

 WARWICKSHIRE POLICE	POLICY
Security Classification	OFFICIAL
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	YES

POLICY TITLE	Firearms Licencing
REFERENCE NUMBER	WP309
Version	1.2

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	LOCAL POLICING
BUSINESS AREA	PUBLIC CONTACT

IMPLEMENTATION DATE	25/09/2025
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	25/09/2026
RISK RATING	HIGH
EQUALITY ANALYSIS	LOW
TIER	1

Warwickshire Police welcome comments and suggestions from the public and staff about the contents and implementation of this policy. Please e-mail policiesandprocedures@warwickshire.police.uk

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1.0 POLICY OUTLINE

This policy explains how Warwickshire Police will approach the administration of firearm, shotgun and explosives licensing whilst balancing the risk and harm to the public with the lawful right to possess firearms, shotguns and/or explosives.

Warwickshire Police will hold all firearms licensing records, electronically.

2.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY

This policy ensures the Firearms Licensing Unit (FLU) complies with guidance to control firearms and shotguns in accordance with the Firearms Act 1968 (and its amendments), Home Office Firearms Licensing Statutory Guidance for Chief Officers of Police 2023, and the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) for Firearms Licensing April 2024. The aim of firearms licensing is to ensure public safety by controlling access to firearms. We can keep the public safe by focusing firearms licensing activity on the following objectives:

- Prevent foreseeable or avoidable harm.
- Manage risk and act decisively if risk is identified.
- Be proportionate and timely.
- Provide a fair, rigorous, transparent and consistent service to the public.

3.0 IMPLICATIONS OF POLICY

This policy is to ensure that all processes and records held by Warwickshire Police are treated in accordance with legal obligations and statutory requirements:

- Firearms Licensing APP
- [FIREARMS LICENCING: Statutory Guidance for Chief Officers of Police' \(revised August 2025\)](#)
- Firearms Act 1968
- [College of Policing Code of Ethics](#)
- [The General Data Protection Regulations \(retained from EU\) 2016](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [The Human Rights Act 1998 \(HRA\)](#)
- [The Management of Police Information \(MoPI\) Code of Practice 2005](#)
- [The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)
- Warwickshire Police's Information Management and Security Policies
- Legal considerations
- Financial implications

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.1 Firearms Licensing Unit

- Ensure that applicants, for the grant or renewal of firearm, shotgun, explosives, registered firearms dealers including additional premise, club, section 11(6), visitors, temporary permits and article 7 certificates, are vetted (via Warwickshire Police Intelligence databases) to assess their suitability to possess firearms, shotguns or explosives. This will include obtaining necessary medical reports and carrying out intelligence checks in relevant systems or with other departments as deemed necessary.
- Conduct a rigorous risk assessment of each grant or renewal application. Firearms Enquiry Officers (FEO) will assess the suitability of an applicant as part of a wider risk assessment through either a personal visit (compulsory for new grant applications) or a telephone-based interview (renewal firearm, shotgun and explosives applications only). Team members of the FLU may assist FEOs in conducting low risk telephone enquiries if necessary.
- Complete change of address and security enquires.
- The Firearms Licensing Manager will also, if deemed relevant and appropriate, provide certificate revocation documentation that includes an **immediate surrender** under the Firearms Act 1968 which may be utilised to assist operational officers in removing firearm(s), shotgun(s) and/or Explosives from certificate holders who are deemed unsuitable to continue to possess them. The Firearms Licensing Statutory Guidance for Chief Officers of Police, Section 3 (assessing suitability) will be referred to and followed.
- Be available (core hours only for immediate access) for specific enquiries made by operational officers in relation to refusal, referral or revocation of certificates or firearms offences (enquiries should be directed to the FLU on Tel 01926 415526).
- Provide accurate information as required for any relevant operational purposes.
- Aid operational officers via the FEO or FLU Supervisor, subject to availability and workload (as defined by the FLU Manager or FLU Supervisor), as may be required from time to time. In relation to the voluntary surrender of weapon(s) and/or certificate(s) and making safe and/or of firearm(s)/shotgun(s) coming into the possession of the Police.
- Provide, as far as is practicable and appropriate, assistance to police officers in respect of firearms licensing related matters.

- Issue a revocation when the Firearms Licensing Manager deems the circumstances to be necessary. The FLU will inform the Force Control room through an auditable email trail of the actions that require undertaking.
- Identify any criminal offences arising from the processing of firearms licensing applications or any other firearms licensing processes, e.g. failure to notify of change of address or weapon transactions.

4.2 Local Policing (LP)

- As part of routine tasks LP officers will attend incidents (for example incidents of a 'domestic' nature or those of specific risk), where persons involved are firearm and/or shotgun holders or hold certificates or weapons at the call card addresses. Dependent on the circumstances it may be necessary (where, for example, risk to public safety is heightened) for the officer attending to seize weapon(s), section 1 ammunition, explosives, certificate(s) and deal with any criminal offences apparent. Where these circumstances occur the seizure of weapon(s) should occur in accordance with relevant SOP.
- Incidents involving firearm/shotgun licence holder where domestic abuse and other incidents where violence, misuse of drugs and other high categorised incidents is evident, will always attract significant scrutiny. Decision making regarding the removal of firearm(s)/shotgun(s) will always start with the presumption of removal. Any deviation from this will require clear rationale.
- Ensure that any incidents involving certificate holders are forwarded to the FLU without delay, as this could affect suitability of certificate holders in continuing to possess firearms/shotguns. These reports will be emailed to the Firearms Licensing Manager and (Firearmslicensing@warwickshire.police.uk) giving a summary of the facts of the case and any actions taken or intended. This notification must be made to the FLU during that tour of duty.
- FLU will provide local knowledge in respect of certificate holders/applicants as may be requested from time to time.
- Accept investigations from the Firearms Licensing Unit which have arisen through the identification of a criminal offence. Examples of such are where there has been a clear and deliberate failure to declare criminal convictions as part of the licence application process.

4.3 Local Police/Armed Police Officer teams deemed suitable weapon seizure

- Accept the allocation of enquiries in respect of late or non-renewal of licence where the possession of the weapon remains with the licence holder who refuses to comply with requests from FLU. These will usually require seizure of weapon(s) and certificate(s) and reporting for prosecution in respect of firearms offences. Offences will be reviewed and considered by local supervisors in respect to manner of disposal or investigation.
- As may be required from time-to-time officers will serve on an individual, a notice of refusal or revocation of firearm and/or shotgun certificate(s). Officers will seize certificate(s), shotgun(s) and/or firearm(s), and ammunition when necessary. Confirm completion of the serving of revocation in writing, to the Firearms Licensing Manager (email to firearmslicensing@warwickshire.police.uk).
- Deal with occasions where revocations are generated by FLU where it is suspected, or known, that an offence in relation to firearms has been committed and process any resultant caution or prosecution.
- Ensure that reports concerning incidents, such as those at 3 above, which cast doubt on the suitability of licence holders to continue to possess firearm(s)/shotgun(s), are forwarded to the FLU without delay. These reports should be in email format, giving a summary of the facts of the case and any actions taken or intended. This notification must be made to the FLU during that tour of duty.
- Bring to the attention of the Firearms Licensing Unit Manager any information which may be considered a cause for concern for public safety relevant to any individual in respect of firearms licensing related matters.

4.4 Public Contact Centre

- Will signpost members of the public to the Firearms Licensing section of the Warwickshire Police website or provide contact details of the FLU to members of the public regarding any queries relating to Firearms licensing.
- When receiving weapons from certificate holders or non-certificate holders for destruction/voluntary surrender, front office staff must enter full details onto the property system including full weapon and person details of person delivering. Instructions 3 and 4 below must be followed on the day of surrender.
- If applicable forward any certificates to FLU office.

- An e-mail MUST be sent to firearmslicensing@warwickshire.police.uk providing details of property number and if certificate(s) have been sent to FLU.

4.5 Operations and Communications Centre

- Upon receipt of instruction from the FLU, to initiate the firearms revocation process, the following process should be followed:
 - When revocation action is to be taken, the FLU will inform the Force Control Room via email (CommunicationCentre@warwickshire.police.uk) at which point ownership will lie with the OCC Inspector (FIM). Where necessary and in urgent cases direct verbal communication should be made by the FLU Management with the FIM or OCC supervisor so that any associated threat or risk can be clearly communicated. This will also be followed up with an email from FLU.
 - A STORM incident will be created – this will be either a priority or scheduled deployment unless exceptional circumstances exist.
 - The FIM will liaise with the duty Inspector where the incident will be allocated for an officer to deal. An (AFO) must attend to “make safe” any weapon/ammunition prior to it being seized in all cases unless there are circumstances that do not make this possible. The FIM will endorse the log with reasoning in these limited circumstances and remind officers attending re seizure of firearm/shotgun certificate.
 - Once the weapon(s)/ammunition has been “made safe,” seizure of weapon(s) and firearm/shotgun certificate(s) should be carried out by the attending officers unless there are extenuating circumstances. It will be for the FIM to ensure that an OPU/patrol supervisor has been allocated the task, and the FLU has been made aware of the seizure.
 - Officers will deal with the full enquiry and, where applicable PIU will interview, file build to prosecution. Close liaison with the FLU will be required.
 - When an incident is reported into the control room, fitting into the categories mentioned within the LP section, automatic checks are completed across intelligence systems including National Firearms Licensing Management System (NFLMS). If this has a positive response on NFLMS or an FA trace on PNC, then the incident is to be tagged for firearms licensing and an email sent

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to (firearmslicensing@warwickshire.police.uk) with specific details of the incident, including the details of the OIC. This must be completed within the officer's tour of duty.

Please state which head of department or chief officer has been consulted in the development of this policy:

<i>Jo Bunting</i>	<i>Superintendent</i>
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5.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

The history and rationale for change to policy will be recorded using the below chart:

Date	Author / Reviewer	Amendment(s) & Rationale	Date of Approval / Adoption
July 2025	Richard Thomas / Jo Bunting	Previously an Alliance policy, updated to reflect Warwickshire only.	18/09/2025

6.0 CONSULTATION

Key stake holders are to be identified, a consultation with external stake holders will occur through formal meetings of the local IAG's. Internal stakeholders being the departments where this policy had direct implications will need to be consulted with broad acceptance. The process of staffing consultation will process.

7.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The Equality Assessment Analysis is available on a separate document.