

Community Statement

Witham Town Council is the 'local' authority, and the Council places this ethos at the very heart of its work, defending local interests and positively promoting strong community cohesion.

Engagement with the Community

Witham Town Council operates an open door policy for all public enquiries whether they be through correspondence, emails, telephone calls or visits. The Town Hall acts as a principal anchor for the Newland Street Conservation Area and the Council proudly runs the town's Information Centre, one of the last such centres to remain open in Essex. Following redevelopment of the centre during the pandemic, footfall continues to grow as key services are provided, from recycling and free dog waste bags to providing an emergency safe space for those fleeing domestic abuse or suffering mental health crises. The welcoming staff are the 'face' of the Town Council able to answer most queries or signpost to another authority or organization that can. The new centre has given the opportunity for fortnightly 'drop-in' police surgeries in the Heritage Room whilst retaining space to browse selected goods for sale.

The Council during the pandemic was able to provide a number of free events for children giving them a chance of some 'normality'. The popular Easter Egg Hunt was followed in the Autumn with a Halloween Spooktacular. In the summer there was a Dog Show, all these events were on the River Walk, now owned by the Town Council.



In December the Town Hall doors were open to Father Christmas and his elf once again providing free gifts for the children. Witham Christmas Fayre was reinvented with a street market in Newland Street with hundreds of residents and visitors attending sampling food and mulled wine, enjoying the entertainment on offer. The United Reformed Church was a partner hosting craft stalls and a warm place to eat whilst listening to carols. Widow Twanky was invited to turn on the Christmas Lights.

The Council actively engages with the public via its growing social media presence including publishing all committee papers via its website and social media channels for maximum exposure of local issues taking place. Residents are encouraged to attend all Council and Committee Meetings to raise their concerns or comment on proposals.

Following residents' concerns regarding the lack of visible policing in the town, Witham Town Council was first to actively work and support police in recruiting special constables. Our team of Specials are active not only during policing patrols but are visible interacting with residents at all events in the town.

The Council has aspirations for a Neighbourhood Plan to protect the local community against speculative and irresponsible development but the process has been delayed due to the pandemic and lack of opportunity for face-to-face consultation.

The Council continues to work with residents promoting the town and be a listening ear.

To be reviewed at AGM 2023