

## Birmingham City Police



Birmingham City Police was the police service responsible for general policing in the city of Birmingham in England from 1839 to 1974. The force was established by a special Act of Parliament in 1839 and was amalgamated as of 1 April 1974 with the West Midlands Constabulary and parts of other forces to form the West Midlands Police as part of the omnibus Local Government Act 1972.

### History

#### *Birmingham Police Act 1839*

##### *Early history*

As early as 1786, watchmen were paid to patrol the streets at night, although this seems to have lapsed on occasion. Special constables were sworn in when required.

In 1800, James Bisset wrote:

*"In 1789, the Author had the honour, in conjunction with George Simcox, Esq. (now one of our worthy Magistrates), and several Gentlemen in the neighbourhood of St. Paul's, of forming the first Committee, and establishing a Nightly Patrole in that district, for preserving the peace, and securing the property of the inhabitants. The laws and regulations were approved of and soon after adopted throughout the town, which was afterwards divided into 13 districts, each governed by a Committee of their own. The utility and advantages resulting from these Institutions, and the good order and regularity which has since prevailed, in such districts where the Patrole is continued, has fully evinced their beneficial effects; and as one of the Committee always attends the Patrole, in their nocturnal perambulation's, every Member of the Society cheerfully obeys the summons of the Night Constable, whenever it comes to his turn".*

In 1812, Joseph Chirm was the "Head Borough Constable".

#### **Birmingham town police**

Following Chartist rioting in 1839, when one hundred police had to be brought from London, an Act of Parliament was passed on 26 August 1839 "for improving the Police in Birmingham". Birmingham was required to have at least 250 constables and 50 officers, funded by a rate imposed on the town of Birmingham, but serving all of Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire. A commissioner was to be appointed by the Home Secretary and report to him. The Birmingham force came into being on 20 November 1839 with 260 men. Francis Burgess, a local barrister, was appointed as the first police commissioner for Birmingham. On 12 August 1842 a new Police Act transferred responsibility to the Birmingham Town Council and another removed doubts as to the authority of the council. Burgess was succeeded by Richard Stephens, as the first Superintendent of the Birmingham Borough Police.

#### **Birmingham City Police**

When Birmingham became a city in 1889 the town police became the Birmingham City Police.

## World War I

571 officers from Birmingham City Police served in the military during World War I, of whom 50 were killed. All 571 are named on a memorial which is located in Lloyd House, the headquarters of the BCP's successor, the West Midlands Police.

## Band

The Birmingham City Police Band was, at one period, conducted by Appleby Matthews, organist of the city's St. Philip's Cathedral and the first conductor of the City of Birmingham Orchestra (later the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra). Members of the band would sometimes supplement the orchestras numbers. Subsequently The band was conducted by Richard Wassell, with whom they performed a number of BBC Radio broadcasts.

The City of Birmingham Orchestra held its first-ever rehearsal at 9.30am on 4 September 1920, in the band room at the Birmingham City Police's Steelhouse Lane station.

## Chief Constables

1839 – 1842: Captain Francis Burgess (as "Police Commissioner")

1842 – 1860: Richard Stephens (as "Superintendent")

1860 – 1876: George Glossop

1876 – 1881: Major Edwin Bond

1882 – 1899: Joseph Farndale

1899 – 1935: Sir Charles Haughton Rafter KBE KPM

1935 – 1941: Cecil Charles Hudson Moriarty CBE CStJ

1941 – 1945: Sir William Johnson

1945 – 1963: Sir Edward Dodd

1963 – 1974: Sir William Derrick Capper

## West Midlands Police



West Midlands Police is the territorial police force responsible for policing the metropolitan county of West Midlands in England.

The force covers an area of 348 square miles (900 km<sup>2</sup>) with 2.93 million inhabitants, which includes the cities of Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and also the Black Country. In 2020, there were 6,846 officers, 484 police community support officers (PCSO), and 219 volunteer special constables.

The force area is divided into ten Local Policing Units (LPUs), each being served by four core policing teams – Response, Neighbourhood, Investigation and Community Action & Priority (CAPT) – with the support of a number of specialist crime teams. These specialist teams include CID, traffic and a firearms unit.

West Midlands Police is a partner, alongside Staffordshire Police, in the Central Motorway Police Group. The force is party to a number of other resource sharing agreements including the National Police Air Service.

## History

### *Regional policing in the West Midlands prior to 1974*

Prior to the formation of West Midlands Police as it is known today, the area now covered by the force was served by a total of six smaller constabularies. These constabularies were as follows:

**Birmingham City Police 1839–1974:** Established in 1839 following an outbreak of Chartist rioting that the Metropolitan Police had to help quell, officers from Birmingham City Police first took to the streets on 20 November of that year. Initially with a strength of 260 officers paid at a rate of 17 shillings a week,[6] the constabulary expanded to keep pace with the growth of the city with the final areas to be added before the force's amalgamation in West Midlands Police being the Hollywood area.

**Coventry Police 1836–1974:** Formed with the Municipal Corporations Act in 1836, Coventry Police was initially only twenty officers with the support of a single sergeant and one inspector. The force reached a strength of 137 officers by 1914 and continued to grow until in 1969 it was merged with the Warwickshire and Coventry Constabulary, part of which it remained until the formation of West Midlands Police.

**Dudley Borough Police 1920–1966:** Formerly part of the Worcestershire Constabulary, Dudley gained its own police force on 1 April 1920 following a review by His Majesty's Inspector that had suggested previous policing arrangements were unsatisfactory. Dudley Borough Police remained independent until the Royal Commission in 1960 which resulted in its inclusion as part of the newly formed West Midlands Constabulary.

**Walsall Borough Police 1832–1966:** Moving away from a 'watch' system, Walsall Borough Police were formed on 6 July 1832 with an initial strength of only one superintendent and three constables. As with the other regional forces, Walsall Borough Police expanded with the area's population and in 1852 appointed its first two detectives. The force took on its first female recruits in 1918 and in the 1960s became one of the first forces to issue its officers with personal radios. As with Dudley's police force, Walsall Borough Police became part of the West Midlands Constabulary following the Royal Commission.

**West Midlands Constabulary 1966–1974:** Lasting only eight years, West Midlands Constabulary was a newly formed force encompassing a number of smaller borough forces including Dudley Borough Police, Walsall Borough Police, Wolverhampton Borough Police and parts of Staffordshire and Worcestershire Constabularies. The creation of the West Midlands Constabulary was the consequence of 1960's Royal Commission into policing.

**Wolverhampton Borough Police 1837–1966:** The formation of Wolverhampton Borough Police was approved on 3 August 1837 under the condition that the strength of the force not exceed sixteen men.[11] The Police Act 1839 saw Staffordshire County Police taking over policing in Wolverhampton with Wolverhampton Borough Police regaining responsibility for policing the town in 1848. At the turn of the 20th century the force was 109 strong, reaching a highpoint of around 300 before the force became part of the short lived West Midlands Constabulary in 1966.

### Establishment of West Midlands Police

West Midlands Police was formed on 1 April 1974, owing to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 which created the new West Midlands metropolitan county. It was formed by merging the Birmingham City Police, the earlier West Midlands Constabulary, and parts of Staffordshire County and Stoke-on-Trent Constabulary, Warwickshire and Coventry Constabulary and West Mercia Constabulary. The first Chief Constable appointed to the new force was Sir Derrick Capper, the last Chief Constable of Birmingham Police.

### Controversies and allegations of corruption

Between 1974 and 1989, the force operated the West Midlands Serious Crime Squad. It was disbanded after allegations of endemic misconduct, leading to a series of unsafe convictions. These included allegations that officers had falsified confessions in witness statements, denied suspects access to solicitors and used torture such as "plastic bagging" to partially suffocate suspects in order to extract confessions. They were alleged to have abused payments to informers. A series of around 40 prosecutions failed in the late 1980s as defendants showed that evidence had or may have been tampered with. West Yorkshire Police led an investigation which led to a small number of internal disciplinary proceedings, but did not recommend any prosecutions for lack of evidence. However, over 60 convictions secured from their investigations have now been quashed, including those of the Birmingham Six.

West Midlands Police had two serious firearms incidents, in 1980 and 1985. In 1980, David Pagett held his pregnant girlfriend as hostage while resisting arrest by the police. Officers returned fire, and shot her. Police had initially tried to claim that Pagett had shot her, but it became clear that it was police bullets that had caused her death. In 1985, John Shorthouse was arrested by West Midlands police for questioning about armed robberies in South Wales. His house was then searched. His five-year-old son, John, was shot by police searching under the child's bed. An internal inquiry was held, and as a result, use of firearms was restricted to a specialised and trained unit.

Allegations of bribery and corruption were made in 1994 by World in Action, an investigative current affairs TV programme. The convicted criminal David Harris alleged that West Midlands police officers had demanded payments of more than £200,000 to keep criminals including himself away from prosecutions. Other allegations from police officers focused on officers attempting to persuade others to accept bribes. The CID was the focus of an investigation by Leicestershire Police at the request of the Police Complaints Authority.

### 2000s and onwards

Under proposals announced by the then Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, on 6 February 2006, West Midlands Police would have merged with Staffordshire Police, West Mercia Constabulary and Warwickshire Constabulary to form a single strategic force for the West Midlands region. This, along with a number of other mergers which would have cut the number of forces in England and Wales from 43 to 24, were abandoned in July 2006 after widespread opposition from police and the public.

Because of the prisons' overcrowding crisis in Birmingham in October 2006 three dozen police cells are to be made available to house inmates in Birmingham to help ease congestion. (By contrast, one contemporary account reported, in 1833, that for days the city gaol had been entirely empty.) Despite a dip in the number of prisoners that month, prisons in the region are close to capacity or already full. Between 32 and 44 cells were set aside at Steelhouse Lane police station, in Birmingham City Centre, in case of emergency. West Midlands Police has an established agreement with HM Prison Service to provide cells in the event they are needed.

In October 2008, the Chief Constable Sir Paul Scott-Lee announced he would not be renewing his contract in May 2009, after seven years in the post. His replacement was Chris Sims.

On taking office, the new Chief Constable announced that the force would be realigned to exist alongside council boundaries, abolishing the Operational Command Units (OCUs) and reforming as Local Policing Units (LPUs). In April 2010, the force reorganised from 21 OCUs into ten new LPUs. There were also changes to the HQ departments, including the new Local Policing Department, the new Public Protection Department and Force CID (formerly Crime Support). These changes were introduced as part of 'Program Paragon' with the aim of making savings for the force of around £50 million.

The aim is to move certain functions from local areas into the central departments – such as dealing with complex or serious crimes, along with finance, IT and administration tasks, so that the local policing units can concentrate on local policing issues. There is also the long-term aim of reducing the number of Contact Management Centres from ten (one each for each LPU) to one, covering the whole of the force.

The force attracted controversy in 2010 when Project Champion, a £3 million scheme to install a network of CCTV cameras in the predominantly Muslim areas of Washwood Heath and Sparkbrook, came under fire from local residents and civil rights organisations. A total of 218 cameras had been planned for installation but the project was abandoned following concerns over their legality and objections from residents and local councillors that they had not been consulted by the force.

Owing to the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, the force has been required to make savings totalling £126 million over a four-year period. Projects including Continuous Improvement and Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) have been established to identify where such savings can be made with a variety of options explored.

The force is one of many to implement Regulation A19, requiring officers with thirty year's service to retire and have made redundancies for police staff ranks.[26] The force had been exploring Business Partnering options involving working with private companies but this plan was halted by Bob Jones, the force's first Police and Crime Commissioner, upon him taking office.

In July 2014 West Midlands PCC agreed to a £25m contract with Accenture.

In March 2021 Oliver Banfield, a probationary officer with West Midlands Police, was convicted of assault by beating after using techniques taught in police training to attack a woman while off-duty. Banfield was sentenced to a 14-week curfew and ordered to pay £500 compensation to his victim. Former Leader of the Opposition Harriet Harman described the fact Banfield did not receive a custodial sentence as “proof ... that [the] system fails women and protects men”. After the conviction, the Crown Prosecution Service apologised for initially declining to charge Banfield. In a May 2021 hearing, Banfield was found guilty of gross misconduct and banned from policing for life.

### Leadership and performance

As of 2018, West Midlands Police was smaller than at any previous time in its history, having lost nearly 2,300 officers since 2010. Government funding for West Midlands Police fell by £145 million since 2010. The chief constable, Dave Thompson, said in 2018 that falling numbers of police officers due to funding cuts, and a “wider spread of crime”, prevented the police doing everything the public want or expect of them.

### Command team

West Midlands Police is managed by a command team who are based at the force's Lloyd House headquarters in Birmingham. They work alongside the elected West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, who sets the budget and priorities for the force. The command team are able to participate in respective LPU daily management meetings by utilising a video conferencing system.

### Chief constables

Sir Derrick Capper (April 1974 – June 1975)  
Philip Knights (August 1975 – 1985)  
Sir Geoffrey Dear (1985–1990)  
Sir Ron Hadfield (June 1990 – July 1996)  
Sir Edward Crewe (August 1996 – c. September 2002?)  
Sir Paul Scott-Lee (October 2002 – April 2009)  
Chris Sims (1 June 2009 – January 2016)  
Sir Dave Thompson (January 2016 – present)

### Structure and departments

Covering an area of 348 square miles (900 km<sup>2</sup>) with 2.93 million inhabitants, which includes the cities of Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and also the Black Country. As of September 2020, the force has 6,846 police officers, 219 special constables, and 467 police community support officers (PCSO), 165 police support volunteers (PSV), and 3,704 staff.[4] In 2019, 10.9% of officers were from a BAME background, compared with 8.5% in 2014.

### Local Policing Units

The area covered by West Midlands Police is divided into ten Local Policing Units (LPUs). Each LPU is headed by a chief superintendent, responsible for the overall policing and management of the area, supported by a Local Command Team (LCT) composed of a varying number of superintendents and chief inspectors.

Each LPU has a number of dedicated Neighbourhood Policing teams. These cover a specific area and are headed by a sergeant with support from a number of police officers, PCSOs and sometimes special constables. The force operates a number of police stations.

### Core policing teams

West Midlands Police is structured in such a way that there are four key teams in each LPU who have the responsibility for dealing with everyday policing duties. The force's current structure was gradually introduced over the past two years with the Solihull and Birmingham South LPUs being the first area to see the change in June 2011,[53] and the Walsall LPU being the last in January 2013.[54] The structural change was introduced as part of the force's 'Continuous Improvement' programme with the ambition of working in a more cost effective and efficient manner and was overseen under the advice of accounting firm KPMG.

Prior to Continuous Improvement, the force had operated with larger response and neighbourhood teams and smaller teams allocated to prisoner handling roles. Community action and priority teams were a new addition to the force's structure under Continuous Improvement.

### Airport policing

The West Midlands Police force area includes Birmingham Airport which is on the Solihull LPU, but not Coventry Airport which is on the Warwickshire Police force area and so policed by their own officers. Birmingham Airport has a dedicated airports policing team assigned who work closely with Border Force customs and immigration officers. Officers working at the airport have additional powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 as the airport is "designated" under the terms of the Act and some are armed.

### Central Motorway Police Group (CMPG)

West Midlands Police is one of the two police forces who contribute officers to the Central Motorway Police Group, the others being Staffordshire Police.[71] CMPG operate out of three main bases, the main headquarters being under the M6 motorway at Perry Barr at which their central control room and vehicle depot is situated. CMPG also have a regional control centre in Quinton, Birmingham shared with Highways England. Officers attached to CMPG cover a wide geographical area, including in the West Midlands the M6, M54 and A45.

### Counter terrorism unit (CTU)

Based in Birmingham, the counter terrorism unit (CTU) is responsible for co-ordinating the force's counter-terrorism activity. CTU works under the guidance of the Government's national counter terrorism strategy, CONTEST, with the aims of pursuing terrorists, protecting the public, preparing for a possible attack and preventing terrorism by working in the community to address the causes of terrorist activity.

As part of the CTU's role in working with the community, its structure includes a Prevent Team which is a group of officers who visit schools, community groups and partner agencies to raise awareness about the work on the unit. Exercises include Act NOW, a tabletop exercise explaining what happens during a counter terrorism operation and WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent), a presentation aimed at front-line public sector workers and organisations that work with potential victims of radicalisation.

### Dog Section

Most dogs in the West Midlands Police Dog Section are products of an in-house breeding program which the force has been running at its Balsall Common training centre since 1994.

Specialist search dogs including Springer Spaniels and Labradors are also used by the Dogs Unit to locate drugs or firearms and explosives. Dogs are continually recruited from rescue centres and from members of the public. All specialist dogs are handled by officers who already have a general purpose police dog, giving the handler responsibility in both training and operational deployment.

Prior to 2013 there were 69 operational dog handlers working in West Midlands Police, dogs underwent an initial training program lasting twelve weeks.[78] Officers with the Dog Section patrol in specially adapted Skoda patrol vehicles with air conditioned cages capable of carrying up to three dogs in the rear[79] and operate from bases at Aston, Canley and Wednesbury.

### Events planning and football

The events planning department has responsibility for co-ordinating large-scale events taking place within the force area and also for ensuring that officers are available should they be required to support other regional forces through mutual aid arrangements.[81] One major responsibility of the department is organising the policing operation for the Autumn political party conferences that are often held at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham. Included within this department also is the Football Unit who coordinate policing of football games within the West Midlands and operate a team of "spotters" to identify violent supporters and banned individuals.

The policing of large-scale events such as football matches, VIP visits and public demonstrations can be coordinated from the force's Events Control Suite (ECS) at the Tally Ho facility in Birmingham. The ECS is able to receive live CCTV footage and has computer facilities for the use of partner agencies with whom the suite is shared.

### Firearms

West Midlands Police operate a number of armed response vehicles (ARVs) that patrol the region and respond to incidents typically involving guns, knives or dangerous dogs.[84] Officers undertake a ten-week selection process to join the firearms unit with courses being delivered on weapons, tactics and advanced driving. Most of the ARVs used by the firearms unit are unmarked Audis, converted with the rear seats removed and gun safes installed.[85] Officers with the firearms unit carry Taser X26 stun guns, SIG P229 9mm pistols, H&K MP5 SF A2/A3 9mm semi-automatic carbines and H&K G36K SF, G36C SF and SIG Sauer SIG516[86] 5.56mm semi-automatic rifles.[87]

Alongside attending firearms incidents, officers attached to the firearms unit also provide tactical advice when planning operations and give lectures on firearms awareness to officers and members of the public.[84] The force also has a Firearms Licensing Department which is responsible for the issue of shotgun and firearms certificates to members of the public and explosives certificates to companies requiring them.[88]

### Force CID

Detached from the LPUs, Force CID is staffed by officers holding a detective qualification and investigate serious and complicated crimes not taken on by Local CID or other departments. Such offences include murders, serious assaults, blackmail and arson. Force CID is arranged into a series of Major Investigation Teams and work from bases at Bloxwich, Harborne, Aqueous 2 (Aston) and Willenhall in Coventry.

### Force traffic

Based at Park Lane, Chelmsley Wood and Wednesbury, the force traffic unit has responsibility for roads policing on all roads inside the West Midlands other than the motorways which are covered by the Central Motorways Policing Group. Officers from the force traffic unit usually hold advanced driving grades and have access to marked and unmarked vehicles, including BMWs and Audis fitted with evidential video recording equipment. Force Traffic is supported by a Collision Investigation Unit based at Aston Police Station who investigate accidents involving fatalities or life-changing injuries.

### Forensic scene investigators

Officers are supported by a team of around 100 civilian forensics scene investigators who attend crime scenes and examine seized items to obtain forensic evidence for use in court. Formerly known as scenes of crime officers (SOCO), scene investigators have access to a wide range of specialist equipment to help with their role and alongside gathering forensic samples; they also are responsible for crime scene photography.

### Intelligence unit

West Midlands Police has dedicated intelligence cells based on each LPU who collate and disseminate information collected by officers from a range of other sources. This role involves "sanitising" intelligence logs and forwarding them on to relevant persons, receiving information from outside sources such as Crimestoppers, and assisting with the progression of investigations.

The intelligence unit is responsible for organising briefing material for officers and police leadership; they also include a covert operations unit, who coordinate undercover policing operations under the terms of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

West Midlands Police is a partner alongside Warwickshire Police, West Mercia Police and Staffordshire Police in the Regional Intelligence Unit collaborative working agreement under which information is shared between the forces on serious and organised criminals affecting the West Midlands Region.

### **Integrated emergency management (IEM)**

The Operations Integrated Emergency Management service is responsible for ensuring that the force is ready to respond to major incidents, that business continuity plans are in place and that the force's duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 is satisfied. This work includes running exercises and drills to test readiness and working closely with other emergency services and local authorities. As part of the service's work, the force also maintains a number of Casualty Bureau facilities at which calls from the public are taken and collated following a major incident such as a plane crash or terrorist attack.

### **Local CID**

Each LPU has a Local CID team of officers who hold a detective qualification and conduct secondary investigations into serious offences that occur within their area. Offences that fall under the remit of Local CID include burglary of dwellings, personal robberies, frauds and some vehicle crime.

### **Offender management unit (OMU)**

All ten LPUs have an offender management unit (OMU) who work with partner agencies to concentrate on the offenders living on their areas identified as being particularly difficult or damaging. Offenders who fall into this category include those designated as prolific and other priority offenders (PPOs), drug users, violent criminals and young criminals.

Officers from the OMU manage their assigned PPOs under two strands. One consists of rehabilitation and resettlement under which partner agencies are involved in an effort to halt re-offending whilst the other consists of catching and convicting offenders who have been identified as not participating in rehabilitation programmes or are wanted for outstanding crimes.

### **Operational support unit (OSU)**

Working from Park Lane, Chelmsley Wood and Wednesbury Stations, the operational support unit is a team of officers specially trained in areas including Public Order policing, method of entry and searching.[100] Officers working with the OSU are typically deployed as part of a "serial" of one sergeant and seven officers and have access to specialist equipment and vehicles including armoured land rovers.

### **Public protection unit (PPU)**

The public protection unit (PPU) investigates reports of sexual assaults and incidents involving children and vulnerable people. PPU is split between adult and child investigations, is responsible for safeguarding and works with partner agencies such as social services and domestic violence charities. As with CID, most officers working in the PPU hold a detective qualification.

### **Professional standards department (PSD)**

Based at Lloyd House, the professional standards department (PSD) is responsible for the recording and assessment of public complaints about police officers, police staff or special constables. PSD also has a role in investigating serious reports of misconduct and corruption involving members of the force.

Members of the public are eligible to make a complaint if the behaviour about which they want to complain was directed towards them, if they were "adversely affected" by said behaviour or if they were an eyewitness to said behaviour. A person is "adversely affected" if they suffer any form of loss or damage, distress or inconvenience, if they are put in danger or are otherwise unduly put at risk of being adversely affected.



PSD work alongside the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), to whom they will refer the most serious allegations.

Where appropriate, PSD have a range of outcomes following disciplinary panels, including no action, counselling (management advice), written warning, transfer to another post, withholding increments and dismissal.

### Special Constabulary

Officers belonging to the special constabulary have the same powers as full-time officers and are unpaid volunteers, giving a minimum of sixteen hours a month of duty time.

### Headgear

West Midlands Police officers wear the traditional black custodian helmet in the rose style, with seamed joined and thin black metal band with a Brunswick star that reads 'West Midlands Police'. Female officers wear a black bowler hat with Sillitoe tartan banding for foot patrol and mobile patrol. Traffic officers wear a white peaked cap with Sillitoe tartan banding, or a white bowler with Sillitoe tartan banding hat for mobile patrol, as do officers holding inspector rank or above although their caps are black rather than white.

PCSOs always wear a peaked cap with a blue band, or a bowler hat with a blue band for female PCSOs, and all officers, whether Constable or PCSOs, when travelling on bicycle wear a black cycle helmet with 'Police' inscribed on it.

Armed Response or Dog Section officers wear black protective baseball caps that read 'Police' and have a Sillitoe tartan pattern on the sides whilst motorcycle officers and Air Operations officers wear specialised hard helmets with in-built radio microphones.

### Uniform

Officers' standard street uniform consists of black lightweight zip-up shirts, black trousers and a high visibility protective vest. White shirts were replaced by the black T-shirts in 2010 but are retained for court and station duties. Officers are issued with fleeces, weatherproof pullovers, fluorescent jackets, high visibility tabards, waterproof over trousers and slash resistant gloves.

Aside the standard street uniform, there are a variety of additional uniforms issued to officers performing specialist roles. Public Order trained officers wear two piece fire retardant overalls and boots with additional body armour and NATO helmets, whilst those with the Cannabis Disposal Team wear one piece jumpsuits and hard hats. Officers working with the OSU searching teams are issued thicker winter coats and tie cord trousers.

When dressed for public order policing, officers wear coloured epaulettes indicating their respective roles. Bronze commanders wear yellow epaulettes, inspectors wear red epaulettes, sergeants wear white epaulettes, tactical advisors wear blue epaulettes, medics wear green epaulettes and evidence gathering officers have orange epaulettes.

Collar numbers within West Midlands Police are between two and five numbers long. Prior to 2006 collar numbers were up to four numbers in length, the numbering system was altered in 2006 to accommodate proposed changes that would have been introduced by a merger of local forces. Officers to have joined since 2006 have five figure collar sequential numbers starting with a 2, PCSOs have collar numbers starting with a 3, police staff have collar numbers starting with a 5, special constables have collar numbers starting with a 7 and transferees from other forces have collar numbers starting with 29.

### Equipment

As part of standard issue Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), officers carry Sepura TETRA radios, rigid handcuffs, CS spray and an extendible friction lock baton. Officers also have access to first aid kits, limb restraints and torches.

Officers have access to a huge range of additional equipment for specialist operations, some of which requires training before it can be used.

### Custody Suites

As of October 2010 there were 18 custody suites designated under PACE for the reception of detainees. Not all of these custody suites are currently used by the force, most have been mothballed owing to budget restraints and have been replaced by two planned 'super blocks', each with sixty cells @ Perry Barr and Oldbury.[140] Other current custody suites are as follows: Bournville (Birmingham South) 17 cells and Coventry Central (Little Park Street 26 cells and Chace Avenue, Coventry for terrorism cases only.

### West Midlands Police Federation

The West Midlands Police Federation is a part of the Police Federation of England and Wales, which is the representative body for every police officer below the rank of superintendent. Representatives of the Federation are elected for three year terms and must be serving police officers.

Police officers are restricted by their regulations from striking and from taking part in politics, hence the Federation represents their interests and negotiates on their behalf in the Police Negotiating Board in relation to pay, conditions and pensions.

The Federation is funded by a monthly subscription paid from officers' salaries and provides representation and advice to officers who are subject to disciplinary offences. Each LPU has Police Federation Workplace representatives to whom officers can go to for support.

### Officers killed in the line of duty

The Police Roll of Honour Trust and Police Memorial Trust list and commemorate all British police officers killed in the line of duty. Since its establishment in 1984, the Police Memorial Trust has erected 50 memorials nationally to some of those officers.

The following officers of West Midlands Police and its former constabularies are listed by the trust as having died attempting to prevent, stop or solve a crime, since the turn of the 20th century:

1901: PC Charles Phillip Gunter. Fatally injured by thrown brick while attempting to disperse a disorderly crowd

1925: PC Albert Willits. Shot dead while attempting to arrest three men

1928: PC Charles William Sheppard. Beaten to death attending a disturbance

1965: DS James Stanford. Fatally stabbed; posthumously awarded Queen's Police Medal

1975: PC David Christopher Green. Fatally stabbed during an arrest

1984: PC Andrew Stephen Le Comte. Fell from a roof while searching for suspects

1984: PC Colin John Hall. Collapsed attending a disturbance and died

1988: PC Gavin Richard Carlton. Shot by armed robber during a police pursuit

1989: PC Anthony John Salt. Fatally injured by falling on a mechanical digger after getting drunk on duty

2001: PC Malcolm Edward Walker. Fatally injured when his motorcycle was struck during a police pursuit

2004: DC Michael Swindells. Fatally stabbed; posthumously awarded Queen's Gallantry Medal

### Notable incidents and investigations

**21 November 1974:** Birmingham Pub Bombings: Twenty one people killed and one hundred and eighty two injured after devices exploded in the Mulberry Bush and Tavern in the Town pubs in Birmingham City Centre. Investigation by the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad, six convicted but later compensated for wrongful imprisonment.

**19 October 1978:** Murder of Carl Bridgewater: Investigation by the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad, four convicted but later released and compensated for wrongful imprisonment.

**1989:** Review of South Yorkshire Police following the Hillsborough Disaster: Force called in to investigate South Yorkshire officers' conduct after the 1989 stadium crush. West Midlands discovered that South Yorkshire Police had altered 164 witness statements and alleged that they pressured and bullied witnesses to change their statements about the disaster.

**2 January 2003:** Murder of Letisha Shakespeare and Charlene Ellis in a gang-related drive-by machine-gunning.

**28 July 2005:** Birmingham tornado: Officers involved in rescue and recovery operation following a tornado touching down in Sparkbrook.

**22 October 2005–23 October 2005:** Handsworth Riots: Race riots in Handsworth and Lozells on two consecutive nights, following rumours of an alleged gang rape of a teenage black girl by a group of South Asian men. One member of the public died as a result of stab wounds and a police officer was shot and wounded.

**2007:** Operation Gamble: A plot by British Pakistanis in Birmingham to kidnap and behead a British Muslim soldier. Eight homes and four businesses were raided after an investigation involving intelligence services and other police forces. The investigation led to 9 arrests, 6 of whom were charged.

**2010:** Papal visit to the United Kingdom: Large policing operation to assist with security measures during Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the United Kingdom which included a mass of Beatification in Cofton Park and dinner at St Mary's College, New Oscott, Sutton Coldfield.

**6 August 2011–10 August 2011:** England Riots: Large scale disorders across England affecting the centres of Birmingham, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich, following the death of Mark Duggan

**2012:** London Olympic Games: Officers from across the West Midlands were involved in policing events in the region and were deployed on Mutual Aid to help assist other forces.