

## Tragic Death of PC Andrew Harper Sparks Wave of Support for Police

The tragic death of PC Andrew Harper sparked a wave of support for police and inspired thousands across the UK to run in an event to honour his life

Newlywed PC Andrew Harper's life was cut short on 15 August after being struck by a vehicle and killed in the line of duty in Berkshire.

The Thames Valley officer was responding to reports of a burglary when he was struck and dragged for a distance by a van. He was due to go on honeymoon the following week.

Colleagues and officers from his and other forces said they have been touched by gifts and acts of kindness from the public.

PC Harper's family and friends stood in remembrance last week in a touching tribute. BBC reports that Chief Constable John Campbell said the occasion was "not a memorial service", but a "time for gathering, a time for pause and a time to reflect".

RaceBest invited people to run a 'virtual race' of 7.605km, which was a nod to the 28-year-old's police number of PC7605. The organiser said that runners raised over £24,000 for charity and saw nearly 5,000 take part in the event.

Harper's death comes as concerns mount over the threat to officers across the UK. Martin Hewitt, the chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, urged the most senior officers to come together to find ways to make frontline policing safer. "If we can't protect our people, how can we protect the public?" he said. Northamptonshire Police Chief Constable Nick Adderley issued tasers to every frontline officer in one UK police force in order to protect against a 'sickening trend' of attacks.

Ralli Director James Reilly said: "The case of Andrew Harper has been in the headlines because of the tragic consequences for a young officer and his family."

"A number of issues have rightly been raised by senior police chiefs regarding the protection of their front line officers including the Northamptonshire Force issuing tasers. This raises a number of issues for both police forces and the public. Weapons involve potential further risk to officers and the public and will require substantial investment and training, as any deployment of firearms can lead to fatality and injury. There have been [high profile cases](#) where officers have been criticised for use of force and studies have been equivocal over the beneficial effect of the deployment of taser electronic weapons. Unfortunately, risk to frontline police officers, attending to unknown and unpredictable situations, can never be entirely eliminated," he continued.

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“We as a firm act for the police federation and have acted for officers who have suffered life changing injuries dealing with similar situations to that unfortunately faced by PC Harper. In a very similar case a Metropolitan Police officer attempting an arrest of a burglary suspect in a vehicle was run over when the suspect tried to flee the scene. As consequence the officer suffered devastating orthopaedic injury and is unlikely resume front line duties. In cases where a vehicle is involved the injured officer is legally entitled to pursue the vehicle insurer if the vehicle is insured or alternatively to pursue a case through the Motor Insurers Bureau,” James Reilly concluded.