

WELCOME

Your journey to becoming a
**Police Community
Support Officer (PCSO)** with
Hertfordshire Constabulary



— David Lloyd —
**Police and Crime
Commissioner**
for Hertfordshire



HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY



Welcome



I would like to thank you for your interest in the role of a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) with Hertfordshire Constabulary.

I am extremely proud of the work undertaken across the Constabulary every day and the strength of Hertfordshire Constabulary lies in its people. PCSOs work together with Police Officers on a daily basis to provide a vitally important role in helping us achieve the Herts Way; Keeping People Safe, Reducing Crime, Catching Criminals. Problem solving, encouraging greater partnership working, developing meaningful engagement with our communities and reducing harm are the core responsibilities of the work of a PCSO.

Neighbourhood policing provides the bedrock for the Constabulary in delivering the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, "Everyone's Business". This is supported by strong local partnership working and excellent investigative capability.

Hertfordshire is a fantastic place to live and work, providing a mix of rural and urban communities, thriving businesses and some of the best transport links in the country. The county is full of contrasts that blend together to create a superb quality of life for both residents and visitors. We are responsible for policing an area starting just twelve miles north of central London, that has a resident population of 1.2 million plus many more who commute through and around the county on a daily basis.

I very much hope you will be interested in joining us as we strive to make Hertfordshire an even safer place.

Charlie Hall QPM
Chief Constable



I see strong value in our continued investment in our PCSOs because they have a vital role in intelligence gathering and they get to know the communities in our towns and villages. They are a key part of neighbourhood policing in Hertfordshire and I know anyone joining the team will find the role exciting and varied.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire,
David Lloyd

Introduction

This document has been designed to give you an overview of the recruitment and training process to join Hertfordshire Constabulary as a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).

You will find further information about eligibility, hints and tips for completing your application and what to expect from your training.

Information can also be found on our website: www.hertspolicepcso.co.uk

The process to join the Hertfordshire Constabulary as a PCSO consists of five main stages:

- Online application
- Telephone interview
- Assessment centre
- Pre-employment checks
- Initial training

The selection process is designed to test the personal qualities deemed suitable for the role of a PCSO. These are constantly evaluated through the assessment process. The personal qualities are:

- Being emotionally aware
- Taking ownership
- Being collaborative
- Deliver, support and inspire
- Being able to critically analyse
- Being innovative and open-minded

Key Contacts

The recruitment team will be happy to help and answer any questions about the role of a Police Community Support Officer, the application process and training.

You can contact the team via email, pcsorecruitment@herts.pnn.police.uk

Telephone: **01707 355055**

Eligibility

To become a Police Community Support Officer, you will need to be successful in our recruitment process. The following information will help you work out if you are eligible and will explain the recruitment process. If you have any questions please email pcsorecruitment@herts.pnn.police.uk

To apply, you must:

- be aged 18 or over
- hold a full manual driving licence
- have been a resident in the UK for a minimum of three years
- meet our entry requirements
- be available to attend all of the stages of the recruitment process
- not have any outstanding CCJs (County Court Judgements).

The Role of a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)

The role of a PCSO is very rewarding and no day will be the same. In the role of a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) you have a direct impact on the community you serve. Your days are driven by protecting people from crime, helping people in need and being a reassuring presence on the streets.

PCSOs work in Safer Neighbourhood Teams, who work with the community to improve the quality of life for residents and make their area safer, by proactively tackling crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB). It's a role that calls for strong powers of observation, communication, judgment, and problem-solving, and it goes without saying that you'll need to be driven by the idea of making a real difference within your community

PCSOs are out and about every day in every neighbourhood across the county – their faces are well-known and they are trusted in their communities, operating regular foot patrols.

Supporting the Force at street level, they help free up valuable police time and resources. In doing so, they put a spotlight on lower-level crime, disorder, and anti-social behaviour. They also play a crucial role in identifying people who may be vulnerable to crime and finding solutions to help them.

The role involves evening and weekend shift work, and may require you to work at various locations across the county. You'll also receive a shift allowance on top of the basic salary.

You could be posted anywhere in Hertfordshire. You will be placed in an area where there is greatest need at the time. You will need to be able to travel to your specified area. The map below shows the locations where you could be posted to.

In Hertfordshire, we have specialist PCSOs who work with the Children and Young People (CYP) team. The PCSOs in the team work with young people up to the age of 18 to prevent them from entering the Criminal Justice system for the first time, or if they are already in the system, to stop them from escalating any further. They use a variety of methods, and their work includes carrying out an assessment with the young person to determine the issues contributing to the criminal behaviour so that work can be carried out with them, and referrals made to other agencies to support that work. In addition, the CYP team contribute to the work of Families First, a multiple agency response to families with children who need support to help them thrive.



Pay and other employee benefits

For individuals working full time (37 hours per week) and working the full shift pattern, the starting salary will be £23,349 (includes shift allowance). The salary will increase to a maximum of £29,601 based on length of service and performance related pay.

You will be eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). This is a contributory Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme to which the Constabulary contributes to as well.

As a full time PCSO, we'll offer you a minimum of 178 hours of annual leave (24 days), with the potential to increase up to 222 hours (30 days), dependent on your hours of work and length of service. You will also receive 8 days of public holidays. Your annual leave entitlement will be confirmed when you begin your role.

We welcome applications for working on a part-time basis. Hours will be required to fit in with the operational requirements of the role and there is an expectation that any submissions for part time hours will include some evening and weekend working. We may not be able to continue with your application if your requested hours do not fit in with the requirements of the Constabulary and you will be informed if this is the case.

You can discuss your requirements with our recruitment advisors.

Stage One – Online Application

The first stage is to register your interest on our website – www.hertspolicepcso.co.uk – and you will be emailed a link to your application form.

You must complete the initial application form online. You may also be subject to preliminary vetting checks at this stage.

This is a chance for you to tell us your motivations for joining as a PCSO and what skills and experience you can bring to the role.

Remember that the person reading your application form does not know you so you will need to make sure your answers contain clear examples that are relevant to the question.

You must hold a full UK manual driving licence to apply for this role.

Stage Two – Telephone Interview

If you successfully pass the online application you will be invited to take part in a 30 minute telephone interview.

The interview will be competency based and will test your personal qualities and values against those that are deemed suitable for a PCSO. Familiarise yourself with the role profile included at the end of this booklet and the personal qualities listed, as all questions will directly relate to these.

You will need to give clear and concise examples of a situation where you have demonstrated a particular value or personal quality.

Remember to describe how you dealt with the situation and what the outcome was, rather than focussing on what happened.

Saying you are 'hardworking' or 'a good communicator' is not enough information. Instead, explain how you have shown that you possess these skills in a structured story. The toolkit below outlines the STAR format which should be used to help structure your evidence.

You can use examples from your work or social life, or of situations you have come across. They do not have to be police orientated but do need to demonstrate the qualities we look for.

Toolkit

Use the **STAR** acronym to structure your evidence and provide one specific example for each of the questions:

ST - A brief description of the situation or task

A - Details of the actions YOU took - use action verbs

R - The results or outcome achieved

When talking about the results and outcomes remember to give clear examples and include any facts or statistics that strengthen your answer.

Stage Three – Assessment Centre

If you pass the telephone interview you will be invited to attend an assessment centre. The assessment centre is split in to two stages and only those that pass the first part will stay and move on to the second stage. You should be prepared to be at the assessment centre for approximately three hours.

The first stage of the assessment centre will consist of:

- A 30 minute group exercise
- Written exercise
You will be given four witness statements to read regarding an incident. Using the information provided within the statements you will have to complete an incident report form and write an account capturing key information and any details you believe to be relevant. The second stage of the assessment centre will consist of:
- A Fitness Test
- Biometric test (fingerprints and DNA)
- Completion of vetting forms, medical forms and references
- Intake date selection

Stage Four – Pre-Employment Checks

If you are successful at the assessment centre you will receive a conditional offer and we will start progressing with your pre-employment checks. These include:

- Vetting
- References
- Medical

Vetting

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

If you, or any of your associates, have any previous criminal convictions you must declare these on the vetting form. If the conviction does not relate to you and you are not aware of specific details please include any information you do have. Failure to disclose such information could lead to the termination of your application due to honesty and integrity.

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 as failure to do so may result in your application being rejected. Please complete the questionnaire carefully and thoroughly – if in doubt, disclose it.

Once the medical questionnaire and any additional information has been received, you will have an appointment with the nurse. Medical requirements for a PCSO include a healthy Body Mass Index (BMI) of between 18 and 30.

The healthy weight range is based on a measurement known as your body mass index (BMI). This can be determined if you know your weight and your height. The actual calculation is your weight (in kilograms) divided by your height (in metres) squared. Guidance and easy to use charts on how to calculate your BMI can be found via the following link.

http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm

The NHS advises that a BMI of 18.5 to 24.9 suggests a normal healthy weight. This means your body is not a risk of weight-related disease. Inaccuracies in BMI can occur if you are athletic or very muscular as this can give you a higher BMI even if you have a healthy level of body fat. In these cases as part of the recruitment process, we will be able to provide a simple test to assess the percentage of your body fat. BMI standards for Police Officers and staff are set by the Home Office. The current Home Office Circular 59/2004 outlines this as between 18 to 30. Applicants who do not meet this standard may find their application delayed and/or will not be appointed.

Fitness test

You will be asked to complete the bleep test: running between two lines (approximately 15 metres) 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, adjusting your speed.

The timing between bleeps is slow at first but becomes faster as the test progresses. You will run until you can no longer keep up with the set pace. You will need to reach a minimum of level 5.4 to pass which equates to 35 shuttle runs over a time period of 3 minutes 35 seconds.

You will need a good general level of fitness to pass this test but can prepare beforehand if needed. Taking part in cardio or aerobic sporting activities for 30 minutes three times a week or more will help you prepare for the level of fitness required. Football, netball, swimming, squash or jogging are good activities to take part in.

Try jogging for 20 minutes or more and as you improve, 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. If you are not used to exercise you should start with gentle sessions lasting no more than 15 minutes.

Stage Five - Training Summary

Prior to joining, you will be sent a mandatory e-learning course, which must be completed prior to your start date.

When you first join, you'll go on a seven-week training course, covering all the essential skills you'll need as an effective PCSO. The training will involve a mixture of classroom and practical exercises.

The training is interactive and fun and during the training you will take part in role plays and regular knowledge checks to put what you have learnt in the classroom into practice. You will get used to reacting to incidents in real time. You will also receive training on using your Airwaves radio, which will be imperative.

The course will teach you how to patrol effectively, respond to incidents and meet the needs of the community. To help you, you'll receive a thorough grounding in personal safety, legal powers, first aid, radio procedure and gathering evidence. You will also receive training in a variety of subjects ranging from crime scene management and community resolution to honour based violence and the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

The majority of your training will be held at our training facility in Letchworth but you will also attend Police HQ in Welwyn Garden City to conduct First Aid and Personal Safety Training.

In the role of PCSO you will be continually learning. Your training doesn't finish at the end of the seven weeks; it is an on-going process. After your initial seven week course, you will then continue your development 'on the job' within the Safer Neighbourhood Team. There will be further regular training days drawn into to your shift pattern to aid you with your on-going development within the role.

Role Profile

Role Title:	Police Community Support Officer
Rank/Grade:	A3 (non supervisory)
Job Family:	Operational
Reporting to:	Neighbourhood Sergeant
Main purpose of the role:	To be a visible foot patrolling representative of law and order, providing public reassurance and building confidence, whilst actively engaging with communities and getting others involved. To assist with the prevention of crime, disorder and ASB within the community, complementing the work of Police Officers by focusing on the six key strands of our Neighbourhood Policing model, with particular focus on the engagement elements which contribute to achieving the policing objectives.

Key Responsibilities

- Achieve 80% of time spent within policing locality addressing crime, anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues,
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by conducting high visibility uniformed patrols, responding to calls for assistance and enforcement of local bylaws and summary offences, via fixed penalty notices.
- Intelligence led foot and cycle patrols of hot spots.
- Use of designated PCSO powers in response to crime, anti-social behaviour, disorder, fear of crime and quality of life issues.
- Provide support and post incident care to victims through follow up visits and regular contact.
- Intelligence gathering (both criminal and community) through interaction with the public, community groups, Key Individual Networks and partner agencies.
- Engage communities on local crime and activity to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour.
- Support investigation processes by conducting tasks such as scene preservation, securing of evidence, collection of CCTV, identifying witnesses, house to house enquires and providing reassurance as directed
- Utilise range of legislative tools to reduce crime and ASB, including evidence gathering in support of longer term problem solving; including. ABC/ASBO breaches and the maintenance of accurate and timely records.
- Contribute towards Problem Solving and Crime Reduction initiatives, including but not limited to activities to develop youth diversion and working with partners to implement long term solutions

Financial e.g. limits/mandates	Non-financial e.g. staff responsibility
None	None

Entry Requirements

- Experience of working in a public facing role
- Proficient in IT Technology (databases, word, excel)
- Excellent communication and engagement skills
- Full manual driving licence

Agile Working	To be confirmed
Psychological Assessment	To be confirmed
Return on Investment	To be confirmed
Limited Duties	To be confirmed

Any other general requirements/Scope

- The post holder may be required to;
 - work from different locations other than the home station, this would usually be at neighbouring stations, however due to an exigency of duty there may be a requirement to work at other stations throughout the County.
 - use their own vehicle so business insurance will need to be organised by the individual.
 - use a Constabulary owned pedal cycle and as such must be willing and able to pass an assessment. (Training will be provided)
 - use public transport in order to carry out their duties
 - work additional hours which will be agreed in advance in line with the Police Staff Handbook.
- The post holder will be required to
 - work shifts.
 - be vetted, as advised by the vetting unit.
 - to undertake training as and when required.
 - to comply with health and safety requirements.
 - to pass an Emergency First Aid course

Obligatory Requirements

- Before commencement of this appointment, this role is subject to medical assessment and fitness test. For some roles health screening or surveillance may be required on a regular basis, as identified by line manager risk assessments,
- There is a requirement for the role holder to meet the probationary objectives set.

Personal Qualities (Behavioural Competencies)

We are emotionally aware

I treat others with respect, tolerance and compassion. I acknowledge and respect a range of different perspectives, values and beliefs within the remit of the law. I remain calm and think about how to best manage the situation when faced with provocation. I understand my own emotions and I know which situations might affect my ability to deal with stress and pressure. I ask for help and support when I need it. I understand the value that diversity offers. I communicate in clear and simple language so that I can be easily understood by others. I seek to understand the thoughts and concerns of others even when they are unable to express themselves clearly.

We take ownership

I actively identify and respond to problems. I approach tasks with enthusiasm, focusing on public service excellence. I regularly seek feedback to understand the quality of my work and the impact of my behaviour. I recognise where I can help others and willingly take on additional tasks to support them, where appropriate. I give feedback to others that I make sure is understandable and constructive. I take responsibility for my own actions, I fulfil my promises and do what I say I will. I will admit if I have made a mistake and take action to rectify this. I demonstrate pride in representing the police service. I understand my own strengths and areas for development and take responsibility for my own learning to address gaps.

We are collaborative

I work cooperatively with others to get things done, willingly giving help and support to colleagues. I am approachable, and explain things well so that I generate a common understanding. I take the time to get to know others and their perspective in order to build rapport. I treat people with respect as individuals and address their specific needs and concerns. I am open and transparent in my relationships with others. I ensure I am clear and appropriate in my communications.

We deliver, support and inspire

I take on challenging tasks to help to improve the service continuously and support my colleagues. I understand how my work contributes to the wider police service. I understand it is part of my collective responsibility to deliver efficient services. I take personal responsibility for making sure that I am working effectively to deliver the best service, both individually and with others. I am conscientious in my approach, working hard to provide the best service and to overcome any obstacles that could prevent or hinder delivery. I support the efficient use of resources to create the most value and to deliver the right impact. I keep up to date with changes in internal and external environments. I am a role model for the behaviours I expect to see in others and I act in the best interests of the public and the police service.

We analyse critically

I recognise the need to think critically about issues. I value the use of analysis and testing in policing. I take in information quickly and accurately. I am able to separate information and decide whether it is irrelevant or relevant and its importance. I solve problems proactively by understanding the reasons behind them, using learning from evidence and my experiences to take action. I refer to procedures and precedents as necessary before making decisions. I weigh up the pros and cons of possible actions, thinking about potential risks and using this thinking to inform our decisions. I recognise gaps and inconsistencies in information and think about the potential implications. I make decisions in alignment with our mission, values and the Code of Ethics.

We are innovative and open-minded

I demonstrate an openness to changing ideas, perceptions and ways of working. I share suggestions with colleagues, speaking up to help improve existing working methods and practices. I constantly reflect on my own way of working and periodically review processes and procedures to make continuous improvements. I adapt to change and am flexible as the need arises while encouraging others to do the same. I learn from my experiences and do not let myself be unduly influenced by preconceptions.

