



GREATER MANCHESTER
POLICE



NAME:
MARTIN

VOLUNTEER ROLE:
SPECIAL CONSTABLE

CASE STUDY

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE GMP SPECIAL CONSTABULARY?

I have always had the belief that when you find a passion for something, you find your purpose in life. I wanted a fulfilling role that I could really make a difference in, whilst having a positive impact and influence on others.

I felt some of the skills and experience I'd gained in my 15 year career in retail, would be transferable, and so joining GMP gives me the opportunity to play a key role in our community and contribute towards delivering its aims and values.

Being a Special Constable is a fantastic way of gaining real life experiences and the opportunity to be a police officer without a full-time commitment. It enables me to volunteer as a fully warranted police officer whilst also focusing on my career in retail.

Make no mistake about it, you may be titled as a Special Constable but when you're in role, you are a police officer. Same powers. Same public perception. You are on the front line!

WHAT ARE THE BEST BITS ABOUT BEING A SPECIAL?

There's a great deal of positives to the role and I've been really taken aback by the opportunities that you get to make a difference.

I really appreciated how welcomed I was to GMP from the very early stages when I was assigned a tutor, to meeting my colleagues in the team at Wigan - all of whom helped in getting rid of any nerves early on, and without doubt had a significant influence on building my confidence.

I've been privileged to speak at recruitment events for Special Constables and I've been enormously proud to speak about my own experiences and journey so far. It's been brilliant to meet potential new candidates and liaise with them about the role.

I love how many opportunities you get to carry out different duties across a variety of events – including both Neighbourhood and Response duties, and specific operations such as Operation Avro, plain clothes surveillance, events such as Parklife, traffic operations, and carnivals. All of which offer different experiences to build your knowledge and help you grow and develop.

The great thing about being a Special I've learnt first-hand, is that there are always fellow officers on hand to help and guide you if needed. I've built some great relationships and feel like I have a fantastic support network to help progress my career and development.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE YOUR VOLUNTARY RESPONSIBILITIES WITH HOME/SOCIAL/WORK COMMITMENTS?

Specials are requested to provide a minimum 16 hours per month, and I'm lucky enough to have the flexibility to work around my shift patterns within my current employment and be able to complete special Constable duties in my free time, and to balance this with time with family and friends.

There's no doubt about it, it takes a level of commitment to balance it all, but the big picture for me is that I'm dedicating my time to make a difference and I take great pride in being a Special Constable and the responsibility of being a GMP police officer.

There are endless opportunities to meet the minimum hours, and I think the more hours and duties you complete, the more skills, experience and knowledge you obtain and the confidence gained have a greater impact going forward.

WHAT WAS THE REACTION OF YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY WHEN YOU DECIDED TO JOIN THE SPECIALS AND VOLUNTEER TO UNDERTAKE FRONT LINE POLICING?

It had always been a burning desire and passion of mine to join the police, so when I shared the news that I had been successful in joining the Specials, the reaction was a little surreal at first, slightly shocked yes, but absolutely in support of my decision and great pride.

I don't think it really hit home until I attended my attestation ceremony (this is where you are officially given the rights to become a warranted police officer). The event gave my family and friends the opportunity to be a part of seeing me swear the oath and officially parading as a Special Constable.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY TO OTHERS?

A million percent. The pride and honour you get every time you put on your uniform is one that will live with you forever. Don't get me wrong there are challenges you will face and experiences that will be distressing at times, but your role is to prevent crime and do everything you can to make the communities a safer place. But that is the reason I chose to dedicate my time to volunteer as a Special. I know in years to come when I look back on my life, being a GMP Special and serving our communities will definitely be up there as one of my proudest achievements.

If you wish to join volunteers in policing please contact: cip-recruitment@gmp.police.uk