



National Uniform & Equipment Survey 2024

Suffolk Constabulary 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 Suffolk Constabulary¹. National results and additional information are available in the main report **here**.

Respondents and Response Rate

- 342 responses were recorded from Suffolk Constabulary, representing a response rate² of approximately 12% (based on March 2024 total police force headcount)³.
- 96% of respondents are police officers, and 4% are police staff.
- 27% of respondents identified as female, 56% as male, and 17% did not specify their sex.

Overall Uniform Experience

- 59% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary said their experience of wearing uniform is 'negative' or 'extremely negative', slightly higher than the 56% average across the 43 forces in England and Wales.
- 18% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary said that their experience is 'positive', while 23% stated they have a 'neutral' experience.
- 43% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary said their uniform items interact together 'poorly' or 'very poorly', while 18% 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>.

- 40% reported that their uniform items do not interact well together with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), while only 14% said their uniform items and PPE interact 'well'.

Uniform Functionality and Fit

- 54% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.
- 74% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary agreed that their uniform restricts their movement, considerably higher than the 64% average.
- 61% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary disagreed that their uniform is good quality, while 65% of respondents from this force said that their uniform does not fit well.
- 44% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary disagreed that their uniform is durable, while 28% agreed.
- 65% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary said their uniform is uncomfortable, only 16% said they are comfortable in their uniform.
- 79% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary disagreed that their uniform keeps them cool in summer, while only 7% agreed.
- 46% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary disagreed that their uniform keeps them warm in winter, and 70% disagreed that their uniform is waterproof.

Uniform Items

- 59% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary reported wearing cargo trousers. Of these respondents, 70% said this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform, slightly higher than the national average of 69%.
- Half (50%) of respondents who wear general purpose trousers from Suffolk Constabulary said this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.

- 73% of respondents who wear a bowler hat and 61% of respondents who wear a patrol helmet from Suffolk Constabulary said these items contribute to a negative uniform experience.
- 64% of respondents who wear a utility belt from Suffolk Constabulary said this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform.
- 53% of respondents who wear general purpose body armour (GPBA) said it contributes to a negative uniform experience.

Uniform Access and Stores

- 26% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary said that obtaining new uniform items is 'easy' or 'extremely easy', while over half (53%) of respondents said it is 'difficult' or 'extremely difficult'.
- 73% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary reported that they have visited their local uniform store.
- The remaining respondents indicated the following reasons for not visiting a store: 10% said the store was too far to travel to, 7% did not know it was an option, and 5% said it is not an option to visit.
- Among those who had visited a store, 49% reported that items were not available in their size, and 26% said some but not all items were available in their size.
- Most respondents from Suffolk Constabulary received the items they ordered within three months (35%), 31% received items within weeks, and 18% faced long wait times of three to six months.

Uniform Cost

- 80% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary agreed that cost drives uniform decisions. No respondents disagreed from this force, with the remaining 20% of respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Perception of Uniform

- 59% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary feel professional in their uniform, higher than the average across England and Wales of 51%. However, 21% said they do not feel professional in their uniform.
- 35% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary feel they look smart in their uniform, while 31% feel they do not look smart.
- 53% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary feel proud in their uniform, while 18% said they do not feel proud in their uniform.

Uniform and Health and Wellbeing

- 64% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary 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, nine in ten (90%) of female respondents from Suffolk Constabulary reported at least one health condition they believe is caused or made worse by their uniform, compared to 72% of male respondents from this force.
- 38% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary agreed that their uniform affects their relationship with their body.
- 17% respondents from Suffolk Constabulary agreed that their uniform affects their mental wellbeing, while 22% agreed that their emotional wellbeing has been effected.

Complaints and Sick Leave

- 39% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary said they had made a uniform-related complaint.

- For 55% of these complaints, no action was taken.
- 6% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary have taken time off work due to the negative effects of uniform, slightly higher than the national average of 5%.
- 55% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary 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 Suffolk Constabulary included worries that taking sick leave would negatively affect work opportunities (8%), negative attitudes in the force (5%), and a lack of perceived empathy from line managers (4%).

Uniform Impact on Retention and Role Choices

- 12% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary 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

- 44% of respondents from Suffolk Constabulary agreed that there should be a national uniform across England and Wales, while 20% disagreed, and 36% feel neutral.

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

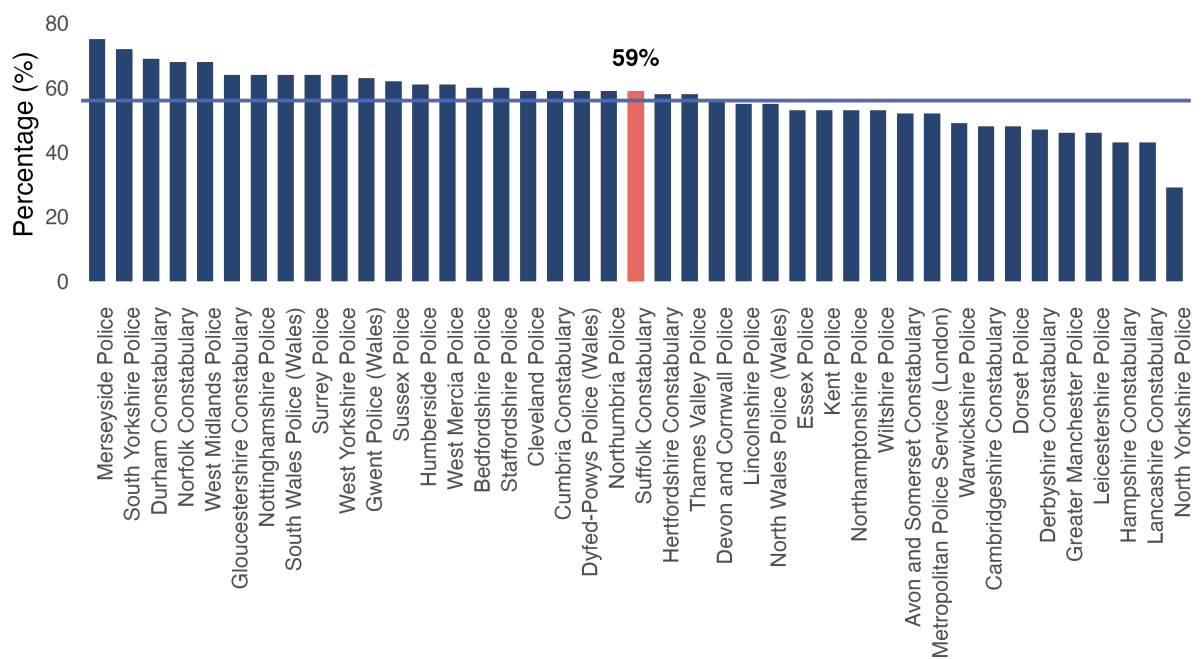


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.

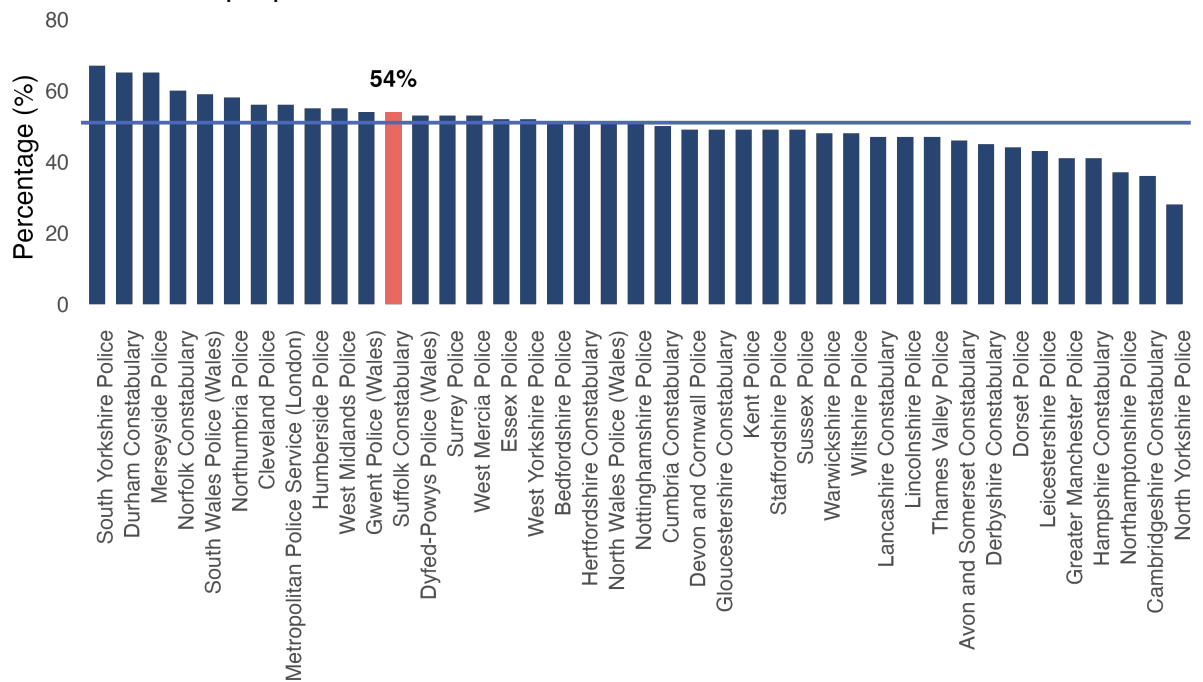


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who reported one or more physical health conditions they believe to have been caused or made worse by their uniform.

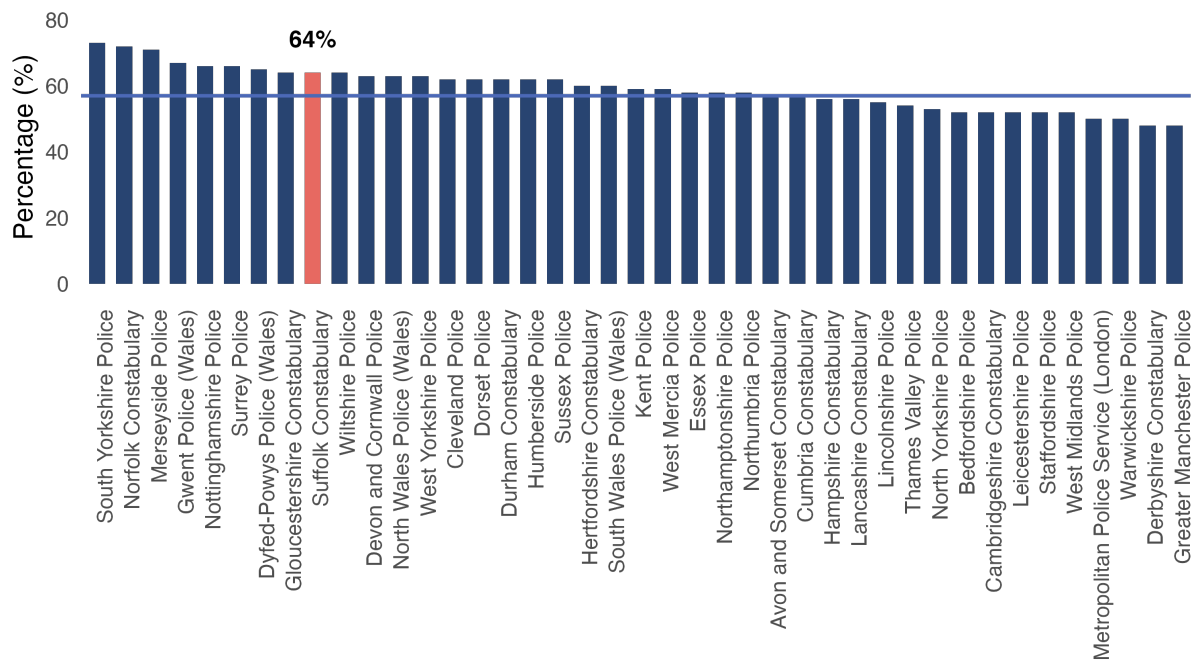


Figure 4: Proportion of uniform-related complaints where no action was taken.

