

News&views

AUGUST 2022 News and views from Derbyshire Police Federation
NATIONAL POLICE BRAVERY AWARDS SPECIAL EDITION



POLICE BRAVERY MUST BE RECOGNISED



By Tony Wetton, chair of Derbyshire Police Federation

It is both an honour and a privilege to be able to attend the Police Bravery Awards which are hosted each year by the Police Federation of England and Wales.

As chair of Derbyshire Police Federation, I am always particularly proud to accompany our nominees to the awards ceremony and this year was no exception. Steve Reid sustained horrific injuries in the incident for which he was put forward for an award. The physical and mental aftermath of these incidents should never be underestimated.

He paid little attention to the risk he was facing when he tackled a man under the influence of drugs but did what he had to do in the interests of keeping other people safe.

Likewise his colleagues Weronika Korbziel, who was with him when the terrifying incident began to unfold, and Stephen Fowkes, who was the first to arrive on the scene and automatically stepped in to help.

On the night of the bravery awards, winner after winner told guests they were just doing the job they signed up to do, that it was their duty to do something and they acted on instinct.

They may play down their actions but we must never fail to recognise the daily bravery of police officers. They run towards danger when others run away – regardless of the threat to their own lives.

We must also recognise their wives, husbands, partners and wider families; those left at home wondering if their loved ones will make it home at the end of their shift.

BRAVE OFFICERS HONOURED AT NATIONAL AWARDS CEREMONY



The brave officers and their guests outside the gates to Downing Street.

A police officer who was slashed twice in the face as he tackled a man under the influence of drugs has been honoured at the Police Bravery Awards along with two colleagues who came to his aid.

PCs Steve Reid, Weronika Korbziel and Stephen Fowkes were joined by fellow nominees from across the country at a Downing Street reception hosted by Home Secretary Priti Patel who praised their “incredible courage”.

Steve's wife Rachel, Weronika's partner Jacob Callow and Stephen's wife Melanie accompanied the officers throughout the event.

They all attended the awards presentation ceremony at a central London hotel later that evening alongside Derbyshire Chief Constable Rachel Swann, Police and Crime Commissioner Angelique Foster and Police Federation branch chair Tony Wetton.

Speaking after the awards ceremony, Tony said: “Our three nominees showed real courage in an extremely dangerous situation and are all fully deserving of this recognition.

“It was an honour and a privilege to spend the day with them and their partners. We are all very proud of them.”

Steve, who is also a Derbyshire Police Federation rep and health and safety lead, suffered horrific injuries when he was attacked with a knife by a suspect after he and Weronika were called to a robbery.

As Steve attempted to arrest the suspect, he was slashed by the man with a knife and came close to being “blinded or killed” as the blade narrowly missed his eyes and a major artery.

His newly qualified colleague Weronika then took charge of the situation before back-up arrived, and Stephen used his Taser to eventually subdue and arrest the individual.

In putting forward Steve for the award, Sergeant Jonathan Dillon said: “While reviewing the body-worn video, I was immensely proud of Steve for moving forward without hesitation into the home of a member of the public after this violent offender forced his way in.

“When Steve was slashed with the knife he continued to engage with the control room and stay focused on the task at hand.



"He stepped forward and was injured as a result of trying to prevent the offender from going into another member of the public's home.

"If Steve hadn't risked his own safety to stop this from happening it is not a stretch to imagine members of the public falling victim to this male's appalling behaviour."

With Steve seriously injured, Weronika ushered people back into their homes while keeping the man in sight.

In his citation, PS Dillon said: "PC Korbiel showed courage, determination and professionalism during an incident in which she witnessed a more experienced officer become seriously injured."

When reinforcements arrived, Stephen used his Taser to reduce the risk of more officers being injured.

PS Dillon explained: "PC Fowkes delivered a robust challenge to the suspect demonstrating police officers will step forward to protect members of the public in difficult circumstances."

In July last year, the individual was jailed for 10 years and 10 months after admitting wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, robbery, criminal damage, and possession of crack cocaine and heroin.

After returning to work when he had recovered from his injuries, Steve became a Derbyshire Police Federation workplace representative so that he could offer support to colleagues and in December he took on the role of the branch's health and safety lead.

Speaking at the Downing Street reception, Ms Patel told the nominees: "I am delighted to be able to celebrate with you, once again, the incredible courage of a remarkable group of police officers.

"Your work involves an extraordinary degree of sacrifice that should never be taken for granted. These awards play an important part in ensuring your deeds are recognised.

"I would like to thank the organisers of the 2022 awards, the Police Federation, and Police Mutual for their continued support for the event."

The officers also received warm praise and a message of thanks from Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

He said: "These acts of bravery, honoured here today by your colleagues and the public, are outstanding and in the finest traditions of policing. I salute each and every one of the fantastic nominees at the awards. You are truly the best of the very best.

"It is absolutely right and proper that we honour and celebrate the work of our brave men and women in uniform who work day in

and day out to protect the public.

"The progress we are making towards recruiting 20,000 more officers gives me full confidence that together we will make our streets safer. From the bottom of my heart, thank you."

Speaking at the awards ceremony, Police Federation national chair Steve Hartshorn said: "Tonight, we heard extraordinary stories of bravery, selflessness and acts of courage that are not just part of the job.

"The bravery shown by these nominees is truly outstanding. From putting their own lives at risk to save others, facing violent attackers and terrifying weapons, to rescuing people from perilous situations in fast flowing water or stranded hundreds of feet in the air, they have faced danger head on."

The annual bravery awards are organised by the Police Federation and sponsored by Police Mutual.

This year's overall winner was Lincolnshire Police's PC Steven Denniss who was stabbed as he tackled a double murder suspect he had spotted while off duty and out walking his dogs.

“THESE ACTS OF BRAVERY, HONOURED HERE TODAY BY YOUR COLLEAGUES AND THE PUBLIC, ARE OUTSTANDING AND IN THE FINEST TRADITIONS OF POLICING. I SALUTE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THE FANTASTIC NOMINEES AT THE AWARDS. YOU ARE TRULY THE BEST OF THE VERY BEST.

'AMAZING EXPERIENCES' AT AWARDS



Steve Reid and his wife Rachel.

Derbyshire Police Federation health and safety lead Steve Reid has been reflecting on his "amazing experiences" at the Police Bravery Awards. Stephen and fellow Derbyshire nominees Stephen Fowkes and Weronika Korbil travelled down to London for the awards event last week.

The trio were shortlisted after an incident in which Steve Reid was slashed twice in the face as he tackled a man under the influence of drugs. Steve Fowkes and Weronika were the first to go to his assistance.

Speaking after the awards event, Steve said: "It was just an amazing experience from start to finish really."

"We went to Westminster in the morning and had a tour around the House of Lords and House of Commons and then we sat in on Prime Minister's Questions - what a time to go down!

"We then had lunch with our two MPs

to our nominations and everything was fantastic."

The following day saw Steve Reid and his wife Rachel, Steve Fowkes and his wife Melanie, and Weronika and her partner Jacob Callow attend a special reception in Downing Street hosted by Home Secretary Priti Patel.

Steve said: "We arrived on a coach and were escorted past the gates and just to be able to see the outside of Downing Street was amazing but to go inside was just surreal."

“IT WAS JUST AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE FROM START TO FINISH REALLY.”

"We all had our photographs taken in front of No 10 and then went through and then you realise that you are sitting in the garden of 10 Downing Street having canapes and soft drinks and you're taking the whole thing in and soaking up the atmosphere. It was brilliant."

"And everyone was there for the right reason, being rewarded for bravery and their actions. We all did our own things."

The reception was followed by the awards ceremony later that evening at a hotel in central London.

Steve said: "But, for all the stories of bravery, it was inspirational just to be there with everyone and having a fantastic night."

"People ask us what the highlights were but every day and everything we went to was a highlight."

"And for us it has been so long since the incident that it was just that final bit to celebrate."

Margaret Beckett and Pauline Latham in the Pugin Room looking out onto the Thames.

"They were just wonderful and engaging and we talked about the incident which led



The brave officers heading for Downing Street.

'IT MAKES YOU PROUD TO BE A PART OF THE POLICE FAMILY'



PC Stephen Fowkes and his wife Melanie outside 10 Downing Street.

A Derbyshire Police officer has described his experiences at the Police Bravery Awards as "surreal".

Stephen Fowkes and his wife Melanie enjoyed a tour of the Houses of Parliament, saw Boris Johnson and Sir Keir Starmer face off at an historic Prime Minister's Questions - the first after the PM announced his resignation - and enjoyed drinks overlooking the Thames from the Palace of Westminster's iconic Pugin Room.

The following day the couple joined fellow nominees and their guests from across the country for a special reception in 10 Downing Street followed by an inspirational awards ceremony at a central London hotel.

Reflecting on his experiences, Stephen said: "The whole thing was an incredible experience. We went to the House of Commons and had tickets for Prime Minister's Questions and obviously that was an amazing time to be there with front row seats.

"We then met our MPs Pauline Latham and Margaret Beckett in the Pugin Room as we literally sat and had a gin and tonic with our MPs sitting in a big bay window overlooking the river. It was very surreal.

"They are absolutely amazing women. They made us feel very at home and we had incredible conversations with them.

"We were there for ages and then they took us across to Portcullis House and showed us all the artwork there."

The following day Stephen and Melanie and the other Derbyshire nominees, Steve

Reid and his wife Rachel and Weronika Korbiel and her partner Jacob Callow, joined fellow officers from across England and Wales at a reception hosted by Home Secretary Priti Patel in Downing Street before heading to the presentation ceremony.

"There were some truly inspirational stories and it does bring a lump to your throat. It makes you proud to be a part of the police family," said Stephen.

“THE WHOLE THING WAS AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE. WE WENT TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND HAD TICKETS FOR PRIME MINISTER’S QUESTIONS AND OBVIOUSLY THAT WAS AN AMAZING TIME TO BE THERE WITH FRONT ROW SEATS.

Commenting on his own nomination, which he received for tackling a knifeman who had attacked and badly injured colleague Steve, he said: "I was surprised to be honest because to me I was only doing my job.

"I responded to a shout from my colleague and my friend Steve. I knew he'd been hurt quite seriously and I was the first Taser officer there so I knew I had to deal with it.

"The suspect had to be dealt with because he was a risk to other officers and members of the public and if he was prepared to attack an officer with a knife what would he have been prepared to do to other people?

"So I put the excellent Taser training that we receive into practice and dealt robustly with this man."



Left to right: Rachel and Steve Reid, Weronika Korbiel and Jacob Callow, Melanie and Stephen Fowkes, Pauline Latham MP and Dame Margaret Beckett MP.

WERONIKA DESCRIBES 'SURREAL' EXPERIENCE OF DOWNING STREET VISIT



Derbyshire's Police Bravery Award nominees attend the presentation ceremony in London.

Derbyshire Police response officer Weronika Korbziel has been looking back on her "absolutely incredible" trip to the national Police Bravery Awards in London.

Weronika was accompanied by her partner Jacob Callow, who is also a response officer with the Force, and her Derbyshire colleagues Steve Reid and Steve Fowkes and their wives.

She said the whole event was well-organised from start to finish and described it as an incredible experience.

The Derbyshire group travelled to London the day before the Police Bravery Awards presentation and had a meal with branch chair Tony Wetton.

They also got the chance to soak up some of the sights and sounds of Westminster in what turned out to be a momentous week in British politics.

Weronika said: "We went down to Prime Minister's Questions and that was absolutely amazing - quite surreal actually."

"It was just a couple of days after Boris Johnson announced his resignation so it was all very heated. It was probably the best time we could have gone."

The following morning saw a special reception for nominees and their guests hosted by Home Secretary Priti Patel at 10 Downing Street.

Weronika said: "On the day of the awards ceremony we went to a reception in Downing Street and had some drinks in the famous garden and that was really nice."

"Priti Patel was there and I had a quick chat with her. I sat next to her when we were having our photographs taken and she was asking me about the nomination and just wanted to know how I was finding the job. She seemed very nice."

"The awards ceremony itself was absolutely incredible. Some of the stories were absolutely horrendous and it really opened your eyes."

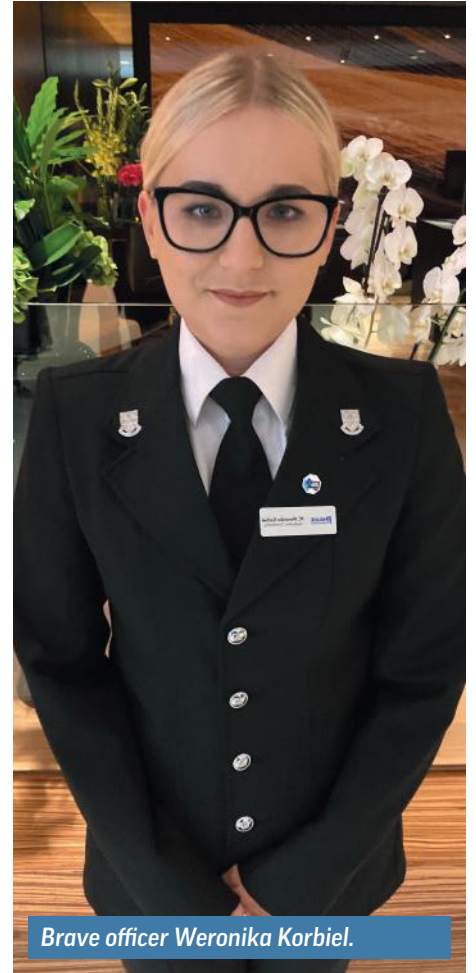
"And I think it's nice to be recognised for the work you do. If you had fallen out of love with the job a little bit, things like this make you fall back in love with it again."

Weronika also enjoyed meeting Derbyshire Chief Constable Rachel Swann at the ceremony

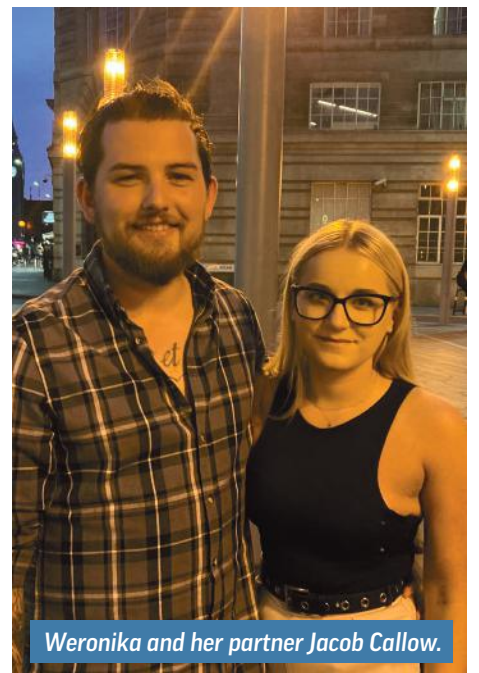
"It was the first time I'd met her and was really down to earth and very nice. The whole thing was lovely."

Weronika has been a police officer for three-and-a-half years and is based at St Mary's Wharf.

She and her Derbyshire colleagues were shortlisted for an award for the courage they showed throughout a terrifying incident which saw Steve Reid attacked and seriously injured by a knifeman.



Brave officer Weronika Korbziel.



Weronika and her partner Jacob Callow.



I THINK IT'S NICE TO BE RECOGNISED FOR THE WORK YOU DO. IF YOU HAD FALLEN OUT OF LOVE WITH THE JOB A LITTLE BIT, THINGS LIKE THIS MAKE YOU FALL BACK IN LOVE WITH IT AGAIN.