

Events and Processions FAQs

Can the police ban public assemblies?

No. Police forces cannot ban a public assembly.

Can the police apply any conditions to authorised assemblies and processions?

Yes but only if the following are reasonably believed and the public assembly may result in:

- serious public disorder; and/or
- serious damage to property; and/or
- serious disruption to the life of the community or the intimidation of others.

What kind of conditions can the police apply?

The conditions the police apply have to be lawful, for a legitimate aim, necessary and proportionate. For example, numbers duration and location can all have conditions placed upon them.

How much does each public gathering cost the police?

Cost can vary, depending on the resources required to ensure everyone's safety.

What is mutual aid?

Mutual aid is a term that refers to drafting officers and staff in from other forces to support an operation. Forces across the country have an agreement that, when required, they will support other forces.

Is mutual aid always used in a police operation?

No. Mutual aid is called upon when we cannot maintain staffing levels in all areas of the business.

Does mutual aid cost more?

Yes. Where possible we will try to use SYP staff. However, there are times we need to ask for support from other forces.

Who commands the police operation?

A specialist trained public order commander is assigned to each public assembly. The size of the march or protest will determine the level of command required.

What are police liaison officers?

Police liaison officers (PLO) are specially trained officers who are dedicated to communicating with public gathering organisers. The light blue tabards they wear can identify PLO's.

What tactics can the police use?

Our primary tactic is to negotiate with all those assembled, to seek compromise. This will always be considered prior to any other action.

What is 'kettling'?

Kettling is a containment tactic and is only employed as a last resort, when the risk of disorder and violence is high and no other option is available. The time in which people are contained is kept to a minimum.

Are there always 'riot' police at a public assembly?

No. It all depends on the details of the public assembly. The commander of the event will decide what types of police officers are required. Police in public disorder protection clothing are part of a dedicated support unit and are not always needed to keep order