

5 key reasons why the Metropolitan Police was founded in 1829

Industrialisation

Due to the Industrial Revolution many people moved to cities for work, leaving rural jobs in farming and agriculture. The old system of constables and watchmen found it difficult to patrol the streets in growing cities, such as London. This led residents to support a larger and professionally paid police force.

Fear of Unrest

The government and landowners feared unrest in Britain after the French Revolution and supported the use of a police force to maintain order.

Taxes

The British government was gradually becoming more involved in people's lives and was able to use taxes to pay for the police force.

Home Secretary

Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, was determined to reduce the amount of crime and persuaded other politicians that a police force could do this without reducing people's freedom.

Failure of Bloody Codes

The Bloody Code, which imposed the death penalty for over 200, often petty, offences aimed to deter crime, but juries in Britain were hesitant to find people guilty of crimes with such severe punishments. The gatherings for public executions even began to attract crime, providing opportunities for pickpockets and prostitution.