

# **Police Scotland recognise International Women's Day – #choosetochallenge #WomenInPolicing**

**Police Scotland are recognising International Women's Day which is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women across the world and also to reflect on how women are thought of in society and in policing.**

This year's theme is #choosetochallenge, as Chief Inspector Jen Valentine explained: "25 years ago I passed out from Tulliallan Police College, a very proud moment for me, my family and particularly for my late father, who had also served as a police officer. I was issued with two skirts; trousers were by special request when I got to my station. I also was issued with a black leather handbag, with specially designed radio pouch.



Police Scotland. Photo: Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)  
"I joined at a time of rapid change – an increase in female officer numbers, more equality in equipment and uniform and better HR policies that started to allow women to continue in the service and have a family.

"From early in my career I stood up for inclusion and equality. This saw me join a small team of Diversity Trainers in 2001, delivering training to all police and staff in Tayside Police. This is one of the most challenging, but also

most rewarding things I have done in policing.

“I was challenged to do more than talk about it, by a male colleague and friend, who encouraged me to join the Public Order Unit in 2004, at that time taking the number of women in the unit up to 3 out of nearly 100. Those figures are vastly different today.

“I’ve been fortunate to have key role models in my career, predominantly male officers, who supported, encouraged and challenged me to realise my potential through Sergeant and Inspector ranks. I hope that I am able to do the same for others.

“The service has changed, but there is still more to be done. Women officers now undertake all roles within policing, our front line officers, giving 24/7 cover to the community and a variety of specialist roles.

“25 years in, I’m now the Area Commander for South Highland and recently promoted to Chief Inspector. A third of the officers in Highlands and Islands are women, slightly above the national average. In promoted ranks it is improving quickly too. I recognise the responsibility I have being a female Chief Inspector.

“Policing offers the opportunity to serve the community. Every officer and police staff member in Police Scotland brings their own unique experience. The more diverse our workforce is, the more we reflect society and as a result are better able to serve it. If anyone is interested in finding out more about a career in policing go to [www.scotland.police.uk/recruitment](http://www.scotland.police.uk/recruitment) and look out for events, such as the Women’s Recruitment Event on 18th March.”

@ScottishWDF #IWD2021 #choosetochallenge #WomenInPolicing