



March 2023

With no apparent break in the cold and wet weather it is important for us to maintain a presence around the town, and we continued with foot patrols, mobile patrols and attending multiple incidents. There has been a recent increase in reporting suspicious events on local Facebook groups but not to Essex Police. The posts can be quite impactful to a community, and it is very important that you do take the time to report a crime in progress via 999. This will be expertly handled by our colleagues in the Force Control Room, and they will dispatch appropriate resources to deal with the incident to provide the best support to victims.

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/>

You can follow the Essex Police Force Control room on Twitter via the following account

[Force Control Room \(@EPControlRoom\) / Twitter](#)

March 4th

It was Saturday and Witham Special Constable Symonds accompanied me to the Community Beat Surgery at The Witham Hub, but as usual we wanted to show a visible presence around the town. We started with foot patrol, visiting shops in the Newlands Precinct, spoke to stall holders on the market and then continued down Newland Street and through the Witham Town Park where we spoke with a few people who had braved the colder morning. When we arrived at the Hub we were greeted with a warm cup of tea before we took up our position just outside the doors to provide engagement opportunities to people passing by. For the first hour we met with quite a few regular visitors to the town, and they provided some information about their local areas and asked about updates to previous incidents. We also provided a positive impact to young children out with their families. For our shift I had the marked Police carrier (sometimes referred to as a 'Riot Van' although I have never needed this function in Witham 😊) and due to an incident in another part of Witham we had to cut short our Beat Surgery to take the van to the scene to assist colleagues in the restraint and safe conveyance to custody. With the person safely monitored in the cell in the back of the vehicle I then drove to Colchester custody where, following a medical assessment we then took the person on to Colchester Hospital for precautionary checks. With the need to ensure the safety of the subject, the staff and public at the hospital we provided a constant guard until we were relieved by a replacement unit later in the afternoon.

March 9th

I was on my own for my shift tonight and I started with a concern for welfare incident. Typically, these incidents require us to check on a person and confirm that they are safe and well and do not require further assistance. Fortunately, in this instance I was able to speak with the person involved and with everything checked I moved on to an incoming report in the town centre. In this incident a shoplifter had assaulted a member of staff causing an injury

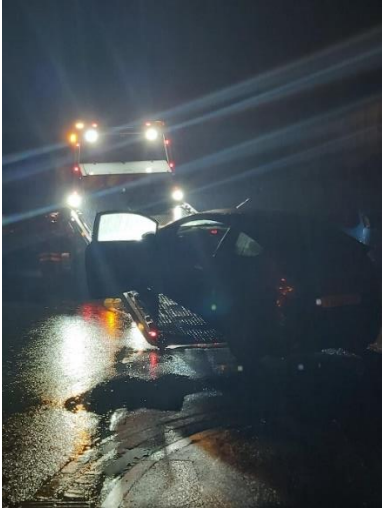


and fled the store. A description was provided, and a direction of travel so I headed over to the train station to see if the person was trying to leave the area. I did speak with a person who matched some of the description and I would like to thank them for their understanding while I tried to confirm details. With the trains departing and without a suspect I headed to the store to join other officers to see if I could assist with identification from the CCTV and carry out a local area search. As the injured staff member left the scene to attend hospital, they noticed that an item of clothing that the suspect was seen wearing had been discarded in a car park near to the rear of Iceland and I seized this for further investigation. With the staff member now on their way to hospital, evidence secured, and the shop closed I continued my area search for the suspect. While in the Newlands Drive car park I clearly heard a nuisance vehicle on Collingwood Road with a popping and banging exhaust. If you have any further information regarding this vehicle, then please bring this to our attention and we can issue the driver with a Section 59 order which could see the car seized.



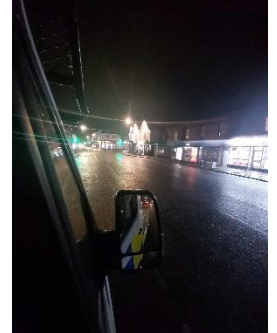
My next incident took me to the Templars estate following reports that a person had been seen in the area stalking a victim of domestic abuse. I went straight to the area and located the person who was sat in his car in sight of the victim's address. With the arrival of supporting units from the Local Policing Team the person was promptly arrested and taken to custody and I sat with the victim taking an extensive statement recording the history of the abuse up to the recent incident. During the recording of the information from the victim we also carry out a risk assessment to help to determine future risk or patterns of behaviour that could help to provide the correct support to the victim and prevent further incidents. With the statement completed just before midnight I planned to head back to the station to upload the information which would then be required to interview the suspect who was now in custody.

With my arrival in Braintree, I then attended a road traffic collision where a drink driver who had failed to stop for Police had subsequently crashed into a residential front garden causing significant damage. With officers arresting the driver and conveying them to Colchester custody I waited with the vehicle for recovery until 03:00.



March 11th

I arrived in Witham to an ongoing report of motorbikes that were heard and seen causing a nuisance and danger on the pathway leading to the RiverWalk behind Church Street. I initially checked at the bottom of Bramble Road where the pathway runs alongside the river before heading around to Church Street and accessing the entrance to the pathway on Ebenezer Close. The riders had been reported earlier in the day but even though I searched all the surrounding area I was unable to locate them at this time. Following my visibility, however, I was contacted anonymously, and I now have a suspect address for the motorbikes. I then headed into the Town Centre, recently, there have been reports that cars have been driving anti-socially up and down Newland Street and I wanted to try and observe this behaviour for myself. While I was parked in the United Reform Church car park, I did notice a few cyclists on the road that had no lights on their bike and dressed in mostly dark clothing. It is recommended for improved safety that if you are riding a bicycle at night that you are wearing high visibility clothing and displaying a light at the front and rear of your bike. With no vehicles causing a nuisance I parked my vehicle in Lockram Lane car park and got out on foot for some engagement. My first visit was to Charlies Bar, where I spoke with the Landlady and a few of the patrons before moving round to The George where I met with the Landlord & Landlady, I had some positive engagement here with my presence and with everything in order, I crossed Newland Street where I spoke with the Landlady at The Red Lion. Unfortunately, as I was on foot, I was then unable to stop a vehicle which was very noisy and appeared to be driving too fast for the limit as it headed along Newland Street. I was able to obtain the registration number and will be looking for this in the future.





March 13th

I was joined by Sgt Christian who is responsible for the Witham Town Team Officers at the Witham Annual Town Meeting held at the Royal British Legion. There were a number of groups in attendance, and it was informative to hear from students from the New Rickstones Academy and Maltings Academy who presented a number of items they wished to highlight in the community. One element of this related to more visible policing around schools and we were able to take this away as a task to try and assist with going forward.

March 16th

I was crewed with Witham Special Constable Eaketts for our patrols, and we first visited the area around Cypress Road and Forest Road following reports of drug use and potential drug dealing which had resurfaced. Fortunately, during our visits over the shift, we did not come across any activity and hopefully our visible presence provided some reassurance for the residents. Due to the recent attempted theft of lead from the roof of St. Nicholas Church we wanted to make sure we were visible in this area, and we combined this with a number of house-to-house enquiries in relation to the nuisance motorbikes. We returned to our vehicle after some positive engagement with neighbours and then began a series of mobile patrols across Witham. We visited Dengie Close, Pattison Close, Laurence Avenue and Pelly Avenue, we drove across to the Maltings estate and provided visibility on Holst Avenue, Baker Way and Haygreen Road before crossing London Road and entering the Redrow estate. Here we checked both park areas and continued to Wendon Drive before heading on to Hatfield Peverel.

On our return into Witham, we revisited most of the previous locations and made our way to the industrial areas, beginning with Eastways. With checks complete we continued to Freebournes Road and met with DEW Security who were also on patrol in the area. We finished our patrols in Witham with visits to Greenfields, Barleyfields, the Town Centre and then to Morrisons car park to check for nuisance vehicles.





March 18th

I was crewed with Town Team Officer PC Southgate for the Community Beat Surgery at The Witham Hub but prior to this we conducted some visible foot patrol around the town, calling in at a business that had been the centre of a social media frenzy following a potential hate crime. After speaking with members of staff and offering some reassurance we headed to the Hub. On arrival at the Hub, we met with local residents that wanted to report drug activity that was causing them distress in their home. Fortunately, they had also contacted the Environmental Health team at Braintree District Council [Antisocial behaviour – Braintree District Council](#) who were going to investigate and contact the people at the offending property. Depending on the nature of the anti-social behaviour this department can have a positive effect before any criminal intervention. During the session we also met representatives from Lally's Loot of Love who have been working with the Witham Hub to provide a small pack for people who experience a mental health crisis and find themselves at hospital with no personal effects. While this may seem a small gesture it can come at a very critical time for a person who needs help. Before we left, I was also able to draw the Mother's Day Raffle which raised nearly £400 for the Hub charity.



We then carried out foot patrol and visited a number of other shops on Newland Street before returning to our vehicle for mobile patrols around Witham.

March 22nd

I was out once again with PC Southgate to follow up on an incident from the previous week and we met with the business owner to record a hate crime. There had been 6 previous occasions whereby the shop widow had been targeted by eggs specifically aimed at the Pride flag that was hanging inside the window. After completing the report with the owner we then moved on to mobile patrols and visited Greenfields and Barleyfields following recent suspicious activity. After checking for outstanding incidents in Witham, we headed across the town to Bramble Road and with good timing we spotted a white 'pit bike' parked outside a nearby property. This motorbike had been tearing up and down the park area, pavements and the RiverWalk earlier in the day and the rider had made off from Police. We were quickly out of our vehicle and secured the bike as the owner reappeared from inside. After speaking with the rider who admitted riding it during the day, it was seized and will be destroyed. These 'pit bikes' are meant for off road and private land only because they cannot be insured to ride legally on the roads. Typically they are extremely loud and cause a disruptive noise nuisance before any other offences are committed by the rider. With the recovery lorry arriving the bike was secured and taken away. We completed our patrols visiting the Morrison Store car park following recent reports that nuisance vehicles had returned to the area but on this occasion there were no cars present.



March 23rd

I was crewed with Witham CSC Officer Eaketts for our patrols and we wanted to focus on gathering information and submitting this onto our database as intelligence reports. These reports are reviewed by a Field Intelligence Officer who then determines patterns of behaviour or links to other crimes or criminal activities. These reports from front line officers are essential and combined with information from members of the public, form a basis for positive actions which may include increased visible patrols, warrants or surveillance by specialist teams. Our first area of interest was Honeysuckle Way & Bramble Road where we had seized a nuisance motorbike on the previous shift. There had been a number of cars stolen overnight from neighbouring villages and these are sometimes left amongst other parked cars to see if they attract any Police interest. If there is no interest in the car for a couple of days then the criminals return and drive the car away. If you do see an unusual vehicle in a car park that you do not recognise and it appeared in suspicious circumstances then please do consider reporting this as it may have been stolen. We drove across town to our next area on Howbridge Road and Dengie Close and as we entered Dengie Close we noticed a man on an E-Scooter who took evasive action to avoid us and disappeared back onto the footpath leading to Town End Field. E-Scooters are illegal to use on public roads & footpaths but we suspect that the man may also have been involved in other criminal activity. After an area search in Town End Field and Maltings Court we headed over to Holst Avenue and Baker Way. We then took a drive over to the Redrow estate due to reports of children accessing the derelict barn buildings which could be very dangerous. The final part of our patrol included Allectus Way, Pinkham Drive, Maltings Lane, Laurence Avenue, Constance Close, Blackman Way, Greenfields and the Town centre.



March 24th

I had recently been approached to go on a foot patrol in Witham with MP Priti Patel. We met in the Witham Town Park and coincidentally met with local superstar Ollly Murs who was filming a piece in connection with the origin of his singing career which started in Witham. After a quick exchange of stories with Mr Murs we continued on our patrol. During the walk we discussed local issues and I pointed out recent successes and challenges that we face in policing the community. Mrs Patel was very keen to hear about our latest plan to improve road safety with the introduction of an advanced speed camera that would be deployed across the town and also how we are currently working to disrupt local drug activity. One of the other topics that was discussed is having a dedicated base for Essex Police officers to operate from in the town. We covered roughly 3km and the walk was recorded by Mrs Patel's photographer Stuart Gulleford and some of these are shown below. We stopped and spoke with a number of local residents and they were very pleased to hear that both Essex Police and their local MP are working together to try and continuously improve their community.



Following our patrol I then headed over to Bure Drive following an incident that occurred overnight to discuss with the investigating team their findings and offer some local knowledge to assist in their enquiries. With this completed I then headed to the Malting Academy where I met with the Essex Police recruitment team who were set up in the sports hall as part of a careers fair for school students from all over the local areas to meet with businesses and look



at future career prospects. In my short time there I was able to offer some engagement and answer questions about my role as an Essex Police officer and there were some very interesting questions.

During the afternoon I was joined by PC Sahin who will be supporting Witham for the Community Policing Team and I was able to take him around Witham to a number of locations where there have been ongoing issues and also collected four separate pieces of information for intel reports.



March 25th

We have had a good response from our Community Beat Surgeries with many people commenting on the reassurance and accessibility to having Police Officers to talk to face to face and this particular morning we held a Coffee With Cops in neighbouring village Hatfield Peverel. We had a good number of residents coming to see us and the feedback was very positive about the opportunity to meet with the Police. If you have a suggestion in your local area that you think would be suitable to come and meet with officers for an hour or two then please let us know. It is important for us to engage with people across the town and estates.

With the event coming to a close we then headed back into Witham in order to meet with the Witham Town Mayor at the Town Hall in connection with our recent Community Award, however, we are never off duty and as we walked from the Newlands Precinct towards the Town Hall we seized two E-Scooters being ridden in the road on Newland Street by two very young lads. After explaining that they could not ride these in public places we took them back to our Police vehicle where we met with their parents. Due to the age of the riders in this instance, the E-Scooters have been returned to each parent with words of advice to both of the boys that they must not be used on public roads or footpaths and if they are stopped on them again they will be seized and destroyed.





This concludes the monthly report for March 2023.