



## CONTENTS

Foreword	Page 3
How did the Gender Agenda come about?	Page 5
The Gender Agenda and Nottinghamshire Police	Page 6
Culture	Page 7
Careers	Page 8
Communication	Page 10
Showing our Commitment	Page 12
Supporting the Gender Agenda	Page 14
Further Information	Page 16



# CONTENTS



## FOREWORD

The “Gender Agenda” nationally sought to awaken the Police service to the issues which must be tackled if it is to develop its potential as a deliverer of quality services to the public in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

This booklet supports Nottinghamshire Police’s commitment to that vision. It is one of the products of the Gender Agenda Project Board, which has worked, with Police Authority support, to identify many of the current issues.

It highlights key actions that will be undertaken, that will assist in creating a workplace that removes barriers to the realisation of the full potential of women in the service, both police officers and police staff.

Much progress has already been achieved, but there are barriers which remain to be overcome. We have worked to create an action plan to address many of those issues. These actions focus on the areas of Culture, Careers and Communications, and through their implementation should reap benefits for all.

Our “Gender Agenda” seeks to overcome these barriers together as a force, to create a fully inclusive workplace, which allows the maximum potential of all members of staff to be realised. It is intended to be a dynamic initiative which will evolve with time, bringing with it real benefits to our organisation and its people.

As such, I give my personal commitment to the implementation of the “Gender Agenda” within Nottinghamshire Police and encourage all employees, but in particular managers, to recognise its value and seek to make a positive contribution to its success.

*Join us in making the vision a reality.*



**Howard Roberts**  
Deputy Chief Constable  
Chair - Gender Agenda Project Board



FOREWORD



## Personal Profile - CHIEF INSPECTOR SALLY HEALY

Sally joined the force in 1986 at a time when the organisation openly treated women officers differently to their male counterparts. For example, she was moved from her initial posting at Bulwell to Hucknall because there was already a woman on her Bulwell shift, and it was seen as acceptable practice to distribute the limited number of women officers around the force. She was also expected to deal with all cases relating to children, despite the fact that some of her male colleagues had far more experience with children than she did.

Sally had varied roles as a P.C. , among them working on a Projects Team, in Performance Review, and on Force Tactical Unit Surveillance Team (where the number of women was restricted to two, thereby requiring Sally to compete with two other women for her place).

Sally progressed steadily through the ranks, approaching each promotion according to her readiness to take on the challenges of the next level. Her priority was to feel comfortable within her existing rank before putting herself forward for the next one. Despite experiencing some pressure to put herself forward for promotion before she felt ready for it, Sally feels that overall her line management has been supportive of her wishes.

Now an operational Chief Inspector, Sally is conscious of her visibility, and despite the fact that the organisation has taken big strides in its treatment of women, still feels that there is an element of having to prove herself as a woman within her role. She is currently the only female Match Commander within the force, and next year will be trained as a Silver Firearms Commander, becoming one of only two females in this role.

In 2001 Sally became involved in setting up the Nottinghamshire Police Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual Support Network, and is joint Chair of this group. This Network provides a support service to the organisation, and offers a first point of contact through the availability of a 24 hour helpline. The network has regular meeting with the Chief to discuss issues, and also has an operational function in terms of providing advice on the investigation of gay crime etc. as well as having an input into training. Sally feels strongly that the Network offers an important service to the organisation, and is happy to contribute her own time into providing this.

Sally's future career aspirations are that she would like to reach Superintendent rank, and remain operational, continuing to enjoy the challenges of the daily job. She would like to see a working environment whereby women are encouraged, but not pushed to progress, at a rate with which they are comfortable. As the organisational barriers to women continue to be lifted, she hopes that more female officers will feel able to maximise their potential and progress to senior level.

## HOW DID THE GENDER AGENDA COME ABOUT?

The Gender Agenda was officially launched in August 2001 and has become the blueprint for the future of women police officers and staff.

It was developed nationally by an executive group representing the British Association of Women Police, Action E, the Senior Women Officers' Conference, the Police Federation, the Association of Chief Police Officers' Women's Group, the Metropolitan Association of Senior Women Officers and the European Network of Policewomen.

Part of the National Policing Plan, the Gender Agenda aims to identify and address the issues affecting women's opportunities to fulfil their potential within the police service.

Some of the key issues identified in the document include under-representation of female police officers across the ranks and specialisms, restrictive policies, lack of proactive career development and difficulties in managing the work-life balance.

In order to tackle these issues, the Gender Agenda set out five long-term aims:

- For the police service to demonstrate consistently that it values women;

- To achieve a gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation balance across the rank structure and specialisms;
- To have a women's voice in influential policy;
- To develop an understanding of the demands in achieving a work/life balance and a successful career;
- To have a working environment and equipment of the right quality to enable women to do their jobs professionally.

President of the British Association of Women Police, Assistant Chief Constable Julie Spence of Thames Valley Police, said: "There is a growing skills shortage and the police service should be doing everything possible to attract and keep people with invaluable experience and expertise, not penalise them for having a family and a life outside work."

As a result, the Gender Agenda aims to promote a more creative and progressive approach from managers to flexible working arrangements, inviting all police organisations to take action, review their progress towards the aims and share examples of good practice.



FORMATION

## THE GENDER AGENDA AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE

Nottinghamshire Police are committed to adopting the five national long term aims of the Gender Agenda.

In order to progress these aims we established a Gender Agenda Project Board, to identify and prioritise issues and recommend practical ways for moving forward. The Project Board interpreted the national aims into a set of specific Force aims appropriate for our organisation. These are:

- For Nottinghamshire Police to publicly demonstrate that it values women staff to improve its internal and external reputation and become an employer of choice.
- To achieve a gender balance across the rank structure and specialisms consistent with the proportion of women in the economically active population.
- To have women representatives on all influential policy committees for focusing on both internal and external service delivery.
- To identify competing demands on women's time and generate actions in order to achieve a work / life balance and a successful police career.
- To have a working environment and equipment of the right quality and standards to enable women to do their jobs professionally and safely.

The Project Board identified that these Force aims could be achieved largely through improved communications, organisational culture and long term careers for women, so that equality for all becomes the norm.

As a result, project sub-groups were established to examine ways in which the force could practically address the areas of Culture, Communications and Careers.

Following the work of these Groups, recommendations were made as to how the force should work towards its aims. These have been brought together in an Action Plan, the key points of which are outlined in this brochure.



AIMS

## CULTURE

It was recognised that the culture of Nottinghamshire Police has a huge impact on the experiences of women within the organisation. As such the Culture Group was tasked with considering how to improve our organisational culture, with a view to eliminating some of the intangible barriers which women staff often have to face.

The Culture Group identified a number of key areas which would make a real difference.

### Encouragement, Support and Value

This can be achieved by Departments and Divisions promoting the benefits of the Gender Agenda, and by having leaders who understand how important it is to convey the right messages of encouragement. The value of women should be recognised, so that issues such as flexible working are seen to be a benefit to the organisation and individuals, rather than a concession.

### Working Practices and Procedures

Changes such as reviewing policies, reports and adverts to ensure that they consider gender issues will make a difference to the culture of the organisation and the perception that women have about the value that the organisation places on them. The representation of women on committees and at policy making forums needs to be addressed, as this is currently limited and can lead to oversights within policy and strategy formulation.

### Compliance

There is a need to ensure that all aims, intentions and agreed actions are undertaken and adhered to. This may

entail implementing systems such as dip testing selection panels and committees for female representation, and reinforcing mechanisms for challenging discriminatory behaviour. It will also include ways in which to review 'the discrimination gap', enabling us to monitor our position, identify patterns and ensure improvements are made.

### How we are Viewed

How the work of the Gender Agenda is viewed and accepted within the organisation is crucial to its success. The launch day is intended to form part of an overall marketing strategy, which will entail ongoing communication and publicity. This will hopefully serve to dispel myths around perceptions of such things as quotas and positive discrimination.

The Culture Group recognise that the key to ensuring the success of the Gender Agenda lies around the ability to convey its message and intentions in the right way, and convince all members of the organisation, from senior managers to female staff, of the worth of this project. Culture is often slow to change, but by taking appropriate action in a positive and committed way, the desired cultural outcomes and improvements can be achieved.



CULTURE

## CAREERS

The issue of careers for women within the organisation isn't just about promotion, although this is an important issue. The Gender Agenda recognises that women need to be afforded the same opportunities to progress their careers as their male colleagues, both upwards and sideways.

The number of female officers in supervisory positions as a proportion of total female officers is far less than the proportion of male officers. This is despite the fact that women tend to fare better within OSPRE. Additionally, although the total number of female police staff is far greater than the number of male police staff, this is not reflected at senior management level.

The Careers Group sought feedback from women within the force and used this to identify areas which would make practical differences to women's career opportunities. They came up with a number of areas for the organisation to address:

### Support for Promotion

This includes encouraging women to put themselves forwards for promotion, as well as providing them with practical support for preparation.

### Personal Development

This looks at introducing schemes such as mentoring, shadowing and attachments, as well as personal development workshops and networking groups.

### Access to Learning

It was recognised that many women experience difficulties in accessing learning opportunities, due to the traditional delivery format of training and development. These issues have been addressed within a separate "Access to Learning" report, and the Careers Group endorse these recommendations which are due to be implemented by the Force Training Department.

### Organisational factors

One of the most important factors in helping women to progress their careers, relates to the way in which the organisation supports them. This includes such things as positive organisational messages, supportive supervisors, encouragement of women tutors, willingness to consider requests for flexible working, and the removal of the stigma of part time working.

### Career Development Structure for Police Staff

It is recognised the lack of a clear structure for police staff, including the necessity to compete with external candidates for job opportunities, has been a real barrier, as well as a source of frustration for many police staff. The introduction of an accepted and transparent career structure for police staff is therefore a priority consideration for improvement.

As a result of these findings, the Careers Group recommended the following:



# CAREERS

- Development of a system which will encourage and support women to put themselves forwards for promotion/OSPRE
- Development of an official mentoring scheme
- Support for the implementation of the "Access to Learning" report.
- Development and implementation of a police staff career structure.
- Encouragement of commitment and understanding from seniors management.



## Personal profile - ENID TOMKINS

Enid Tomkins is Admin. Manager for a team of 81 people within HQ(INS) and PA to Martin Hansen, Director of INS.

Enid joined the organisation at 50 years of age with no IT skills and little experience of modern office procedures, having recently been a jeweller. Prior to having children she had been an office manager at a College of Education.

Enid feels that the experiences she has had within the organisation have been positive and that age and gender have never been a barrier to her progress or training. She has received full line management support and as a result undertaken training in a wide range of areas, including IT applications, recruitment and selection, management, race and diversity, PDR and mentoring.

Enid feels that her experiences show that through individual commitment and line management support a great deal of career potential and personal fulfilment can be achieved.

## COMMUNICATION

The aim of the Communications Group was to assist the Gender Agenda Project Board to achieve its five long term aims in areas relating to communications issues.

It was identified that this would be done by:

- Moving the image of the Nottinghamshire Police from male and tough to diverse and able.
- Building relationships with local media.
- Consulting with local women's groups to promote Nottinghamshire Police as a professional career.
- Promoting the work of the Gender Agenda and raising its profile.
- Ensuring the inclusion of the Gender Agenda principles within new and updated force policies.



In order to achieve these aims, the Communications Group, through consultation and feedback, developed a number of Actions which have been incorporated into the overall Gender Agenda Action Plan. These Actions are as follows:

### **Review Media Training**

To ensure that all members of staff work consistently in this area and to give women in particular, confidence with media exposure, and the opportunity to utilise this.

### **Review Recruitment Literature**

To reflect the 'diverse and able' image of the organisation through its publicity material, ensuring that images of women are appropriately represented.

### **Minority Groups to be more prominent in press releases**

To make the public more aware of women and minority police staff and officers, and raise their profile in general.

### **Develop relationships with local media**

To help promote the Nottinghamshire Police as a whole and the organisation's diverse make up and opportunities.

### **Promote the Force as a professional career**

To reach audiences that are considering career options, such as schools, colleges and minority groups, in a timely and appropriate way.

### **Create a website for the Gender Agenda**

To provide a further medium for promoting diversity and gender issues both internally and externally.

**Use Police Station entrances more effectively**

To re-design front counter areas to convey a corporate and professional image, using available space to publicise force / divisional / local information, organisational initiatives and career opportunities.

**Promote Gender Agenda activities**

To actively pursue opportunities to promote the work and progress of the Gender Agenda.

**Ensure policy makers are aware of the principles of the Gender Agenda**

To ensure that all policies consider the gender implications of policy decisions and guidelines.

## Personal profile HELEN PURCELL

Helen joined Nottinghamshire Police as a P.C. in 1982. A graduate, she had strong expectations of progressing her career within the force.

However, one of her first recollections within her probationer training was that of a Training Sergeant who made clear to her his belief that she would leave to have children within 5 years. This attitude was reinforced when Helen applied to join the Graduate Entry Scheme, when, during a function, a Command officer, on seeing a woman officer who had passed her sergeants exams, commented "she'll never make the top corridor". It was incidents such as these that contributed to Helen's realisation that the career she aspired to within Nottinghamshire Police was to be blocked by obstacles and attitudes.

Deflated in her ambitions for promotion, Helen identified a specialism which she wished to enter. She felt she would be suited to the work within Force Support, but at the time the force policy was that women were barred from joining the department. She was told by her line manager that this "was not a job for a woman".

Disillusioned, Helen decided against taking her sergeant's exams, feeling that there was little point. She left the force after 7 years.

In 1992 Helen re-joined the organisation, this time as a member of police staff. She immediately noticed a difference in attitudes towards women from her previous experiences. There was a much clearer emphasis on equal opportunities and a more flexible approach towards women, which enabled her to work within a part time position as a control operator. In 1996, Helen successfully applied for a training role in IT training.

Since then, Helen's career has gone from strength to strength. Through organisational, and particularly line management support, Helen has increased her professional and academic qualifications, and gained promotion to Senior Training and Development Officer. She feels that the organisation of today is far removed from the one she joined as a PC.

Says Helen, "I feel that the ethos of the force towards women has changed. I am confident that I will have the opportunities to progress further within the organisation, developing at both a personal and career level".

## SHOWING OUR COMMITMENT

The Gender Agenda was developed within Nottinghamshire Police as a way of tackling some of the issues that have been a feature of the working lives of many of its women employees.

It is not intended to be retrospective or negative, but rather to offer positive, proactive and practical solutions to problems and barriers that women have to face.

The Actions outlined within this brochure indicate how we intend to be proactive, but as well as practical aims, we must not underestimate the value of engendering a working environment which is supportive and understanding of the issues that affect women.

The Gender Agenda Launch is intended to explain to managers what the initiative is all about, with a view to gaining their acceptance and support.

The actions below indicate how we are committed to bringing the Gender Agenda to life. All that is required now to ensure its success is open and receptive minds and a willingness on the part of all members of the force to make it happen.

### Gender Agenda Priority Actions:

- Implement and support womens' workshops for OSPRE and promotion
- Develop and implement a mentoring scheme, through W.I.N. and the

Leadership and Management Initiative.

- Promote the police staff career development strategy.
- Improve recruitment literature and media.
- Give more prominence to women within media interfaces.
- Increase the use of media to convey a positive image of women within the force.
- Develop a Gender Agenda internal and external website.
- Promote the benefits of employing, retaining and developing women, and ensure that managers understand the Gender Agenda principles.
- Promote flexible and part-time working and demonstrate practical ways to manage this.



- Continually monitor and review the gender gaps, identifying new and outstanding issues to be addressed.
- Introduce a “Woman of the Year” Award.
- Emphasise that demographic changes mean that we must make full and proper use of all the human resources available to us. We cannot afford to neglect any area.
- Dispel the myths about ‘positive discrimination’. The Gender Agenda aims to ensure that women progress on the basis of their merit, potential and abilities, unhindered by unnecessary barriers.



## Personal Profile Pc JILL WEST

Jill joined the organisation in 1979. In the late 1980s, in response to a Weekly Order, she forwarded an expression of interest to work part time. It actually took until 1994 before this happened. In fact, her personal experience was that she was told to come back full time after her maternity leave (which was operational, shift work), or to leave the job. No other options were offered.

Jill feels that if study time had been available she would have considered studying for her promotion exams. Another off-putting factor was the common knowledge that you must work shifts and be operational to be promoted, which for Jill, with her childcare responsibilities, was not a viable option.

During her time with the force, Jill experienced other barriers as a result of her childcare responsibilities, such as being unable to attend the Harrogate Convalescence Home when she needed to, because there was no facility for her to take her son.

Jill has seen many changes in the time she has been with the organisation, relating to areas such as uniform, equipment and shift working. She feels that progress is being made, and that her male colleagues now take women more seriously and there is an increasing acceptance of their role within the organisation.



**Nottinghamshire Police Authority**

*"The Police Authority believes that equality is an entitlement, not an indulgence, and one which should never be disregarded. We welcome any initiative that helps eradicate discrimination between people on the grounds of gender or indeed race, disability, religion or any other reason. The Gender Agenda will actively encourage progression and opportunity for everyone, helping people to be judged without prejudice and rewarded appropriately."*

**John Clarke**  
Chairman, Nottinghamshire Police Authority



**Nottinghamshire Police Federation**

*"The Nottinghamshire Police Federation welcomes the launch of the Gender Agenda. The benefits from Nottinghamshire Police participating in this initiative will be available to all members of Nottinghamshire Police and should lead to a workforce that is more representative of the communities we serve and will ensure that the members we represent have an achievable and realistic work/life balance. It will give opportunities for members of staff who are under-represented in areas of the workforce to be supported in a structured manner to achieve their goals."*

**John Hammond**  
Chairman, Nottinghamshire Police Federation



*"Unison fully support the aims of the Gender Agenda and believe that this initiative will benefit all employees, male and female".*

**Shannie Khan**  
Branch Secretary, Nottinghamshire Police Branch Unison



**Superintendent's Association**

*"At both local and national level The Superintendent's Association supports the Gender Agenda and recognises the important part it plays in highlighting the need for, and assisting in the creation of a diverse Police Service which reflects the community we serve. The Association's National Executive includes a reserved seat for a female Superintendent and at its 2004 National Conference, the Association publicly launched its signing of a memorandum of understanding with the BAWP. This is designed to foster a closer and more effective working relationship between the two associations".*

**Superintendent Stuart Wright**  
Chair, Nottinghamshire Branch of the Superintendent's Association



**Women's Integrated Network (W.I.N.)**

*"The Women's Integrated Network (W.I.N.) welcomes the Gender Agenda project. We look forward to working with the force to address the issues that prevent women officers and police staff developing their full potential".*

**Ann Williams**  
Chair, Women's Integrated Network



**Nottinghamshire Police Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual Support Network**

*"The Nottinghamshire Police Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual support Network welcome the launch of the Gender Agenda, recognising its importance in promoting and supporting a diverse workforce within Nottinghamshire Police".*

**Chief Inspector Sally Healey**  
Joint Chair, Nottinghamshire Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual Support Network



**The Nottinghamshire Black Police Association**

*"The Notts Black Police Association is proud to be associated with the launch of gender agenda. We wish it well, and offer our continual support in its endeavours to achieve fairness and tackling matters of diversity. It is work such as this that brings hope to many. Together, the support networks can, and will help to achieve the goals which have for too long been held out of reach."*

**Chief Inspector S P Sharma**  
Chair, Notts. BPA

**Disability Action Network**

*"The Disability Action Network welcomes the Gender Agenda as a positive step in acknowledging the uniquely diverse workforce that makes up Nottinghamshire Police and its invaluable contribution to the community as a whole".*

**Anna Ludlow**  
Treasurer, Nottinghamshire Police Disability Action Network



## Personal Profile - ALISON WHITBY

Alison joined Nottinghamshire Police in 2002 as a Call Taker following 23 years in the NHS. At the time, she wanted to try something different and was attracted by the prospect of the potential career opportunities open to her within the force.

Initially Alison was offered part time hours, which, as a single parent, proved to be a struggle financially. Along with this, she had to cope with a steep learning curve in terms of police procedures, culture and jargon, and experience of being treated with a certain amount of suspicion and wariness by existing staff, in what was a new role within the Control Room.

Despite all this, Alison persevered, gradually increasing her hours and after three months in post, successfully applying for a position as a Call Handler. Following this, Alison became part of a team, which had a positive effect on her working relationships and environment. Alison has since secured a Control Operator post and is currently training for this, part of which includes the opportunity to work towards an NVQ qualification.

Alison's general experience as a woman within Nottinghamshire Police has been that line management has been largely supportive to her on a career and personal level. Although some training and development needs have not been met, and this can be a fragmented area, she acknowledges that this is purely for operational reasons. As regards culture, she did experience a derogatory sexual remark from a colleague, but her line manager dealt this with quickly and to her satisfaction. She accepts that within the working environment there will be some 'banter', but feels that boundaries are monitored.

A particularly positive experience Alison has recently had was through undertaking the Springboard course. This enabled her to integrate with other women within the force, network, share experiences and develop personally. She saw such a change in some of the women attending the course and feels that it is such a valuable experience that she has been inspired to apply to become a coach/mentor for Springboard.

Alison's hopes for the future are to continue to develop within the force, maximising the range of career opportunities that, with a combination of her efforts and the organisation's will, should become available to her.

## Further Information

Website: [www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/genderagenda](http://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/genderagenda)

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Are there any specific issues which you think the Gender Agenda should be tackling, or do you have any feedback on the work that's been done so far? If so, we'd like to hear from you.