



## July 2023

Summer is well and truly underway and typically the British weather is extremely temperamental, however, we continue to carry out our volunteer roles as Community Special Constables across Witham. As mentioned in the previous report there is an increased focus on road safety and we will look at ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) led stops entering the town and also speed checks with a mixture of 100 checks (100 vehicles are measured over a period of time and in a single location to establish general driving behaviour) and pop-up checks on some of the estates where speeding becomes a particular concern with so many children playing out in the evenings now it is lighter. We continue to support key events in the town and this year we will be supporting the Witham Carnival and joining the procession. We still have a focus on driving down anti-social behaviour and deterring drug related crime across the whole of the town.

To report to Essex Police then please use the information at the bottom of this report. Thank you.

## **July 5<sup>th</sup>**

I was crewed with Special Constable Wintin for our patrol this evening and we began with a speed check on Rickstones Road near to the junction with Forest Road. Generally, speeds were within the 30mph limit but we were very aware that drivers were warning each other prior to seeing us and this reduced speeds in both directions, which is the ultimate goal. We did stop and talk to several drivers including one who had a front number plate missing and provided words of advice to get it fixed as soon as possible. We then headed around Forest Road and into the Rivenhall estate via Evans Way, we parked our vehicle near to Babbs Court and took the new footpath along the back of Forest Road until we reached Motts Lane. After a check on Cut Throat Lane we walked along Forest Road past Mulberry Gardens and Elderberry Gardens before cutting through to Yew Close and onto the rear of Newman Crescent. We continued back onto the footpath before following it around to Shelley Gardens to investigate reports of drug use in the wooded area. At this time, there was no suspicious activity or signs of drug use. Our next location took us to Church Street and Ebenezer Close as we continue to try to disrupt the use of illegal motorbikes in the area. When we turned into the disused garage area behind Ebenezer Close, we spotted a male on an E-Scooter who fled upon seeing us leaving a distinctive smell of cannabis trailing in his wake. We remained in the area for a short while to determine if there were any others in the vicinity, but I then received notification on my police mobile device that the same male had just made his way into the Humber Road estate.



We continued our patrols to the Spa Road Park where we engaged with a number of teenagers near to the skate park before heading up to the Rugby Club to meet some of the staff at the Witham Hangout. During the previous 2 sessions they had some disruption, and we were able to provide reassurance and visibility to the children, staff and



parents. As we exited the park we noticed a young male on an E-Scooter who took evasive action upon seeing us and escaped along the footpath towards Colne Chase. To try and intercept him we parked in Brent Close and continued on foot towards Colne Chase. When we rounded the corner of the footpath he was once again quick to make his escape but was now in company with three others, two on bikes and the other on another E-Scooter. As they made off again it was very evident that at least one of the children was in possession of cannabis. These are children with DRUGS! As parents you will know if your child has come into contact with cannabis and we strongly encourage you to take positive action to prevent this. Children can be used by others in the supply chain to distribute drugs locally using E-Scooters and bicycles and if stopped in possession of drugs that can be attributed to dealing, they could be arrested! Please give them the best start in life by acting now and taking your own action before they become involved at a level that will result in action by Essex Police. For advice on drugs then there are a number of helpful links on the internet where you can communicate confidentially or if you require Police assistance then please contact us.

Unfortunately, there were also others on the estate during the evening that were involved in drug use and drug supply and use of illegal electric scooters. The law is now very clear on the use of privately owned electric scooters and these cannot be used in a public place. If stopped by Police, they can be seized, and additional driving penalties can be enforced for No Insurance and Driving Otherwise in Accordance With A Licence. These will result in points added to a licence and a fine.

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



For the remainder of our duty we headed out to Terling and Hatfield Peverel following reports of a recently stolen car from the Hatfield Peverel area. Occasionally these cars are left in an area by criminals to determine if they are being tracked. If you are aware of a vehicle that has suddenly appeared in your area that you do not recognise and you are unsure then please report this via 101 and this can be checked to see if it has been reported stolen so it can be recovered.





July 6<sup>th</sup>

I headed out to Witham to focus on further speed checks and began outside the Cherry Tree Public House. I have been approached several times about speeding vehicles heading out of Witham and with 2 pedestrian crossings now on this stretch of road it should highlight to drivers that this is a busy area with significant risk to others if the speed limit of 30mph is exceeded. During the 45 minutes I recorded 100 vehicles passing my location and only had to verbally warn 2 drivers. I then moved across the town to Spa Road where I set up a new position at the junction with the car park leading to the shops and school. This was very obviously 'new' to a number of drivers and even though every vehicle had previously slowed for the chicane just after the Humber Road estate turning, many had managed to quickly increase their speed in excess of the 30mph limit. 1 driver who I was unable to stop (due to other traffic) was measured at 37mph and a person riding an illegal motorbike overtook cars and on the wrong side of the road passed my position at 55mph, showing absolutely no regard for his or anyone else's safety. With no registration plate and a crash helmet I am still trying to identify the rider to take the appropriate action, a police information report has been submitted. In total 9 drivers had failed to adhere to the limit and I will look at this location again in the future. My final location took me over to Maldon Road and the junction with Blackman Way. By this time of night the traffic quantity had eased, however, this resulted in drivers exceeding the speed on the long straight road section and I issued tickets to 3 drivers with the fastest speed recorded at 43mph. As the sun dipped down behind the houses I moved on to targeted patrols and visited Greenfield, Hatfield Road estate and stopped along Armond Road to follow up on reports of drug use at the brick bridge at the end of Moat Farm Chase. Fortunately there were no concerns and I concluded my patrol without incident.







**July 8<sup>th</sup>**

It was the day of the Witham Carnival and we were fortunate to be asked if we would like to participate in the procession and to have an engagement stand in the Witham Town Park. We had secured the use of a marked police carrier (riot van) for the procession and I was joined by Braintree Special Constable Jade Storey & fellow Community Special Constables Chief Inspector Lorne Campbell & Special Constable Claire Eaketts. With the Carnival theme being 'Safari' we tried to embrace this with some appropriate decorations and put the PA system to good use with animal sounds throughout the procession which seemed to be very well received. These events are a great opportunity to show our part in the Witham Community and it was amazing to see the route lined with people, young and old, who came out to support the event.



**July 12<sup>th</sup>**

I was dropped off into Witham at the Templars estate to deliver a number of letters on behalf of Braintree CID to residents requesting any information that may assist with a burglary that had occurred previously. When I entered the park area I engaged positively with a large group of children before heading to the nearby addresses to distribute my letters. I then continued my foot patrol across Rickstones Road and into the recreation ground and across the field to Cypress Road. There I attended the flats where there had been recent reports of teenagers on the communal stairs smoking drugs. I did see evidence that this had been occurring but there was no one present at this time. I then heard over the radio that a teenager known to me, who is involved in the supply of drugs in the Witham area had been stopped on the RiverWalk and I made my way along Cut Throat Lane onto Collingwood Road and down Guithavon Valley until I met with the officers. There were two plain clothed officers and they were part of a team including 2 other uniform officers that were supporting the Safer Streets initiative in Witham. The detained teenager had been seen riding an electric motorbike on the River Walk and I had specifically briefed the team prior to deployment in Witham to look out for this person. Following the successful stop they had then found a quantity of suspected Class A drugs (cocaine) and Class B drug (cannabis) which had been prepared for distribution, a large amount of cash and mobile phones. The rider was arrested for Possession With Intent to Supply and driving offences.

relating to no insurance and the electric motorbike was also seized. To complete the necessary preliminary investigation a Section 18 search was carried out on the suspects home address and further items connected with the supply of drugs were recovered and seized. I joined my colleagues for the search and also to convey the suspect to custody where they would be interviewed in connection with the offences.



The electric motorbike is one of a number in use across Witham suspected to be used to supply drugs, however, there have been other offences where the bikes have been ridden dangerously at high speeds and causing distress to other drivers and pedestrians when used on footpaths. We will continue to target these electric motorbikes which can only be used on private land.

### July 15<sup>th</sup>

I arrived in Witham to carry out a specific search following information shared on the NextDoor Application which stated that a Ford Fiesta had been stolen recently from a nearby village. There has been a significant increase in these vehicle thefts across the county and there is a team working within Essex Police to track and investigate these thefts in order to bring the suspects to justice. I started on the Templars estate and visited each of the side roads checking each parking area, I next headed across the town to the Flora Road estates and checked the complete length of Bramble Road and Honeysuckle Way, Rosebay Close, Calamint Road, Speedwell Close and Foxglove Close. I returned again to Honeysuckle Way and began to check the side roads and fortunately it was here that I noticed a vehicle matching the description that was potentially out of place. I was able to speak to some local residents who were unaware of the owner and stated that the car had not been there very long. I carried out checks on the vehicle using the Police National Computer and it was shown as the stolen vehicle. At this point we have the best opportunity to look for forensic clues that may lead to a suspect so I arranged for a specialist recovery of the vehicle which did cause a minor disruption and spectacle for a few residents.







With the vehicle recovered I headed into the town centre to carry out a short foot patrol, I spoke with several of the stall holders on the market and also popped into The Witham Hub before I received a call over the radio for an intruder alarm which had been set off in Hatfield Peverel. After arriving on scene I was able to determine that it was a false alarm and notified the alarm company. I returned through to Witham but due to the high winds there was a report of a tree balancing precariously in Cressing and I drove to the area to close off the road. At the time of my arrival the road was still in use with vehicles and pedestrians unaware of the potential danger and I quickly closed off the road each side of the tree. Approximately 1 hour and without warning the tree came crashing down across the road which could have been catastrophic, I would like to thank the eagle eyed member of public for calling it in to our control room in the first instance and to the nearby neighbours who provided refreshments while I waited for the Highways Team to arrive to remove the tree.



The final part of my duty was to answer an assistance call from officers who had been assaulted while trying to detain a suspect in Braintree and with another colleague I conveyed the suspect to Chelmsford Custody.

## July 22<sup>nd</sup>

It was the day of the Community Beat Surgery at The Witham Hub in the Grove Centre but before I took my place outside, I stopped on Collingwood Road to conduct speed checks. This time I set up a little closer to the junction with Guithavon Valley to measure the speed of vehicles travelling from the town centre. In just under an hour I measured 100 vehicles which provides a sample at that time of day on that particular location. From the data we can determine if there are significant issues that need additional focus. In total 6 drivers were stopped and given verbal warnings with their speeds creeping over the 30mph limit but generally with the prominent position of my marked police vehicle and my high visibility clothing the remaining drivers were ok. I did speak to local residents who



indicated that my presence had made a marked difference to the usual manner of driving so I will continue to monitor this at different times and days of the week.



**Speed Complaint Investigation**

**36**

Highest recorded speed

**30**

Speed limit

Location: Collingwood Road

Date: 22/7/23

Start time: 09:48

Finish time: 10:44

Officer(s) checking: 78075

24	31	22	26	26	24	31	28	27	35
28	22	25	27	35	27	24	30	28	30
27	27	21	22	21	20	21	21	25	24

Verbal warning or advice

Fixed penalty ticket

Speed awareness training

Reported to Court

With the survey complete I carried out mobile patrols around Armond Road, Spa Road, Spinks Lane and through the town on my way to the Beat Surgery. Over the course of 2 hours at The Witham Hub I spoke to over 30 people who had either come to see a local officer and report issues or families bringing their children to say hello. I had a very positive engagement with a child who had been recently fostered and the family wanted to introduce them to a police officer and the role we play in keeping people safe. The Beat Surgery is there for you and your Community so please do come along, we have facilities to record crimes and this can be done in a secure and confident environment if required. The new banner flag is designed to draw attention to joining our team and becoming a Community Special Constable and supporting Witham. If you would like to find out more about the scheme then please scan the QR code on the flag when you pass or alternatively you can follow the link below.

[Community Special Constables | Essex Police](#)



With the conclusion of another successful session I returned to my vehicle as the skies opened and it began to rain throughout the afternoon. Not to be put off, I targeted hotspots identified around Witham for suspicious behaviour related to drug supply and during a slow drive around one particular road I did attempt to intercept a person on a bicycle with a rucksack who deliberately evaded me. If you have any information regarding this activity you can





report this to officers or alternatively contact Essex Police on 101 or Report-It-Online via the Essex Police website. An information report has been submitted for the incident and will be used to provide evidence for future action.

### July 25<sup>th</sup>

Witham Community Special Constable Claire Eaketts was out with Braintree Special Constable Wintin for patrols across Witham and they began by following up reports of persistent anti-social behaviour caused by children at the ASDA store on Highfields Road. Over the past week children have been coming into the store and committing disturbances and shoplifting. After being banned from the store they then congregated outside in the trolley area and continued to cause disruption and concern for staff and visitors to the store. The purpose of our patrols is to deter anti-social behaviour and to deal with the children directly if they are causing a nuisance and we would ask parents to check on the whereabouts of their children in the afternoons and early evenings during the school holidays. With children at the skate park and on the field by the Witham Town Football Club they carried out foot patrols and engaged positively before returning to their vehicle and crossing the town to the Templars estate.



The area around the park on Shaw Road had also been the subject of anti-social behaviour and this extended to criminal damage when part of the railings and the bins were damaged and left unsafe. If you have any information that would help to identify the people responsible then please speak to officers in confidence or report via 101. This is your park, in your community and therefore it is affecting you and your children. After reviewing the damage and conducting a visible foot patrol throughout the Courts they next headed to Laburnum Way and checked on the derelict boarded up buildings and the recreation ground. With mobile patrols through the town centre they patrolled the Redrow estate before disrupting suspected drug related activity on Maldon Road involving teenagers on bicycles. An information report has been submitted to target this activity in future patrols.







July 26<sup>th</sup>

I had seen an article on the Witham Community Facebook page submitted by Witham Town Councillor Jack Coleman amid concerns over the speeding on Spa Road. I had recently conducted a speed survey in that area but within the responses on social media there were comments about increased speeds on Flora Road and I therefore began my shift with a check near to the junction with Bramble Road. Over the following 40 minutes I monitored and recorded the speed of 100 vehicles and although I was primarily focused on traffic coming into Witham from Faulkbourne Road, it was the traffic leaving Witham that I measured most frequently exceeding the speed limit. The highest of these was 39mph which is especially dangerous as I counted 24 people including children that crossed this wide road to and from the park. In this instance I was on my own and therefore it was not practical to be able to stop the traffic without causing a further hazard but this will now prompt our return to take positive action against drivers as we continue to try and reduce road casualties in the national #VisionZero campaign.



**Speed Complaint Investigation**

Highest recorded speed: **39**      Speed limit: **30**

Location: Flora Road

Date: 26/7/23

Start time: 17:22

Finish time: 18:04

Officer(s) checking: 78075

Verbal warning or advice       Speed awareness training

Fixed penalty ticket       Reported to Court

30	30	30	30	29	26	32	30	-39	30
29	28	36	-35	26	24	32	35	35	27
30	30	29	27	24	-39	29	30	30	30

During the checks I was approached by several residents who were thankful for my presence and were supportive of further checks in the area. I then moved down to ASDA where I spoke to members of staff concerning a shoplifting incident that had happened the previous evening and I was able to identify the suspects for an ongoing investigation. My next location took me across town to Constance Close to follow up on the drug related activity I had seen on a previous shift and I was able to speak with a potential victim of cuckooing and ascertain that in this instance they were not a victim, but I did provide safeguarding advice. I returned to the Spa Road area where I attended the Witham Hangout to provide a reassuring presence and although I was encouraged to join in the excellent dance demonstration, I made my excuses to return to my patrols. Unfortunately at this point in the evening it began to rain heavily and my last role of the evening was to intercept a young missing girl who had been seen boarding the train from Braintree. I made my way to the train station and with the assistance of the staff who held the train for a few extra minutes I was able to locate and remove the girl and return her to Braintree Police Station.

July 28<sup>th</sup>

The Witham Hub had organised an Emergency Services Day in The Grove Centre and I was able to attend with Witham CSC Officer Eaketts and Braintree Special Constable Penrose. I positioned our marked police carrier for the event and we set out some police kit and provided colouring activities and some free items to help promote the #SaferStreets initiative. During the event we were inundated with families with their children who wanted to try out the different parts of the carrier, including being temporarily "locked up" in the cage at the rear. There were some great photos taken by parents with a promise that we would not be seeing their children in the back in the future!



With the 3 of us in attendance we were also able to talk to people about their local concerns and we had several people report about drug use in their area as well as parking and speeding concerns. These will be looked at with future shifts and checks. We were not alone in the Centre and there more more Essex Police representatives providing information about online and phone scams and support on fraud. There were also partners from the Fire Service, NHS and the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Team on hand to provide their advice and information about their roles but I think it was our vehicle that just edged our popularity. We were also able to promote our volunteer role and potentially there were several people who may look to join the Essex Special Constabulary in the future.



## July 29<sup>th</sup>

In response to the input we had received the previous day I took the speed camera out with a plan to target numerous locations around Witham and I began at Forest Road. This is quite a challenging location to be able to set up the device due to the large amount of parked cars along the edges of the road in lots of different locations. We can only conduct these checks where it is safe for drivers to be able to clearly see us, for the safety of other road users and for pedestrians who may be crossing. I did find a position near to Lime Close, however, almost as soon as I started I had to cut this short due to a high risk domestic violence incident in the vicinity. Due to the warning markers for the potential suspect I was joined by other units before we approached the location. While officers attended the victim I went round the back of the building, where I spotted the suspect running off along the footpath along the rear of the estate and while in pursuit I directed other officers to the location. The person made several attempts to hide and even climbed over and ran through the rear garden of a nearby house before reappearing onto Flemming Way. Fortunately I am very familiar with the area and was able to keep a running account of location so additional officers coming into the area could meet up with us. With the suspect disappearing into the bushes we initially lost sight before they reappeared with another officer chasing, at this point the suspect ran out of energy and dropped to the ground where they were restrained and arrested. With additional officers arriving at the scene the person was placed into the rear of a police vehicle to be conveyed to custody. Not quite finished with the incident I returned with officers to the rear garden of the house to check for damage and I recovered a mobile phone which had been dropped by the suspect. This incident really showed the benefit of local knowledge in assisting in the capture of this suspect and the teamwork of all the units attending to support the victim and being able to provide reassurance that the suspect could cause no further harm.

With this incident resolved I returned to my speed check location and although I was able to measure a number of vehicles, the amount of traffic was very light so I will look to return at another time and day of the week. I then conducted a thorough search and foot patrol along the length of the pathway that stretches from Rickstones Road, along the back of Redwood Close, to Poplar Close for recently stolen goods that may have been stashed or dropped but nothing was found. My next stop was in the town centre where I called in at The George to wish the landlord and landlady all the very best for the future as they leave the pub. The new landlord has a great base to build upon and the relationship with the pub and the customers has been a great success over the years I have been a Community





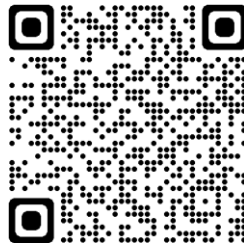
Special Constable in Witham. My final visit of the day was to the Witham Rugby Club where they were holding a community fun event and although the weather had threatened most of the day it had managed to hold off long enough for many people to visit.




This concludes the monthly report for July 2023.



You can find Witham Community Special Constable patrol updates on Twitter by searching and following

[Essex Police Witham \(@EPWitham\) / Twitter](https://twitter.com/EPWitham)



Contact Essex Police

Emergency call  999

Non-Emergency  101 or  Report it Online

<https://www.essex.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

