest possible sentences to reverse the current concerning trend of a rising number of assaults on emergency service workers."

More than 11,000 people were prosecuted for assaulting an emergency worker in 2019, according to Ministry of Justice statistics.

This latest change in the law will be the second in two years after the 2018 Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act increased the maximum sentence from six months to a year.

The new law will mean that when a person is convicted of offences - including sexual assault or manslaughter – a judge must consider whether an offence against an emergency worker merits an increase in the sentence.

Kevin takes on new role as Fed rep

One of the newest Cambridgeshire Police Federation workplace representatives is PS Kevin Misik. He has not undertaken any formal training yet but is already learning about the role from Federation colleagues.

"I have only been a Federation rep for a very short time and this means that I've not had a chance to carry out any training yet but I think the drive that made me apply to be a rep was similar to what made me become a police officer, to help people who might not be able to help themselves for whatever reason," he explains.

"It's been good to speak with the more experienced reps, to understand how to help officers and to understand how we are able to influence the Force to make sure that everyone is treated fairly. It's strange with so much service to be starting on something entirely new and this will be a new and welcome challenge.

"Going forward, the priority for me will be to understand the role of a rep and get some training under my belt to be able to offer the best help and support I can, and understanding how I can support the other reps as part of the wider team.

"As always, my office door is open - if you



PS Kevin Misik.

need me, come and see me."

Kevin joined Cambridgeshire Police in September 1999 and, following what he describes as a rocky probation working at first Cambridge and then Histon, was posted as the Beat Officer for Bar Hill and a number of

surrounding villages.

"Working with a community to address their issues and concerns was one of the main reasons that I decided to become a police officer, to help the people who are not able to help themselves," he said.

"I have spent a majority of my career working in Neighbourhood Policing and, in that time, have helped solve a number of problems, memorably working with the District Council to apply for an order to stop drinking in Bar Hill which was the first time that type of order had been granted anywhere other than a city centre."

He left this role to become a sergeant and worked on a response shift and in custody. He is currently the city centre sergeant in Cambridge running a team that deals with retail crime, homelessness issues and night time economy.

Looking ahead, Kevin believes there will be changes for the whole force and the officers in it.

"I see officers being asked to make fast and challenging decisions and, while the majority of the public support the work that we all do, there is an increasing vocal group who look to undermine and discredit the good work of officers often with a view to progress their own agendas or at times for exposure," he explained.

"We are putting officers with the smallest amount of experience into some of the most problematic situations and it is vital that they are supported by it with the right equipment, support or advice."

“IT'S BEEN GOOD TO SPEAK WITH THE MORE EXPERIENCED REPS, TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO HELP AND TO UNDERSTAND HOW WE ARE ABLE TO INFLUENCE THE FORCE.”

Extra Covid funding

Cambridgeshire will receive an extra £300,000 to use for what the Government is calling 'coronavirus enforcement'.

A total of £60 million in surge funding will be split equally between local councils and police forces.

The Force's share of that fund is £309,760.

Liz Groom, chair of Cambridgeshire Police Federation, said the funding was welcomed but questioned whether the restrictions placed on how the money could be used, could mean that even more pressure was placed on officers.

"We are in the midst of a recruitment campaign but, while we await the effects of that to be felt, we simply don't have enough officers to meet the demands placed on them," says Liz.

"Inevitably, I can see the Force using this funding to pay officers over-time. That will be OK in the short-term, officers are used to putting in extra hours when operational needs dictate but I am not

sure that is sustainable in the longer-term and we could see them experiencing burn-out with their mental health suffering due to fatigue."

The Government announcement said the aim was for police to be more visible to ensure members of the public comply with the restrictions in place to try to halt the spread of coronavirus while councils would get funding and guidance to support compliance and enforcement.

It would, ministers explained, enable police to increase patrols in town centres and ensure that people are complying with the new restrictions, particularly in high-risk areas. The police would also, they said, provide more support to local authorities and NHS Test and Trace to enforce self-isolation requirements.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said: "This extra funding will strengthen the police's role in enforcing the law and make sure that those who jeopardise public health face the consequences."



Police minister Kit Malthouse (centre) outside Flint House with Chief Superintendent Ian Wylie (left), chair of the Board of Trustees, and Flint House CEO Tom McAuslin.

Police minister's praise for Flint House

The police minister has expressed concern that donations to the Flint House police rehabilitation centre are falling.

Kit Malthouse visited the Oxfordshire facility last week and warned officers that the moment they stop paying their Flint House donation is probably the moment they will need it.

Describing Flint House as 'outstanding', he said: "Policing today is a very different job; it's much more stressful with more opportunity for injury and problems physically as well as trauma that can lead to mental health difficulties. So the need for this really outstanding facility is growing," he explained.

"The only negative I've heard is that a reducing number of police officers are supporting this charity through the small weekly donations and, of course, the moment you stop paying those subscriptions sadly might be the moment that you need it.

"It would be great to see those numbers grow so the facilities here can remain in 'tip top' shape to help."

Mr Malthouse's visit, which coincided with the launch of the Police Covenant on 8 September, included a tour of the charity's gym and exercise areas and a new

swimming pool which is under construction.

He also heard from Flint House charity trustee chairman, Chief Superintendent Ian Wylie, of Avon and Somerset Police, who said: "This charity is funded entirely by donating police officers. We don't receive any additional funding to deliver this outstanding service and it really contributes to the wellbeing of police forces across the country."

Flint House is usually attended by around 3,500 officers from more than 29 forces across England and Wales but the coronavirus pandemic forced it to shut earlier this year. It did, however, continue to provide care and support to over 300 officers through remote consultations and virtual programmes.

Mr Malthouse added: "This organisation has been dedicated to police officer wellbeing for many years and is expanding its facilities in the face of growing need. Happily, the culture in policing has changed from one of 'pull yourself together' to one that is now taking physical and mental health much more seriously. You definitely see that when you wander around the corridors here."

The weekly subscription to Flint House is just £1.70.

Back up and running

Flint House, the police rehabilitation centre, has now re-opened after coronavirus forced its closure earlier in the year.

A limited number of physiotherapy patients have been able to visit the centre on a mostly non-residential basis from early September but some patients who have completed remote consultations may be offered a five-day residential stay following an initial coronavirus assessment and ongoing screening.

Tom McAuslin, Flint House's chief executive officer, said: "Re-opening in accordance with the Government guidelines has been challenging but we are pleased to be able to welcome initially small numbers of patients with a view to expanding those numbers safely."

Around 250 police officers in need of treatment during lockdown were able to receive virtual physiotherapy programmes through the Flint House team.

Flint House, based in South Oxfordshire, is a police supported charity offering mental and physical rehabilitation to police staff. It offers a range of services which help more than 3,000 officers return to work every year.

If you do not currently subscribe to Flint House and you are interested in finding out more please contact the Federation office by emailing cambridgeshire@polfed.org



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