



## National Uniform & Equipment Survey 2024

# Sussex 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 Sussex Police<sup>1</sup>. National results and additional information are available in the main report **here**.

## Respondents and Response Rate

- 640 responses were recorded from Sussex Police, representing a response rate<sup>2</sup> of approximately 10% (based on March 2024 total police force headcount)<sup>3</sup>.
- 83% of respondents are police officers, and 17% are police staff.
- 34% of respondents identified as female, 46% as male, and 19% did not specify their sex.

## Overall Uniform Experience

- 62% of respondents from Sussex 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 Sussex Police said their experience is 'positive', while 21% stated they have a 'neutral' experience.
- 42% of respondents from Sussex Police said uniform items interact together 'poorly' or 'very poorly', while only 14% said their uniform items interact 'well'.

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<sup>1</sup>Note 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.

<sup>2</sup>Response 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.

<sup>3</sup>Home 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>.

- 35% reported that their uniform items do not interact well together with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), while 18% said their uniform items and PPE interact 'well'.

## Uniform Functionality and Fit

- Almost half (49%) of respondents from Sussex Police disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.
- 68% of respondents from Sussex Police agreed that their uniform restricts their movement, while only 15% of respondents from Sussex Police disagreed.
- 59% of respondents from Sussex Police said their uniform is not good quality, while 63% of respondents from this force said that their uniform does not fit well.
- 47% of respondents from Sussex Police disagreed that their uniform is durable, while 26% agreed.
- 60% of respondents from Sussex Police said their uniform is uncomfortable, only 19% said they are comfortable in their uniform.
- 76% of respondents from Sussex Police disagreed that their uniform keeps them cool in summer, while only 5% agreed.
- 38% of respondents from Sussex Police agreed that their uniform keeps them warm in winter, while 35% disagreed. However, most respondents (64%) disagreed that their uniform is waterproof.

## Uniform Items

- 69% of respondents from Sussex 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%.
- 71% of those who wear general purpose trousers from Sussex Police said 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, while 64% of respondents who wear ballistic body armour said the same.
- 54% of those who wear a utility belt from Sussex Police said this item contributes to a negative uniform experience.
- 54% who wear a dress shirt and 50% of respondents who wear an all-climate shirt from Sussex Police said that these items contribute to a negative uniform experience.

## Uniform Access and Stores

- 48% of respondents from Sussex Police said that obtaining new uniform items is 'easy' or 'extremely easy', while 30% of respondents said it is 'difficult' or 'extremely difficult'.
- 58% of respondents from Sussex Police reported that they have visited their local uniform store.
- The remaining respondents indicated the following reasons for not visiting a store: 17% said the store was too far to travel to, 13% did not know it was an option, and 8% said it is not an option to visit.
- Among those who had visited a store, 52% stated that all required items were available in their size, 20% said some but not all items were available in their size, and 27% reported that items were not available in their size.
- Most respondents from Sussex Police received the items they ordered within weeks (49%), 29% received items within three months, and 9% received items within days.

## Uniform Cost

- 79% of respondents from Sussex Police agreed that cost drives uniform decisions, while only 2% disagreed.

## Perception of Uniform

- 49% of respondents from Sussex Police feel professional in their uniform, slightly lower than the average across England and Wales of 51%. However, a quarter (25%) said they do not feel professional in their uniform.
- 32% of respondents from Sussex Police feel they look smart in their uniform, while 36% feel they do not look smart.
- 45% of respondents from Sussex Police feel proud in their uniform, while 17% said they do not feel proud in their uniform.

## Uniform and Health and Wellbeing

- 62% of respondents from Sussex 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, 89% of female respondents from Sussex Police reported at least one health condition they believe is caused or made worse by their uniform, compared to 66% of male respondents from this force.
- 42% of respondents from Sussex Police said that their uniform affects their relationship with their body.
- 19% of respondents from Sussex Police agreed that their uniform affects their mental wellbeing, while 22% agreed that their emotional wellbeing has been affected.

## Complaints and Sick Leave

- 35% of respondents from Sussex Police said they had made a uniform-related complaint.
- For 74% of these complaints, no action was taken.
- 6% of respondents from Sussex Police have taken time off work due to the negative effects of uniform, slightly higher than the national average of 5%.
- 51% of respondents from Sussex 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 Sussex Police included negative attitudes in the force (10%), worries that taking sick leave would negatively affect work opportunities (9%), and a lack of perceived empathy from line managers (8%).

## Uniform Impact on Retention and Role Choices

- 13% of respondents from Sussex 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

- Nearly half (48%) of respondents from Sussex Police agreed that there should be a national uniform across England and Wales, while 14% disagreed, and 38% feel neutral.

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

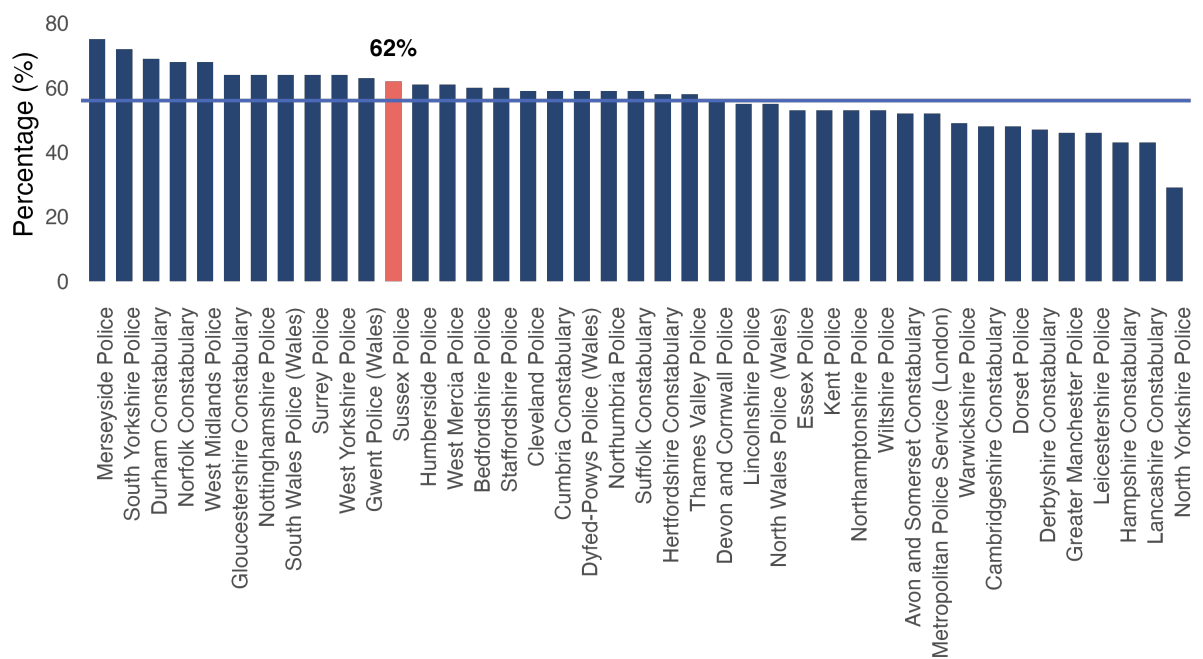


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their uniform is fit for purpose.

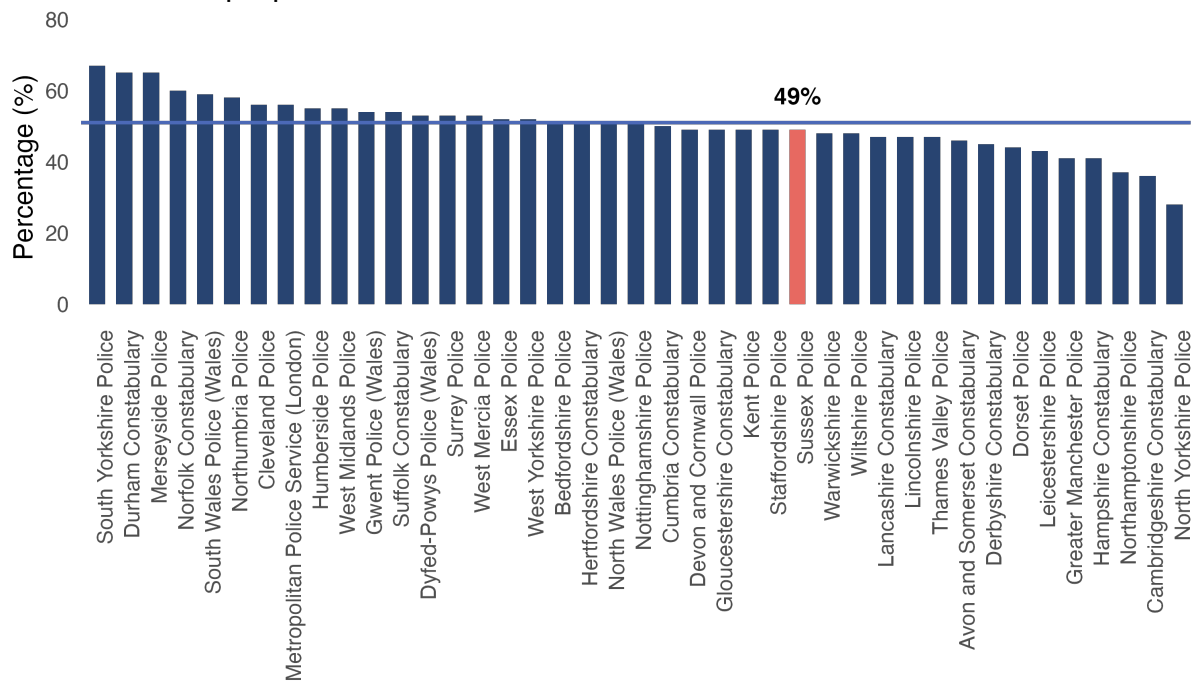


Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who reported one or more physical health conditions they believe to have been caused or made worse by their uniform.

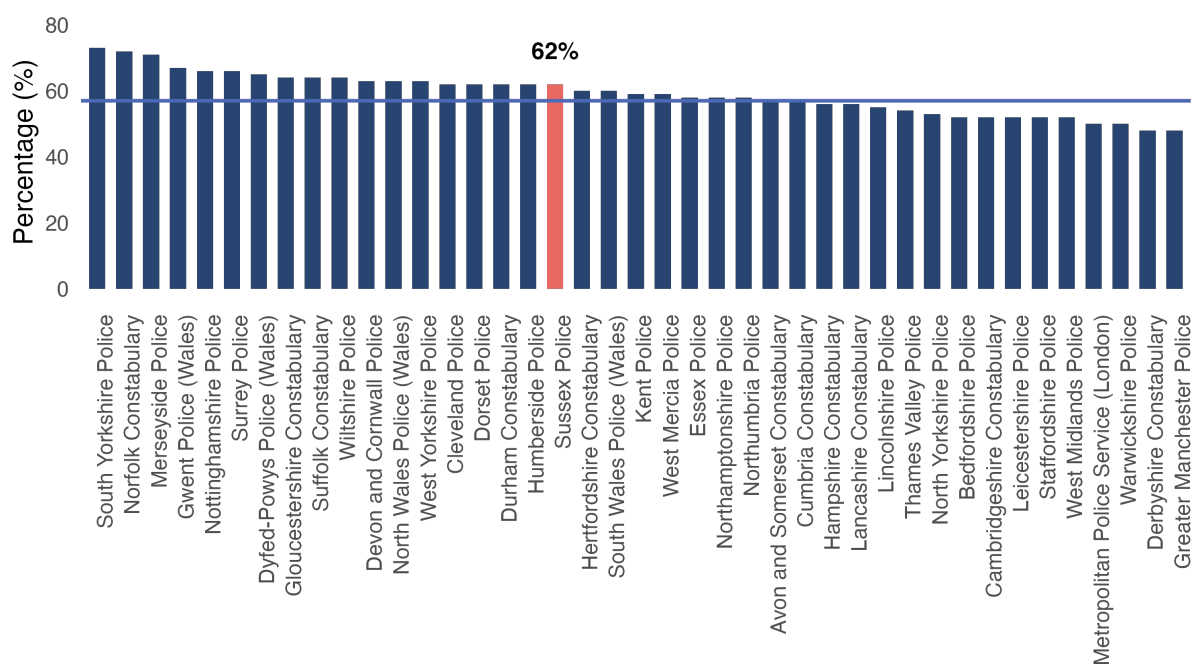


Figure 4: Proportion of uniform-related complaints where no action was taken.

