



## **March 2026**

March signalled the beginning of Spring, but the cold weather has proven a challenge for most people to be out around the town during the weekends and evenings. As the evenings started to get lighter, we started to experience some anti-social behaviour in the town centre, and this focused our patrols. We have been carrying out speed checks, tackling drug related activity, preventing shoplifting and providing reassurance with visible patrolling.

The Community Special Team are continuing the fortnightly Community Beat Surgeries, located outside The Witham Hub on a Saturday between 11am & 1pm and we are always pleased when people drop by if they have any concerns in their neighbourhood, seek advice or just say hello!

[Community Special Constables | Essex Police](#)

## **March 4<sup>th</sup>**

I began my duty in the evening with a visit to the library but pleased to see and hear there were no concerns before beginning foot patrol in the town centre, heading through the Witham Town Park and past Helen Court onto the River Walk near to Pattison Close. I continued onto Bridge Street before walking back over the footbridge into Guithavon Valley and returning up Guithavon Street into the town centre. I called in at the only open store in the Newlands Precinct to provide reassurance before spending a short time monitoring the traffic passing up and down Newland Street.



I returned to my vehicle for mobile patrols visiting the derelict flats on Dorothy Sayers Drive to see if there had been any new damage caused to the building. Fortunately, it was deserted and I continued around to Forest Road and Poplar Close to check on another property which had seen criminal damage recently, again I was pleased to see that there had been no further issues. During the evening there were no reported incidents in Witham, and I concluded my shift back at the Police station where I was able to update and contribute to 2 ongoing investigations.

## **March 7<sup>th</sup>**

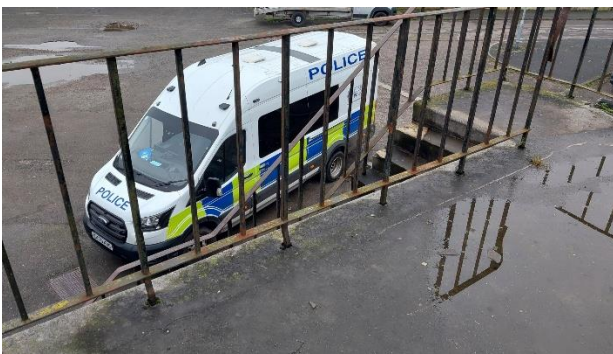
I started my shift on foot in the town centre visiting the market stall and the nearby stores, engaging with staff before continuing my visible patrolling. After a visit to the town park, I headed back up Newland Street and down Maldon Road where I witnessed a collision between two cars in the queuing traffic. Both cars were able to pull off the main road, and I ensured that both parties, who were both uninjured, exchanged details. I also checked both vehicles and drivers' detail for insurance and vehicle markers before they headed off. I crossed the road to enter the Grove Centre



just in time to see a shop staff member running past the telephone boxes towards Mayland Road. I followed and quickly stepped in as the staff member had been chasing after 2 people who had just stolen items from a nearby store. I immediately recognised one of the suspects and I was then able to take the details of the other suspect following a helpful intervention by an ex-police officer. With all items returned and both suspects information recorded, I returned to the store with the staff member to create the investigation for the theft. This will now be allocated to a regular officer for further action.



I was then joined by fellow Witham Community Special Constable Connor Penrose and after completing some further foot patrol we returned to our vehicles to visit the Spa Road area of the town due to the social media campaign encouraging attendance at Witham Football Club for their afternoon fixture. It was great to see a steady trail of people heading up to the Simarco Stadium and to see large groups of youngsters attending. With a visit to ASDA, we were able to confirm they had no issues and we returned to mobile patrols until kick off.



The last visit of the day was back to Dorothy Sayers Drive following a new report that children had been seen on the roof, but there was no further damage observed. Due to an evening operation in Dunmow, we both had to return our respective vehicles, but our duties did not stop on our return. SC Penrose headed out to Halstead to complete patrols in the town and I followed up using the Witham Town CCTV system to review a reported incident that had occurred on the River Walk. Information relating to the incident was then relayed to the Witham Town Team officers who conducted targeted patrols over the evening. Following a review of the incident there will be a mix of both overt and covert patrols to provide visibility and reassurance.



## March 8<sup>th</sup>

Following an invite from Town Mayor, all the Witham Community Special Team met up at St. Nicolas' Church for a Civic Service where he wanted to give thanks for the support shown to the Witham community over his past year of office. The service was very moving with speeches & readings and some very familiar hymns for all to join in. The Mayor's chosen charity for the year is the Alzheimer's Society and if you would like to find out more about Dementia and the great work of the society then please follow the link below.

[Alzheimer's Society](#)



## March 9<sup>th</sup>

Straight out of my main place of work, down to the Police station and back in Witham within an hour saw my shift begin around Newland Street. Over the past few weeks, we have tried to provide a visible presence to discourage large groups of young people entering the library or loitering around the convenience store and this seems to have had a positive effect with fewer reports. To support a recent incident on the River Walk I headed down to the ASDA store to review their CCTV where I was able to gather further images to support our investigation. The initial Facebook post which had provoked a lot of online interest had been removed and although several comments had been made online, there was no further information shared directly to Police. We have a patrol plan in place to increase visibility in the area and to support this I carried out foot patrol down Guithavon Valley and checked out the area behind the Duck Pond for a different concern.



I did return to my vehicle to assist with a vehicle that had failed to stop for another unit and while I was in the south of the town I visited Haygreen Road, Baker Way, Mortimer Way and Elgar drive before heading back towards the town centre. With no other reported issues, I completed my duty and headed home.



## March 11<sup>th</sup>

I was crewed with Halstead Community Special Constable Mihalyfi with a plan that we would share locations between Witham and Halstead for our community patrols and we started in Witham. During the day the Streetwarden had reported several people causing issues in the library and with the suspects known to me I wanted to ensure that they were not causing further disturbances. Arriving just after 5pm we parked nearby and headed into the library to provide some visibility and reassurance to the staff. The moment we entered we were alerted to a small group of children on the upper floor causing a nuisance and after a short discussion they were escorted outside.

The people from the earlier reports left the library just before we arrived and so we carried out foot patrols around the town centre, visiting the Newlands Shopping Precinct and the Grove Shopping Centre.



We returned to our vehicle to conduct patrols around ASDA & Guithavon Valley before returning to the town centre where a member of public alerted us to a small group of teenagers who were riding their bikes in and out of the road in front of traffic and were concerned for their welfare. Arriving in the area I recognised the group immediately from my previous patrols and engaged with them about road safety and particularly, not one of their bikes had lights. Fortunately, a Safer Essex Roads initiative had provided me with sets of bicycle lights and after retrieving enough for the group they set off for the train station, now clearly visible on the road. Opportunities for constructive engagement is a key part of our role as Community Specials and hopefully this will continue to build our relationship with the younger people in Witham.

With the promise of some patrols in Halstead, we headed over for high visibility patrols, and it wasn't long before we were assigned to a tasking near to Colne Engaine, fortunately this was problem free and before we could return towards the town centre we were assigned to another anti-social behaviour incident in Witham.

On arrival back in Witham, we visited the location of the earlier report and found that a group of children had begun construction of a 'den'. With a significant hole in the ground, wooden pallets, tree branches and a hand drawn plan it did make me feel a little nostalgic from my past adventures at a similar age. Unfortunately, the location was the issue, and they had decided to build against the fence of the railway track and near to the back of residential properties. The site was untidy and although the children involved were focused on their plans it was causing a nuisance. I called the informant to provide an update on what the children had been doing, and I made a record to contact the landowner to clear the area.



Patrols will be carried out over the next few days to try and engage with the children in a positive manner, however, we will be highlighting the damage to the area, the danger of the railway line and offering some constructive advice on the design of any future 'den' due to the inclusion of an underground fire pit which could have been extremely dangerous.

With additional mobile patrols back in the town centre, we concluded our shift.

### March 14<sup>th</sup>

I began my patrol on foot in the town centre, parking in the Newlands Drive car park before continuing into the Newland Precinct and engaging with the market stall holders. I visited one store to speak with staff to provide them with an update on the ongoing investigation for the shoplifters that were arrested previously, before heading up to the library to provide visibility and reassurance. I was joined by fellow Witham Special Constable Connor Penrose, and we began the Community Beat Surgery outside The Witham Hub. During the 2 hours we provided visibility and met with a group youth leader about visiting a nearby local club to provide positive input to the children and received information regarding drug related activity.

We left the town centre to conduct foot patrol around Walnut Drive following up on the recent report of anti-social behaviour involving children damaging trees and digging up land. Since I had first looked at the location during a previous duty the area had been tidied up by a parent of one of the "den builders" who spoke to us and understood why it had been reported. We were also able to speak to several of the children from the area who had been part of the building team and provided them with advice around digging holes and some of the safety risks, however, we tried to remain constructive in our comments because their plans demonstrated some good old-fashioned teamwork and fun.





Our next location took us on to the RiverWalk to provide visibility and reassurance due to a report to Police and reports on social media of an incident the previous Saturday afternoon involving a group of teenagers, but we were pleased to see that there had been no further issues and following a check with staff at the nearby ASDA store we concluded our patrols.



### **March 16<sup>th</sup>**

I visited the library just prior to closing time to find out if they had experienced any anti-social behaviour over the day but there had been no concerns and I moved in to the town for foot patrol. With all the shops starting to close there were very few people around but I did engage with several shoppers near to the Tesco store.

A recent increase in the use of illegal motorbikes around the town and industrial areas had been identified and I carried out mobile patrols on the Freebournes and Eastways Industrial estates. We work with Witham Industrial Watch to prevent crime in these locations and excellent CCTV had been provided which enabled us to obtain clear images of the bikes and vehicles involved which will help in our investigations.

Unfortunately, it is commonplace nowadays for the riders to wear complete face coverings or masks, so we are still working on their identities. If you are aware of anti-social or dangerous riding and you may have information which can help us to prevent an accident and improve community safety, then please contact us directly or you can contact Crimestoppers and report anonymously. With an area search conducted, I returned to the town centre to provide visibility and reassurance.

The remainder of my shift in Witham was cut short due an emergency call requiring me to head to nearby Feering where due to the complexity of the incident I was unable to return to my Community Special patrols.



**March 18<sup>th</sup>**

I managed to get into Witham just after 4pm so I could revisit the library several times prior to their late-night closing and the library discussed that they are planning to set up a teenage “zone” to promote positive engagement to help address some of the recent anti-social behaviour. With no immediate issues I conducted foot patrol in the town centre, through both the shopping centres before walking down Newland Street to the Morrison Daily store. With the improved weather this seemed to encourage several motorcycles to “race” up the high street and I did manage to stop one rider who was caught up at the traffic lights. Unfortunately, the other bike raced off continuing up Newland Street towards the library and out of sight. With words of advice to the rider who appeared remorseful I will be looking out for the other rider for future action.



With my presence near to the junction of Guithavon Street and Newland Street I was in exactly the right place to deal with a collision between another motorbike rider and a car that had turned across the rider’s path. Fortunately, there was no serious injury and with assistance from a member of public we were able to reopen the road quickly where I then conducted further checks on the parties involved before they exchanged details and continued their journey.

When we are on duty, we have an active list of incidents reported to Police and I was alerted to anti-social behaviour in nearby Hatfield Peverel involving a description of an off-road motorbike that matched the ones seen on Newland Street. I headed up to the location, and several residents approached me to confirm details and provide information about the possible location of the bikes near to the recreation ground. I parked behind a suspicious vehicle that had an intelligence report for drug related activity before continuing on foot via the duck pond and saw a large group of teenagers and younger children who ran off as soon as they saw my presence. There was a significant smell of cannabis, a Class B drug, in the air and this may have been the reason that the group dispersed quickly. I continued my patrol around the park area and spoke to several families who thanked me for my action having felt intimidated by the group. Please continue to report any suspicious activity in your area so that we can target our patrols.



With no sightings of the bikes or the group and the suspicious car having disappeared when I got back to my van, I submitted an intelligence report and returned to Witham.

To conclude my duty, I conducted a further foot patrol in the Newlands Precinct and Grove Centre and mobile patrols around Forest Road including Dorothy Sayers Drive to check on the derelict buildings before returning to Braintree to complete a statement for an ongoing investigation.



### **March 21<sup>st</sup>**

I had received information in the week from residents who were concerned by a person who had been trying to convince the homeowners that their house insurance was invalid and that they were at serious risk of a fire if they did not engage his company services. A leaflet had been left with details of the company and although initially it appeared quite convincing, a deeper look at the claims on the leaflet and the link to the website revealed that it had several warning signals of a potential scam. I had conducted some background work before I visited the residents to provide them with some feedback and safeguarding advice and thanked them for bringing this to the attention of the Police. They proceeded to tell me that their neighbour had also been approached, and I visited several other residents in the area who all had similar stories of a male who appeared aggressive in his manner. We are still looking for further information to identify the person involved and the vehicle associated so we can make direct enquiries concerning this business. The link



below will give you some guidance around doorstep fraud but if you are unsure – don't open your door and call Essex Police on 999

### [Door-to-door and courier fraud | Essex Police](#)

I headed in to the town centre for my regular foot patrols visiting the market traders in the Newlands Shopping Precinct and conducting reassurance patrols on Newland Street and in the Grove Centre. I dropped in to the Witham Hub where a person reported that they had been struck by a person on a mobility scooter in the Grove Centre and after checking the person's injuries and recording the incident I conducted a search for the suspect. The incident has now been allocated to an officer, and I continue to provide information to support the investigation which has included obtaining CCTV from the centre manager.



The remainder of shift saw me continue on foot, visiting the library, Witham town Park and the RiverWalk around the Duck Pond and train station before returning to Braintree Police station for a briefing on OP Vigilant.

Op Vigilant is an initiative to tackle Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) typically around nightlife areas to prevent stalking, harassment and more serious crimes. The operation utilises a mixture of plain clothes, covert mobile units and uniformed officers in marked vehicles to create a reassuring presence, to provide a visual deterrent and to be immediately available should an incident occur. I volunteered to extend my normal duty to be able to utilise the Witham Town Council CCTV system to identify any potential hotspots or issues across the town and I provided updates over the radio to my colleagues. Although Witham does not have a significant nightlife environment like the neighbouring cities of Chelmsford and Colchester, it is still a popular location for dining out and drinking at venues in the town. OP Vigilant covers the whole of Essex area with deployments in different locations, which has seen over 1500 public interactions, 85 arrests and 250 stop searches.

### **March 25<sup>th</sup>**

I arrived in Witham and headed to the Swanvale Industrial area to sit and wait for a vehicle potentially entering the North of Witham following an ANPR activation. There are specialist cameras around the area which identify vehicles from their registration marks (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) and this may



indicate the vehicle has been stolen, does not have insurance or the occupant may be wanted for questioning in connection with an outstanding offence. It is also used to help track missing people, so they can be a valuable resource. While I waited for a short time I was called by an informant who had been threatened by a person they knew to be close by on Newland Street. I headed in to the town to the library and following a talk with the informant I requested additional units to the scene, where a person was arrested and taken in to custody. Unfortunately, with the custody process and then the requirement to stay with the detained person I was unable to return to my normal patrols.



The person has been released on bail with conditions not to return to Witham which provides safeguarding to the victims and will help with issues in the library where they had been involved over the previous 2 weeks.

### **March 28<sup>th</sup>**

Saturday arrived and I first visited the town centre for foot patrol in the Newlands Shopping Precinct before moving on to Newland Street and the Witham Town Park before crossing Maldon Road into the Grove Centre for my Community Beat Surgery outside The Witham Hub. The Mayor was also present in the centre of the Grove alongside the Witham and Maldon Swans who were holding a charity Easter raffle. In my location I met and talked with residents, had pictures taken with children fascinated with my uniform and gathered information pertaining to issues in the local community. Being accessible for the 2 hours provides high visibility and a deterrent to crime in the town centre but also enables me to react quickly if an incident did occur.





With the conclusion of the Beat Surgery, I headed off on foot patrol again before returning to my vehicle for mobile patrols. With no concerns in Witham, I extended my patrol once more to Hatfield Peverel but also pleased to see no further issues with anti-social behaviour occurring there either.



With a final visit to Witham Town Centre, I returned to the Police Station where I assisted with the seizure of a vehicle with no insurance.

### **March 30<sup>th</sup>**

I began my shift with a journey out of town to return items for the previously arrested person before heading back to Newland Street following 2 reports of anti-social behaviour involving a group of children at the library and the nearby Roslyn House. A report from a member of public at the library mentioned a large group of young teenagers who had caused a significant disturbance inside before running out into the street. The second report from another member of the public reported seeing the group climbing over the gates to enter the front of Roslyn House.

When I arrived, I saw the group run across the road towards Freebournes Court and after a quick initial assessment for damage, I caught up with several of the group in the Grove Centre. Unfortunately, the reports did not contain any detail of potential offences or suspects, and I could only engage with the few that stayed, however, I did know each of them and any subsequent investigations with the library and the owner of Roslyn House may tie them back to the incidents. This group contains children as young as 12 & 13 years old and therefore it is very important that parents are aware of their behaviour in the town centre which is causing significant disruptions for staff of the library and nearby residents.

During my enquiries I was further informed that a large group of teenagers had been causing a disturbance behind the library on the previous Saturday evening which caused distress to the elderly residents at Whitehall Court. We will be targeting these areas and will be dealing with children which may involve us bringing them home.



Due to my presence in Witham, I was asked to support an ongoing high risk missing person incident, staying with the informant until the person was successfully located and returned to a place of safety. Part of the return involves taking a report of the circumstances and the welfare of the person before I was then able to return to my final location for my shift.

I had received a message that the derelict flats on Dorothy Sayers Drive have once again been damaged and I circled round to take a look. In this instance the entire door of one of the flats had been ripped off. The flat inside had been damaged many times previously and it was not possible to assess any new damage, but these flats are not play areas and present a very clear danger to unauthorised people entering the building. I have since been informed by the company securing the building once more that the damage in this instance had been caused by a group of children that arrived with tools! This is a criminal act and if they are apprehended, they could be prosecuted. Please be aware what your children are doing before they are seriously injured or end up with a criminal conviction.



This concludes the report for March

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[StreetLink - Connecting people sleeping rough to local services](#)

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

[Essex Police Witham \(@EPWitham\) / Twitter](#)



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/>

