



National Uniform & Equipment Survey 2024

South Wales Police Force Report

Results: October 2025

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Key Findings

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

Respondents and Response Rate

- 612 responses were recorded from South Wales Police, representing a response rate² of approximately 9% (based on March 2024 total police force headcount)³.
- 77% of respondents are police officers, and 23% are police staff.
- 31% of respondents identified as female, 50% as male, and 19% did not specify their sex.

Overall Uniform Experience

- 64% of respondents from South Wales Police said their experience of wearing uniform is 'negative' or 'extremely negative', higher than the 56% average across the 43 forces in England and Wales.
- 20% of respondents from South Wales Police said their experience is 'positive', while 17% stated that they have a 'neutral' experience.
- 48% of respondents from South Wales Police said their uniform items interact together 'poorly' or 'very poorly', while only 11% of respondents said that 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>.

- 44% reported that their uniform items do not interact well together with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), while 14% of respondents said their uniform items and PPE interact 'well'.

Uniform Functionality and Fit

- 59% of respondents from South Wales Police disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose, higher than the average of 51% across England and Wales.
- 68% of respondents from South Wales Police agreed that their uniform restricts their movement.
- 60% of respondents from South Wales Police disagreed that their uniform is good quality, while two thirds (66%) of respondents from this force said their uniform does not fit well.
- Over half (51%) of respondents from South Wales Police disagreed that their uniform is durable, while 24% agreed.
- Two thirds (66%)of respondents from South Wales Police said their uniform is uncomfortable, while only 16% said they are comfortable in their uniform.
- 72% of respondents from South Wales Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them cool in summer, while only 12% agreed.
- 44% of respondents from South Wales Police disagreed that their uniform does not keep them warm in winter, compared to 35% who agreed. 62% of respondents disagreed that their uniform is waterproof.

Uniform Items

- 69% of respondents from South Wales Police reported wearing cargo trousers. Of these respondents, 83% said that this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform, considerably higher than the national average of 69%.

- 78% of respondents who wear general purpose body armour (GPBA) said it contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 58% of respondents who wear a utility vest from South Wales Police said that this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 58% of respondents who wear a bowler hat and 50% of respondents who wear a patrol helmet from South Wales Police said that these items contribute to a negative uniform experience.
- 44% of those who wear general purpose trousers from South Wales Police said that this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.

Uniform Access and Stores

- 24% of respondents from South Wales Police said that obtaining new uniform items is 'easy' or 'extremely easy', while over half (58%) of respondents said it is 'difficult' or 'extremely difficult'.
- 65% of respondents from South Wales Police reported that they have visited their local uniform store.
- The remaining respondents indicated the following reasons for not visiting a store: 13% said they are not allowed to visit, 10% did not know it was an option, and 6% said it is not an option to visit.
- Among those who had visited a store, 35% reported that items were not available in their size, and 29% said some but not all items were available in their size.
- Most respondents from South Wales Police received the items they ordered within weeks (42%), 35% received items within three months, and 12% faced long wait times of three to six months.

Uniform Cost

- 77% of respondents from South Wales Police said they believe that cost drives uniform decisions, while only 4% disagreed.

Perception of Uniform

- 51% of respondents from South Wales Police feel professional in their uniform. However, one in four (26%) said they do not feel professional in their uniform.
- 34% of respondents from South Wales Police feel they look smart in their uniform, while 35% said they do not look smart.
- 49% of respondents from South Wales Police feel proud in their uniform, while 19% said they do not feel proud in their uniform.

Uniform and Health and Wellbeing

- 60% of respondents from South Wales 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, 86% of female respondents from South Wales Police reported at least one health condition they believe is caused or made worse by their uniform, compared to 67% of male respondents from this force.
- 43% of respondents from South Wales Police said that their uniform affects their relationship with their body.
- One in five (20%) respondents from South Wales Police agreed that their uniform affects their mental wellbeing, while the same number (20%) agreed that their emotional wellbeing has been effected.

Complaints and Sick Leave

- 46% of respondents from South Wales Police said they had made a uniform-related complaint.
- For 72% of these complaints, no action was taken.
- 3% of respondents from South Wales Police have taken time off work due to the negative effects of uniform, lower than the national average of 5%.
- 55% of respondents from South Wales 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 South Wales Police included negative attitudes in the force (11%), worries that sick leave would negatively affect work opportunities (7%), and a lack of perceived empathy from line managers (5%).

Uniform Impact on Retention and Role Choices

- 14% of respondents from South Wales 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 South Wales Police agreed that there should be a national uniform across England and Wales, while 19% disagreed, and 32% feel neutral.

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

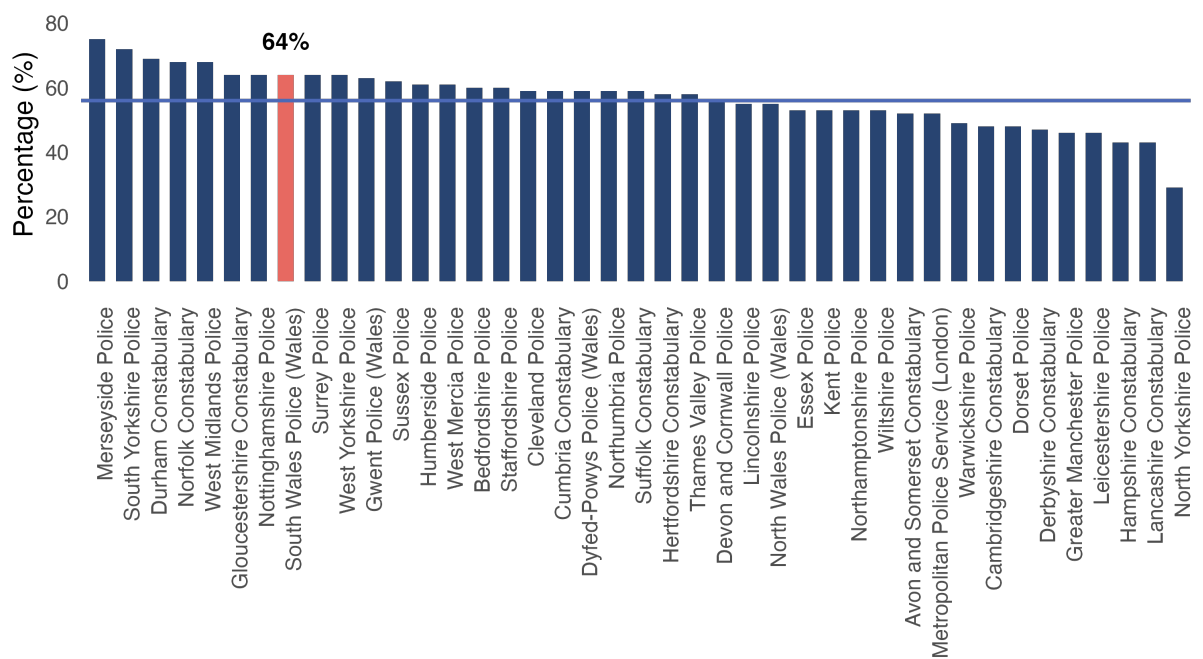


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.

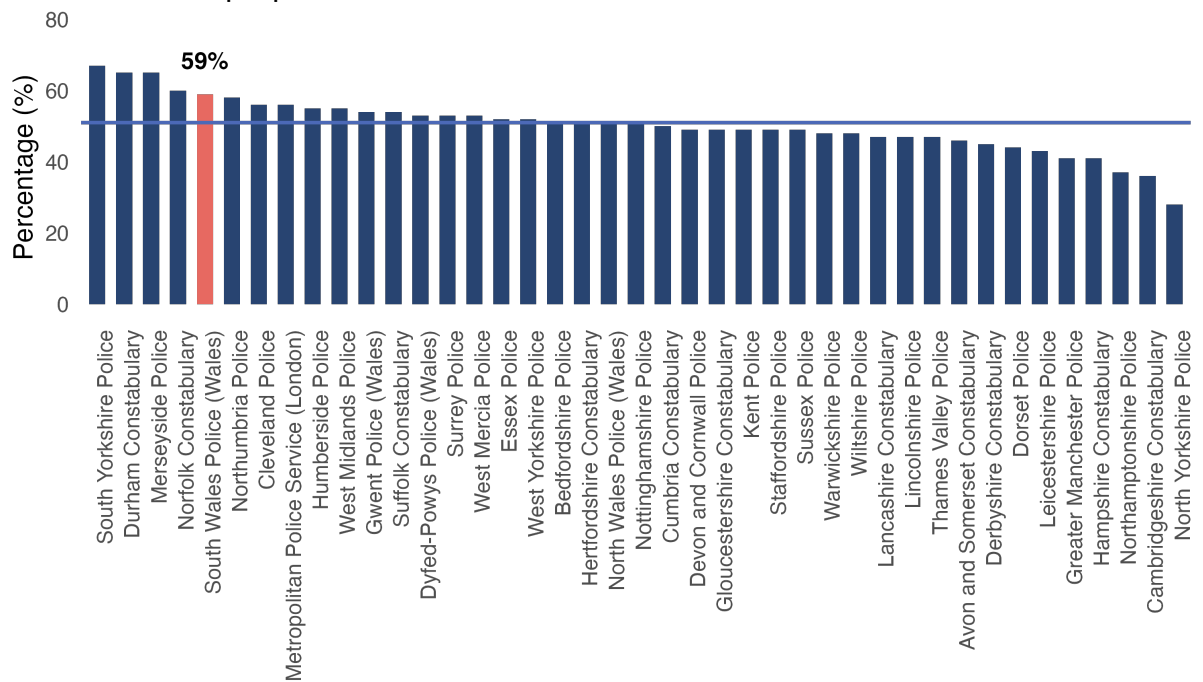


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who reported one or more physical health conditions they believe to have been caused or made worse by their uniform.

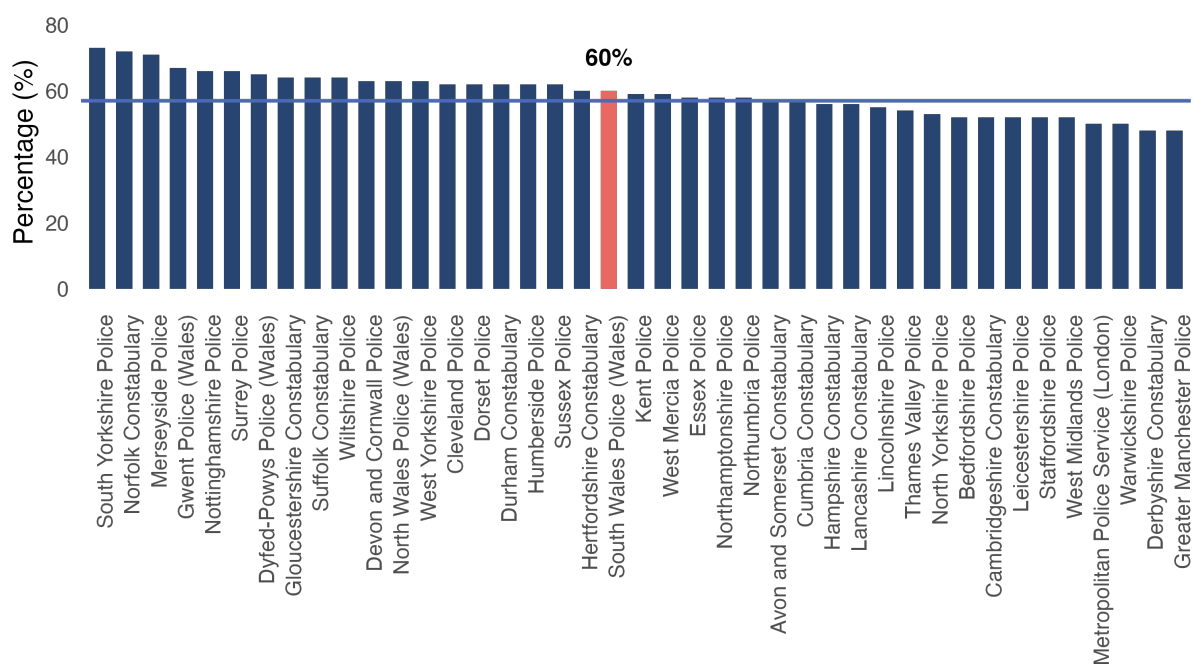


Figure 4: Proportion of uniform-related complaints where no action was taken.

