



August 2021 Patrols

With the end of July marking the schools breaking up for the Summer, we wanted to provide an increased visibility in Witham to provide reassurance and to deter rise in anti-social behaviour. The ongoing concerns for the spread of Covid19 had resulted in large scale events postponed or cancelled but businesses were starting to see more visitors as the restrictions eased. It was great to see an increase in people out in town in the evening enjoying some of the great restaurants and pubs that Witham has to offer, and we continued to provide our mobile and foot patrols.

August 1st

I arrived in Witham with Special Constable Eaketts who will be joining the Witham CSC team shortly replacing Special Constable Keyse who has now departed to join up as a regular Police Constable with Essex Police. The first part of our shift consisted of speed checks on Maldon Road. During recent foot patrols I have noticed a few drivers exceeding the speed limit which is a not only a significant safety concern but also increases the road noise for residents making this an anti-social issue as well. We will continue to carry out speed checks and vary the times of our deployments. During the check on 100 passing vehicles I submitted 4 tickets to drivers with one driver stopped at 43mph, however, even as I was dealing with this driver another one passed at speed!



The 100-speed check creates a survey of speeds on a given road at a given time and these are fed in to a central database which monitors driver awareness and behaviour to focus efforts on improving road safety. Following the completion of this action we then parked in Newlands Drive and headed out on foot patrol. As we walked through the Newlands Precinct and in to the Grove Centre, we spoke with a number of people who were all very pleased to see our presence. We continued through to Greenfields and on to Blackwater Lane before crossing over Maldon Road to join the River Walk past Pattison Close on our way to Bridge Street. After crossing Bridge Street, we headed on to the Duck Pond where we had been informed that a tent and potentially homeless persons had been seen. As we checked the area around the Duck Pond, we did discover the tent and belongings of 2 homeless people that were known to us in the Braintree District. We recorded the information, and this has been passed on to Braintree District Council who are responsible for the current restriction order preventing them from setting up a camp anywhere in the District. At the time of our patrol, there was no one present in the tent. We continued up the footpath under the viaduct and on towards ASDA, before walking up Spa Road. There appeared to be very few people at the park, however, we soon noticed an elderly person who was stumbling and struggling to walk. Fortunately, I recognised the



lady from a previous similar occurrence and we then helped her back to home. Due to the increased frequency of the lady leaving her home and becoming easily confused while out we have submitted an adult social care referral. After thanking us for our help we left her safely in her home, however, from a later social media report I understand that the lady left again in the afternoon and was looked after by several children until a family member was alerted. This demonstrated a great community spirit and hopefully the lady will receive additional support. We returned to our foot patrol and visited the shops on Spa Road before heading down Powers Hall End towards Chipping Hill, observing the newly painted signpost and then on to the Spring Lodge Community Centre. We continued over the footbridge at the bottom of Chipping Hill and then on towards the train station before patrolling along Collingwood Road back towards our vehicle. We concluded our visibility in Witham with mobile patrols around the town and housing estates.



August 3rd

A longer day as I took time away from my normal job to support 2 separate Essex Police operations in Witham. For the morning I deployed on foot with PC Thorndyke to support the operation focusing on positive engagement for young people. Traditionally the Summer holidays result in more young people out and about in the town, parks, and many heading to the train station as a meeting point or to travel to other locations and this can result in anti-social behaviour, safety concerns or children going missing, so a visible presence is important. We started out on foot from Morrison's then headed along Cut Throat Lane up to Mulberry Gardens before walking along Cypress Road towards the Recreation Ground, with very little activity seen we then continued to Braintree Road and down to Chalks Road and along to Church Street. When we arrived at the bottom of Chipping Hill, we encountered the "wobbly" footbridge (which has been reported) and then we were stopped by a driver who was concerned for a young child seen on the River Walk. Although we headed straight back to the area the child was now with a parent and all in order. We did record details of a car that may have been involved in drug related activity which gave off quite a pungent smell as it went by! We continued up Powers Hall End and then along to the Spa Road shops before reaching the Spa Road park. Again, there were very few children in the park, but we did speak to a small group who were enjoying the skate park all to themselves. To check on the homeless people recorded a couple of days ago we patrolled along the River Walk towards the Duck Pond, but the tent and belongings had been moved. We later found out from other officers on foot patrol that they had discovered the tent and belongings up near the weir. We carried on to Guithavon Road and on to Mill Lane before heading up in to the town centre. As we entered the Newlands Shopping Centre we located one of the homeless people from the tent and we spoke to them in relation to the order that prevents them from camping anywhere in the Braintree District, however, we also have a duty of care and we



were pleased to find out that they had been provided support by The Witham Hub with food and drink. After leaving the shopping centre we continued along Collingwood Road and then down on to Avenue Road where we visited Atlantic Square which had been a subject of anti-social behaviour. After checking the buildings, we crossed through the train station and down Albert Road returning to our vehicle. We concluded our operational patrol with mobile patrols on the Hatfield Road estate, Haygreen Road, Holst Avenue, Maltings Lane, Constance Close, the Humber Road estate and finishing with Bramble Road, Honeysuckle Way, Rosebay Close and the park areas.



The evening operation commenced at 5pm and focused on the disruption of drug related activity in the Witham area. This involved linking up with the ANPR team and a mixture of plain clothes officer and vehicles and marked units on patrol. I was crewed with Special Inspector Campbell and as part of the Witham CSC team we were in the marked vehicle to provide local knowledge to the other units with deployment and typical areas for patrols. In Witham we have seen occasional reports of suspected dealing of drugs by individuals and we have built up some intelligence reports which allow us to target this activity. The first instance during the evening was near to the Recreation Ground after a young person was seen acting suspiciously on a bicycle and then made off from both the marked unit and the covert units, fortunately I was able to identify this person and a further report has been created. Our presence in the area served as a disruption with no activity in the previously reported location. We were then alerted by the ANPR team based in the Force Control Room in Chelmsford of a vehicle related to drug supply entering Witham and we deployed to try and intercept. As we headed along the expected route, we located another vehicle and one of our covert units was able to stop the vehicle and driver for a search. In this instance no drugs were found but the driver was identified for future intelligence purposes. With our increased patrols we found groups of teenagers gathered in different locations around Witham and provided advice around anti-social behaviour, however, a search carried out on one group near to Bramble Road resulted in 2 of the group found with drug related paraphernalia. Due to their age their information has been passed to the Child & Young Persons Officer for further enquiries. Over the course of the evening a total of 7 intelligence reports were submitted, stop searches on 9 people, 2 individuals were positively identified for drug distribution and will be the subject of future action and two vehicles stopped.

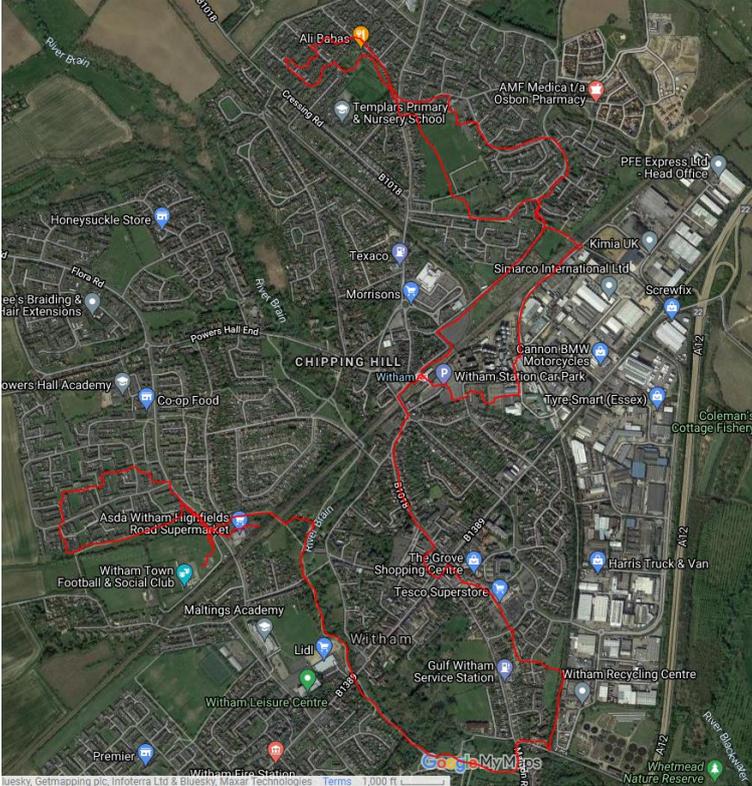


August 4th

With day 2 of the operation around positive engagement with young people I headed back to Witham with Officers from Braintree and Special Constable O'Keefe for more foot patrol. We started at Witham Train Station before walking through Cut Throat Lane to Mulberry Gardens and on to Cypress Road. Heading through the Recreation Ground we entered the Templars estate where we engaged with a number of children playing football in the park. We then filtered through the Courts before returning towards Rickstones Road and the Little Elms Public House. As we paused to speak with people near to the shops in Laburnum Way area, we received information regarding suspected drug related activity along Cypress Road which we have recorded. We continued down Laburnum Way and down Motts Lane to the bridge over the train tracks and onto the Eastways Industrial estate. A vehicle from the previous evening's operation was located and again this has been recorded for intelligence dissemination. We continued through the estate and exited via Atlantic Square and back up to the train station where we met with other officers investigating an incident involving a high-risk missing person. We then turned towards the town along Collingwood Road and spoke with a homeless person in Lockram Lane before engaging with people in the Newlands Shopping Centre and The Grove Centre. We then patrolled through to the Witham Town Park where we met visitors enjoying the park and as we continued down the footpath past the cricket field, we engaged with a few residents from Helen Court. We arrived on the River Walk and walked on towards Bridge Street speaking with several people along the route. Due to the ongoing concerns for the homeless people near to the weir we visited the location but once again the tent was unoccupied. We then headed towards ASDA before crossing Spa Road and along the bottom of Humber Road where we spoke to a family enjoying the sunshine and spoke to another resident about speeding concerns along Humber Road at night. After a short break back at Braintree Police station to collect a vehicle we headed back to Witham to conduct mobile patrols around Allectus Way, Holst Avenue, Laurence Avenue and then assisted in the town centre with an abnormal load through Newland Street to its destination for the building work set to start behind Lidl.



WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL



August 7th



During the two-week operation in Witham we carried out targeted patrols in relation to drug related activity, electric scooters, and vehicle crime. With two marked units we were able to descend on a particular area and increase the immediate presence with both mobile patrols, strategically positioned vehicles and high visibility foot patrols. We started our patrols on the Templars estate, engaging with some young children playing football before Special Constable Eaketts missed her penalty and I had mine saved! As we moved on through the Courts, we attended a minor accident between two vehicles but after exchanging details there were no other concerns. During the foot patrol we did not see any other issues and we returned to our vehicles to move on to Forest Road & Cypress Road.



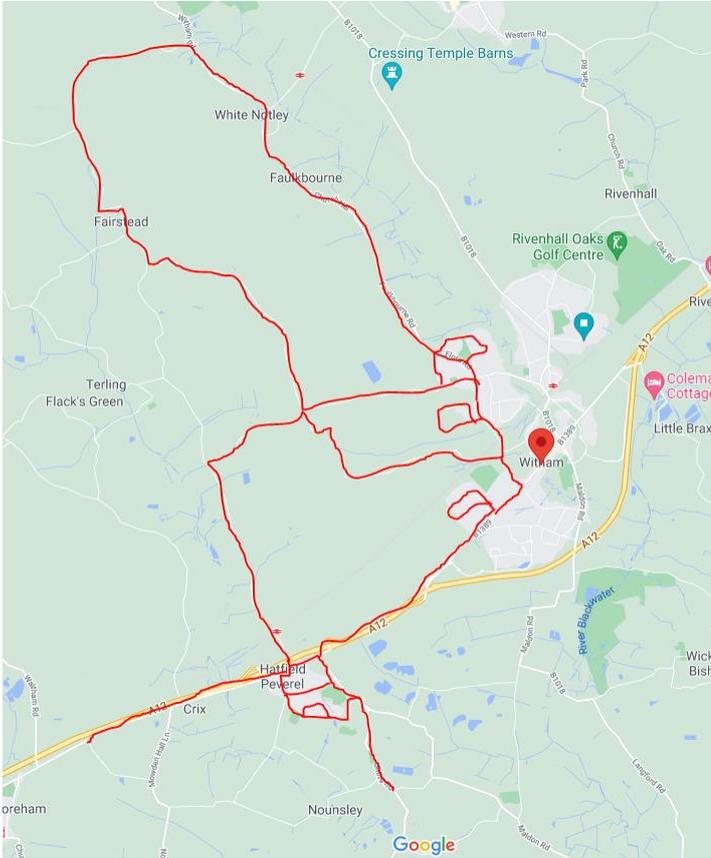
We visited the sites of previous anti-social behaviour and drug related incidents but found no evidence at the time and we headed in to the Town Centre. On arriving outside the Town Hall, I was able to issue a Community Protection Warning to a rough sleeper who had caused a problem a few days earlier. With the CPW issued this provides Essex Police with the ability to use increased powers if the offending recurs. With Special Inspector Campbell in one vehicle and Special Constable Eaketts and Myself in another we headed up to the Humber Road estate. As we approached the area a young person on a bicycle quickly made off in to the estate and although we conducted foot patrol through the alleyways and green areas they had used the footpath along the back of the Rugby Club on to Blunts Hall Road to evade us further. With very few other people seen out around the various roads and pathways we travelled over to Hatfield Road and into Allectus Way. During the mobile patrol we spotted suspicious activity involving a male who was known to us and we got out on foot to investigate. With several other young males walking in different directions we provided some visible deterrent and these people quickly disappeared from the estate. We also stopped a person near to the shops on Wolvesford but as I tried to explain the legal rules around the use of a privately owned scooter the person made off. Fortunately, this was all recorded on my Body Worn Video camera and will provide the necessary evidence in the seizure of the scooter in the future. A stop search was also carried out on a person as part of the operation. At this point Special Inspector Campbell returned to the station while we continued our patrols visiting Constance Close, Greenfields, Pattison Close, Laurence Avenue, the Town Centre and finishing back at Cypress Road where we carried out another stop search. Over the course of the shift we had completed two stop searches, two police intelligence reports and stopped two vehicles. We will continue to carry out operations to deter crime and improve the community.



August 9th

I attended the Witham Town Council Community Meeting with Sergeant Mugridge of the Braintree Community Policing Team where we reviewed the previous months reports and discussed any new issues for the Witham Special Constables to address. Following this I returned to my vehicle to conduct area searches in support of the recent incidents of van thefts from Black Notley & Witham. Starting from the scene of the theft I then traced several routes out of Witham towards Hatfield Peverel, Terling, Fairstead & The Notleys but unfortunately without any sightings. The Community Policing team had been out during the day making several enquiries which will also support the investigation further and we are working alongside the specialist vehicle units in Essex Police and neighbouring Police forces. During my patrol I did find a high value vehicle parked out in the countryside and although there was no apparent owner present the vehicle was not reported as missing.





August 12th

In company with Special Constable Eaketts we carried out CCTV enquiries in our continuing investigation of a recent van theft and met with a local business who may have captured some relevant footage. After reviewing this we then carried out further CCTV scoping, where we check the immediate local area for further CCTV opportunities. With the results documented for follow up we carried out a search in an area previously identified for drug supply and although we did not find any drug related items, we did locate a “stunt” scooter. These can be up to £100 in value and therefore this has been secured at Braintree Police Station and a media post has been sent out to try and identify the owner. We continued our patrols in to the evening visiting the Lodge Farm estate (REDROW) and checking for recent anti-social behaviour in the park areas before heading on to the Hatfield Road estate. Following this we headed in towards the Town Centre to provide a visible presence due to reports of potential drink drivers and as we headed along The Avenue, we found two young teenagers on bicycles without lights. Although they were on their way to celebrate their recent A Level results, we stopped them and with our partnership with Essex Safer Roads we were able to provide them with free lights to allow them to continue safely. After patrols around Manor Road, Cypress Road & Forest Road we were called to support the recovery of a lorry on the A12.



August 14th

I began my patrol in Witham with further enquiries before being called to assist the Fire Service with a vehicle fire in the car park behind the shops on King Edward Way. With my presence already in Witham I was able to attend in under 5 minutes and as I arrived, I worked with the Fire Watch Manager and the crew on scene. Due to the nature of the fire it was upgraded to suspicious and it was then arranged for a SOCO (Scenes of Crime Officer) and a specialist dog unit from the Fire & Rescue Service. During the wait for these specialist teams I spoke with several neighbours to try and establish the circumstances for the vehicle and the subsequent fire which had caused significant damage to the interior. When the SOCO & Dog Unit arrived, they recorded several photographs of the scene and I then met Fizz who has been specially trained to detect criminal elements pointing towards arson. There has been an article explaining how Fizz helps the services and this can be found on the following link

<https://twitter.com/AssocPCCs/status/1427214217388740608?s=20>

With special boots fitted to protect Fizz's feet from broken glass and twisted metal she searched the surrounding area and then all over the car. Following the search, we will be following up on the results in our investigation.



After the team departed and I arranged for recovery of the vehicle I was contacted by my control team to attend a concern for safety at the train station. I was on the platform and talking with the staff member who was taking care of the person within a few minutes of the call and when I managed to ascertain this young person's name it was quickly established that they had been reported as missing from Braintree but had no recollection of who they were or how they got on to the train. After establishing some minimum information and contacting our on duty Mental Health Triage team I was able to contact a worried parent to update them. Due to the incident taking place at the train station the British Transport Police arrived on scene and following my updates were able to return the person home to a place of safety with safeguarding advice to the family. I concluded my patrols in Witham with a mobile patrol around the estates and checked on the previous locations for anti-social behaviour with no concerns found.



August 15th

I commenced my patrol with CCTV enquiries which yielded some positive results to assist in the investigation of the theft of vans before heading in towards the Hatfield Road estate to conduct similar enquiries in relation to the suspected arson involving a vehicle in King Edward Way. After reviewing some evidence, I carried out a patrol of the estate and I then came across a vehicle badly parked and insecure at the entrance to one of the side roads. Checks on this vehicle revealed no insurance held, and it was displaying incorrect licence plates. The vehicle was not reported as stolen and therefore without a driver or seeing the vehicle being driven, I had no power to seize the vehicle. After carrying out some investigation in to the owner, the car has been reported to Braintree District Council for collection. An intelligence report has been submitted in connection with the car. After attaching a Police Aware sticker, I then headed in to the town for some foot patrols, first heading through the Newlands Shopping Precinct before heading down Newland Street and in to the Witham Town Park via Kings Chase. When I entered the park, I engaged with several people enjoying the good weather before stepping out on to Maldon Road and back up towards the shopping precinct. It was very encouraging to see a good number of people in the town as we start to enjoy the positive changes in social distancing guidelines.

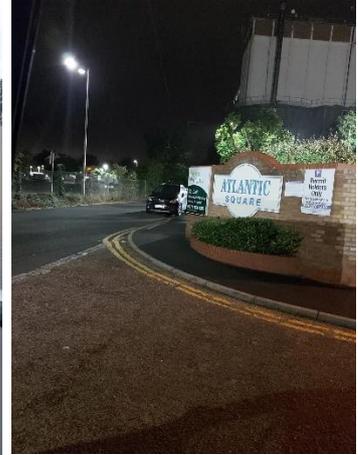


August 17th

In company with Special Constable Eaketts we set off on mobile patrols around the Powers Hall End & Flora Road estates visiting Calamint Road, Speedwell Close, Foxglove Close and the park at the bottom of Rosebay Close before heading over to Honeysuckle Way & Bramble Road. We checked the car park near to Powers Hall Academy and then dropped down on to the Humber Road estate. We parked up and headed out on foot around the estate, firstly checking the fields near to the Rugby Club and the common ground that has recovered since the fire last year. We then headed through Ness Walk and up through Medway Close before walking through to Ouse Chase and onto Yare Avenue. As we continued through Don Court and up to the top of Yare Avenue we engaged with residents and had a quick kick about with some children out playing on the green area. We continued our patrol back down towards Cam Way and then through to Crouch Drive before heading back along Humber Road to our vehicle. We drove over to Hatfield Road conducting a quick mobile patrol of the Lodge Farm estate (REDROW) before heading in to Allectus Way, where once again we exited the vehicle for foot patrol, however, this was not until my colleague had pulled a branch from a drain cover that was causing an obstruction in the road. As we patrolled through the alleyways and



roads and on to the field at the rear of Philip Road, we encountered some information that was later recorded in a police intelligence report for future follow up. This would not have been discovered without the visible foot patrols. Following the rounds on the estate we travelled in to the Town Centre before heading out to Hatfield Peverel and Terling and then returning to Witham on to the industrial estates in our continuing search for stolen vehicles. These mobile patrols at night provide a visible deterrent and hopefully reassurance to businesses and residents.





Crewed up with PC Davies of the Witham Town Team we carried out a community engagement event, we were invited to attend the Witham Family Fun Day organised by Bethel Christians & Kings Ministries at Woodend Farm. With the Essex County Fire Service also in attendance it was an opportunity to show two of the local emergency services. Split over two sessions we were able to let parents and children explore the police van and try on some equipment as well as take away some colouring packs. We had several very inquisitive budding officers albeit in about 10 years' time! It was a great event and is important for us to be able to show residents of Witham and visitors how we fit into their community with a friendly and approachable service.



August 22nd

I began my patrol in the afternoon, there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour and evidence of drug related behaviour in the afternoon and early evening and I wanted to carry out some targeted patrols in some of these areas. For the first part I carried out mobile patrols around Humber Road before conducting foot patrol on the estate. With no issues found I moved down to Highfields Road where a moped had caught my eye. Following up on the owner details the vehicle was recorded in connection with other investigations and I moved on to the Hatfield Road estate. After a quick drive around Allectus Way and King Edward Way I once again conducted foot patrol in the area. A person of interest was seen on the estate and after a few minutes another person of interest was seen in the proximity but on seeing my presence quickly disappeared in to the garages. I was able to call for assistance from PCSO Claire Beverley and we continued to sweep through the estate. On this occasion the visible presence seemed to make a difference with neither person seen again. Police information reports have been submitted for this behaviour. I then moved my patrol in towards town and as I drove past Kings Chase, I noticed a vehicle at the end near to the park entrance that was unfamiliar to me. I was able to park close by and entered the Witham Town Park. As I approached the toilet block, I could see a teenager on the bench side of the block and as I walked around the other side, I then surprised a total of 7 young males who were engaged or had been recently engaged in drug related activity. When I stated that I would be searching them in connection with the drugs, one made a quick break for the park gate and while I tried to pursue this person the others took this opportunity to grab their bikes and an electric scooter and exit the park toward Helen Court. Fortunately, with the benefit of my Body Worn Video, I was able to



capture every one of them in detail and already have names and addresses for two of them for future follow up actions. This encounter was witnessed by a member of the public who was in the park at the time and they thanked me for my intervention. Although I did not manage to apprehend anyone currently, I did disrupt their activity and drive them from the park. A lengthy police information report has been submitted for this incident.



August 24th

I was on patrol with Special Constable Eaketts and as soon as our shift began, we were straight over to Witham for a concern for safety. When we attended the location, we spoke to a person who admitted that they had nowhere left to turn and needed help. Over the following hour we spent time listening and offering support and in conjunction with our Mental Health Triage Team we were able to signpost the person to a specialist team who could potentially offer some more targeted support. By the time we left to resume our patrols the person had significantly changed from our first arrival and thanked us for our time and sympathetic response. Our role as Volunteer Essex Police officers covers a wide range of situations and although we may not be able to find solutions ourselves, we have a huge support network through Essex Police that allows us to respond in the appropriate way.

Almost immediately that we returned to our car we then had to stop a car that we witnessed driving at excessive speed approaching a crossing where there was already a pedestrian present. After stopping the driver and checking them and their vehicle they were given a very stern warning. Their details have been recorded for any further instances of poor driving. We returned to our patrols and revisited the previous locations for theft of vans and headed out from Blunts Hall Road towards Terling, Hatfield Peverel and Fairstead. These locations have been on the

route when the vans have been stolen. We checked out two sites where vans were stored, however, the ones seen in these locations were all in order. As we completed the sweep of the lanes and the side roads around Witham, we stopped another vehicle driving at excessive speed on Flora Road. The driver was spoken to again and it is evident that there are several drivers who are still routinely flouting the posted limits. We have taken this away as an action to return soon for speed checks.



August 28th

During my afternoon shift I followed a suspicious vehicle in to Witham and carried out necessary driver checks. The information has been submitted on a Police Intelligence Report. I then continued my high visibility patrols in Witham, starting on Cypress Road I carried out checks in Walnut Drive before heading round to Forest Road, as I continued past Lime Close I saw an E-scooter on the road ahead of me and when I tried to stop the rider they dived quickly into Sycamore Close before cutting through the alleyway at speed. Privately owned E-scooters that are not part of an approved trial scheme are illegal to use on Public Road, Footpaths and other Public areas, when ridden in the manner witnessed they are dangerous for the rider and other road users and pedestrians, children or pets that may be on the footpaths. Unfortunately these E-scooters are very difficult to stop so please share the following link to help advise owners of their responsibilities.

<https://www.essex.police.uk/police-forces/essex-police/areas/essex-police/campaigns/campaigns/2021/e-scooters>

I then headed in to the Town for foot patrols along Newlands Street, Newland Shopping Centre, The Grove Centre and the Witham Town Park. On returning to my vehicle and heading up Hatfield Road I recorded potential drug related activity and I then attended reports of an assault on the Humber Road estate that escalated and moved up to the Spa Road shops. After dealing with this incident I concluded my patrols with additional mobile visibility on the Flora Road estate.

August 29th

I was once again crewed with Special Constable Eaketts who is planning on joining the Witham Community Special Constable team in the near future. If you can spare 16 hours or more per month, you can also volunteer to become a



Special Constable and provide your Community with extra policing resources. It is an extremely rewarding role and if you would like to find out more please follow the link below.

<https://www.essex.police.uk/communityspecials>

Our primary focus was to provide reassurance and visibility on the Humber Road estate and nearby park area following reports of anti-social behaviour and potential drug related activity. As we walked through the estate, we met several residents and even helped with a photo with one young lady who was keen to meet with us. As we walked along the grass area at the bottom of the estate, we even drew the attention of a drone. When we returned to our vehicle, we set off across town to Lime Tree Place for a visit before moving on to Maldon Road, Laurence Avenue and Constance Close. Due to recent activity in the town park during the evenings we conducted a short foot patrol from Kings Chase down past Helen Court to the River Walk before returning to the Witham Town Park. For the final part of the shift we stopped outside the Town Hall to call on the Grand Opening celebration of MR Barbers which was in full swing with guests and music. It was great to see a new business opening in the Town.



As we finished our shift it was the turn of Acting Sergeant Mabey to take over and he carried out mobile patrols in the town centre, before visiting each of the previous locations identified for anti-social behaviour to provide a presence and reassurance. He also attended an incident of suspicious circumstances on the Humber Road estate but after investigating this further there were no concerns.

This concludes the monthly report for August 2021.