



# ROA NEWS



February 2026

## Message from Chair – Mel Goudie

Well, where did 2025 go, yet another year has flown past and we are already at the end of January 2026, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very healthy and prosperous 2026.

The 2025 AGM/Reunion was held at the King Robert Hotel in Stirling and was once again a great success. It was especially nice to welcome several members who had never previously attended. Due to personal commitments the Chief Constable and DPF Chairperson were unable to attend but were well represented by the ACC Simon Dobinson and DPF Secretary Darren Mitchell. Simon spoke of where the force currently was in respect of numbers and how the future of MDP was being viewed.



He also notified us that the Chief Constable Mel Dales had formally notified MOD, that she would be retiring from the force in early 2026. Subsequently and after the interview process her successor was announced and I'm delighted to inform you that the current DCC Kier Pritchard has been appointed as the new Chief Constable. At the time of writing the DCC vacancy has still to be advertised. Darren Mitchell the recently appointed DPF Secretary, took the opportunity to introduce himself to the members and bring us up to date with the current issues within the force.

The feedback from those in attendance was that it had been a highly successful weekend and the addition of the Whisky/Chocolate and Wine/Cheese tasting and a Quiz evening had been a welcome addition. The free day saw a variety of events with members visiting the Kelpies, Falkirk Wheel, Bannockburn Battle Ground and museum.

In 2026, we are returning south of the border and have been very fortunate to secure the Stallingborough Grange Hotel, Grimsby. This is a wonderful location, and the facilities are exactly what we require. Not only that, but it is also owned by one of our members partners and they are well versed in the requirements of the organisation. Application forms are available on the ROA page within the DPF website. If you've never been before why not come along and enjoy a great weekend with friends old and new.

I will be off grid for a few weeks from mid-February as I will be going into hospital for a replacement knee operation. That said I will be able to answer emails etc. Should it require immediate action please contact the Vice Chair or Secretary.

Once again, I would like to thank the committee for their dedication to the ROA and the support they have provided in this past year. Without them there would be no ROA.

## Welcome to New Members

We are pleased to give a warm welcome to the following new members: Maria Avarl, Jayne Dunn, Sean & Ruth Todd-Bennett, Reyburn Logie, Kirsteen Anderson, Robert Mileham, James Purdon, George Wilkinson.

## Message from Chief Constable – Kier Pritchard

Hello everyone,

Chief Constable Melanie Dales announced her retirement in August 2025. Mel joined the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) in February 2022 following a 30-year career in policing, including in Home Office Forces. I would like to thank Mel for leading the Force through, what is still, a challenging time for policing and a significant period of MDP reform.



I stepped into the role of Interim Chief Constable in September 2025 and, following the recent selection process, I'm thrilled to share the news that I have been offered the position. It's an incredible honour to take on this role permanently, and I'm committed to serving the MDP to the very best of my ability.

Since joining the MDP in September 2023, I've had the privilege of seeing the extraordinary work our officers and civilian staff do every day to protect the nation's defence establishments. Their professionalism, dedication, and resilience are nothing short of inspiring.

As we begin this new chapter together, I'm determined to lead the force forward, building on our strengths and ensuring the MDP is recognised as the vital and trusted national asset it truly is. 2026 will be a year of growth and transformation for the MDP and I'm committed to strengthening our focus and determination. I will ensure that working conditions are supportive, safe, and enable success and that our capabilities evolve in line with the threats we face. I want the MDP to be a place where people thrive, grow, and feel proud of their contributions.

The MDP came together at the King Henry VIII Wine Cellar in MOD Main Building, Whitehall, to celebrate exceptional dedication, innovation and leadership at the 2025 Rewards and Recognition Awards Ceremony. Congratulations to all our winners, and their well-deserved awards, which include: 'Unsung Hero' - PC Boyle, RNAD Coulport; 'Collaboration' - Inspector Collins, RAF Wyton; 'Inspirational Leader' - Temporary Chief Inspector Millican, AWE; 'Innovation' - PC Bland, RAF Wyton; 'Diversity & Inclusion' - PC Ho, Whitehall; 'Apprenticeship Excellence' - PC Su, Whitehall.

In January, we welcomed the House of Commons Defence Committee to MDP Headquarters at RAF Wyton. This was an opportunity to highlight the critical importance of the MDP, and the diverse roles and incredible people that make up our organisation. Committee members observed first-hand some of our specialist policing and security capabilities. Feedback was extremely positive. The Chair of the MOD

### MyCSP/Capita Transfer

Capita took over the responsibility for administering civil service pensions as from 1st December 2025 however there have been many teething problems with scheme members reporting difficulty logging into the portal, incomplete pension details, long waits on customer service calls, and delays to pension quotes and payments for newly retired members. Capita has said it had been left with a much bigger backlog of work in progress cases than originally agreed and is working tirelessly to clear the backlog inherited and resolve member queries as quickly as possible. Due to service delays and member frustration, the Civil Service Chief Operating Officer and Capita's CEO recently issued a joint statement apologising for the worry and distress caused and committing to urgently resolve the serious issues by putting together a plan of action. However, given the scale of the problem the issues have been raised in Parliament with MP's highlighting serious concerns demanding swift action. DPF has also voiced its concerns about the delay in processing payments under the scheme and the hardship and distress this is causing to their members (and former members) who have been caught up in Capita's poor performance through no fault of their own. More information can be found at [www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk](http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk)

Meanwhile anyone logging into the pension portal for the first time since 25th November 2025 will need to create a new account. More details about registering will be covered in the Civil Service Pension Spring Newsletter.

Police Committee was also in attendance and was highly impressed with our capabilities. This was a significant step in raising the profile of the Force.

MDP Dog Handler's PC Hope, PC Brake and PC Woodcock from AWE Burghfield proudly represented MDP in the annual PSUK 10-Mile Road Race, hosted this year by South Wales Police in Cardiff. A huge congratulations to our runners for their dedication, teamwork, and fantastic representation of the Force.

Congratulations to PC Houghton on his incredible resilience and determination in undertaking an exercise bike ride to raise funds for Thames Valley Air Ambulance. The bike was gifted from the Chief Constables Fund to aid with recovery following a car accident. PC Houghton's story is truly inspiring and reflects the strength and spirit within our Force.

We have had more retirements, and I am incredibly proud of the contribution and dedicated service of these officers: PC Brian retired after 22 years' service, Inspector Dalglish MBE retired after 24 years' service, Chief Inspector White retired after 38 years' service.

The latest cohort of MDP new recruits successfully completed their initial recruits training programme. The Pass Out Parade, in November 2025, was a fitting celebration of their hard work, resilience, and dedication during 12 weeks of intensive training. I wish them every success as they embark on their careers in Defence policing.

I look forward to updating you on the Force later in the year.

---

## Police Care UK

Police Care UK is a charity for serving and veteran police officers and staff, volunteers, and their families who have suffered any physical or psychological harm as a result of policing. If you would like to discuss the practical, emotional or financial support that Police Care UK can potentially provide, please make a referral on their website at [www.policecare.org.uk](http://www.policecare.org.uk) or call 0300 012 0030 and ask to speak to a member of their team

---

## Police Long Service & Good Conduct Medal - 30 or 40 year Bar Eligibility

If retired or exited officers want to apply for their 30 or 40 year bars they need to have been serving on the 11th March 2022 to present, if they weren't serving at this time they can receive a coin for 30 years of service. They need to email the Group Mail Box - [mdp-rewardandrecognition-gmb@mod.gov.uk](mailto:mdp-rewardandrecognition-gmb@mod.gov.uk) with their Full name, Rank, person number, Badge number, Serving station, hire date, leaving date, home address and contact number/email.

### Support is available from The Charity for Civil Servants

Whatever your role within the Civil Service, you'll be impacted by the rising costs of living, whether that be energy costs, fuel for your car or the cost of your weekly shop.

The Charity for Civil Servants can help with all sorts of financial issues caused by an unexpected change in circumstances - whether your income has suddenly reduced or you're unable to pay for essential items that need replacing.

To receive regular updates about the help and support provided by the Charity sign up at [www.cfcs.org.uk](http://www.cfcs.org.uk) they can also be contacted on 0800 056 2424. And if you know anyone else who could benefit from hearing about the Charity's support, please do share this with them.

The Charity for Civil Servants supports all current, former and retired civil servants throughout their lives, listening without judgement and offering practical, financial and emotional support.

# MDP HISTORY— ON DISPLAY AT NATIONAL EMERGENCY SERVICE MUSEUM, SHEFFIELD

– by Keith Heather

A short diversion whilst travelling home to Norfolk from the last ROA AGM in Stirling, I was greeted with some exciting news.

The CEO of NESM informed me that in early 2026 they will be putting new display cabinets along one of the walls in the Police area. When installed they will be filled mainly with items from the MDP collection.

Normally there is an entrance fee for NESM, (£8.50 concession) but the CEO has agreed to allow members of the ROA while attending the 2026 Reunion on Sunday 18th October to enter for a small donation from each person. The museum is around 1 1/2 hrs from Grimsby.

NESM is an old Victorian Police/Fire Station built over three floors with many varied and exciting displays. It also has a small café.

For more information visit their website: [www.visitnesm.org.uk](http://www.visitnesm.org.uk)



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2025 AGM REUNION

The MDPROA held its AGM and Reunion at the King Robert Hotel, Stirling on 28–29 October 2025, attended by 34 members and guests, including senior Force and Federation representatives. Awards and commendations were presented, and Treasurer Ken Hicks stepped down after six years, prompting committee changes and the election of Dee Finn.

Members received updates from officers, approved minor rule amendments, and confirmed that the 2026 AGM/Reunion will take place at the Stallingborough Grange Hotel, Grimsby, from 16–19 October. Below are a collection of photographs highlighting the camaraderie, shared memories, and lasting bonds celebrated during this reunion.

