

PETER AYLING – CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

My name is Peter Ayling, I am a Chief Superintendent in the Met and I am currently the Borough Commander for Bexley. I've been doing the role now for just over a year.

I joined Kent Police at 21 and transferred to the Met as a Superintendent in 2011, throughout my career I've done a variety of roles, predominately in tactical arena and local borough based policing.

I wanted to be a Police Officer for quite a few years, my Father was in the police so it's something that I've had a tendency towards, but it was just as I was near the end of school really it was something I felt really quite passionate about, something I thought I could do and it just seemed a really interesting and varied job.

There is a tremendous amount of support for you, whether that is through coaching from your peers, or whether its supervisors just looking after your development, understanding where you have got specific needs or, understanding where there are opportunities for you to contribute to certain parts of the business.

Everyday can be different but, typically every morning I will review exactly what has gone on in the borough, and depending on what has happened will have conversations with my senior leadership team or with our local stakeholders just to give them a briefing and then there is a need to respond to any opportunities or threats that may have arisen overnight.

There are stresses and strains to the job, I think particularly within my role, you can feel the burden of responsibility, if you are suffering an increase in crime at one stage, people are looking to you internally and externally to make sensible reasoned decisions, that will bring about a reduction in whatever crime it is that's occurring.

I am really proud to be part of the Metropolitan Police and really proud of the role we do in keeping Londoners safe, so there are some challenges we do need to overcome, we need to increase our visibility on the streets and we need the workforce that does reflect the diverse communities of London. If we hope to have genuine and sustained trust, people must feel that we are a representation of the community they're part of.

In terms of my own personal development, there are a huge number of opportunities open to me within the Met, you can diversify in a number of different areas and there are opportunities for academic study, there are opportunities to involve yourself in specialist business, there are opportunities to work on different boroughs, so there are a number of avenues that are open to me, so I am absolutely committed in the short term on my borough in ensuring I leave a lasting legacy and making sure the decisions I make now, and the changes that I make, are in the best interests of the people who will continue to live and work in Bexley for years and years to come, and long after I have moved on to new pastures.



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What I think makes me a good police officer is the ability to listen and communicate, they are absolutely key. Whether you are dealing with your colleagues or whether you are dealing with the public, patience and motivation but, I think the thing that singles out good police officers is just unrelenting enthusiasm, and it's really difficult I think not to be successful in whatever you want to do if you are always optimistic and enthusiastic.

I would recommend a career in the Metropolitan Police to anybody, and I would recommend the direct entry scheme to people as well. There are a lot of myths and rumours about policing, and I am sure people will have seen a lot that is written in the media. All I can say is we often talk about the cultural of policing in very negative terms and we forget the really really positive culture that exists, one of courage, one of togetherness, one of doing something that genuinely matters.

My experience in the Met has been positive throughout and joining from a different force I was apprehensive about how I was going to be received, particularly as a young Superintendent, particularly not policing in London before and I found people to be open minded, very welcoming and with a huge amount of support available to me so that I can adjust to those challenges.

So one of the natural apprehensions I think is if you are coming through in direct entry how will police officers accept you. Well first and foremost there will be quite a rigorous training program and very, very good level of support for those candidates, but I think people will be surprised and pleased that there is an open minded culture within the Met and I think people will see the quality of the individual and judge them on what they do and how they add value when they join the organisation rather than have entrenched views about whether somebody can adjust to the role having not served in every rank.

I think it is eminently possible for somebody from a civilian role to move into policing and I think we can take huge benefits from their outside experience and looking at things from a different perspective. In particular one thing I found is that in the past there was a reluctance to consider that any business methodology was relevant for policing which is absurd, you can employ sound principles of leadership or business into any organisation and the Met Police is no different and I think we will really benefit from getting people with a rich diversity of background and experience to continue to shape and adapt the really positive culture that already exists within the Met.

Three words that best sum up my job. Making a difference.

