

MAY 2025, ISSUE 93

Witham's Voice

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Summer

YOUR WITHAM



Witham Town Council holds regular meetings in the Town Hall where your elected Councillors make decisions on your behalf. Witham residents are welcome to attend any of these meetings to raise any concerns they have. Meeting agendas and minutes are available on the Town Council website or can be viewed in the Information Centre. Agendas are also posted on the information board on the side of Fenn Wright

Most meetings are held on a Monday or occasionally a Tuesday evening:



Full Town Council - once a month
Environment - once a quarter
Community - once a quarter
Policy & Resources - once a quarter
Planning & Transport - fortnightly



Follow our social media



@Withamtc



@Witham Town Council



@town_witham



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LOVE YOUR OPEN SPACES!

Witham Town Council hosts a **quarterly Open Spaces meeting** at the Town Hall, bringing together elected Councillors and representatives from **Witham Wombles, Witham & Countryside Society, Campaign to Protect Rural England**, and **local residents** with expertise in wildlife and environmental matters.



The meetings cover a wide range of topics related to Witham Town Council managed open spaces which include the River Walk, James Cooke Wood, Whetmead Nature Reserve



and The Closed Churchyard. We discuss issues from tree planting and river quality, to paths and environmental protection and everything in-between. If **YOU** have a question, concern or idea about any of our cherished spaces, we would love to hear from you. **All Witham residents are welcome to attend** or you can send in your questions and observations to **openspacesadmin@witham.gov.uk**

Agendas are available three clear days before each meeting on our website, in the Information Centre or on our noticeboard.

Dates for the Diary

Open Spaces Meetings

2PM Town Hall
4th June
3rd September
3rd December

Discover Witham's WILD SIDE



The River Walk is the heart of our town and stretches from Maldon Road to Ebenezer Close, offering diverse habitats and scenic views—but have you explored our other open spaces?

James Cooke Wood

On the outskirts of Witham, past Olivers Nurseries on Maldon Road, is a small peaceful community woodland—perfect for a stroll, dog walks, and an adventure in waiting for young explorers.



Whetmead Nature Reserve

This hidden gem at the end of Blackwater Lane is where the River Brain and Blackwater meet. In summer, watch dragonflies dance over the water or spot a heron or kingfisher. Prefer a higher vantage point with a view? Follow winding trails through the hilly meadow and see birds of prey soar. For families, the new nature trail offers hands-on fun. Bring paper and crayons for brass rubbings or buy a pack from the Town Hall.

Closed Church Yard Lockram Lane

As you saunter around the grounds, see if you can spot the heritage of some of our road names, which were derived from some of Witham's inspiring residents.



Creating a BUZZZZZZZZ



BEE SQUARED

Witham is buzzing this summer with the Bee Squared project! Sponsored by **Indaver**, in partnership with **Witham Town Council**, this community initiative supports pollinators by encouraging local families to plant wildflowers. Primary school children have received wildflower seed packets to create a square metre of nectar-rich habitat in their gardens and window boxes throughout the town.

Look out for three new
bee havens on the
River Walk this summer



On the right path

Large tree roots have been breaking up River Walk footpaths near the Moat Farm Chase path junction and an area close to Saxon Drive. Following an arboricultural survey, a no-dig/flexi-pave solution was recommended and subsequently installed at the end of April to protect the tree roots and make it safer for our residents to walk and cycle on the River Walk.

Water Works

We are aware of the continued issue with spring water flooding the River Walk footpath behind Church Street. We recently had a survey carried out by drainage and civil engineering consultants and are working on a solution.

Call for Gardeners - Witham Open Gardens '26

Do you have a garden you're proud of—big or small, wild or wonderful? We're looking for local residents to take part in our **Open Gardens 2026 event!**

Whether it's a hidden courtyard, a flower-filled haven, or a quirky green space, we'd love for you to share it with the community. This is a great way to meet fellow garden lovers, support a good cause, and celebrate the beauty right on our doorstep.

If you are interested please contact openspacesadmin@witham.gov.uk or call 01376 520627.

Let's make 2026 bloom with community spirit!



RIVER OF DREAMS

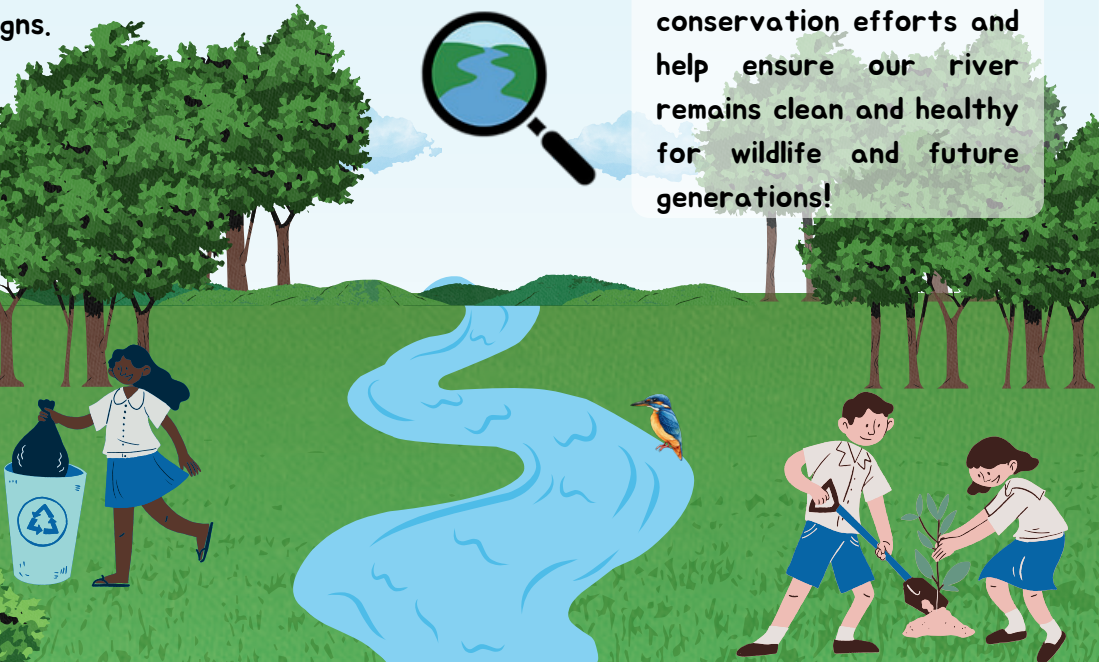
We are pleased to announce that Witham Town Council has signed up to the Essex RiverWatch programme.

The Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust together with the Essex Rivers Hub have set up this citizen science project to collect information about Essex and Suffolk rivers to pinpoint problem areas and prioritise action.

Working with three volunteer residents, our Open Spaces Team will be testing the quality of the River Brain and River Blackwater each month by looking at the temperature, ammonia, phosphate and nitrate levels as well as visual pollution signs.



These results are reported back and will feed into local conservation efforts and help ensure our river remains clean and healthy for wildlife and future generations!





Paws for thought

HERE AT WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL, WE CARE ABOUT
OUR RESIDENTS AND THEIR PETS.



01

DOG BINS

Want to do something pawsome for your pooch? Sponsor a dog bin on Witham's River Walk, at James Cooke Wood, or Whetmead! Your bin will feature a photo of your dog and a message reminding owners to clean up. Plus, we'll donate to a dog charity of your choice!

02

PLAQUE SCHEME

Looking for a special way to remember your beloved pet? Our Pet Commemorative Plaque Scheme lets you honour their memory with a personalised plaque on our Mill Lane bench - a heartfelt tribute to keep their spirit alive.

PLEASE CONTACT

openspacesadmin@witham.gov.uk

or pop into the Information Centre to find out more

WHY NOT COME ALONG TO WITHAM'S DOG SHOW?



EVENT PROGRAMME

- 10:15 - Golden Oldie
- 10:45 - Most Precious Pup
- 11:15 - Best Junior Handler
- 11:45 - Miss World
- 12:15 - Mr Universe
- 12:45 - Best Rescue
- 13:15 - Scrumptiously Scruffy
- 13:45 - Best Crossbreed
- 14:15 - Best Fancy Dress
- 14:45 - Dog The Judge Would Like To Take Home



*Witham
River Walk*

*Saturday
17th May
10am - 3pm*

Sponsored By...

Holmes & Hills

SOLICITORS



Competition entry is £1 a category. Book on the day at our Witham Town Council Stall. All entry fees will be donated to local dog charities. Full details can be found at www.witham.gov.uk/dog-show



Witham Town Council's Summer Community Events



2025

MAY
17

Witham Dog Show

JUN
14

United in Music

AUG
7

Teddy Bears Picnic

AUG
15

**VJ Day 80th Anniversary
Commemorative Event**

SEP
1

**Witham Rail Disaster Memorial
Service**

SEP
20

**Witham Street Entertainment
Festival**

Witham Royal British Legion Hall



£1 admission including
tea/coffee!!

Doors Open
2:00 PM
Film Starts
2:30 PM

**BRIDGET JONES'S
DIARY
18TH MAY**



**THE YOUNG ONES
15TH JUNE**



**CALENDAR GIRLS
20TH JULY**



Supported by
Witham Town Council

Carnival

Country and Western
Theme



Procession

Entertainment

Stalls



Procession leaving Witham Town Football Club and
Witham Town Rugby Club at 1.30pm.

Followed by entertainment in Witham Park at 3pm





CRIME



Witham Town Council are aware of the concerns amongst residents and businesses in Witham about anti-social behaviour and crime.

Crime was therefore the central theme of this year's **Annual Town Meeting** in April, where the **Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Jane Gardner**, spoke about crime figures and the desire to fund more police officers in Essex.



Official crime figures show a reduction in crime in Witham from 812 incidents in 2022 to 759 in 2023. However the police are aware that many people do not report crime.

It is vital that all residents and business owners report crime to the police, not just Facebook - it is only with statistics and real life examples that the Police will prioritise a stronger presence in Witham.

Witham Town Council was the first local council to 'go live' with the Community Special Constables Scheme. We have 3 volunteer officers whose expenses are funded by the Town Council.

Monthly reports of their activities can be seen on our website - if there are areas of Witham that you feel need more support, **please let us know.**

Our Special Constables are also outside **Witham Hub every alternate Saturday** if you have any questions for them

In 2023, Witham Town Council recruited a **Street Warden, Paul**, who is responsible for maintaining and facilitating community safety by being a visible presence in the town Monday to Friday

Report Crime



Essex Police hold a regular Tuesday Community Beat Surgery at **Witham Information Centre** where you can pop along and chat to an officer about any concerns you may have.

Upcoming dates for 2025:

Tuesday 20th May 10:30 - 1200

Tuesday 27th May 10:30 - 1200

Tuesday 10th June 1500 - 1630

Tuesday 24th June 10:30 - 1200

Visit **www.essex.police.uk** and click **Report** to share details.



Or ring 101

Always call 999 in an emergency

If you prefer to remain **anonymous**, you can report crime via CrimeStoppers,

<http://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Or ring 0800 555 111

COMMUNITY GRANT AID

Each year Witham Town Council give grants to local non-profit making or community organisations that benefit the town



Last year the following groups were awarded a grant:



Templers Community Association

To help fund the 40th Anniversary Fun Day

Witham Carnival Association

For the running costs of Witham Carnival on **12th July 2025**



Mill Lane Bowls Club

For repairs to the club house



Witham Boxing Club

To purchase new training and safety equipment

Citizens Advice

To deliver debt advice to the people of Witham



Friends of Witham St. John CIC

For the upkeep of the St. John's Ambulance building

COUNCILLOR GRANT SCHEME



Each Town Councillor has an annual budget of £500 to support community projects

LAST FINANCIAL YEAR THE FOLLOWING GROUPS WERE HELPED...

- **2nd Witham Boys' Brigade**
- **7th Witham Girl Guides**
- **Mill Lane Bowls Club**
- **United Reformed Church Baby Bank**
- **Witham Allotment Association**
- **Witham All Star Majorettes**
- **Witham Carnival**
- **Witham RBL**
- **Witham Soccerbility**



If you think your community group might benefit from a councillor grant, visit

www.witham.gov.uk/small-grants

for more details and an application form



NOT SURE OF WHICH COUNCIL YOU NEED?

Witham Town Council

Management of:
The River Walk, James Cooke Wood, Whetmead
The Closed Churchyard
Street lights with the initials WTC

01376 520627

Braintree District Council

Management of:
Refuse Collections
Street Cleaning
Witham Town Park
Fly Tipping
Abandoned Vehicles
Housing
Planning applications

01376 552525

Essex County Council

Management of:
Potholes
Road signs
Bridges
Traffic lights
Most street lights
Pavements

0345 7430430



YOUR COUNCIL



61 NEWLAND STREET WITHAM CM8 2FE

01376 520627

Witham Town Council Offices

Monday to Thursday 9:00am-5:00pm

Friday 9:00am-4:00pm

townclerk@witham.gov.uk

Information Centre

Monday to Thursday 9:00am-4:30pm

Friday 9:00am-3:50pm

infocentre@witham.gov.uk



CENTRAL

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Attend Your Town Council Meetings!

When?

Meetings: 7:30 PM

Planning & Transport Committee: 6:30 PM

Find Agendas

*Noticeboard on Newland Street
(attached to Fenn Wright)*

Online: www.witham.gov.uk/committees

In the Town Hall Council Chamber

With access through the side door via the drive.

NORTH

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Leanora Headley

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Artur Sloma

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Not sure of your ward? - You can find out at www.witham.gov.uk/wards or by asking at the Information Centre.