# BRITISH COUNCIL

## STUDY UK DISCOVER YOU





## INTERVIEW WITH A POLICE OFFICER



Andy Sidebotham is a Police Inspector with Bolton Central Integrated Neighbourhood Policing Team, part of Greater Manchester Police. We asked him a few questions about the work of the police in the UK.

### What is the role of a police officer in the UK?

Police officers work in partnership with the communities they serve to maintain law and order, protect members of the public and their property, prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime and improve the quality of life for all citizens. We use a wide range of techniques to protect individuals, identify the perpetrators of crime and ensure successful prosecutions against those who break the law.

#### Who do you normally work with?

In my role as a neighbourhood inspector I work with a wide range of people. I work alongside a detective inspector, police/detective sergeants, CID officers, police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and many others.

I also have strong relationships with other partners; for example Bolton council, housing and environmental health. Every month I hold a partnership meeting in which all the different partners attend and we discuss key issues within the neighbourhood. On a wider basis, police officers work closely with members of the criminal justice system, social workers, schools, local businesses, health trusts, housing authorities, town planners and community groups to provide advice, education and assistance to those who wish to reduce crime or have been affected by crime.

### Is the UK a safe country to come to?

Nowhere can be 100 per cent safe, as unfortunately we are always going to have a minority of people who ruin things for others. However, I do believe that the UK is an extremely safe country to come to; there are many services for the public in place to ensure their well-being and also many lovely places to explore.

### What sort of things can I speak to a police officer about?

You can speak to a police officer about anything. Police officers are trained in being good listeners and therefore this allows them to build a rapport with members of the public and to build confidence as well as strong relationships.



### ·STUDY UK· DISCOVER YOU



### What should I do if I lose my passport? Can I report it to the police?

I would phone the non-emergency police number 101 and let them know about the lost passport. That way they can give you a lost property reference number and also, it helps us alert the correct people, as a lost passport could be used in a fraud or identity theft.

#### What happens if I report a crime?

If you report a crime it will be dealt with according to the nature of the crime. In the neighbourhood team we deal with neighbourhood issues. The most popular way people report crimes is by ringing 999 or 101. The telephone number 999 should only be used in situations where there is immediate danger or a crime in progress. Other situations should be reported on the 101 number.

When you call 101, the system will determine your location and connect you to the police force covering that area. You will hear a recorded message announcing the police force you are being connected to. If you are on a boundary between two or more forces, the recorded message will give you a choice of which force to be connected to.

The call operators then grade the incident depending on the seriousness, and it is dealt with from there. In the neighbourhood team we tend to get crimes sent through to us for officers to investigate and to follow up all leads. The initial contact is normally made by the response officers.

### Can I ask to speak to a police officer of the same sex as me?

Yes you can, however this is entirely down to demand. We will always try to accommodate the best we can, and under some circumstances a same sex officer is a necessity, for example, when the incident involves sexual assaults, rapes or religious issues.

#### Will you provide an interpreter if I need one?

Yes. Greater Manchester Police work very closely with professional interpreters and we will request them when needed. Interpreters will help in interviews, with taking statements and when dealing with general enquiries.

Interpreters and Translators are provided to Greater Manchester Police by Capita.

### If I ring 999 in an emergency, how long will it take for an officer to arrive?

This entirely depends on the type of emergency and how the operators grade it. If it is a grade 1, the police have to be there within 15 minutes, a grade 2 warrants response in an hour and grade 3 would be a maximum waiting time of four hours.

However, we take every incident seriously and try and deal with them all as quickly and efficiently as possible.

#### Do police officers carry guns?

Police officers do not carry firearms, except in special circumstances. The officers on the neighbourhood team do not carry guns, however specially trained police officers from the armed response unit do. Some officers from across various areas within Greater Manchester Police do carry Tasers or other personal defence items though.