Joining Bedfordshire Police as a

POLICE OFFICER

MANY ROUTES IN
ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE
Protecting People and Fighting Crime
Together

WELCOME FROM THE CHIEF

Bedfordshire has a complex mix of volume crime, serious crimes, drugs, gangs and terrorism threats. Every day our officers meet threats, harm and risks like those in large cities and protecting vulnerable people is our primary focus.

Despite our relatively small size, we lead joint protective services - Armed Policing, Dogs, Roads Policing, Major Crime - for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, and are the lead force for the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit – a co-ordinated approach from the seven forces to tackle serious and organised crime, and terrorism. Joining Bedfordshire Police gives you both collaborative and regional opportunities in specialised roles.

Police officers play a vital role in helping to keep our communities safe. Through preventing and investigating crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing disorder, police officers provide a much appreciated active presence in all areas.

As a police officer you will be working for the benefit of the community. That is why we are keen to recruit people from all walks of life and backgrounds because we know you better understand the real issues and concerns facing those who live and work in your neighbourhood.

Join Bedfordshire Police and help us continue to protect people, fight crime and keep our county safe.

Garry Forsyth
Chief Constable

YOUR JOURNEY AS A POLICE OFFICER

Police officers undertake a huge range of duties which vary from local policing patrols to assisting at major incidents. We also offer opportunities to build a vast and exciting career where you can progress into specialisms ranging from traffic policing to major crime as well as progress through the ranks. The opportunities are endless.

Policing is exciting, demanding and pressured work – but it's also incredibly rewarding too. We are always looking for new police officers to work alongside our existing dedicated, highly motivated and committed teams.

We welcome transferees from other forces and applicants from further afield. We are also keen to hear from applicants who live locally, have local knowledge and will help us better reflect and understand the wonderfully diverse communities we serve.

Successful applicants will start with us as a student officer and complete a two or three year probation period where they will work towards. We understand that transitioning into the policing role can have its challenges but we will be there to support our students through each stage and throughout their journey with us.

Students will start their 22 week training programme at Dunstable Police Station. On completion, they will be issued their warrant cards at a passing out ceremony in front of their family and friends. They will then receive 15 weeks of on the job training with an experienced officer, making an immediate and visible contribution to policing in Bedfordshire. Students will undergo regular assessments throughout the probation period.

Once the probation period is complete officers can start carving out their dream policing career and work in different departments, build on new skills and create a stronger working relationships with colleagues.

All officers need to go about their duties with commitment, enthusiasm, professionalism, determination, support our victim CARE campaign and embrace the College of Policing Code of Ethics.

HASEEB BENSHARIF

STUDENT OFFICER

Being a police officer has always been a dream job for me. A few of my family members are police officers and hearing about what type of jobs they attend really opened my eyes to policing. I have always wanted a job where every day is different and the officer role perfectly demonstrates this. I am yet to have a day where it is the same as the day before.

Being part of a team like this is really enjoyable because I can talk to others about my job and ask for advice. My team support me all the time.

During my tutorship my tutor, PC Wilshere, supported me throughout. The first four months were tough as I was adjusting to being a police officer and seeing things I haven't seen before, especially coming from my previous job in customer service.

My tutor supported me by always being there if I needed her and was ready to step in to help.

She also provided advice about how I handled a situation and gave guidance on what I could have done differently. This had a really positive impact because it can be daunting starting a career like this but my tutor made the transition very easy.

Once I gain my NVQ in policing and have passed my two-year probation I want to specialise with BOSON, which is our guns and gangs unit and specialises in disrupting gang activity.

WHO CAN APPLY

Age requirement

Candidates can apply at age 17, but will need to be 18 before they can sit the Online Assessment Centre (OAC), which is the stage after the application form. There is no upper age limit for appointment, but the compulsory age of retirement is 60 years.

Previous applications

Previous applicants can re-apply six months after receiving their letter of rejection from a police force. Applicants can only apply directly to one police force at a time.

Nationality

To be eligible for appointment, you must be a British citizen or a citizen of a country that is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland. Commonwealth citizens and foreign nationals are also eligible but only if they are resident in the UK free of restrictions.

If you are a Commonwealth citizen or other foreign national, you must provide proof that you have no restrictions on your stay in the UK. You should therefore send a copy of your passport showing that your stay is free of restrictions.

Qualifications

Specific educational qualifications are required for the different routes we offer. Please see the ‘Routes Into Policing’ section which details the different qualifications required for the different routes we have available.

Tattoos

Tattoos which are offensive, garish, prominent or numerous are not acceptable. Please supply photos and measurements of any tattoos along with your application. They will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Medical

You must be in good health and your BMI must be between 18 and 30.

We no longer have a standard for uncorrected vision, as long as your vision with glasses is:

- 6/6 or better binocularly
- 6/12 or better in either left or right eye

You must have good fitness levels: you need to achieve 5.4 on a bleep test.

Following success at the assessment centre and interview, candidates will be provided with a work health questionnaire that must be completed and sent directly to the Occupational Health Department. A full medical history must be disclosed as failure to do so may result in your application being rejected. Please complete the questionnaire carefully and thoroughly – if in doubt, disclose it.

Financial situations

If you are struggling with debt, you may still be able to apply, you just need to supply us with evidence of your ability to manage your debts successfully. However, if you are an undischarged bankrupt, or you have been declared bankrupt within the past three years you are automatically ineligible. Any outstanding county court judgements will be assessed by the vetting team on a case-by -case basis.

Cautions or convictions

If you have had any previous cautions or convictions please detail these on your application form. Each application will be judged on a case-by-case basis; however it is essential that you disclose all previous cautions or convictions, regardless of whether you believe they are relevant.

Driving licence

Applicants can apply without holding a driving licence, but will need to, ideally, have a full manual driving licence by the end of their 22 week classroom based training, but **must** have this by the end of their 15 week tutorship.

Business interests

Unless the Chief Officer decides otherwise, you will not normally be eligible for appointment as a police officer, if you have any of the following business interests:

- You hold office or employment for higher gain (other than a police officer) or you carry on any business.
- Your spouse or any other relative living with you keeps a shop or similar in Bedfordshire.
- You, your spouse, or any relative living with you holds or has financial interest in any license or permit relating to liquor licensing, refreshment house, or betting and gaming or the regulation of places of entertainment in Bedfordshire.

Reasonable adjustments

We welcome applications from candidates with disabilities and will give full consideration to reasonable adjustments required either throughout the recruitment and selection process and, if successful, in the role of Police Constable.

FIND OUT HOW *Adaptable* YOU ARE

START YOUR CAREER IN POLICING

DISCOVER YOUR POTENTIAL

SHAUNA MALONEY

POLICE CONSTABLE

From an early age, it may sound very cliché but I've always wanted to be a police officer.

Before joining I went to university and gained two degrees in social care studies and pharmaceutical science with drug development. When I moved from Ireland to Luton I worked for a charity that supported women with complex needs such as drug and alcohol dependencies. I had the opportunity to work in partnership with Bedfordshire Police. I was hugely impressed with the way the force safeguarded and protected the public.

I became police officer because I want to protect and serve the public.

I wanted to be a voice for victims of crime, safeguard the vulnerable, make a positive difference in society, provide justice for others and help stop discrimination.

I wanted to be able to motivate people from different ethnic minorities to join the police. I am originally from Ireland and I am a very proud Irish female who was new to Luton. The force is noted to be diverse in their employment, it is important to cater to the community you serve this way and this was hugely appealing to me.

I joined the police in March 2019 and after training went straight onto response, which meant I went out to high priority calls 999 calls. Response policing gives you the opportunity to work in partnership with the community, maintain law and order, protect members of the public and their property, prevent crime, reduce the fear in the community and improve the life for all citizens.

ENTRY ROUTES AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

NEW ROUTES INTO POLICING

Bedfordshire Police, in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), offer two entry routes for the role of police constable which are delivered through a combination of practical front line duties and academic work.

Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA)

PCDA is a three-year apprenticeship resulting in a Degree in Professional Policing Practice. Candidates will undertake a comprehensive practice-based course where students will be assessed against the national assessment criteria to demonstrate that they can achieve Independent Patrol status (IPS) and full operational competence (FOC).

Candidates must have GCSEs, or equivalent, at grade C (or 4 in the new grade system) or above in Maths and English AND A levels A-C or the equivalent (BTEC etc.) amounting to 64+ UCAS points. If you do not have these qualifications please see below the different options to join this route.

A candidate with 64 or more UCAS points, who passes the initial shortlisting and the ARU eligibility criteria will proceed to the SEARCH assessment centre.

If a candidate passes the initial recruitment shortlisting and has between 32 and 64 UCAS points, they will have to pass an online academic aptitude test followed by an admissions interview. The interview board will consist of representatives from the force and ARU. Successful candidates will proceed to the SEARCH assessment centre.

For candidates that don’t have two A levels at grades A-C or equivalent, but have GCSEs and two years relevant experience in the below occupations will be asked to complete an online academic assessment and a further discussion with ARU.

To follow the above route you will need two years or more experience in the following occupations:

- Armed forces
- Nursing/ care sector
- Social work
- Youth work
- Charity work
- Teaching
- Experience in the justice and law enforcement sectors
- Police staff - particularly in custody, public contact, demand hub, enquiry office roles, investigative roles
- PCSO or special constable who has gained independent status for a minimum of two years
- Criminal justice sector/CPS/ courts
- Border force
- Prison service
- Relevant local authority experience which has involved close and sustained work with police
- Experience of emergency services e.g. ambulance or fire service
- Experience of cyber/digital and financial fraud/crimes
- Roles that focus on promotion of equality of opportunity and inclusion

Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP)

DHEP is a two-year entry programme which operates as a conversion programme to the profession of policing, resulting in a Level 6 graduate Diploma in Professional Policing Practice. Candidates will undertake a comprehensive practice based programme of learning and development where they will be assessed against the national assessment criteria to demonstrate that can achieve independent patrol status (IPS) and full operational competence (FOC).

Applicants must hold a degree or equivalent to enrol on this programme.

Accelerated Detective Constable Programme

This is a two-year route which offers candidates the opportunity to work towards being a detective constable at an accelerated rate. All candidates will need to complete the relevant training and assessments along the way to ensure they meet the standards required by the force.

Successful applicants will complete initial classroom training and go on to work as a police officer across the county to gain valuable experience in both the force's response and community teams. Within the first year they will take the National Investigators Exam (NIE) and be given study material for this. After a year, if the candidate has demonstrated that they meet the requirements expected, they will be placed into an investigative team. From there they will complete an intensive Trainee Investigator (TI) training programme to obtain the qualification needed to become a detective. Once this has been obtained sucessful candiates will be a fully qualified detective.

You do not require any specific educational qualifications or previous policing experience for this programme, but you do need to be driven and show dedication throughout this programme.

"As a detective I get to investigate some of the most serious crimes and work with victims impacted by them.

"During my time with the force I have worked with various departments like Child Protection, Serious and Organised Crime and Guns and Gangs, as a build my knowledge and experience."

JEEVAN SAHOTA, STUDENT DETECTIVE CONSTABLE

STUDENT OFFICER TRAINING

As a student officer you will embark on a two (DHEP & ADCP) or three (PCDA) year programme designed to develop competent police constables. There are significant targets that students must achieve to pass the programme, which includes:

- Satisfactory completion of the learning phase. At the end of this the 22 week stage students will be expected to demonstrate a high level of knowledge and understanding of law and procedure.
- Fitness for independent patrol. During the 15 week tutorship phase students will need to demonstrate that they can apply knowledge and understanding in practice.
- Confirmation of appointment of constable. This should be achieved at the end of the 2 or 3 year programme, dependent on the route chosen, subject to satisfactory performance and is linked to completion of the PCDA/DHEP course.

After receiving a letter of appointment, student officers will start their 22 week initial training, which we refer to as being the learning phase. During this period they will attend classrooms sessions, learn about law and take part role play scenarios.

Upon successful completion of the learning phase students are given a week's leave before being posted to a response team, where they will begin their 15 week tutorship.

Once successful in completing the tutorship phase and throughout the remainder of the 2 or 3 year probationary period there will be constant monitoring, support and further training. Students will undertake on the job assessments and complete modules. Dedicated assessors and support staff work hard to help students through this process.

Passing each stage and completing all modules in the programme will see students confirmed in rank and become a fully qualified police officer.

We are committed to addressing the needs of underrepresented groups. Further details can be obtained by emailing the recruitment team: r.recruitment@beds.police.uk

APPLICATION ADVICE

In the application form we will be looking for evidence from your past actions, behaviours and experiences to see if you've got what it takes to work for Bedfordshire Police.

When you're filling out your application form there's one thing that you need to remember – we don't know you. Make your talents shine through by writing clear answers, backed up with examples. For instance, saying that you're 'hard working' or 'a good communicator' isn't enough. Instead tell us a structured story and provide details on the specific competency that relates to the question. Please try and keep to one example for each competency and make sure you provide lots of in-depth detail.

We advise using the spelling and grammar check on your computer or asking someone to read your application before submitting. We suggest drafting your submission on a word-processing package such as MS Office Word, and cut and paste it into the application form.

"I worked in the leisure industry as a lifeguard and joined the police in 2005 as a PCSO, just before I was 19 years old. I then joined the police constable role a few years later.

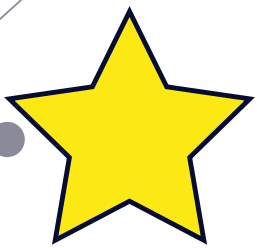
"My supervisor and peers recognised I had a talent for investigations – my ability to think outside the box and being incredibly relentless in achieving results for the victims and bringing offenders to justice. So I soon took the detective career pathway. I also wanted to use this opportunity to specialise in the intelligence world of policing."

Lucy, Detective Constable

APPLICATION TIPS

- Check your spelling and grammar and ensure it is to a high standard before submitting you application. Use a spell checker to help you spot any spelling or grammar mistakes
- Provide context for your example. Write a brief opening paragraph so we can understand your example better
- Does your example flow? Does it have a beginning, middle and end? It may be difficult for the assessor to understand your application if your example does not follow a logical format
- Does your example make sense? Does it have enough context? Remember that the assessor does not know you or the background to your examples. You need to provide enough context and structure your example
- Ask a friend for help. Ask someone to read through your example to spot any mistakes and to check if the example makes sense and has enough context
- Use the word count as a target to reach. Sending through a few words or lines will not give the information we need to learn more about you

Use the acronym **S.T.A.R** to structure your story and provide one specific example for each of the questions work:



Situation - set up the situation
Task - what do you need to do to resolve it
Action - what actions did you take
Result - what did the steps above achieve

WHAT IS GOOD EVIDENCE?

When completing the application keep in mind the following:

- Give specific examples explaining ‘how’ not ‘what’
- Your evidence should relate to the competency being assessed. Read and understand the competency before providing your example
- Do not use multiple examples within one answer. We will ask four competency based questions and want you to use a different example for each
- Avoid being vague or ambiguous
- It is important to describe what part **you** played in the example you are providing
- If you give a statement, for example; ‘it is important that we engage the community’, your evidence should be able to support that statement; how are you engaging the community?
- Demonstrate your awareness of the various factors that need to be taken into account during the situation you’re writing about

When writing about the results and outcomes remember to:

- Give clear examples
- Supply any facts or statistics that strengthen your answer
- Make sure you give a conclusion to your example, whether the outcome was good or bad
- Consider what you may do different next time if the outcome was not positive

Remember to avoid jargon, words and phrases which are (or can be construed as) misleading or ambiguous.

Use the word count as a target to reach. One line answers will not be enough to showcase your skills and reasons why you would make a good police officer.

POLICE OFFICER COMPETENCIES

Serving the public

Demonstrates a real belief in public service, focusing on what matters to the public and will best serve their interests. Understands the expectations, changing needs and concerns of different communities, and strives to address them. Builds public confidence by talking with people in local communities to explore their viewpoints and break down barriers between them and the police. Understands the impact and benefits of policing for different communities, and identifies the best way to deliver services to them. Works in partnership with other agencies to deliver the best possible overall service to the public.

Openness to change

Positive about change, adapting rapidly to different ways of working and putting effort into making them work. Flexible and open to alternative approaches to solving problems. Finds better, more cost-effective ways to do things, making suggestions for change and putting forward ideas for improvement. Takes an innovative and creative approach to solving problems.

Service delivery

Understands the organisation's objectives and priorities, and how your own work fits into these. Plans and organises tasks effectively, taking a structured and methodical approach to achieving outcomes. Manages multiple tasks effectively by thinking things through in advance, prioritising and managing time well. Focuses on the outcomes to be achieved, working quickly and accurately and seeking guidance when appropriate.

Decision making

Gathers, verifies and assesses all appropriate and available information to gain an accurate understanding of situations. Considers a range of possible options before making clear, timely, justifiable decisions. Reviews decisions in the light of new information and changing circumstances. Balances risks, costs and benefits, thinking about the wider impact of decisions. Exercises discretion and applies professional judgement, ensuring actions and decisions are proportionate and in the public interest.

Professionalism

Acts with integrity, in line with the values and ethical standards of the Police Service. Takes ownership for resolving problems, demonstrating courage and resilience in dealing with difficult and potentially volatile situations. Acts on own initiative to address issues, showing a strong work ethic and demonstrating extra effort when required. Upholds professional standards, acting honestly and ethically, and challenges unprofessional conduct or discriminatory behaviour. Asks for and acts on feedback, learning from experience and developing own professional skills and knowledge. Remains calm and professional under pressure, defusing conflict and being prepared to step forward and take control when required.

Working with others

Works co-operatively with others to get things done, willingly giving help and support to colleagues. Is approachable, developing positive working relationships. Explains things well, focusing on the key points and talking to people using language they understand. Listens carefully and asks questions to clarify understanding, expressing own views positively and constructively. Persuades people by stressing the benefits of a particular approach, keeps them informed of progress and manages their expectations. Is courteous, polite and considerate, showing empathy and compassion. Deals with people as individuals and addresses their specific needs and concerns. Treats people with respect and dignity, dealing with them fairly and without prejudice regardless of their background or circumstances.

The selection process is designed to test the above core competencies as deemed suitable for the role of a police officer, which is constantly assessed through the full assessment process.

The competencies as summarised are:

- Decision Making
- Openness to Change
- Service Delivery
- Professionalism
- Serving the Public
- Working with Others

FIND OUT HOW *compassionate* YOU ARE

DISCOVER YOUR POTENTIAL

START YOUR CAREER IN POLICING

PAUL GARRAD

POLICE OFFICER

The best part about the police officer role is every day is different. Each shift could see you attend calls ranging from domestic incidents, shoplifting and criminal damage, burglaries, public order and road traffic collisions, and that is just scratching the surface.

You see some really horrible sights and have to deal with some quite nasty people, but on the plus side you are protecting vulnerable people, sometimes children, from some really nasty characters, which in itself is hugely rewarding. Arresting criminals and knowing that the victim is safe is a great feeling.

You can get quite a bit of abuse from some people and sometimes need to have a thick skin and ignore it, because they are actually aiming it at the uniform.

Having a great team around you really helps through the tough moments. You may have had a bad day or set of shifts, but the job is so unpredictable, that's what makes it so good and you know that awesome job is just around the corner.

SELECTION PROCESS

Stage one – competency based application

You must complete the initial competency based application form. You will be subject to preliminary vetting checks at this stage.

Stage two – College Of Policing Online Assessment Centre

If successful at the application stage you will be invited to take part in the Online Assessment Process (OAC), this has replaced the SEARCH assessment.

The OAC has four stages which can be sat during a seven day period set by Bedfordshire Police and the College Of Policing.

It consists of:

- Situational Judgment Test (SJT)
- Competency Based interview
- Written Briefing Exercise
- Briefing Exercise (verbal)

This is completed online by candidates and does not require any travelling to a specific place and can be completed at any time and day during the seven day window allocated to the candidate.

Stage three - interview

In some cases, this may be offered to you before you sit the OAC but your result will not be given until you are successful in the OAC. The reason for this is due to time constraints and keeping the process as quick as possible for candidates.

Stage four – pre-appointment checks

Conditional offer – If you are successful following the selection process you will receive a conditional offer and we will start progressing your pre-appointment checks which include vetting, medical, references and a fitness test. Until these checks are complete you should not hand in your notice with your current employer.

Vetting – At this stage you will be required to complete a recruitment vetting e-form which will ask more details about you and those you live with. You will also be required to undertake biometric vetting, which involves your DNA and fingerprints being obtained. Further details will be provided at the time.

Medical – Candidates will be provided with a work health questionnaire that must be completed and sent directly to the Occupational Health Department. A full medical history must be disclosed, failure to do so may result in your application being rejected. Please complete the questionnaire carefully and thoroughly – if in doubt, disclose it.

MEDICAL STANDARD

The Force Medical Advisor uses Home Office guidance to consider medical conditions when people apply to become a police officer, conducting independent assessments and assessing each person's medical history on an individual basis.

We understand that before they begin the application process, some applicants wish to clarify if there are any medical conditions which could be problematic when applying to become a police officer.

The College of Policing has developed a pre-application questionnaire which allows applicants to check their eligibility for the role.

THE FITNESS TEST

To pass the fitness test you need to reach a minimum of level 5.4 on the bleep test.

You will be asked to run back and forth along a 15 metre track in time with a series of bleeps. If you arrive at the end line before the bleep sounds you need to wait for the bleep before resuming running and adjust your speed. The timing between bleeps is slow at first but the bleeps become faster as the test progresses and it becomes more difficult to keep up with the required speed. You will run until you can no longer keep up with the set pace.

To prepare for the test and help improve your stamina, take part in sporting activities that last 30 minutes or more and get you out of breath, such as football, netball or squash. You can also make rapid improvements by taking part in activities that create a large aerobic demand such as jogging, cycling, swimming and rowing.

Try jogging for 20 minutes or more and as you improve try to increase the distance covered in that time. Alternatively jog a set distance from home and back again and try to reduce the time taken to cover the distance. You should exercise three times a week for 20 minutes. If you are not used to exercise you should start with gentle sessions lasting no more than 15 minutes.

FURTHER PRE-APPOINTMENT CHECKS

References

We will need references from your all employers (paid or otherwise) covering a minimum of three years. If you have been out of employment for a longer period than two weeks, a personal reference will be required. A list of suitable referees will be sent to you.

If you have been attending University or College within the three years prior to your employment you will be required to complete an authorisation form, so we can contact your University or College for a reference.

If you are an existing member of police staff, internal references will be required from a current line manager.

Final offer

Once all pre-appointment checks have been concluded and approved, and a start date agreed, a final offer and conditions of service will be issued.

Start date

You will be notified nearer the time what your likely start date will be.

Probation

You will be required to successfully complete a two or three year probation period, dependent on which route you apply for. Once the probation period is completed you will be a fully ranked officer and be able to start progressing your policing career.

SHARN BASRA

ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE

After a career in policing spanning almost 27 years, Sharn Basra is the Assistant Chief Constable for Bedfordshire Police. He talks about the endless opportunities he's had within the force which have led to where he is today, and why he would encourage others to take one of the many routes into a career in policing.

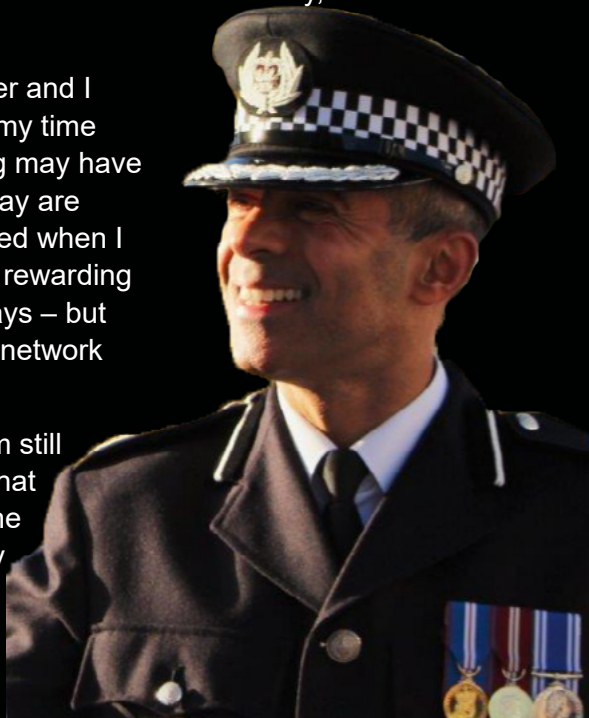
"Like so many others, I joined policing to keep people safe, make a difference, and lock up baddies. For me it was important to do this in my home county, Bedfordshire, so that I knew I was making a real difference to where I, my family, and my friends live.

"It may be a cliché to say that policing is a varied job but it is true. Once you are in the force there are so many different pathways your career can take. I spent six years as a bobby on the beat and then another six years as a detective constable, working to solve all manner of crimes.

"I've also spent time as the head of our public protection unit, helping to oversee the protection of some of the most vulnerable people in our society, as well being an area commander for the south of the county, and head of crime for the whole force.

"It is without a doubt the best job ever and I would not change anything. If I had my time again I would still be a cop – policing may have changed a lot and the pressures today are very much different to the ones I faced when I first signed up, but it really is such a rewarding career. Of course there are tough days – but you get the training and the support network you need to manage those.

"After almost 27 years in policing, I'm still lucky enough to love every day of what I do, and now I am responsible for the day to day delivery of policing for my home county – how cool."



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BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE

Protecting People and Fighting Crime

Together