



# policebeat

[www.policefed-ni.org.uk](http://www.policefed-ni.org.uk)

March 2016

The News Magazine of The Police Federation for Northern Ireland



# #WeAreYou

also inside this issue

• Police Treatment Centres • Family Homecare • PFNI Lottery Fund • Membership Plus



## EDITORIAL

## #WeAreYou isn't solely about us

The **#WeAreYou** campaign launched at Stormont is about this entire community. We don't segregate or differentiate.

When they're not safeguarding the vulnerable, quelling street disorder or attending incidents, Police Officers are every bit the same as the wider community they serve.

**#WeAreYou** is our attempt to show how Officers are not cocooned from everyday pressures such as mortgages, debt, ill or infirm relatives or finding quality time to spend with their kids.

The men and women represented by the PFNI work in a dangerous, sometimes lethal, environment. What they see and have to deal with as part of the job leave indelible marks. Small but not insignificant memories flood back: the colour of a jumper worn by a child lying on the road; a sound associated with a cry for help; a smell that triggers a flashback of a terrorist attack.

Their work takes them into areas of personal danger, volatility and tragedy. Will they be glassed in the bar brawl? Are gunmen waiting around the next corner? Throughout their working life, they will be subjected to multiple traumatic incidents which cannot be 'parked' as soon as they go off duty. The impact can be profound and long-lasting with an inevitable cross-over to their private and family lives.

They are under constant scrutiny – ever mindful of consequences to their career if they make a mistake. Most in society value the work the Police undertake but there are those who, at best, take things for granted and, at worst, revile, berate and attack our colleagues in uniform. Sadly, respect and a bit of understanding can be too often in very short supply.

Throughout it all, they never stop being mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, grandchildren. When they leave the station, priorities are refocused on their families, all of which makes each and every one of them the same as their neighbours, friends and wider community.

Now, **#WeAreYou** isn't about clapping ourselves on the back. No, it's about saying to the community that we'd appreciate a little understanding. We don't want hero-grams, just a little recognition of the job we do, and the fact that we are the same as other people in every other respect.

**#WeAreYou** will be seen in cinemas throughout Northern Ireland and on social media platforms. We hope it strikes a chord with you and signals a clear intention on the part of the PFNI to build on the respect you rightfully deserve.

## #WeAreYou campaign launched by Police Federation

### Movies are 'stark and thought-provoking' – Justice Minister

The Northern Ireland Justice Minister, David Ford, has described the Police Federation for Northern Ireland's **#WeAreYou** campaign as 'stark and thought-provoking.'

The campaign uses three, specially commissioned mini-movies entitled **WeAreMothers**, **WeAreGranddaughters** and **WeAreFathers** and sets out how Police Officers are no different from the people they serve.

The initiative was launched before 100 invited guests in the Long Gallery in Parliament Buildings, Stormont, on the 1st March, including Ministers, MPs, MLAs, Church leaders, the PSNI, the Assembly's Justice Committee, Policing Board for Northern Ireland and representative organisations.

One of the three mini-movies, **WeAreFathers**, is being screened in cinemas across Northern Ireland. All three have been uploaded to social media platforms to reach the widest possible audience.

The series shows the everyday pressures faced by Officers, and how experiences they encounter as Police Officers impact on normal family life.

The three scenarios were produced by Birmingham-based TINKER TAYLOR with the entire cast and crew of almost fifty recruited in Northern Ireland.

PFNI Chairman, Mark Lindsay, said for too long, Officers were seen as separate from the community but out of uniform, they faced the same pressures as everyone else.

Mr Lindsay said: "Our men and women are wives, husbands, parents, brothers, sisters and all of them have to grapple with daily challenges that are exactly the same as those confronted by their extended families, friends and wider community.

"They have to worry about children, family, mortgages, balancing the books and the maintenance of a proper work-life balance.

"More than that, they have to worry about their safety and the security of their families in a climate where the terrorist threat level is rated 'severe'.

"In a very real sense, Officers are no different from their neighbours, but with the added pressure of the job. They endure attacks on the frontline. They're constantly under the microscope. They're public servants who answer the call, often at great risk to themselves.

"There is another aspect that merits closer examination. Too many officers suffer psychologically from the scenes they witness on a regular basis.

"They deserve to be better understood. We're not asking for adulation, just a bit of latitude that we are human beings doing a trying and challenging job for our entire community.

The Northern Ireland Justice Minister, David Ford MLA, welcomed the **WeAreYou** campaign as a genuine attempt to better explain the role and work undertaken by Officers.

Mr Ford said: "The three short movies are stark and thought-provoking. They illustrate the daily challenges faced by many Officers who leave their homes to confront situations that demand courage and split-second decision-making.

"Their job is like no other and they deserve the understanding and support of the wider community who want a more normal society free from terrorism and criminality."

