

**PCSO Simon Griffiths**

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Simon Griffiths has been a PCSO for eight years now. We sat down with him to find out more about what the role is like...

**This month, we're celebrating 20 years of PCSOs. What do you enjoy most about the role?**

I like that you are implanted in an area – mine is Woodseats. I've been here eight years so I've built up a lot of relationships. Problems can go on for years, so it's important to take a long-term approach to resolve issues sustainably. It's all about resolving things for people and improving their quality of life. I work closely with a lot of partners like the council, community groups and housing associations.

I work with Sharrow's Community Forum, and we look at solving problems like drug dealing. Drug dealing brings anti-social behaviour and violence with it, so it's important we do all we can to tackle it.

Amongst other things, I've been looking at how we deter offenders. I look at things like putting lighting and CCTV in areas dealers would ordinarily use. Making those areas more appealing to the general public deters criminals and also gives the community better facilities. I play a large role in securing funding for community initiatives, and it makes my job incredibly worthwhile.

**And what's your typical day like?**

The beauty of the PCSO role is that you get to assess problems and take ownership. There are welfare checks to be undertaken for vulnerable adults and those who are at risk of cuckooing [being exploited by gangs and dealers]. I have pre-booked community events so I can speak to people about any issues they are experiencing. Small problems can easily become more serious so it's important to stay up to date and intervene at the earliest opportunity.

I also help with scene-sitting after a serious incident and searches for missing people. Having the local knowledge really helps with matters like this.

**Can you give us an example of someone you helped?**

I once worked with an out-of-work actor who was being cuckooed and taken advantage of by criminals. I helped him with the very basics: getting furniture, curtains, even things like a toilet seat. All this helped him break that toxic cycle, get the right support for his drug addiction and now he's even getting back into acting work!

We are expanding our PCSO team and applications are now open on Monday 26 September. If you are looking for a role where every day is different and you're always out and about, visit our website to find out more.