



July 2022 Patrols

July started with an increase in temperature and more public engagement events for us to attend to provide interaction, reassurance and visibility, while behind the scenes we were still tackling crime and protecting vulnerable people. One of the significant community events was the 2nd Witham Dog Show organised by the Witham Town Council and we were invited to provide access to local Police officers for all attending and to judge some of the categories. With the school holidays almost upon us we wanted to make an impression on the estates and town centre to deter anti-social behaviour. With the dry conditions we were also advising children and teenagers about the risks of fire following the discovery of several 'meeting areas' on scrubland.

July 1st

I met with Special Inspector Campbell at Howbridge Junior School for their Summer Fete, which was held at the end of the school day. I brought along the marked Police carrier and we set up with uniform, hats, shields and of course access for the children to the vehicle and the now locally renown "visit to the cage" We had some fantastic engagement with the children and parents with interesting questions and quite a few potential recruits – in a few years!



July 2nd

Today was the Witham Town Councils' 2nd Dog Show on the RiverWalk near to Chipping Hill & Powers Hall End. We were given a pitch near to the arena and this provided us with excellent engagement opportunities. We provided some road safety advice for children and of course opened the carrier for photos and questions. I was joined by PCSO Stranger & also attending were PC Southgate & Special Constable Partridge. I was very fortunate to be asked if I would be a judge in two of the dog show categories which began with 'Best Biscuit Catcher' and 'Dog that I would Most Like to Take Home' There were some amazing dogs and with their owners and families the event was a great success.



More photos from the show are available on the Witham Town Council Face book Page

[Witham Town Council | Facebook](#)

June 5th

I was joined by PC Southgate for foot patrols in Witham and after parking our vehicle on Pattison Close, we headed off along the RiverWalk, crossing Maldon Road, along the edge of the Freebournes Industrial area until we crossed onto Avenue Road and then onto the train station. We continued along Cut-Throat Lane until we arrived at Cypress Road, we visited the Recreation Ground and then back along the main road leading onto Collingwood Road. A slight detour into Armond Road then took us onto the RiverWalk and we followed this all the way back to Bridge Street before crossing to arrive back at our vehicle on Pattison Close. During the 6km patrol we recorded information regarding drug related behaviour for future action.



During the later parts of our mobile patrols which included Laburnum Way, Forest Road, Rickstones Road & the Templars estate a further report has been submitted for suspicious vehicle activity following a report from a concerned member of public.



July 7th

Crewed with Witham Special Constable Eaketts we headed out for foot patrols beginning at the park area on Evans Way. It was great to see the park in use and there were no signs of previous anti-social behaviour. We moved further along Forest Road to Flemming Way and conducted an area search where we checked hedgerows for signs of reported drug activity and then onto the Witham Cemetery for reassurance checks. We have had recent information concerning potential drug related activity on Blunts Hall Road leading on towards Terling and again we carried out several area searches along the route. I am pleased to say that we did not find anything drug related, however, in one of the laybys on Blunts Hall Road there was evidence of a small fire in the corner of the crop field. Please be extremely mindful that even a discarded cigarette thrown from a car window can easily start a serious fire in the hot and dry weather conditions. Special Constable Eaketts was driving the police car after recently achieving independent patrol status, which is another of the great benefits of becoming a Community Special Constable. For more information on joining us and helping your community please see the link below.

[Special Constabulary | Essex Police](#)



Our final foot patrol of the evening took us onto Honeysuckle Way following reports that large numbers of teenagers had been starting fires, drinking alcohol, and using drugs in the scrub land behind Oxlip Road. After some negotiating the wilderness, we managed to locate 2 separate 'dens' and at the second we found a group of teenagers sitting around a pit that had been created for fires. Although there was no fire at the time, we provided words of advice and addressed the reported concerns of alcohol and drug use. The teenagers present appeared to be using the location for social gathering and there were no obvious concerns but this area will be revisited. We then attended 2 incidents involving a bank fraud with a vulnerable person and a reported assault on Bridge Street before finishing our shift.



July 9th

It was the day of the Witham Town Carnival and I had been able to arrange for 6 Special Constables to provide high visibility and reassurance for the duration of the procession and the main events in the Witham Town Park. While 3 officers waited with the marked police carrier to follow the procession the other officers and myself carried out foot patrol along the route. With rolling roadblocks organised by the Carnival stewards we were able to walk among the crowds lining the streets and had some very positive engagement throughout the procession route. As the procession passed up Newland Street and on towards The Grove, we were called into action for 2 simultaneous incidents. The first involved a 4-year-old who had wandered off from a frantic mother who was now shouting out in the street for help and assistance. Several minutes passed with other people getting involved in the search before a possible sighting of the child at the bottom of Newland Street and we ran to the location, fortunately it was the child and we were able to reunite them with the mother. After confirming identities and details we were able to return to our patrols. As we approached the White Hart, other officers from my team were attending a lady who had collapsed with a medical episode in the street. Once again it was with assistance from an off-duty paramedic that the lady received the care required and we were able to help her recover before we all headed towards the Witham Town Park.



With the carrier parked at the entrance to the Town Park we opened this up for photo opportunities, while the other team of officers walked around the park to provide visibility and reassurance. We were approached by lots of people regarding the missing child and able to put their minds at rest with the update that they had been found and reunited. During the remainder of the afternoon, we alternated with the other crew to provide a visible policing presence and a further 2 missing children in the park were quickly found and reunited. With the main display events finishing in the arena, we packed up the carrier and finished our patrols. With no major incidents or crime reported over the course of our attendance we hope that our visibility contributed to everyone enjoying their day.





July 11th

I was crewed with Special Constable Wintin and we attended the Templars estate to carry out reassurance patrols due to a report of anti-social behaviour involving banging on residents' doors late at night. While this may seem like harmless fun, residents may be vulnerable and what may appear to be low level annoying behaviour to some can become very frightening to others. Before we had an opportunity to walk through the whole of the estate, we were called to a disturbance on Albert Road. We arrived on scene in minutes, again, showing the benefit of the role as dedicated officers in Witham. After speaking with witnesses, who informed us that a couple were having a very heated argument, we carried out a large area search of the surrounding roads, pathways and train station but with no trace of the people involved. Just as we planned to head back to the Templars estate, we were directed to attend Woodend Farm following a report of a large fire. Within 5 minutes we were on scene and straight into action, ensuring that members of the public were kept away from the area. There were already 2 fire appliances starting to tackle the fire but it was spreading very quickly due to the very dry conditions and wind which was driving the flames towards the surrounding fields. With a witness report that this fire may have been started deliberately other Police units were called in to carry out area searches, review CCTV and attempt to apprehend the suspects. With the assistance of an off duty Metropolitan Sergeant my colleague helped to clear Woodend Farm of 30+ children who had been attending an activity event while I co-ordinated with the fire commander and relayed this back to our control room. As the fire continued to spread from building to building, I was able to coordinate with one of the business owners to extract several vehicles in proximity. This helped the fire service and they were then able to get additional appliances into the site. With a total of 8 appliances from different stations, including a specialist platform & dedicated water supply tanker, 3 HAART medical response vehicles, four Police units & UK Power Network this was a significant incident.

With the arrival on scene of Braintree CID I was able to take a step back and after reviewing the CCTV footage I identified one of the suspects from my local knowledge. This assisted in the arrest of the suspect the following day as the investigation continues.





July 12th

I was crewed with fellow Witham Special Constable Eaketts and following concerns raised by local residents on Rickstones Road we set up to carry out speed checks on the stretch of road between Forest Road and Rectory Lane. Unfortunately, in the space of just 20 minutes we had stopped 3 drivers exceeding the limit and issued a traffic offence report (TOR). We had a large, very visible, vehicle and wearing high visibility jackets but this still did not deter some drivers who continued to speed past us as we were talking with drivers already pulled over. This is not acceptable and dangerous to other road users, pedestrians, and yourselves! #Fatal4 #Visionzero #SummerRoadSafetyEssex @SaferEssexRoads



Our time at the location was cut short when we were asked to support a disturbance at Cullen Mill. Again, in just two minutes we were on scene and quickly trying to establish the reason for the disturbance. After speaking with witnesses, we went to engage with the suspect but the incident took a dramatic turn when the suspect climbed over a balcony before slipping and falling to the ground below injuring themselves. To administer first aid and due to the demeanour of the suspect and level of injury I pressed my assistance call which immediately requested additional officers to the scene.

An Ambulance was very quick to arrive, just after the first additional police unit and we were able to establish some control and get preliminary first aid in place. With the arrival of further officers, the suspect went off to hospital for checks and to address injuries and we finished our shift to get cleaned up. The incident was very dynamic due to the location and other residents and we were very pleased for the extra support.

July 14th

Crewed with fellow Witham Special Constable Eaketts we returned to Rickstones Road to carry out a check on 100 vehicles. This process is used to conduct a survey of speeds and identify if additional action is required. All vehicle speeds are noted but if a vehicle is measured exceeding the 30mph posted speed limit, it is recorded and depending on the speed the driver is stopped and may receive a verbal warning, speed awareness course or reported for further action which may incur points and a fine. During the checks 14 drivers were stopped with 9 verbal warnings, 2 applicable for speed awareness courses and a further 3 drivers reported to Court due to their excessive speed. The highest recorded speed was 45mph! We were joined towards the end of the check by Witham Community Special Constable Mabey and a colleague who had been to a mental health incident in Witham.



Following the conclusion of our checks we then carried out patrols of areas identified for potential drug supply along Blunts Hall Lane, Stevens Road & the Humber Road estate. I am pleased to report that there was no evidence of this activity during our patrols.

July 19th

I was crewed with Witham Town Team Officer PC Southgate and we headed into Witham on a very hot day with temperatures reaching 40 degrees. As you can imagine the heat coupled with our uniform and equipment did make it quite challenging to operate but we still carried out patrols. On the Templars estate we followed up on CCTV enquiries before heading round Witham to provide visibility and reassurance at several areas identified by residents for suspicious activity linked to drug supply. One of the areas reported was around Maldon Road and the Witham Town Park, however, this was deserted. With no incidents reported we concluded our patrols with further visibility on the Hatfield Road estate & Humber Road estate.





July 21st

Crewed with Witham Community Special Constable Eaketts we were initially tasked to support Braintree CID assisting with arrests in connection with a Modern-Day Slavery investigation in Braintree. After conveying a suspect to Chelmsford Custody, we then headed into Witham. Almost as soon as we entered Witham, we stopped a vehicle for checks following its driving manner close to Morrisons and gave the driver suitable words of advice before allowing them to continue their journey. During the remainder of our shift, we headed up to the site of the recent fire near to Woodend Farm following reports on social media that there had been teenagers near to the building remains. While this is being cleared there are still significant hazards and we wanted to ensure that the perimeter is maintained. Fortunately, when we arrived there was no-one around and we then travelled to the Hatfield Road estate for general patrols. It was here in the car park on King Edward way that we identified a vehicle that I did not recognise and following checks it was discovered to be displaying false number plates. The vehicle had been stolen from a location in London a month earlier and had been left parked up in Witham. Although the vehicle was secure, we arranged for recovery and this was removed for further investigation. The owner of the vehicle has been notified.



July 23rd

I attended the Community Beat Surgery in company with Braintree Special Constable Storey at The Witham Hub in the Grove Centre. During our time at the Hub, we met with an increasing number of residents wishing to report local issues or seek advice. Each of these are recorded for further action and Special Constable Storey to a vulnerable person who would only report to a female officer, where she was able to offer advice and reassurance for which the person was visibly relieved. If you have something you wish to discuss with a specific officer then please let the staff at the Hub know and we will try and make sure that we have the right officer to meet with you.

After concluding our visit, we then headed out to Oliver's Nursery where we had a pre-arranged meet with a family with young children. A recent incident at school had prompted parents to seek advice and we were happy to speak with the children but also to let them have a look at our vehicle and try on some of the police kit that we were carrying.

The final part of our community-based day was at Woodend Farm for a Community charity day in aid of CHES who provide support for homelessness. The charity was being supported by the Bethel Christian Fellowship staff at the farm with inflatables, farm tours, alpacas and attendance by Fire, Ambulance and Police. From the moment we arrived we were inundated with families and children keen to climb into the carrier and experience "the cage". We also provided kit to try on and provided very positive engagement for the event.

[Helping The Homeless In Your Community – Chess Homeless](#)



July 24th

Crewed with Special Constable Storey we patrolled Terling & Hatfield Peverel before heading into Witham to carry out speed checks on Maldon Road. This is another road identified by residents where both speed and anti-social driving is observed. The first location at the junction of Maldon Road & Blackman Way allows us to measure the speed of vehicles approaching the pedestrian crossing from the town. In this location we had to provide a verbal warning to a couple of drivers and issued a ticket to one driver who may be eligible for a speed awareness course. We then moved up Maldon Road to outside Daman's where we can then measure vehicles coming along Maldon Road approaching the town. In this location 2 drivers were given a verbal warning. Over the 200 vehicles that were measured this was a positive result and an improvement of previous checks. We will be returning at different times to vary the cross section of driving behaviour.

We then moved up to Cut Throat Lane to check on the allotments and reports of speeding by allotment owners along the lane from residents. This is a busy thoroughfare for pedestrians, bicycles and mobility scooters so please take care, if you are aware of any dangerous driving then please try and capture the registration of the vehicle and report this to Police. We were also able to speak with an allotment owner regarding security and safety during the holiday period with the potential for increased anti-social behaviour or crime including theft of tools or damage to property and would again encourage you to report any suspicious activity.

We then carried out foot patrols on Holly Walk, Babbs Court and along the footpath up to Evans Way and the play area, unfortunately we discovered that there was a significant amount of broken glass near to the sand play area and we therefore advice that you check the area before allowing your children int the sand. A referral to the Streetscene team through Braintree District Council has been submitted.





July 26th

Crewed with Special Constable Sinott we carried out patrols in Witham starting at Dengie Close where we carried out high visibility foot patrols following information from residents that suspicious behaviour relating to drug distribution had increased in the area recently. While we were there at the approximate times, we did not detect anything, however, our presence shows the importance of being seen in the community which is a major part of the Witham Community Special Constable role. After checking the garage areas behind Pelly Avenue, we returned towards our vehicle. After a short mobile patrol around Elizabeth Avenue, Maltings Lane, Holst Avenue and Gershwin Boulevard we parked up in Pattison Close and continued on foot towards the Witham Town Park. There were several dog walkers out on the River Walk but there was no activity in the park and we exited Kings Chase onto Newland Street. We walked up towards The George & The Red Lion before entering the Grove Centre. After returning a couple of stray trolleys we then crossed over into Greenfields and it was here we disrupted potential drug related activity which resulted in the three teenagers involved all heading off as we approached. With two of the males known a police information report was submitted due to their behaviour. We then continued along the footpath at the back of the field and onto Blackwater Lane where I located one of the many Geochace's that have been hidden around Witham by the Scout Group. This has been set up as an adventure trail for children to explore Witham and more details can be found at [Home | GeoScout](#)



We walked back towards our vehicle and carried out mobile patrols, once again visiting Dengie Close before driving back towards the town. As we approached Spinks Lane I recognised a vehicle of interest and after anticipating its movements it was located on Humber Road, unfortunately when it was requested to stop the driver decided to accelerate dangerously away and this was recorded as a Fail To Stop offence. The vehicle automatically is added to the ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) system for awareness to all officers to help stop the vehicle. An intelligence report has been submitted for this incident. As the sunset we headed back towards the town centre where a large group of teenagers had gathered outside one of the local restaurants, as we approached comments were made and they all ran off. While we did not identify any offences we did eventually catch up and have a discussion with them about how they acted and the perception by residents and business owners.

Over the course of our patrols, I was able to speak to 2 separate E-Scooter riders and inform them of the current law that prevents their use in Public. If the riders are seen again, they could have the scooter seized where it will be disposed of with no chance of the owner recovering it again. These are expensive items so please follow the current guidance around their permitted use.

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



July 28th

It was 999 services days at The Grove Centre and in partnership with Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Essex Police Fraud Prevention & Recruitment team, I attended with Witham Community Special Constable Mabey & Braintree Special Constable Watts. With the marked police carrier once again providing a source of interest for children and dressing up clothes, colouring packs and stickers, it was a very positive engagement event. The event was supported by The Witham Hub and Tina Townsend and was an opportunity to promote the excellent work they carry out in the community.

With the event concluded we then carried out mobile patrols in Witham with a visit to the estates and play areas, including Lodge Farm (REDROW), Maltings Estate, Haygreen Road park, Hatfield Road estate, Humber Road and then over to Forest Road and the Templars estate. During our foot patrol around the Courts, we disrupted an older teenage group in the park which involved a short foot chase with one person who made off. With additional visibility in the town centre, we concluded our patrols without further incident.



Additional photos from the 999 Services Day event are available here [The Witham Hub | Facebook](#)

July 30th

To vary our patrols, I crewed with Witham Special Constable Eaketts for foot patrols & mobile patrols specifically in the town centre. We wanted to carry out visits to each of the Public Houses and also carry out a licensing check at one establishment in town. This check ensure that they adhere to the requirements of their licence, with appropriate door staffing levels, displaying of the licence, ensuring that a DPS (Designated Premises Supervisor) is in attendance and other checks including drug misuse and underage drinking. With visits completed at The George, The Red Lion, The White Hart & Charlie's Bar we headed down Newland Street and went into Battesford Court before walking across to The Swan. Outside the premises was a person acting suspiciously on our arrival and very quickly disappeared out of sight. Although an immediate area search provided no further information, we identified that the person was wanted in connection with several offences. This meant that it was important for us to try and locate the person to help with ongoing investigations. We initially continued our foot patrols along the RiverWalk and up past Helen Court towards the Witham Town Park. We cut through onto Maldon Road and crossed The Grove into Greenfields where we disrupted drug related activity with one teenage male running away as we approached. There were no reports of the activity and it was only discovered by our foot patrols, if you see anti-social behaviour then please report this easily online at the following link. [Report antisocial behaviour | Essex Police](#)

With support from Braintree PCSO's we did engage with the remaining teenagers who were given advice about drug use and gathering in the location.



At this time, we decided to return to our vehicle and drove down Newland Street and onto Bridge Street and here we saw the wanted person again. This time we had additional units in Witham and this ended up with a few highly visible units in Witham as we searched for the person. With a cordon set around the Grove Centre and Freebournes Court a search was carried out. The person was then reported to have entered the Barwell Way area and officers were deployed along the Blackwater Rail Trail and carried out door to door enquiries and garden searches. We were also able to deploy the Essex Police Drone Team to the area but with failing light and the trees their capabilities were limited and the search was stood down with no further sightings.

July 31st

I volunteered to assist with a planned operation to increase visibility and reassurance in support of the European Cup Final in Witham. In company with Witham Town Officer PC Southgate & Witham PCSO Stranger we carried out foot patrol in the town centre visiting each of the venues showing the game and mobile patrols to some of the other pubs. During our foot patrol in the Witham Town Park, we had some positive engagement with a large group of teenagers and this really demonstrates how attitudes have changed to our presence in Witham. With the final whistle following extra time and a historic win for the England team we headed out of Witham without any related incidents.



This concludes the monthly report for July 2022.