

More Than Security: Supporting Vulnerable People When They Need it Most

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In probation settings, security officers are often the first people individuals encounter when accessing support services. While maintaining safe and secure environments remains a core part of the role, today's security professionals are increasingly called upon to support vulnerable individuals, de-escalate challenging situations and respond to emergencies when seconds matter.

On International Security Officers' Day (24 July), Conor Murphy, De-escalation Guard at Redfern Probation Office, [Sodexo UK & Ireland](#), reflects on the importance of supporting people through difficult circumstances and the life-saving incident that reinforced why he chose a career in security.

A career built on helping others

Conor entered the security profession after completing Security Industry Authority (SIA) training during a period of unemployment.

What began as an opportunity to develop new skills soon became a career that offered responsibility, variety and the chance to make a genuine difference in people's lives.

"I quickly found that I enjoyed the responsibility, professionalism and variety that comes with working in the security industry," says Conor.

"Since then, I have continued to develop my experience and confidence as a security officer."

Over the past four years, he has built a career combining public safety with community support, helping create safe and welcoming environments for people facing a range of challenges.

Supporting people when they need it most

Working within one of the busiest probation offices in the country means supporting people who may be experiencing difficult circumstances.

For Conor, the most rewarding aspect of the role is making a positive difference in the lives of vulnerable individuals.

“Supporting individuals who may be facing difficult circumstances and helping them feel safe, respected and valued gives me a great sense of purpose,” he says.

Alongside supporting clients and visitors, Conor values the strong team culture within Redfern. Working closely with colleagues enables the team to share knowledge, support one another and deliver the best possible outcomes for the people they serve.

When training and teamwork saved a life

One incident stands out above all others.

While on duty, a person on probation suddenly collapsed and stopped breathing. Conor was first on the scene and immediately drew upon his first aid training while colleagues contacted emergency services and helped manage the situation.

“Those moments felt intense and focused. My attention was entirely on giving the individual the best possible chance of survival,” he says.

Conor performed CPR until paramedics arrived and took over. Later, he learned that his actions had played an important role in helping save the person’s life.

The incident led to him receiving an internal award and a nomination for the Pacesetters Officer of Distinction Award, but Conor says the recognition was never the most important part.

“The real reward was knowing that my training, quick response and commitment to helping others had contributed to a positive outcome for someone in need.”

The experience reinforced the importance of preparation, teamwork and remaining calm under pressure – qualities security professionals rely on every day.

More than a visible presence

The role of a security officer extends far beyond responding to incidents.

Security professionals provide reassurance, protect people and property, and help create safe and welcoming environments where individuals feel respected and supported.

“Security officers are essential because they help create safe, secure and welcoming environments for employees, clients, customers and visitors,” says Conor.

“We protect people by preventing incidents, responding to emergencies and providing a reassuring presence.”

For Conor, the life-saving incident was an unforgettable moment, but it also reflects something broader about the profession.

Whether responding to an emergency, supporting a vulnerable individual or simply providing reassurance, security officers have opportunities every day to make a positive difference in people's lives.

"That experience reinforced why I value working in security and reminded me how important it is to stay prepared. For more information see: [Facilities Management Services](#)