



National Uniform & Equipment Survey 2024

Thames Valley 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 Thames Valley Police¹. National results and additional information are available in the main report **here**.

Respondents and Response Rate

- 659 responses were recorded from Thames Valley Police, representing a response rate² of approximately 7% (based on March 2024 total police force headcount)³.
- 99% of respondents are police officers, and 1% are police staff.
- 24% of respondents identified as female, 56% as male, and 20% did not specify their sex.

Overall Uniform Experience

- 58% of respondents from Thames Valley Police 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.
- 21% of respondents from Thames Valley Police said their experience is 'positive', while 21% stated they have a 'neutral' experience.
- 41% of respondents from Thames Valley Police said their uniform items interact together 'poorly' or 'very poorly', while only 14% 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>.

- 37% reported that their uniform items do not interact well together with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), while 19% said their uniform items and PPE interact 'well'.

Uniform Functionality and Fit

- 47% of respondents from Thames Valley Police disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.
- 65% of respondents from Thames Valley Police agreed that their uniform restricts their movement, slightly higher than the 64% average.
- 62% of respondents from Thames Valley Police said their uniform is not good quality, while 64% of respondents from this force said their uniform does not fit well.
- 45% of respondents from Thames Valley Police disagreed that their uniform is durable, while 30% agreed.
- 56% of respondents from Thames Valley Police said their uniform is uncomfortable, while only a quarter of respondents (25%) said they are comfortable in their uniform.
- 76% of respondents from Thames Valley Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them cool in summer, while only 6% agreed.
- 41% of respondents from Thames Valley Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them warm in winter, and 61% disagreed that their uniform is waterproof.

Uniform Items

- 65% of respondents from Thames Valley Police reported wearing cargo trousers. Of these respondents, 79% said this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform, considerably higher than the national average of 69%.

- 55% of those who wear general purpose trousers from Thames Valley Police said this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 54% of those who wear a utility belt from Thames Valley Police said that item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 52% of respondents who wear general purpose body armour (GPBA) said it contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 51% of respondents who wear a bowler hat from Thames Valley Police said this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.

Uniform Access and Stores

- 49% of respondents from Thames Valley Police said that obtaining new uniform items is 'easy' or 'extremely easy', while 32% of respondents said it is 'difficult' or 'extremely difficult'.
- 32% of respondents from Thames Valley Police reported that they have visited their local uniform store.
- The remaining respondents indicated the following reasons for not visiting a store: 21% did not know it was an option, 21% said it is not an option to visit, 16% said they are not allowed to visit, and 10% said the store was too far to travel to.
- Among those who had visited a store, 33% reported that items were not available in their size, and 16% said some but not all items were available in their size.
- Most respondents from Thames Valley Police received the items they ordered within weeks (63%), 21% received items within three months, and 8% received items within days.

Uniform Cost

- 77% of respondents from Thames Valley Police agreed that cost drives uniform decisions, while only 4% disagreed.

Perception of Uniform

- 53% of respondents from Thames Valley Police feel professional in their uniform, higher than the average across England and Wales of 51%. However, a quarter of respondents (25%) said that they do not feel professional in their uniform.
- 36% of respondents from Thames Valley Police feel they look smart in their uniform, while the same quantity (36%) feel they do not look smart.
- 47% of respondents from Thames Valley Police feel proud in their uniform, while 21% said they do not feel proud in their uniform.

Uniform and Health and Wellbeing

- 54% of respondents from Thames Valley 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 Thames Valley Police reported at least one health condition they believe is caused or made worse by their uniform, compared to 59% of male respondents from this force.
- 40% of respondents from Thames Valley Police agreed that their uniform affects their relationship with their body.
- 19% respondents from Thames Valley Police agreed that their uniform affects their mental wellbeing, while 22% agreed that their emotional wellbeing has been effected.

Complaints and Sick Leave

- 36% of respondents from Thames Valley Police said they had made a uniform-related complaint.

- For 72% of these complaints, no action was taken.
- 4% of respondents from Thames Valley Police have taken time off work due to the negative effects of uniform, slightly lower than the national average of 5%.
- Half of respondents (50%) from Thames Valley 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 Thames Valley Police included worries that taking sick leave would negatively affect work opportunities (12%), and negative attitudes in the force (8%).

Uniform Impact on Retention and Role Choices

- 17% of respondents from Thames Valley 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

- 52% of respondents from Thames Valley Police agreed that there should be a national uniform across England and Wales, while 16% disagreed, and 32% feel neutral.

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

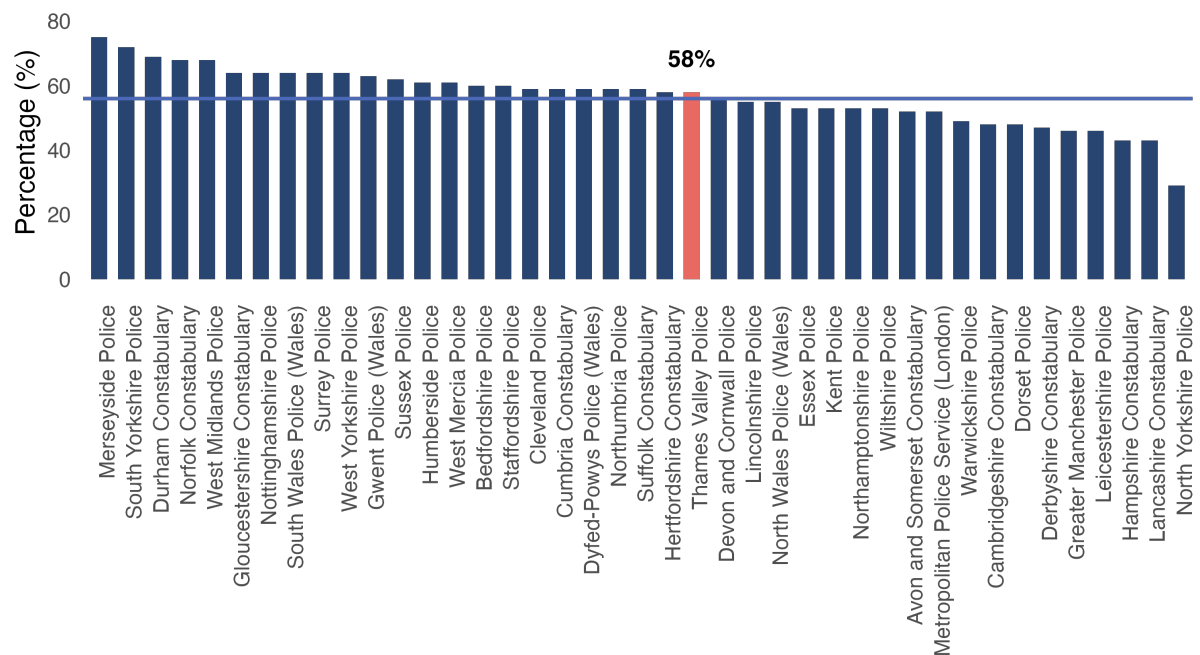


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.

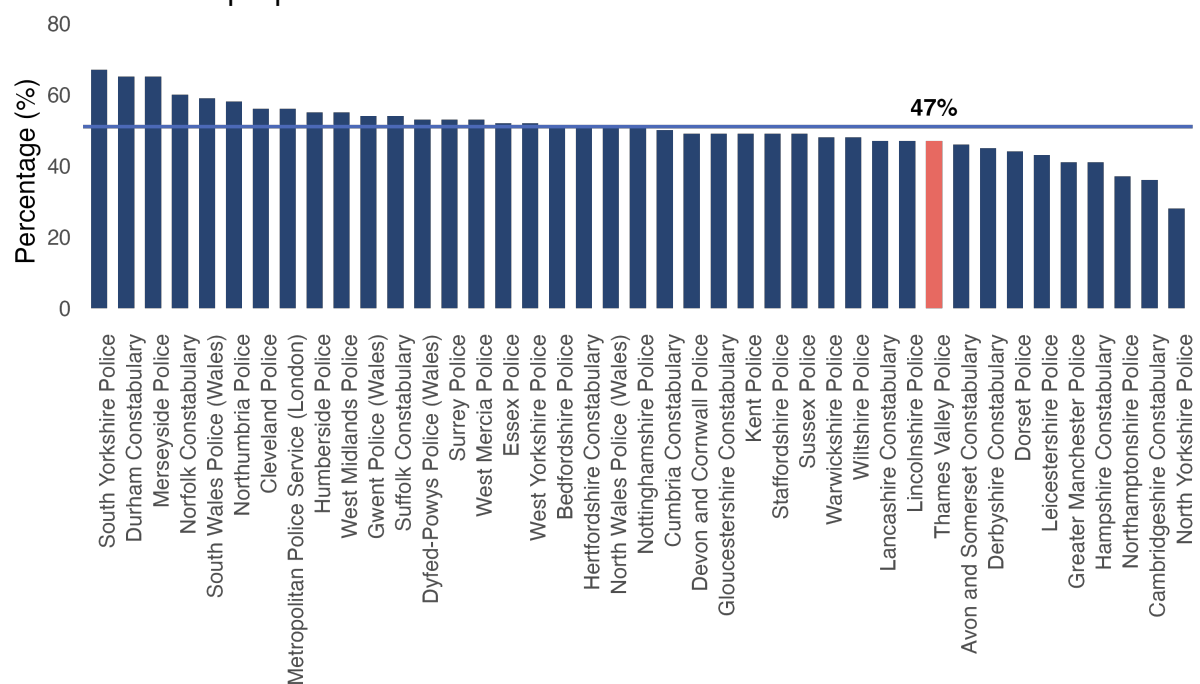


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who reported one or more physical health conditions they believe to have been caused or made worse by their uniform.

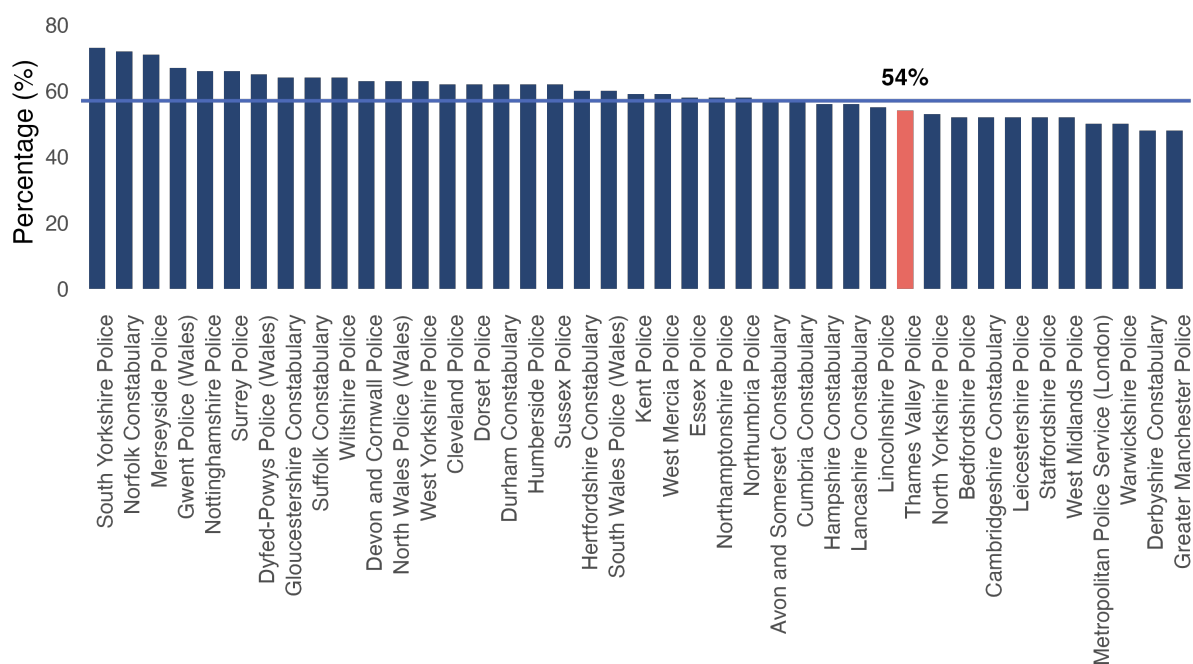


Figure 4: Proportion of uniform-related complaints where no action was taken.

