

News story: Special Constables and Police Volunteers Honoured at Awards

Volunteers in policing who have deployed drones to search for missing people, raised awareness about the risks of carrying a knife, and helped to shut down a hotel being used for child sexual exploitation (CSE) have been honoured at an awards ceremony in London today (Tuesday 16 October).

The Lord Ferrers Awards – which is in its 25th year – celebrates the contributions of Police Support Volunteers, Special Constables, Volunteer Police Cadets, and volunteers supporting the work of Police and Crime Commissioners.

Police forces in England and Wales and members of the public submitted over 700 nominations this year, the highest number ever received in the awards' quarter-century history. A total of 53 exceptional candidates were shortlisted.

Winners received awards across ten categories at the ceremony at Millbank Tower, attended by the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

All police volunteers are true heroes – giving up their own time to support their communities and help keep the country safe.

This year's inspirational finalists should be truly proud of their achievements and I want to thank them for their contribution to policing.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd said:

Each year, I am amazed by the innovation, dedication and selflessness shown by the nominees for the Lord Ferrers Awards.

Volunteers in policing bring a wide range of experience, skills and outlooks. This is crucial to ensuring that we have a police force that is trusted and valued by the British public.

Other categories acknowledge employers who have gone above and beyond to support their staff to volunteer in their local force and recognise volunteers who have used innovative methods to solve problems in policing.

Former BBC News presenter Sir Martyn Lewis hosted the event, which was sponsored by Police Mutual.

The winners are:

Ferrers Special Constabulary – Individual Award

Joint winner: Abaid Hussain, South Yorkshire Police

Special Constable Abaid Hussain stepped in to drive forward the 'Rotherham Town Centre Street Drinking and Begging Plan'. He engineered a series of response options targeting key repeat offenders. He was prolific in enforcing Public Space Protection, demonstrating considerable courage by seizing alcohol, making arrests and challenging problem sellers of alcohol. His intervention has led to a significant reduction in street drinking and begging incidents.

Joint winner: Neil Healey, Nottinghamshire Police

Special Sergeant Neil Healey has been a key part of the Child Sexual Exploitation disruption team. He has demonstrated a significant sense of public duty and a passion for tackling CSE by visiting hotspots, issuing Child Abduction Warning Notices, targeting perpetrators and safeguarding victims. His recent success includes enforcing a Civil Closure Order which led to the shut down a hotel used for abuse.

Special Constabulary – Team Award: The Tameside Special Constables, Greater Manchester Police

This team of Special Constables volunteered to be part of Operation Labyrinth, tackling Child Sexual Exploitation cases. They have had many successes, including helping to finalise a crucial investigation and safeguarding a victim at risk of being groomed further. Due to these successes, and the commitment demonstrated by the team, they have now taken over the delivery of Operation Labyrinth on a full-time basis.

Police Support Volunteer – Individual Award: Sally Mack, Norfolk Constabulary

Sally Mack joined Norfolk Constabulary as a Family Liaison Support Volunteer three years ago. Through her work, Sally identified a gap in support provision for witnesses to fatal road collisions, and the bereaved. She has put together a network of agencies which she can call to provide specialised or ongoing support. Her initiative has a huge impact on those who have been referred as it allows them to 'restart' their lives.

Staffed by volunteers aged 14 to 25, the Basingstoke Community Court gives victims of low level crimes a voice and allows offenders to reflect on the harm they have caused to victims. This initiative aims to avoid and reduce recidivism. Since going live in June 2016, the Court has heard over 100 cases and seen positive results. The Court would not have achieved these without the contributions made by the volunteers.

Volunteer Police Cadet – Individual Award: Alicja Sadkiewicz, South Wales Police

Alicja Sadkiewicz is passionate about her Polish heritage. As part of the Holocaust Memorial Trust initiative five challenges, she translated and told the story of a Polish survivor of the Holocaust to pupils of her former

primary school. She also took part in a march and service to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day.

Volunteer Police Cadet – Team Award: Trafford Volunteer Police Cadets, Greater Manchester Police

This over 130-strong team performed a range of initiatives to tackle issues that are affecting their local communities, including:

- knife crime – they wrote and produced a video to raise awareness of the dangers of knife crime, which has been shared widely on social media
- fly tipping – they mobilised a large group of cadets to perform a litter-pick in an affected area
- anti-social behaviour – having learnt about an elderly couple's house and garden being a target for anti-social behaviour and criminal damage, the cadets decided to work together to improve the appearance of the house's frontage and front garden. As a result, the couple felt less intimidated and the anti-social incidents became less frequent

Employer Supported Policing Award: Global Coach Tours, Derbyshire Constabulary

Global Coach Tours, a small family travel company, allow their employees to take five days a month in paid Employer Supported Policing (ESP) leave to support the police. This is far greater than the commitment that they were asked to provide. Their contribution equates to 25% of ESP hours in the force area.

ASCO Leadership Award: Nathan Selby, Merseyside Police

Noticing a high number of failed applicants at the Special Constables interview, Nathan Selby took the initiative to improve the recruitment and induction processes. He instigated a monthly event for applicants, explaining the interview process and the competencies. As a result, the pass rate has substantially improved, which has also indirectly increased in the number of BME Special Constables. Nathan also set up a Professional Development Unit with induction sessions to ensure that new officers receive consistent and adequate support.

Technical Innovation Award: The Unmanned Aerial Support Group, Wiltshire Police

There are 5 such teams in operation in the UK, but the team in Wiltshire is unique; it is the only one that is led by special constables. They use drones to support various operational policing activities including incidents involving missing people, air crashes and crowd disorder. This team of four provides 24/7 on-call cover. In addition to the police, this team also

provides support to Fire and Hazardous Area Response Team (HART).

OPCC Volunteer Individual/Team Award: Victim Support West Yorkshire

The Victim Support West Yorkshire volunteers provided emotional and practical support to 90 victims and their families, suffering from physical injuries and mental trauma from the Manchester Arena attack in 2017. Volunteers also supported victims at the anniversary event held in Manchester.