# Violence against police in Northern Ireland escalates with brutal attacks in Belfast and Banbridge



The recent increase in violence against police officers in Northern Ireland has raised significant concerns about their safety while fulfilling their duties. In a notable incident in south Belfast, a police officer suffered serious injuries, including a severe bite on the arm, after confronting street fighting on University Street. This confrontation involved two men, Lewis Goodall, 26, and Matthew Wilson, 25, who were remanded in custody facing multiple charges, including assault occasioning actual bodily harm and possession of an offensive weapon. The officer's injuries were exacerbated when Goodall allegedly became aggressive during an attempted arrest, resulting in the officer being punched and bitten.

This alarming trend of violence against law enforcement personnel appears to be escalating. Just last month, in Banbridge, another officer required hospital treatment after a brutal attack where he was choked, bitten, and kicked in the face while responding to a disturbance at a takeaway. Reports indicated that during this altercation, other officers were also subject to violence, with one being headbutted and another bitten on the arm. Incidents like these not only highlight the dangers faced by officers daily but also reflect a broader issue of public disorder and aggression that needs addressing.

Moreover, the pattern of assaults on police officers is not isolated to a single location. In North Belfast, an officer was injured when a suspect headbutted him after being arrested for various offences. This incident exemplifies the volatile nature of policing in areas where conflicts arise, challenging the officers' ability to maintain order safely. The police have expressed their alarm over such attacks, emphasising that officers routinely face hostile situations that can escalate quickly, often with dangerous outcomes.

Court officials have noted the serious nature of the charges brought against those involved in these assaults, reflecting a growing recognition of the need for tougher stances on violence against law enforcement. In the case of Goodall, the court determined that he posed a risk to public safety, leading to a decision to deny bail—demonstrating the legal system's acknowledgment of the seriousness of such behaviours.

As police continue to respond to public disturbances, the community must reflect on the implications of these violent encounters. There is a pressing need for a dialogue regarding community support for law enforcement, prevention of violence, and addressing the underlying issues contributing to these confrontations. Such measures are essential not only for the protection of police officers but also to foster a safer community for all residents.

Amid rising tensions and challenges faced by law enforcement, the situation necessitates cooperation between community members, policymakers, and police forces to cultivate a safer environment and ensure that those tasked with maintaining public order can perform their duties without fear of violence.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/policeman-punched-in-the-face-and-bitten-as-he-responded-to-street-fighting-A6APM5WUNNHDHLF5JQ7SCPGKUQ/)
2. Paragraph 2: [[2]](https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/man-arrested-after-police-officer-choked-and-bitten-attack-banbridge), [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2023-07-11/police-officer-bitten-and-choked-in-brutal-attack), [[6]](https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/crime/officer-left-unable-to-speak-after-being-kicked-bitten-and-choked-whilst-responding-to-callout-showing-the-grim-reality-of-what-our-officers-on-the-ground-are-facing-each-and-every-day-4214953)
3. Paragraph 3: [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-59808595), [[5]](https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/psni-officer-hospitalised-after-being-24886203)
4. Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/policeman-punched-in-the-face-and-bitten-as-he-responded-to-street-fighting-A6APM5WUNNHDHLF5JQ7SCPGKUQ/)
5. Paragraph 5: [[7]](https://www.irishpost.com/news/police-officer-choked-bitten-and-kicked-in-the-face-in-brutal-attack-256815)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/policeman-punched-in-the-face-and-bitten-as-he-responded-to-street-fighting-A6APM5WUNNHDHLF5JQ7SCPGKUQ/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.psni.police.uk/latest-news/man-arrested-after-police-officer-choked-and-bitten-attack-banbridge> - A police officer required hospital treatment after being assaulted, bitten, and choked in Banbridge, Co Down, on July 10, 2023. The officer and a colleague responded to a fight at a takeaway on Newry Street. During the incident, the officer was kicked in the face, bitten on the shoulder, and choked, rendering him unable to speak. Other officers were also attacked, with one being headbutted and another bitten on the arm. A man was arrested on suspicion of assault, assault on police, non-fatal strangulation, and possession of an offensive weapon in a public place.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-59808595> - Two police officers were attacked after arresting a man in north Belfast on Tuesday morning. A police car was flagged down by a woman on the Cliftonville Road at about 03:00 GMT. Shortly after, a male was arrested on suspicion of several offences. Police said the man then headbutted a female officer and punched a male officer, injuring both. The man remains in custody. The incident highlights the risks officers face daily while serving the community.
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2023-07-11/police-officer-bitten-and-choked-in-brutal-attack> - A police officer needed hospital treatment after being assaulted, bitten, and choked in a 'brutal' attack in Banbridge, Co Down, on July 10, 2023. The officer and a colleague responded to a report of a fight at a takeaway on Newry Street. During the incident, the officer was kicked in the face, bitten on the shoulder, and choked, leaving him unable to speak. Other officers were also attacked, with one being headbutted and another bitten on the arm. A man was arrested on suspicion of assault, assault on police, non-fatal strangulation, and possession of an offensive weapon in a public place.
5. <https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/psni-officer-hospitalised-after-being-24886203> - A police officer was hospitalised after being headbutted, kicked, and spat at during a 'horrific attack' in Dromore, Co Tyrone, on August 29, 2023. The PSNI responded to a report of an assault at a licensed premises on Main Street. Upon arresting a 33-year-old man, he became aggressive, kicking the officer twice in the head, headbutting him, and spitting at him. The officer was taken to hospital for treatment. The suspect was arrested on suspicion of common assault, assault on police, resisting police, and disorderly behaviour.
6. <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/crime/officer-left-unable-to-speak-after-being-kicked-bitten-and-choked-whilst-responding-to-callout-showing-the-grim-reality-of-what-our-officers-on-the-ground-are-facing-each-and-every-day-4214953> - A police officer was left unable to speak after being kicked, bitten, and choked while responding to a callout in Banbridge, Co Down, on July 10, 2023. The officer and a colleague responded to reports of a fight involving two men at a takeaway on Newry Street. During the incident, the officer was kicked in the face, bitten on the shoulder, and choked by the suspect. Other officers were also attacked, with one being headbutted and another bitten on the arm. A man was arrested on suspicion of assault, assault on police, non-fatal strangulation, and possession of an offensive weapon in a public place.
7. <https://www.irishpost.com/news/police-officer-choked-bitten-and-kicked-in-the-face-in-brutal-attack-256815> - A man has been arrested after a police officer was brutally attacked while attempting to break up a fight at a takeaway in Banbridge, Co Down, on July 10, 2023. The officer and his colleague were called to a fight between two men at a takeaway on Newry Street at around 11pm. As the PSNI officers spoke to both men separately, one of them lashed out and attacked the officer, who was kicked in the face and bitten on the shoulder during the incident. He was also choked by the man, with his injuries leaving him unable to speak at present. When other officers arrived to provide assistance, they too were attacked with one officer being headbutted and another bitten on the arm. A man has since been arrested on suspicion of offences including assault, assault on police, non-fatal strangulation, and possession of an offensive weapon in a public place.