

# Top police officer credits her rise to him indoors



Lynne Owens says her husband has made 'tremendous sacrifices' for her



Brenda Trenowden, above with her family, and Nicky Morgan, right, say their success in their careers would not have been possible without their husbands



CARL FOX/SUZANNE FLUNKETT/JENNY GODDALL

## Sharon Feinstein

IF YOU want to reach the top as a woman in the police, get a house husband. Britain's most senior female officer has revealed that she was able to get to the summit only because her partner, formerly a police officer too, stayed at home.

In her first interview, Lynne Owens – who takes over as head of the National Crime Agency (NCA) next month – also says female attributes are an advantage in fighting crime. “Much of policing isn't about brute strength, it's about negotiation and detective skills,” she said. “You need an analytical brain and the ability to negotiate sensibly with others in the criminal justice system. It's not to say that male colleagues can't do that, but it does draw on some female characteristics.”

Owens, now chief constable of Surrey police, said that she had emailed her husband's family as soon as she was chosen for her new role as she “couldn't have done it without him at home”.

“Neil is my rock,” she said. “He is absolutely delighted with the appointment. He's been there for our daughter throughout my rise in the force, and of course this role will mean national and international travel.”

“When we had our daughter we decided he would give up his own police job to look after her. He's absolutely amazing [and] has made tremendous personal sacrifices. It's meant I could be entirely selfish in my career because I've known he's always there for her.”

Owens joins other powerful women in acknowledging the importance of a man at home. Nicky Morgan, the education secretary, is able to stay in London three nights a week because her son Alex, 7, is in her constituency 110 miles away with her husband, Jonathan, a home maker who trained as an architect.

“I think that's what it's like these days [for] modern couples,” Morgan, also the equalities minister, said this year. “If you have children, it's give and take, isn't it? You support each other.”

Brenda Trenowden, 48, a banker who chairs the 30% Club, which campaigns for more female company directors, believes many successful women depend on a supportive man at home.

“I do not think many senior people in high-powered careers are in dual-working families,” she said recently. “It is very difficult.”

A mother of two, she described her own husband as “chief household officer”.

Owens, who comes from a long line of police officers and was overall commander of policing for the 2011 wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge when an assistant commissioner for the Metropolitan police, said her husband saw it as a privilege that he had been able to stay at home.

“He cooks during the week,

but I'm a lover of a Sunday roast, so I try and make sure I do that and put back into the family.”

This Christmas and new year will be the first she has spent with her husband – and with her 18-year-old daughter – in nearly three decades. After spending her adult life in uniform, she has almost no civvy clothes.

She is used to a 12-hour working day. “I sleep really well but my brain is always going when I'm awake, thinking about what we should be doing, jotting notes to myself,” she said.

Owens is going to need her weekday freedom. Theresa May, the home secretary, is expected to transfer counter-

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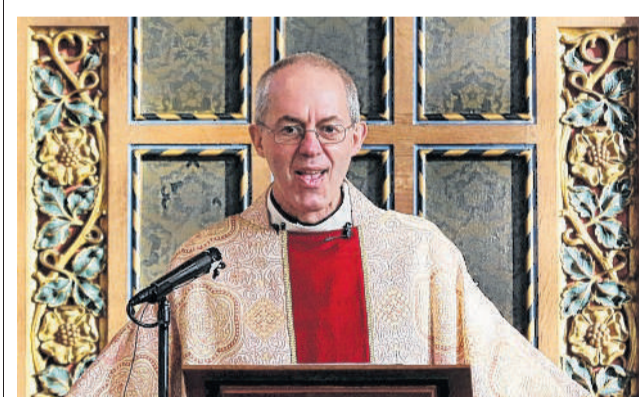
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terrorism from the Met to the NCA in this parliament. The proposed move, which would follow a review, has prompted fierce opposition from the Met.

“Who runs counterterrorism is a decision for the home secretary,” Owens said. “My role is to lead the fight against serious and organised crime. But I will be working really closely with Mark Rowley, national lead for counterterrorism. There are areas where we could better share capabilities but at the moment counterterrorism won't be my responsibility.”

Recently Owens has been reviewing preparations for a terrorist attack following the atrocity in Paris. Now MPs have decided to bomb Isis targets in Syria, she will review it again.

“What happened in Paris was the most despicable act. These were treacherous murderers.”



Justin Welby offered a home to Syrian migrants in September

## Red tape stalls archbishop's refugee cottage

Nicholas Hellen  
SOCIAL AFFAIRS EDITOR

PLANS by Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to offer sanctuary to Syrian refugees in a Lambeth Palace cottage have been hampered by bureaucratic delays.

His gesture, made 10 weeks ago, was of great symbolic significance because 84 Church of England bishops had criticised David Cameron for ignoring their offer to provide help for a total of 50,000 refugees, far beyond the government limit of 20,000 by 2020.

Officials at Lambeth Palace have become so concerned by the logjam in the government-backed programme that they worked on a back-up plan to invite Christian refugees from the diocese of Egypt instead. They abandoned the idea because of worries that it

would be unfair to single out a family for a “golden ticket”.

Tim Finch, co-ordinator of the National Refugees Welcome Board, said: “It's frustrating that voluntary offers to help house Syrians, like that made by the archbishop, aren't being taken up at the moment. Bureaucracy is getting in the way of generosity.”

Lambeth Palace said it was now exploring an alternative to waiting for its local council, Lambeth, to secure an allocation of refugees.

“We are currently working ... with the Home Office in exploring our participation in the emerging community sponsorship programme. This will enable direct community involvement in supporting Syrian refugees.”

Playing God over the dinghies of the desperate, page 33 @nicholashellen



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