



National Uniform & Equipment Survey 2024

South Yorkshire 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 Yorkshire Police¹. National results and additional information are available in the main report **here**.

Respondents and Response Rate

- 432 responses were recorded from South Yorkshire Police, representing a response rate² of approximately 7% (based on March 2024 total police force headcount)³.
- 92% of respondents are police officers, and 8% are police staff.
- 31% of respondents identified as female, 53% as male, and 16% did not specify their sex.

Overall Uniform Experience

- 72% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police said their experience of wearing uniform is 'negative' or 'extremely negative', significantly higher than the 56% average across the 43 forces in England and Wales.
- Only 10% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police said their experience is 'positive', while 18% stated they have a 'neutral' experience.
- 52% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police said their uniform items interact together 'poorly' or 'very poorly', while only 8% 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>.

- 43% reported that their uniform items do not interact well together with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), while only 8% of respondents said that their uniform and PPE interact 'well'.

Uniform Functionality and Fit

- 67% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose, while only 13% agreed. This is significantly higher than the 51% average across England and Wales.
- More than three quarters (77%) of respondents from South Yorkshire Police agreed that their uniform restricts their movement.
- 69% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police disagreed that their uniform is good quality, while 72% of respondents from this force said their uniform does not fit well.
- Half (51%) of respondents from South Yorkshire Police disagreed that their uniform is durable, while only one in five (20%) agreed.
- 73% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police said that their uniform is uncomfortable, while only 11% said they are comfortable in their uniform.
- 79% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them cool in summer, while only 9% agreed.
- 31% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police agreed that their uniform keeps them warm in winter, but 43% disagreed. Most respondents (68%) disagreed that their uniform is waterproof.

Uniform Items

- 57% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police reported wearing cargo trousers. Of these respondents, 88% said that this item contributes negatively to their ex-

perience of wearing uniform, significantly higher than the national average of 51%.

- 87% of those who wear general purpose trousers from South Yorkshire Police said that this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 65% of respondents who wear general purpose body armour (GPBA) said it contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 59% of respondents who wear a polo shirt and 55% of respondents who wear a dress shirt from South Yorkshire Police said that these items contribute to a negative uniform experience.
- 55% of respondents who wear a bowler hat and 42% who wear a patrol helmet from South Yorkshire Police said that these items contribute to a negative uniform experience.
- Half (50%) of respondents who wear a utility vest from South Yorkshire Police said this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.

Uniform Access and Stores

- Only 17% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police said that obtaining new uniform items is 'easy' or 'extremely easy', while the majority (64%) of respondents said it is 'difficult' or 'extremely difficult'.
- 49% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police reported that they have visited their local uniform store.
- The remaining respondents indicated the following reasons for not visiting a store: 16% said the store was too far to travel to, 12% did not know it was an option, and 15% said it is not an option to visit.
- Among those who had visited a store, 33% reported that items were not available in their size, and 20% said some but not all items were available in their size.

- Most respondents from South Yorkshire Police received the items they ordered within weeks (56%), 29% received items within three months, and 7% received items within days.

Uniform Cost

- 76% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police agreed that cost drives uniform decisions, while only 9% disagreed.

Perception of Uniform

- 43% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police feel professional in their uniform, lower than the average across England and Wales of 51%. However, 34% said they do not feel professional in their uniform.
- 32% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police feel they look smart in their uniform, but 43% feel they do not look smart.
- 46% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police feel proud in their uniform, while 23% said they do not feel proud in their uniform.

Uniform and Health and Wellbeing

- 73% of respondents from South Yorkshire 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, almost all (97%) of the female respondents from South Yorkshire Police reported at least one health condition they believe is caused or made worse by their uniform, compared to 78% of male respondents from this force.

- 44% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police agreed that their uniform affects their relationship with their body.
- One in four (25%) respondents from South Yorkshire Police agreed that their uniform affects their mental wellbeing, while one in four (25%) also said that their emotional wellbeing has been effected.

Complaints and Sick Leave

- 39% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police said they had made a uniform-related complaint.
- For three quarters (75%) of these complaints, no action was taken.
- 4% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police have taken time off work due to the negative effects of uniform, slightly lower than the national average of 5%.
- 61% of respondents from South Yorkshire 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 Yorkshire Police included negative attitudes in the force (14%), a lack of perceived empathy from line managers (9%), and worries that taking sick leave would negatively affect work opportunities (6%).

Uniform Impact on Retention and Role Choices

- 21% of respondents from South Yorkshire 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

- 48% of respondents from South Yorkshire Police agreed that there should be a national uniform across England and Wales, while 19% disagreed, and 34% feel neutral.

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

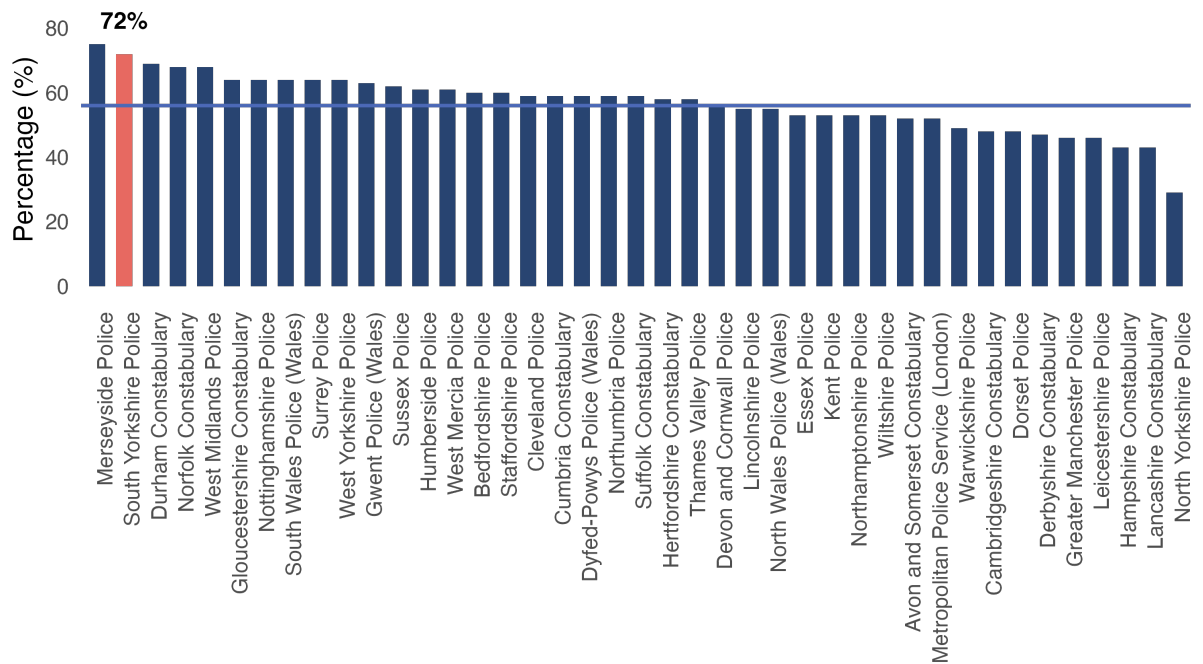


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.

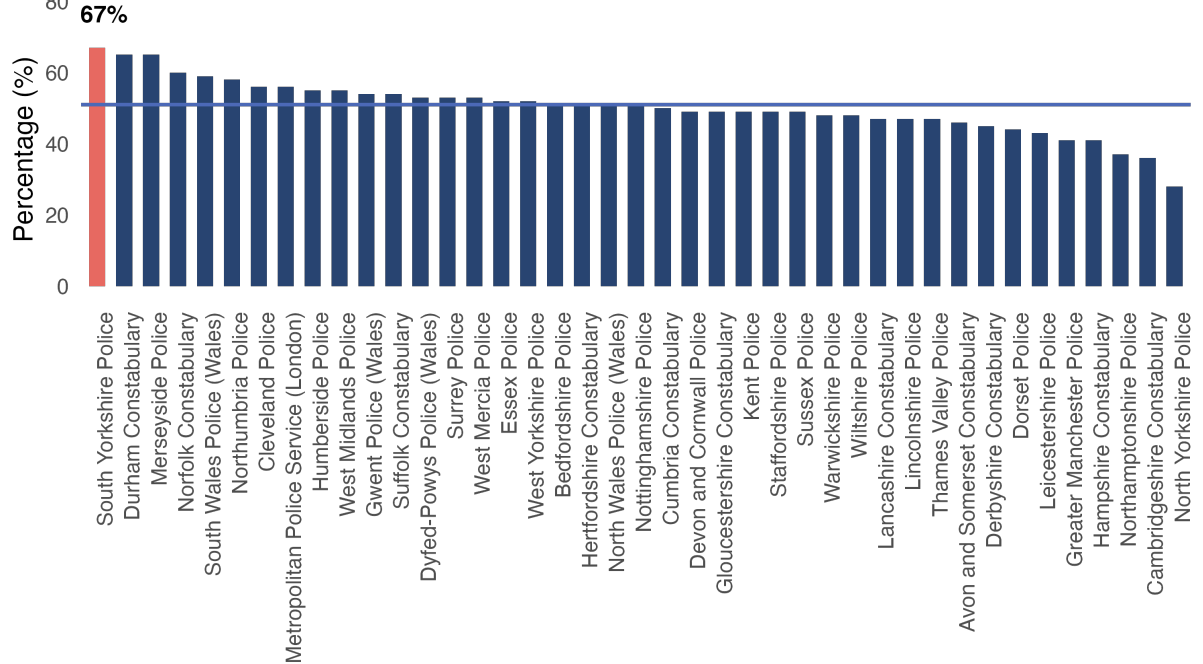


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who reported one or more physical health conditions they believe to have been caused or made worse by their uniform.

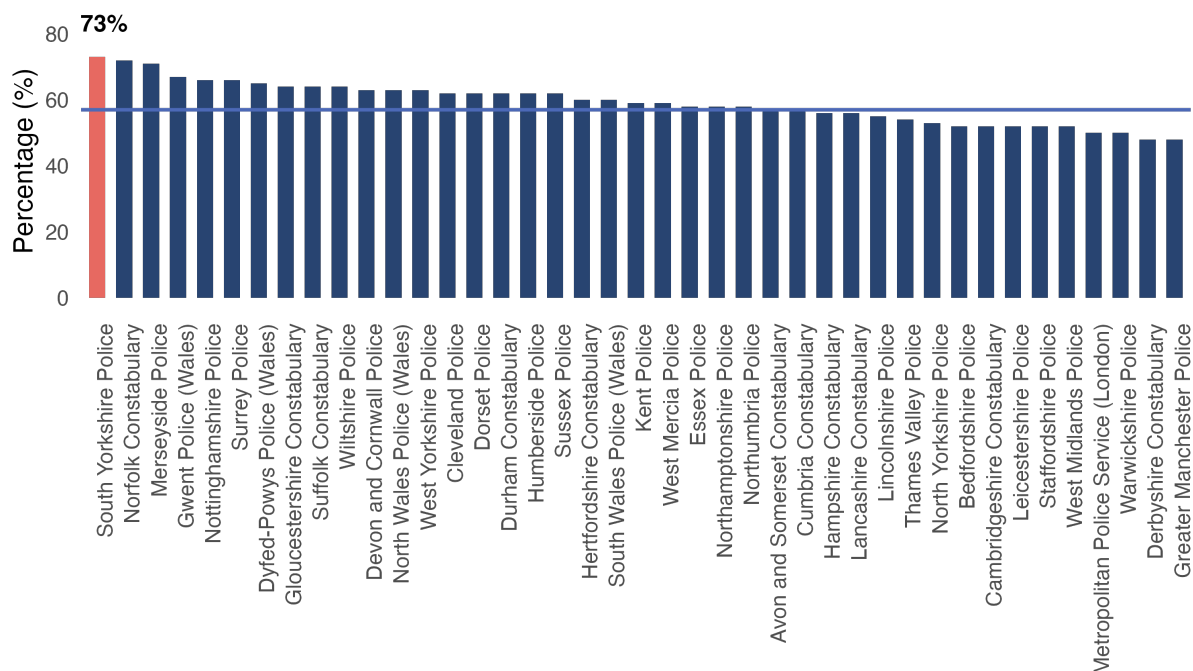


Figure 4: Proportion of uniform-related complaints where no action was taken.

