



BCH ANIMAL WELFARE SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT 2025 - 2026



The Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire (BCH) Independent Dog Welfare Scheme is administered by the Cambridgeshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner on behalf of all three Police and Crime Commissioners. Operating 24/7 across both urban and rural environments, the team provides responsive oversight to ensure police dogs are cared for to the highest standards.

The Scheme continues to deliver effective independent scrutiny, helping to maintain public confidence that Police dogs across BCH receive appropriate welfare and support. The Dog Unit delivers specialist capabilities across the Tri-Force area, with highly trained dogs and handlers supporting frontline policing and enhancing operational Effectiveness.

ABOUT THE TEAM

The Dog Unit consists of trained police dogs and handlers operating across BCH. In addition, volunteers carry out welfare checks at Luton International Airport (LIA). The dogs are trained to track offenders and locate missing persons, while some receive specialist training to detect drugs, cash, firearms, or explosives using their highly developed sense of smell. The unit is a vital resource in preventing and detecting crime across the three forces. Currently, the Dog Unit has 30 handlers and 27 general purpose dogs and 15 detection dogs. At LIA specifically, there are six handlers and seven operational dogs, with one dog currently in training supporting ongoing activity.

VISITS

Over the past 12 months, a total of 14 welfare visits have been undertaken, during which 120 welfare checks were completed by our Volunteers. We are pleased to report that no serious concerns regarding the health or welfare of any of the dogs were identified during these visits. Reports highlighted only minor issues, such as a cut paw, a tail injury, and digestive concerns. All of these were being appropriately managed under the guidance of a Vet and we are pleased to confirm that all issues were successfully resolved.

VOLUNTEER COMMENTS

“Excellent setting for training officers were kind, open and accommodating. I would like you to send my sincere thanks to them. I love this job its a total privilege to meet the awesome dogs and their handlers”



ABOUT OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our five Independent Volunteers are members of the public who play a key role in oversight and accountability. They observe, comment on, and report on the condition of police dogs, as well as how they are transported while on duty. These volunteers provide essential and robust scrutiny, helping to ensure the highest standards of care, treatment, and overall wellbeing for dogs across BCH.

This we have recruited a number of volunteer to ensure there are at least two volunteers in each policing area, strengthening our ability to maintain consistent and effective oversight.



GOODBYE LUNA

Retired Police Dog Luna is nine years old and has dedicated over 7.5 yrs operational service being a Drugs, Cash and Firearms dog (DCW) for BCH Police Dog Unit. Luna was abandoned in Ireland back in 2017, whereby she was collected by The Dogs Trust, she was then rehomed to her handler at BCH. Luna has had a fantastic career and some amazing finds along the way.

Lunas Dad said “Throughout Luna’s career she has made me proud, she has already embraced retirement spending all her time with the family on long walks and weekends away”



ACHIEVEMENTS

In February this year, we were delighted to receive recognition from Dogs Trust and were awarded certification confirming that the Tri-Force Animal Welfare Independent Visitors Scheme runs an effective Animal Welfare Scheme for our dog units.

This accreditation highlights our commitment to ensuring an open and transparent process for monitoring the welfare needs of our incredible working dogs. Dogs Trust has expressed pride in supporting our scheme and looks forward to continuing a strong partnership with the Tri-Force in the years ahead.

We are also pleased to share that one of the dogs was rehomed from the Dogs Trust this year, and it is hoped she will go on to be successful in her training with the Dog Unit.

