



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01532

Name of petitioner

Garry Stagg

Petition title

Stop Public Bearing of Arms by Police

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to prevent Sir Stephen House, Chief Constable of Scotland, from allowing armed police to routinely patrol the streets of Scottish towns and villages and cities.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

I have emailed my constituency MSP, and sent copies of this email to most other MSPs. I have started a public petition at <http://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/stop-arming-scottish-police> and have it has been suggested by Patricia Ferguson MSP that I petition the Parliament directly.

Petition background information

Great Britain has always had an unarmed, civilian police force and a policy of policing by consent. Police officers carrying guns as a matter of routine on the streets of our cities, towns and villages is deeply disturbing. Standing Firearms Authorities were introduced in 2009 and Chief Constables in the former Strathclyde, Tayside and Northern constabularies implemented this practice. Now that the operational decision has been taken by the Chief Constable of Police Scotland to implement SFA nationally, the matter has been drawn to the attention of the public. Armed officers on patrol or attending incidents where firearms are not required are a danger to the public and to themselves as well as a potential target for criminal or terrorist activity. The policy must be reversed with immediate effect.

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/armedpolice>

Related information for petition

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

Closing date for collecting signatures online

07 / 10 / 2014

Comments to stimulate online discussion

I do not believe in a routinely armed police force. Reluctantly, I accept that there is a need for a small number of police to carry weapons.

However, those weapons must be kept out of sight and securely housed, only to be deployed in exceptional circumstances and at the orders of a senior commander. Furthermore, whenever there is an operational need to remove those weapons from their secure housing, there must be full and public accountability.

I cannot accept that there is a need for officers to carry weapons in public view. I am intimidated by the possibility that armed officers, attending a routine disturbance, could be overwhelmed, causing the weapons to be either removed from them or discharged. I am disturbed that such officers are a potential target for criminals and/or terrorists, thus endangering the public around them whom they are supposed to protect. No matter how well trained, officers are human and can make mistakes. There have already been tragic incidents in Britain involving correctly deployed armed response units, leading to the deaths of innocent people. This becomes far more likely if police are carrying semi-automatic weapons on day-to-day patrol. I would urge you to please call upon the Justice Secretary to rein in Sir Stephen House and reverse this dangerous and unacceptable policy.