



## **January 2023**

With the start of a new year, we aim to continue to grow our presence with the Witham Community Special Constables working alongside Regular colleagues to provide a visibility and reassurance across Witham. The Safer Streets in Witham initiative will continue to expand over the year, and we will be working with newly appointed Street Wardens in the Town Centre while still focusing on identified community issues. There will be emphasis on anti-social behaviour and road safety but with a primary goal to be seen and we will continue to be available to residents at the Community Beat Surgeries at The Witham Hub & The Town Hall.

## **January 8<sup>th</sup>**

I have been working recently on anti-social behaviour involving vehicles in Morrisons car park that have been sounding horns, revving engines, racing around the car park and carrying out hand brake turns, etc which has become a persistent nuisance to residents. Over the Christmas period I was able to identify some of the vehicles and in company with PC Southgate we have now issued a written warning to 3 of the drivers and will be issuing further letters over the coming months. The actions by the drivers are not only causing a disturbance but are dangerous. If the drivers continue in this behaviour, we have legislation that allows us to seize their vehicle. Following this we then headed over to the Recreation Ground to provide visibility following reports on local social media of bullying by groups of children the previous day. When we attended, we came across a significant amount of building & household waste that had been dumped outside the entrance to the Cemetery. We recorded this for a report to Braintree District Council who are the correct authority to clear the rubbish and then to carry out an investigation to identify the people responsible. This type of dumping of waste is more commonly known as fly tipping and if identified they will be prosecuted.

We continued our patrols and headed over to the Templars Estate where we carried out a short foot patrol, but due to the poor weather, there were very few people about, I was able to speak with one teenager who I identified for knocking on doors and running off, which seems to be popular on the estate now. Unfortunately, this game has been more aggressive with doors being kicked or thumped which is causing resident's distress. We returned to our vehicle and carried out visible patrols through the town centre, Laurence Avenue, Pattison Close and Maltings Lane before heading up towards Haygreen Road. A short detour to an incident at Greenfields resulted in taking one of the involved parties back to their home address and we then drove over to the Hatfield Road estate. During our checks in each of the side roads we noticed a vehicle acting suspiciously and although we attempted to catch up with the vehicle it accelerated off the estate and disappeared. Fortunately, we had obtained the vehicle registration and description of the driver which was recorded for future action.





### January 10<sup>th</sup>

Witham CSC Officers Eaketts & Symonds headed out on patrol, first visiting the Humber Road estate for visibility and reassurance before heading to Chelmer Road and into the Town centre. They carried out a foot patrol through the Witham Town Park before travelling up to the Redrow estate where they disturbed a large group that were heading towards the park on the estate. Recently there have been increasing reports of anti-social behaviour in the area and therefore we want to increase our presence to deter this. Following this they then assisted with a vehicle stop on Allectus Way, where a Section 23 search for drugs was carried out on the vehicle and driver. The vehicle was also not insured and therefore seized. Over the course of the shift, they also stopped and spoke with several cyclists who were all dressed in dark clothing and cycling without lights. At this time of year this is especially dangerous due to poor light and weather. Please ensure you have lights fitted and are wearing high visibility clothing or items to increase your visibility on the roads. They completed their shift attending a domestic incident and were able to attend within a minute of the 999 call to Police due to their presence in Witham.



I was also out in Witham with Town Team Officer PC Southgate, and we first attended an abandoned 999 call on Honeysuckle Way, fortunately we were able to offer reassurance to the people involved and we continued our mobile patrols targeting potentially stolen or abandoned vehicles following a recent incident in Witham. These actions took us out towards Terling where we picked up two teenagers who were walking down the dark road and we brought them back into town for their safety. With a visit to Laurence Avenue & Pattison Close we then headed over to Hatfield Peverel for further searches and then back to Witham to assist with a vehicle stop on Flora Road. The vehicle had made several direction changes to avoid a marked police car before heading out of Braintree towards Witham. A Section 23 stop for Misuse of Drugs was conducted and a small amount of Class B drug was



found in the vehicle. Following the stop, we then patrolled Morrisons car park & Haygreen Road as we continue to tackle anti-social behaviour involving cars in these locations.



### January 12<sup>th</sup>

I was crewed with Special Constable Sinott and we arrived in Witham to conduct CCTV enquiries for an incident on the previous Monday. With this complete we then attended a concern for welfare after a person was reported on one of the bridges over the A12. In conjunction with traffic officers who slowed the traffic on the A12 we physically searched each of the bridges at Hatfield Peverel and were able to locate the person who was now off the bridge and talking with 2 off duty Police Officers that had stopped to assist. SC Sinott quickly built up a rapport with the person and we were joined by an Ambulance and the Essex Police Mental Health Triage Car. This specialist unit is used to bring a dedicated Mental Health Nurse to the scene who can provide a professional assessment. These assessments are necessary to determine the next course of action for the vulnerable person and fortunately in this instance the person was able to leave the scene and return home with a friend. We continued our patrol on to the Redrow estate where we carried out reassurance foot patrols on the park areas and then crossed over to Haygreen Road and the Allectus Way estate. We were then called to a road traffic collision on Spinks Lane between a young girl and a car. Although the road was clear when we arrived, we were able to find the victim and driver who had been moved into the nearby Maltings school. Our priority is to assess any injuries and Special Constable Sinott spoke with the 13-year-old girl who had injuries to her ankles and feet and a scrape and bruise on her head. The injured party had been with their parent crossing the road and after the collision with the car had been knocked to the floor and temporarily lost consciousness. With this level of injuries an ambulance was requested, and SC Sinott stayed with the victim while I spoke to the driver of the vehicle. Due to the nature of the accident a breath test must be conducted, and this was carried out with a negative result. The driver was very shaken but after taking evidential photos of the damage to the vehicle and a first account the driver was able to return home. When the ambulance crew arrived, they carried out their assessment and then took the injured girl to hospital for precautionary checks. Following this incident, we were alerted to a motorbike that was being ridden in the alleyways between Forest Road and Rickstones Road and we conducted foot patrol throughout the area. This was useful because we spoke to several residents along the pathway who corroborated the motorcycle rider had been using the path and was also suspected to be involved in drug dealing. A police intel report will be submitted when we have obtained further details in order to take further action. Our final task of the night was to provide visibility in Morrison carpark, but I was pleased to see no vehicles present following the recent issuing of warning letters.





### January 14<sup>th</sup>

Witham CSC Officers Eaketts & Symonds started their patrols in Witham with foot patrol in the Town centre where they distributed our new one-page newsletters and dropped off a number of these in The Witham Hub. They were visible in Tesco, Aldi, Lidl & Morrisons car park where there had been a recent distraction theft reported. The victim had been returning their shopping trolley & was distracted by a person who engaged them in conversation, while another person gained access to the victim's vehicle and removed their bag, leaving the victim very distressed. Please make sure you secure your vehicle before walking away from it – no matter how short your time away from your car may be. They then carried out foot patrols along the RiverWalk and then moved on to the Redrow estate checking the park areas before moving across the town to Forest Road where they conducted further visible foot patrols. During their shift they had lots of positive engagement with residents and visitors to the area. Following their time in Witham they also visited Terling & Hatfield Peverel where they spoke to residents and informed them about the Witham Community Beat Surgeries where they could come and speak to officers.



During the day I was also out on patrol in Witham with Town Team Officer PC Southgate to follow up on a recent incident involving the Police helicopter that was deployed to assist in the arrest of several people in connection with the possession of drugs. We recovered evidence connected with the incident which was booked into the property system and submitted the relevant paperwork to the investigating officer. Our final task of the day was to collect a wallet which had been dropped outside of the library and handed in to staff. We were able to take this back to the station for safekeeping to be returned to the owner the following day.



**January 21<sup>st</sup>**

I was crewed up with fellow Community Special Constable Symonds for the Beat Surgery at the Witham Hub in the Grove Centre, we arrived early in the town to conduct some foot patrols first. We began in the Town Centre with a walk through the Grove Centre and across Newland Street to the Newlands Precinct. The market which had previously been in the Lockram Lane car park was now spread out in the centre and this certainly gave it a feel of inclusion to the shopping area. We spoke to several of the stall holders who had seen a big improvement in their custom. I am sure this will continue to attract more shoppers to the precinct but please be make sure that you keep your bags, purses and belongings safe while walking around or browsing.



We next headed across to Michelle's Florists where I have been assisting with an incident just before Christmas and provided some update to the investigation. We walked through the Red Lion carpark and cut through the Grove Centre and into the Tesco store carpark. Recently there had been a distraction theft from a car whereby the driver was only away from their car for a short time, but this was enough for someone to access their car and remove their bag. Please ensure that if you walk away from your car, no matter how briefly, that you check your car is secure. We continued through to Greenfields where a car had previously been vandalised, but this has now been removed. We walked around the field until we came out from Blackman Way onto Maldon Road and crossed over to Helen Court. We patrolled the edge of the green before taking the footpath up to the Witham Town Park and through to Kings Chase. We carried out investigative enquiries around residential properties before looking for a vehicle of interest in the car parking areas behind the shops on Newland Street. We then attended the Community Beat Surgery where we provided visibility and reassurance to residents and visitors to the town. We had a lot of positive engagement over the 2 hours, we recorded some information passed to us and noted requests for patrols in certain areas identified by concerned residents.





Following the Beat Surgery, we carried out mobile patrols around Pattison Close, Haygreen Road, Holst Avenue and Baker Way and after visiting the Redrow estate we removed another E-Scooter from the streets which was being ridden along the pavement. One of the areas identified during our earlier Beat Surgery was the Forest Road and Templars estate and after parking the very visible Police carrier at the edge of the Recreation Ground at Laburnum Way we set off on foot once again. The main footpath that links Forest Road with Rickstones Road has become a problem with the use of E-Scooters and a reported Moped using the footpath which is extremely dangerous for residents, young children and pets. If you have any information regarding this anti-social and dangerous behaviour, then please let us know at the next Beat Surgery or report this online to Police via the Essex Police website.

[Report antisocial behaviour | Essex Police](#)



We continued across Rickstones Road and onto the Templars Estate where we walked through the Courts and the main pathways, fortunately during this patrol there were no issues identified and we returned through the park area on Shaw Road to head back towards our vehicle. As we walked along the side of the Recreation ground it was great to see that there were several different groups of local children playing football and as we arrived at our vehicle, we caught up with a couple of the Witham Councillors who were out for a walk.

### January 24<sup>th</sup>

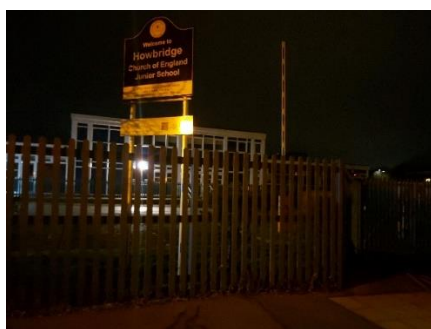
I was crewed with fellow Witham Community Special Constable Eaketts, and we set out with a plan in mind to provide visibility in several locations in Witham where there had been reports of anti-social behaviour and drug related activities. Our first port of call was the Templars Estate to follow up on an ongoing "game" that children on the estate were playing which involves knocking on doors and running off. It is one that I am sure we are all familiar with but the issue on the estate has been with the knocking being replaced with the kicking of doors and banging on windows. This has become very frightening for some residents and risks damage to doors and windows which could result in criminal damage. We obviously do not want it to escalate to this level and so we are looking at opportunities to engage with the children and offer advice. To help with this we carried out foot patrols on the estate and spoke to a number of children who were near to the park. We then headed across the town to Dengie Close where there had been an increase in activity associated with drug dealing and we carried out foot patrol in the vicinity. On this occasion we did not see any suspicious activity but drug use in the area was confirmed by one local resident we spoke to. We returned to our vehicle and carried out patrols at nearby Pattison Close, Howbridge Road and Maltings Lane. Our next stop was in the town centre and a visit to the Witham Town Park, unfortunately when we entered from Kings Chase, we discovered that the door of the public toilets had been ripped away and as well as damage to the interior fittings there was also evidence of drug use. If you have any information relating to this damage, then please let the Police or Council know. After recording the damage and securing the door as best as we were able, we then drove up to the Redrow estate following a live report that there were children playing on the ice





on a pond area near to Bradshaw Gardens. This is a highly dangerous activity, and we were keen to ensure that no one was on the ice. When we arrived, we were informed by residents that the group of young teenagers had run off towards Augustus Road and after confirming there was nobody left near to the pond, we carried out an area search but did not locate them. As parents it is very important that you advise your children that falling through ice and into very cold water can result in death as was so tragically recorded in the West Midlands just before Christmas.

We were also on the lookout for stolen vehicles and previously these have been parked on housing estates for a few days following a theft or out in rural areas. With most of the estates covered during our patrols we then headed out towards Terling following Blunts Hall Road before finishing our shift checking in Fairstead and the Notleys.



## January 26<sup>th</sup>

It was a repeat crewing for tonight's shift in Witham and we started with similar patrols but this time in Dengie Close, no sooner had we pulled into the entrance of the road we saw three teenagers who took a significant interest in our presence and as I got out of the car, they all ran off into the darkness towards Maltings Lane. Although we searched the area there were no further signs of them and then a few minutes later we saw a male, wearing a backpack on a bicycle heading towards Dengie Close who then deliberately evaded us by riding off into the alleyway towards Pelly Avenue. We remained in the area for a short while and hopefully provided visibility to the residents, but this also served as a deterrent to the suspicious activity. We then travelled over to the Redrow estate but fortunately there were no concerns in this area, we drove across the town to the Templars Estate and within a few minutes we had confiscated another E-Scooter from a teenager, and this will now be off the streets of Witham. We were next called to assist with a suspected drink driver who was being followed by our informant coming into Witham. Due to our location, we were able to quickly get behind the driver and they were brought to a safe stop in ALDI car park. With the assistance of another Police unit from Braintree we were able to confirm that the driver was not under the influence of drink or drugs but had only just picked up the vehicle and was unfamiliar with its size and operation. The informant had informed us that during the time that they had followed the vehicle, it had been driving well below the speed limit and this had resulted in a concern. Special Constable Eaketts provided suitable

words of advice regarding the driving and the importance of familiarising yourself with the vehicle controls before heading out onto busy roads, especially in the dark.



We were then directed to the derelict flats adjacent to the Little Elms Public House, where children had been seen breaking windows and within a few minutes we were on scene. Unfortunately, the report had been for 10 minutes earlier and there were no signs of anyone at the location matching the descriptions provided. We did investigate and found the broken window which did give access to one of the flats. We therefore needed to confirm that there was no person(s) inside the property and an additional unit came to assist with the interior search. In derelict buildings this presents a real danger for the Emergency Services who need to enter to check there is nobody trapped inside. Please stay out of these buildings which are normally in a poor state of repair and may contain hidden hazards and make sure this is passed on to your children.



We then returned back on the south side of the town, and we revisited Dengie Close and Howbridge Road and stopped another E-Scooter rider who will no longer be riding this around the town. We continued our patrols and supported a dog unit who had stopped a vehicle in nearby Holst Avenue and as we drove around the nearby roads we stopped another E-Scooter rider. Unfortunately, the message does not seem to be getting across that privately owned E-Scooters that are not part of an official hire scheme are currently illegal to use in public places. With the area search complete we decided to call in at Morrisons car park to check to see if there were any cars causing anti-social behaviour.

#### [E-Scooters: What you need to know | Essex Police](#)

On arrival into the parking area, we were passed by one car leaving at speed but noticed one more still parked up close to the steps up on to Braintree Road. As we pulled behind the car, the rear passenger door flew open, and a teenage male was on his toes and running across the car park. As I approached the open door the reason became obvious as a significant amount of drugs was left in the rear seat and following a further search a significant quantity of cash was found as well. The two-remaining people in the car were searched for further evidence but there were no further items found and once the car had been thoroughly searched and the items belonging to the escaping



male had been seized, they were allowed to leave. Fortunately, the male was very well known to me and with the assistance of another unit from Braintree Local Policing Team he was arrested and taken to Custody for the offence of Possession With Intent to Supply drugs.

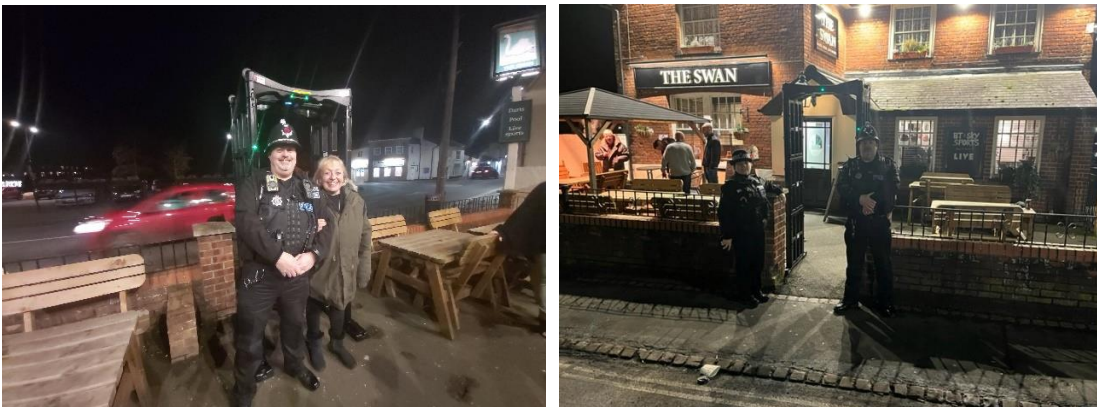


The investigation will continue into the drugs, the supply chain and other aspects but this was a significant arrest and hopefully sends a message across Witham to teenagers engaged in this activity that you will be caught, you will be arrested and there will be a punishment.

### January 28<sup>th</sup>

To support the #SaferStreets initiative and #VAWG (Violence Against Women & Girls) in Witham we deployed the Knife Arch to provide information and demonstrate the equipment at The Swan Public House. This is setup in conjunction with the landlord or landlady to allow us to provide an increased visible presence in the Town and answer any questions. I was joined by Witham Town Team Police Officers PC Southgate and PC Spink and we also had a roving patrol with PCSO Stranger & Special Constable Truscott. We had lots of positive engagement from people inside the pub who came outside to meet us and even people passing by who were inquisitive about its use.

The knife arch is a metal detector that is able to determine objects located on a person by zone which allows a focused search and is a visible physical deterrent and is an excellent tool for #SaferStreets.



After a successful evening we packed away the equipment and headed over to Morrisons car park following a report from nearby residents that several cars had been driving around with exhausts popping and banging which was disturbing the neighbourhood. When we arrived, we did find two vehicles parked up in the location and after some words of advice and engagement they relocated away from the residential properties. Any repeat action by the cars may result in the issuing of a Section 59 Warning which could result in their cars being seized.

We then headed back to Braintree to carry out a targeted traffic operation for cars that have been racing on the A120 and around the Great Notley area. Unfortunately, within a few minutes of starting the operation I was called to a serious road traffic accident where a young driver was trapped after leaving the road and crashing into trees. With the assistance of the Essex Ambulance Service, Fire & Rescue Service, Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) specialists and Essex Hazard Response Team (HART) the person was cut out of the car and taken to hospital for the injuries sustained.



With the patient receiving medical care I was joined by other officers in assisting to maintain a road closure until the Roads Policing Team arrived to carry out an accident assessment and the vehicle was recovered. We finally finished our shift at 3:30am!

This concludes the monthly report for January 2023.