



West Yorkshire Police

West Yorkshire Police was formed in 1974, when part of the West Yorkshire Constabulary (itself created in 1968, and covering a much larger area) was amalgamated with the Leeds City Police and Bradford City Police, under the Local Government Act 1972.

The force was originally known as the West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police. Some older signs around the Force area, such as the one in the reception of Millgarth Police Station in Leeds city centre, read 'West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police'. The 'Metropolitan' from the police title was dropped in 1986 when the Metropolitan counties were abolished.

Proposals made by the Home Secretary on 21 March 2006 would see the force merge with North Yorkshire Police, South Yorkshire Police and Humberside Police to form a strategic police force for the entire region. This did not take place.

On 12 December 2006, Sir Norman Bettison was announced as the new chief constable, replacing Colin Cramphorn and resigned from his post on 24 October 2012. He was replaced by Temporary Chief Constable John Parkinson until the appointment of Mark Gilmore as chief constable on 1 February 2013.

Operational structure

For operational purposes West Yorkshire Police is divided into five geographic divisions known within the force as 'policing districts'. The change in nomenclature reflects that of April 2014 the alignment with council boundaries for policing districts and the reduction of divisions in Leeds (which had three) and Bradford (which had two) so that each policing district was conterminous with its respective local authority boundaries. Each district is made up of Partnership Working Areas (PWA) which consist of an Inspector and three teams of sergeants, police constables, special constables and PCSOs. The first single police commander of the Bradford district, Chief Superintendent Simon Atkin, was appointed in October 2013 as part of ongoing moves to merge the district's two policing divisions, while Chief Superintendent Angela Williams was appointed in Calderdale.

The force headquarters is situated on Laburnum Road to the north of Wakefield city centre along with the Learning and Development Centre and specialist operations facility at Carr Gate, Wakefield at Junction 41 of the M1 motorway.

The Sir Alec Jeffreys Building in the Calder Park Business Estate (at Junction 39 of the M1 motorway) houses the Yorkshire and The Humber Scientific Support Service and was opened in May 2012 by Sir Alec Jeffreys himself.[12] West Yorkshire Police is the 'lead force' for scientific support and provides such services for North Yorkshire Police, South Yorkshire Police and Humberside Police.

The new headquarters for the newly formed Leeds district is operational on Elland Road, Beeston, Leeds. The total area is 12,500 m² (135,000 square feet) and provides office accommodation as well as a 40-cell custody suite. It replaced Millgarth and Holbeck police stations in Leeds.

The existing operational support facilities at Carr Gate, Wakefield were expanded and new buildings constructed which provide centralised specialist training for the force in one location. The new facility, which totals 20,000 m² (220,000 square feet) includes:

Chief Constables

West Riding Constabulary

Major-General Llewellyn William Atcherley (1908-1919)

Captain Henry Studdy (1944 to 1959)

George Edward Scott (1959 to 1969)[20]

West Yorkshire Constabulary (1968)

Ronald Gregory (1969 to 1983)

West Yorkshire Police (1974)

Sir Colin Sampson (1983 to 1988)

Peter Nobes (1988 to 1993)

Keith Hellawell (1993 to 1998)[21]

Alan Charlesworth (1998 to 1999)

Graham Moore (1999 to 2002)

Colin Cramphorn (September 2002 to November 2006)

Sir Norman Bettison (January 2007 to October 2012)

Mark Gilmore (April 2013 to August 2016)

Dee Collins (appointed November 2016) [temporary chief constable between June 2014 and November 2016]

John Robins (appointed June 2019)

Police and crime commissioner

From November 2012 until May 2021, the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioners was Mark Burns-Williamson. In 2021, his role was abolished when Tracy Brabin was elected Mayor of West Yorkshire and assumed responsibility for the force.