



National Uniform & Equipment Survey 2024

West Merica 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 West Mercia Police¹. National results and additional information are available in the main report **here**.

Respondents and Response Rate

- 217 responses were recorded from West Mercia Police, representing a response rate² of approximately 5% (based on March 2024 total police force headcount)³.
- 93% of respondents are police officers, and 7% are police staff.
- 30% of respondents identified female, 52% as male, and 18% did not specify their sex.

Overall Uniform Experience

- 61% of respondents from West Mercia 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.
- 17% of respondents from West Mercia Police said their experience is 'positive', while 22% stated they have a 'neutral' experience.
- Almost half (49%) of respondents from West Mercia Police said their uniform items interact together 'poorly' or 'very poorly', while only 8% 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>.

- 42% reported that their uniform items do not interact well together with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), while only 11% said their uniform and PPE items interact 'well'.

Uniform Functionality and Fit

- Over half (53%) of respondents from West Mercia Police disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose, higher than the 51% average across England and Wales.
- 65% of respondents from West Mercia Police agreed that their uniform restricts their movement.
- 62% of respondents from West Mercia Police disagreed that their uniform is good quality and only 15% agreed.
- 60% of respondents from West Mercia Police disagreed that their uniform fits well, while only 13% agreed.
- 53% of respondents from West Mercia Police disagreed that their uniform is durable, while 23% agreed.
- Over half (52%) of respondents from West Mercia Police said their uniform is uncomfortable, while only 22% said they are comfortable in their uniform.
- 74% of respondents from West Mercia Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them cool in these summer, while only 4% agreed.
- 38% of respondents from West Mercia Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them warm in winter, and 67% disagreed that their uniform is waterproof.

Uniform Items

- 62% of respondents from West Mercia Police reported wearing cargo trousers. Of these respondents, 64% said that this item contributes negatively to their experience of wearing uniform, slightly lower than the national average of 69%.

- 75% of respondents who wear a patrol helmet and 57% of respondents who wear a bowler hat from West Mercia Police said that these items contribute to a negative uniform experience.
- 67% of respondents who wear a dress shirt from West Mercia Police said that this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 64% of respondents who wear general purpose trousers from West Mercia Police said that this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 62% of respondents who wear general purpose body armour (GPBA) said it contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 55% of respondents who wear a utility belt and 53% of respondents who wear a utility vest said that these items contribute to a negative experience of wearing uniform.

Uniform Access and Stores

- 39% of respondents from West Mercia Police said that obtaining new uniform items is 'easy' or 'extremely easy', while 34% of respondents said it is 'difficult' or 'extremely difficult'.
- 62% of respondents from West Mercia Police reported that they have visited their local uniform store.
- The remaining respondents indicated the following reasons for not visiting a store: 15% said the store was too far to travel to, 10% did not know it was an option, 7% said it is not an option to visit, and 7% said they are not allowed to visit.
- Among those who had visited a store, 32% reported that items were not available in their size, and 21% said some but not all items were available in their size.
- Most respondents from West Mercia Police received the items they ordered within weeks (43%), 24% received items within three months, and 19% received items within days.

Uniform Cost

- 80% of respondents from West Mercia Police agreed that cost drives uniform decisions, while only 2% disagreed.

Perception of Uniform

- 46% of respondents from West Mercia Police feel professional in their uniform, lower than the average across England and Wales of 51%. However, 26% said they do not feel professional in their uniform.
- 31% of respondents from West Mercia Police feel they look smart in their uniform, while a third (33%) said they do not look smart.
- 44% of respondents from West Mercia Police feel proud in their uniform, while 22% said they do not feel proud in their uniform.

Uniform and Health and Wellbeing

- 59% of respondents from West Mercia 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, 88% of female respondents from West Mercia Police reported at least one health condition they believe is caused or made worse by their uniform, compared to 58% of male respondents from this force.
- 37% of respondents from West Mercia Police agreed that their uniform affects their relationship with their body.
- 21% respondents from West Mercia Police agreed that their uniform affects their mental wellbeing, while 18% agreed their emotional wellbeing has been effected.

Complaints and Sick Leave

- 37% of respondents from West Mercia Police said they had made a uniform-related complaint.
- For two thirds (66%) of these complaints, no action was taken.
- 6% of respondents from West Mercia Police have taken time off work due to the negative effects of uniform, slightly higher than the national average of 5%.
- 57% of respondents from West Mercia 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 West Mercia Police included negative attitudes in the force (9%), and worries that taking sick leave would negatively affect work opportunities (9%).

Uniform Impact on Retention and Role Choices

- 9% of respondents from West Mercia 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

- 59% of respondents from West Mercia Police agreed that there should be a national uniform across England and Wales, while 14% disagreed, and 27% feel neutral.

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

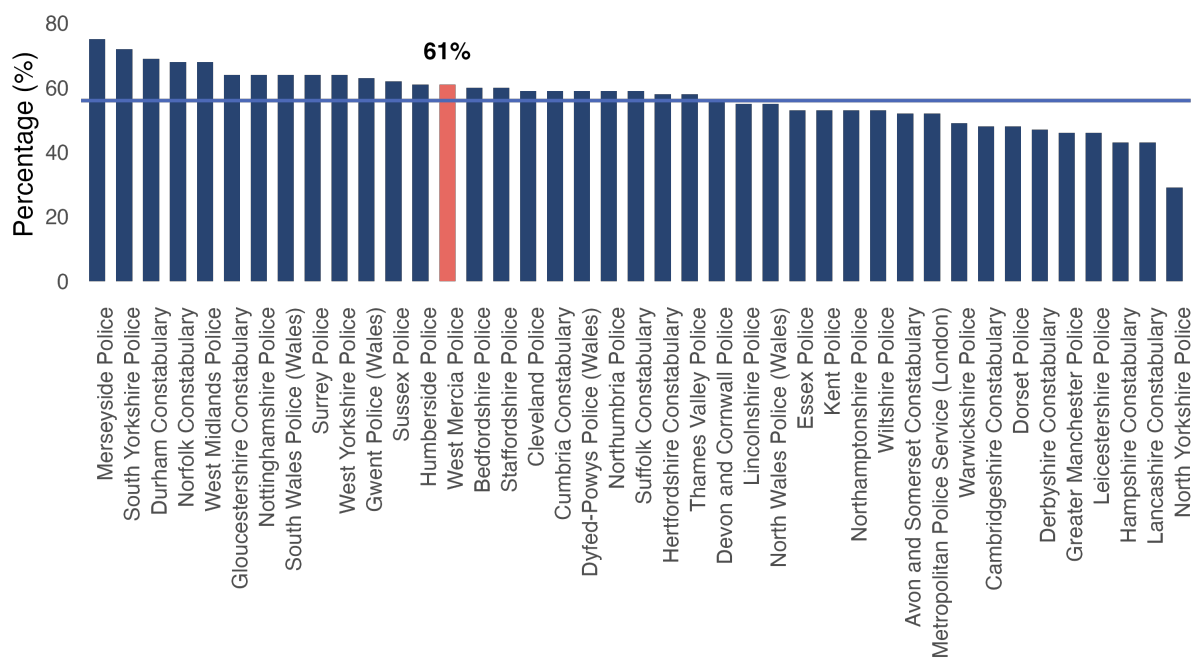


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.

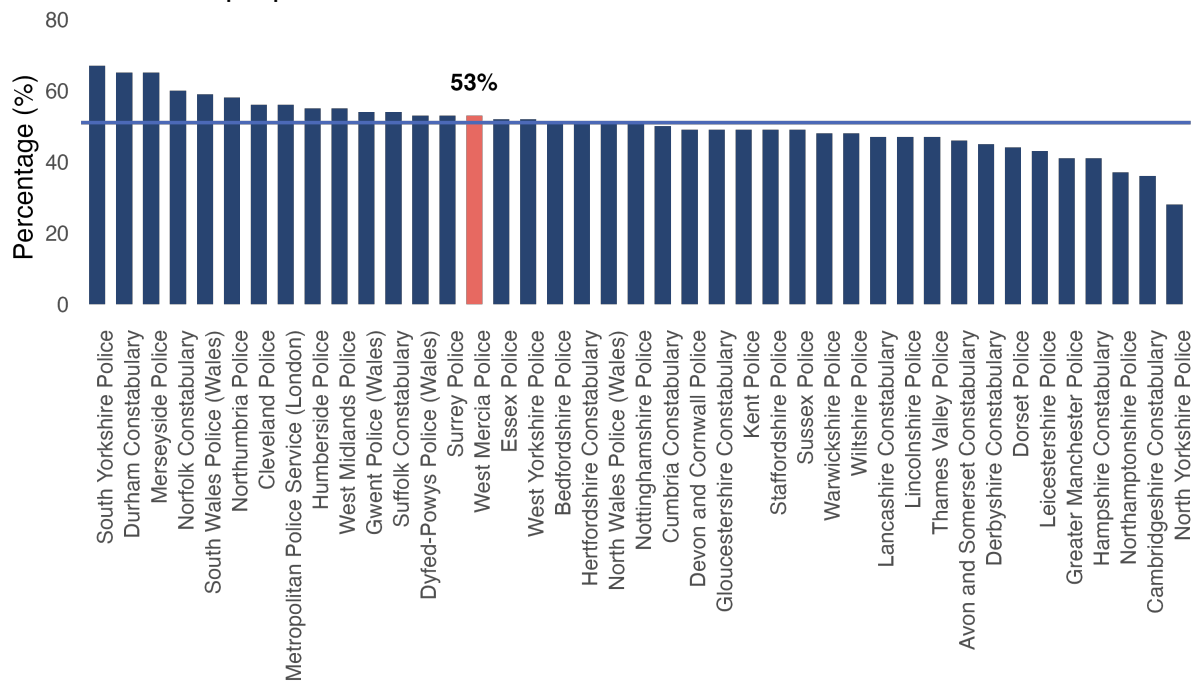


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who reported one or more physical health conditions they believe to have been caused or made worse by their uniform.

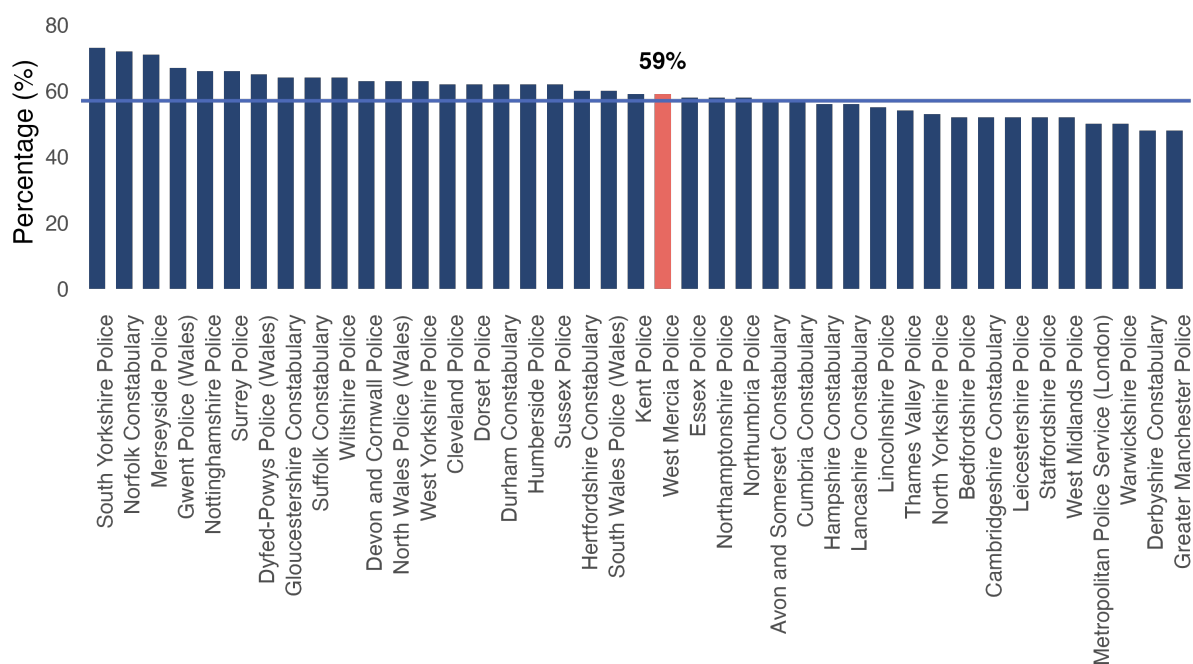


Figure 4: Proportion of uniform-related complaints where no action was taken.

