



National Uniform & Equipment Survey 2024

Dorset Police Force Report

Results: October 2025

Dr Camilla De Camargo, Dr Stephanie Wallace, Lois Fairclough,
Dr Sahrish Khan, Zac Mader, Belinda Goodwin, & Dr Yuze Sha

Lancaster
University



POLICE
Federation



Key Findings

This report provides a summary of responses to key questions from the first National Uniform & Equipment Survey for Dorset Police¹. National results and additional information are available in the main report **here**..

Respondents and Response Rate

- 275 responses were recorded from Dorset Police, representing a response rate² of approximately 9% (based on March 2024 total police force headcount)³.
- 81% of respondents are police officers, and 19% are police staff.
- 29% of respondents identified as female, 56% as male, 15% did not specify their sex.

Overall Uniform Experience

- Almost half (48%) of respondents from Dorset Police said that their experience of wearing uniform is 'negative' or 'extremely negative', lower than the 56% average across the 43 forces in England and Wales.
- A quarter (25%) of respondents from Dorset Police said their experience is 'positive', while 27% stated they have a 'neutral' experience.
- 35% of respondents from Dorset Police said their uniform items interact together 'poorly' or 'very poorly', while 20% said their uniform items interact 'well'.

¹Note that force-specific percentages may differ from those in the main report as the individual force report data are not weighted. See Section 2.3 of the main report for more details.

²Response rates are calculated based on the total force population. Therefore, while, for example, a 10% response rate is reported for the force, the effective response rate among uniformed officers and staff—the intended population for this study—may be higher.

³Home Office (2025) Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31st March 2025: data tables [Dataset]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables>.

- 30% of respondents from Dorset Police said their uniform items do not interact well together with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), while 22% said their uniform items and PPE interact 'well'.

Uniform Functionality and Fit

- 44% of respondents from Dorset Police disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.
- 67% of respondents from Dorset Police agreed that their uniform restricts their movement, slightly higher than the 64% average.
- Almost half (48%) of respondents from Dorset Police said their uniform is not good quality, while 58% of respondents from this force said their uniform does not fit well.
- 35% of respondents from Dorset Police disagreed that their uniform is durable, while 38% agreed.
- 58% of respondents from Dorset Police said that their uniform is uncomfortable, while only 18% said they are comfortable in their uniform.
- 82% of respondents from Dorset Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them cool in summer, while only 3% agreed. This is higher than national average of 74% who said the same.
- Half (50%) of respondents from Dorset Police said their uniform keeps them warm in winter, while 24% disagreed. However, half of respondents (50%) disagreed that their uniform is waterproof.

Uniform Items

- 73% of respondents who wear the dress shirt from Dorset Police report this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform.

- 70% of respondents who wear general purpose body armour (GPBA) from Dorset Police said it contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 67% of respondents from Dorset Police reported wearing cargo trousers. Of these respondents, 65% said this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform.
- 58% of those who wear general purpose trousers from Dorset Police said this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 58% of respondents who wear a bowler hat and 50% who wear a patrol helmet from Dorset Police said these items contribute to a negative uniform experience.
- 56% of those who reported wearing a utility vest said this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform, while half (50%) of those who wear a polo shirt report the same.

Uniform Access and Stores

- 29% of respondents from Dorset Police said that obtaining new uniform items is 'easy' or 'extremely easy', while 46% said it is 'difficult' or 'extremely difficult'.
- 27% of respondents from Dorset Police reported that they have visited their local uniform store.
- The remaining respondents indicated the following reasons for not visiting a store: 8% said the store was too far to travel to, 16% did not know it was an option, and 41% said it is not an option to visit.
- Among those who had visited a store, 47% stated that items were not available in their size, and 15% said some but not all items were available in their size.
- Most respondents from Dorset Police received the items they ordered within three months (40%) or within weeks (26%), while almost a quarter (24%) faced long wait times of three to six months.

Uniform Cost

- 73% of respondents from Dorset Police agreed that cost drives uniform decisions, while only 6% disagreed.

Perception of Uniform

- 54% of respondents from Dorset Police feel professional in their uniform, slightly higher than the average across England and Wales of 51%. However, 26% said they do not feel professional in their uniform.
- 35% of respondents from Dorset Police feel they look smart in their uniform, while 35% feel they do not look smart.
- 56% of respondents from Dorset Police feel proud in their uniform, while 16% said they do not feel proud in their uniform.

Uniform and Health and Wellbeing

- 62% of respondents from Dorset Police reported at least one health condition they believe was caused or made worse by their uniform, highlighting clear concerns about the physical impact of uniform wear.
- Among those who provided their sex, 84% of female respondents from Dorset Police reported at least one health condition they believe is caused or made worse by their uniform, compared to 65% of male respondents from this force.
- 38% of respondents from Dorset Police agreed that their uniform affects their relationship with their body.
- 15% respondents from Dorset Police agreed that uniform affects their mental wellbeing, while 15% agreed that their emotional wellbeing has been effected.

Complaints and Sick Leave

- 31% of respondents from Dorset Police said they had made a uniform-related complaint.
- For 71% of these complaints, no action was taken.
- 6% of respondents from Dorset Police have taken time off work due to the negative effects of uniform, slightly higher than the national average of 5%.
- Half of respondents (50%) from Dorset Police said that although they had experienced negative effects due to wearing their uniform, they did not take sick leave.
- Reasons for not taking sick leave at Dorset Police included worries that complaining would negatively affect work opportunities (8%) and negative attitudes in the force (7%).

Uniform Impact on Retention and Role Choices

- 11% of respondents from Dorset Police have made decisions about their current or future roles based on the uniform they must wear. This includes transitioning to a non-uniformed role, choosing a role based on the required uniform, and even leaving the force due to uniform-related issues.

Thoughts on National Uniform

- 49% of respondents from Dorset Police agreed that there should be a national uniform across England and Wales, while 15% disagreed, and 36% feel neutral.

Figure 1: Proportion of respondents who said that their experience of uniform is ‘negative’ or ‘extremely negative’.

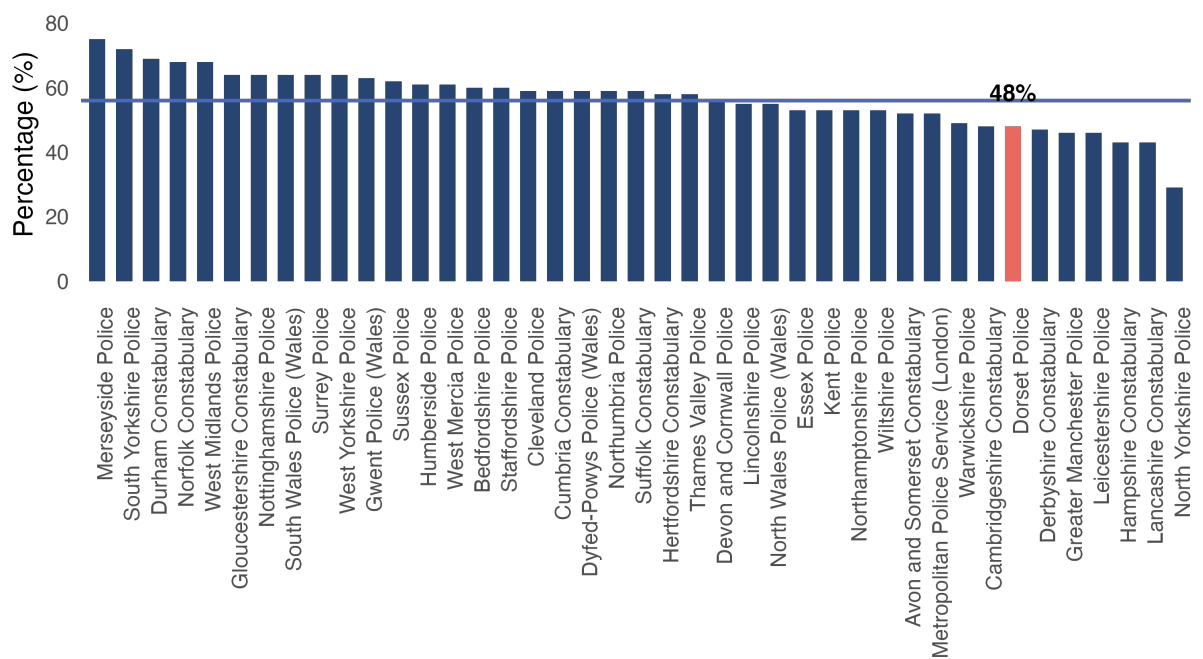


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.

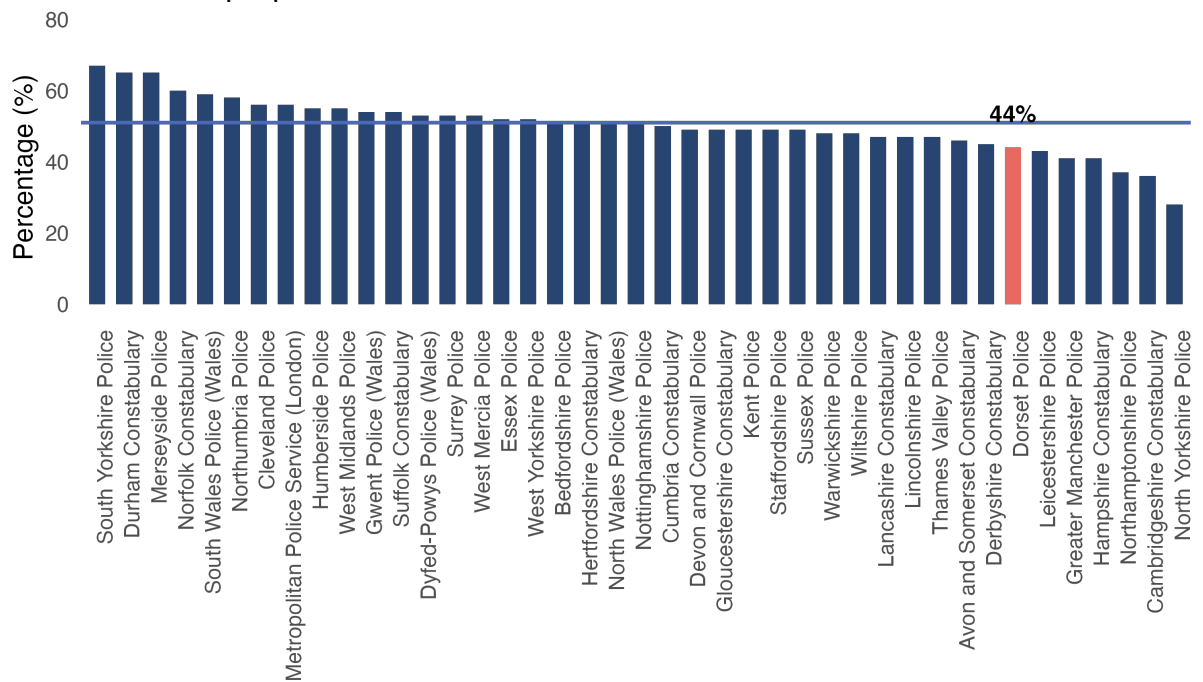


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who reported one or more physical health conditions they believe to have been caused or made worse by their uniform.

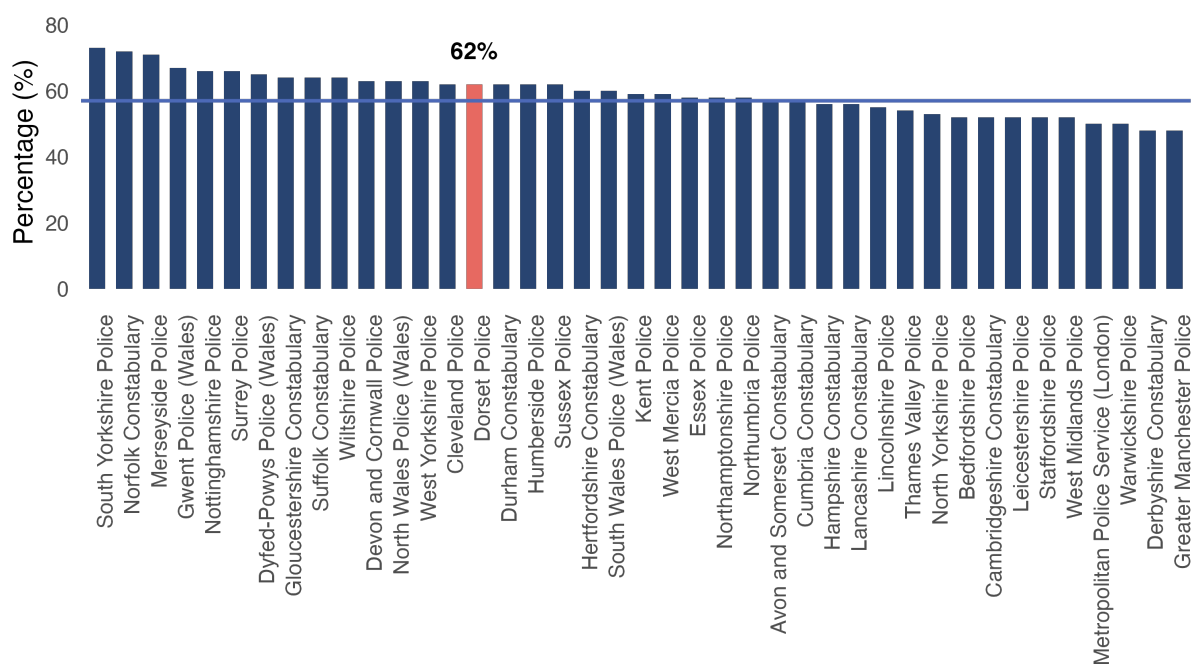


Figure 4: Proportion of uniform-related complaints where no action was taken.

