

# Witham's Voice

Winter 2022

Issue 83



**Witham**  
town council



## Queen Elizabeth II 1926-2022

The first British monarch to reign for 70 years, she was respected by everyone around the world and her dignity and grace were unmatched. We thank her for her unwavering devotion to our country.

I hope that the outpouring of love shown over the sad days we shared in the Royal Family's grieving had been a comfort. May Her Majesty rest in peace.

*The Mayor of Witham,*

*Councillor Jack Bayford*

### *THE MAYORS CHRISTMAS MESSAGE - Councillor Jack Bayford*



It has been a pleasure to serve as the mayor of Witham for the past seven months. I have been lucky to have such a variety of opportunities to visit so many people and organisations in the town that help to make it such a great place to live. The charities I have chosen to support include the Royal British Legion and the Witham Cricket Club. I am hosting a 60s Music Night in April for these charities (tickets available from the Town Hall).

However, with all the good this year I would like to reflect on the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II, and all the loved ones that were lost this year; Christmas can be an extremely lonely time, and if you feel that you need any support please do not hesitate to reach out.

## MEET YOUR NEW COUNCILLOR: Paul Heath

Hi, my name is Paul Heath and I am 59 years of age and have lived in Witham all my life.



I was previously on the council for over 24 years from the mid 80s serving every role available including 2 terms as mayor. This allowed me to represent the town on 100's of occasions at home and abroad, something I am very proud and honoured to have been able to do.

During my times in office I was heavily involved in a lot of things that we can all take part in and enjoy today including, the River Walk, Whetmead, James Cooke Wood, and the Town Hall, which has changed a lot in the time I've been away. It is good to see a number of clubs/organisations are still going strong and others have come to the fore.

My work background is in retail management and finance, having spent the last 18+ work years at Stansted & Southend airports, I then took early retirement to become my mum's full time carer once her dementia meant she was unable to look after herself. Something I was proud to be able to do, but a role I discovered needs supporting, which is one of the many reasons I put myself up for election earlier this year and I am so grateful for the support shown in me by the electors. I hope to use my time to once again promote the town, but also to all the wonderful groups that are available to help us all through difficult times.

To relax you will often be able to spot me and my two doggies, Dudley (Jackapoo) and Arthur (Cockapoo) along the River Walk and all 3 of us are more than happy to chat, so please say hello.

**Our front cover and illustrations were generously designed by Witham cartoonist Ron.**

**To contact him, or to see more of his work visit [www.ronmcgeary.co.uk](http://www.ronmcgeary.co.uk)**

# YOUR COUNCIL

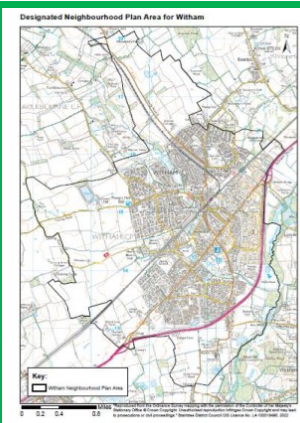
Council meetings are open to any members of the press or public to attend and registration beforehand is not necessary. Dates of our Full Town Council and committee meetings are published on the back page.

In addition to its standing committees, Witham Town Council has been responsible for the creation of a range of working and steering groups including:

**Climate Change Working Group:** The purpose of the group is to ensure that commitments for the climate are delivered not just as policies, but as tangible actions with material benefits. The Town Council is committed to ensure that policy formulation leads to genuine action.

**Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group:** Working in partnership with Braintree District Council, the group commissions reports, recommendations and works as a consultee on projects concerning the regeneration of Witham's public realm.

**Open Space Management Sub-Committee:** The group oversees the day-to-day management of Witham Town Council owned and leased open spaces including – the River Walk, James Cooke Wood, Whetmead Nature Reserve and All Saints Closed Churchyard. They are responsible for management plans, projects of interest and any issues relating to Witham Town Council managed open spaces.



## Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The Town Council are starting on a 'Neighbourhood Plan', a supplementary planning document that can add local detail within the Braintree District's Local Plan, for example on the location and type of housing, shop design, industry, and conservation, sports and leisure provision.

The Steering Group intend to hold a series of events open to all to hear the views of residents and businesses on our town's future.

As the Local Planning Authority, Braintree District Council have approved the Witham Neighbourhood Area Application, as shown above. Residents can respond to the below survey with their thoughts and suggestions, to start shaping the plan, and their future community.

<https://www.witham.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan>

# THE NEW WITHAM GIFT VOUCHER SCHEME

Witham Town Council are launching an exciting new gift voucher scheme in time for Christmas. Residents will be able to buy gift vouchers to spend in a selection of local businesses around Witham such as hairdressers, jewellers and gift shops. As well as, making it easy to buy a great gift for friends and family it is hoped the scheme will encourage local money to stay local and be spent in businesses within Witham.

The scheme will be completely free for businesses to sign up to and more details can be found at [www.witham.gov.uk/witham-voucher-scheme](http://www.witham.gov.uk/witham-voucher-scheme).

The vouchers will be issued in amounts of £5 and £10. Residents can purchase the vouchers from the Information Centre which is situated within the Town Hall, so why not pop in to see us as we have numerous Witham gifts, Adventure Island tickets, Wilkins jams and chutneys and so much more. The Centre is open 9am till 4.30pm Mon and Tues, 10am till 4.30pm Wed, 9am till 4.30pm Thurs and 9am till 3.50pm on Fridays.

We look forward to seeing you all.



## Christmas in the Information Centre

The Information Centre will be transforming to a festive wonderland this Christmas, so make sure you pop in for some fantastic gift ideas!

We have a wide selection of Wilkin & Sons products, including their delicious individual Christmas puddings and gift selections. We also have our Witham calendar, with images of local landmarks provided by locals! This is available for just £6 and is the perfect gift for anyone who loves Witham.



All of our items can be made in to a beautifully wrapped hamper, with gift wrapping available for just £1. The Information Centre will be open from 3pm to 7pm on Saturday 3rd December as part of Witham's Christmas Fayre.

# STAYING WARM THIS WINTER

We understand that this winter is going to be extremely hard for many people. With the rising cost of living necessities, heating a home or filling the fridge will be impossible for a lot of people, therefore Witham Town Council has started a “Winter Warming” project to try and help. From Monday 7th November 2022 the function room will be open from 10-3pm, every Monday for you to come and sit and chat, and maybe do a puzzle or play a board game. There will be tea, coffee, biscuits and soup and a roll all free of charge. All ages including children are welcome.

However we are not the only one offering help, so through the next few pages we have compiled information on local organisations who are offering support.

If you have any questions or need further help please do not hesitate to contact the Town Hall.



## WITHAM COMMUNITY FRIDGE

The Witham Community Fridge was set up in October 2019 by the Witham Hub, and its aim is to reduce food poverty and food waste. Thousands of tonnes of useable food is taken to landfill on a daily basis. The Witham Hub has teamed up with FareShare and Neighbourly to collect food surplus from them to redistribute via their Community Fridge which is located inside the Hub.

Their dedicated team of volunteers go to local supermarkets 6 nights a week to collect any usable surplus and take it back to the Hub. They also accept items from you... if you have a bulging apple tree or a glut of veg that you just can't use or freeze then bring it down to the Hub and pop it into the fridge for others.

There are no awkward questions asked if you want to use the fridge, they run the fridge on the basis you can leave a donation if you can to go towards the Hub running costs, so just pop in with a bag and take what you need and leave what you can.

Pop over to their Facebook page to see what they have in the fridge on a daily basis.

## Age Concern Games Morning

The Age Concern games morning is on every Wednesday morning between 10am-12am at Witham Town Hall. The group plays games and enjoy a good chat with a tea or coffee for £2.00 per person. If you would like to join them or have any questions, please call Jayne on : **07707 291602**



Layer your clothing as much as possible



Cover your head and feet whilst you sleep to retain body heat



Keep a humidifier in your room, which will raise the overall temperature



Drink warm water to stimulate your body



Eat a high-calorie, high fat snack before sleeping to warm your body

Braintree Area Foodbank have been providing food, for those in crisis, since April 2012. Their mission is to see that no one should go hungry. With centres in Braintree, Halstead and Witham, the need for the Foodbank is increasing with over 5,703\* people fed in the last financial year (2021-2022), of which over 2,595 were children.



The cost of living crisis will have an impact on everyone, but for those without savings, the retired or those with no spare cash each month this crisis will push them further in to food poverty.

The Foodbank runs on a voucher based system. People speak to one of our referral agencies to obtain a voucher and can then collect a food parcel from one of the centres. Visitors are welcomed with a smile, a cup of tea/coffee and have the chance to talk to someone in a friendly and non-judgmental environment.

The foodbank works with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, children's centres and health visitors. To find out more about the agencies that hold the vouchers and how you can get help, please contact them on **01376 330694** or by email **info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk**

## WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL'S SUNDAY CINEMA

Don't forget your next Sunday Cinema on the 11th of December - Royal British Legion - doors open at 2, film starts at 2:30pm - the film, coffee, tea and biscuits all for £1 !!!  
**Anyone and everyone of all ages are welcome.** For any questions, or further dates please call 01376 520627 Hope to see you on Sunday! **Sponsored by Witham Town Council**



# STAYING WARM THIS WINTER

Julie in the Information Centre is always available for a chat and advice on things to do and will be setting up her jigsaw puzzles again.

The following is a list of places to go where you can keep warm this winter without turning your heating on at home!

## Monday -

Community Café	United Reformed Church	9.30 am to noon
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## Tuesday -

Coffee/tea	Royal British Legion Hall	10 am to 12 noon
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First Tuesday – Bingo from 10.30 am

Third Tuesday – Breakfast Club

Lunch	Royal British Legion Hall	Noon
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Open to all, cost for two course £6.00

Cinema – Second Tuesday in the month

	Royal British Legion Hall	from 1 pm
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Community Café	United Reformed Church	9.30 am to 12.30 pm
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## Wednesday -

*The Knitters and Stitchers - First Wednesday in the month*

	Library	10 am to noon
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Coffee/tea	Royal British Legion Hall	11am to noon
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Lunch Club	Royal British Legion Hall	noon
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Open to all, cost for two courses £6.00

The Well	Guithavon Street	10 am to 2 pm
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## Thursday -

Community Café	United Reformed Church	9.30 am to noon
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(including bacon butties!)

The Well	Guithavon Street	10 am to 2 pm
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## Friday -

Community Café	United Reformed Church	9.30 am to noon
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Community Lunch	United Reformed Church	noon
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The Well	Guithavon Street	10 am to 2 pm
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## Saturday -

Community Café	United Reformed	9.30 am to noon
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The Well	Guithavon Street	10 am to 2 pm
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## Sunday -

Sunday Cinema	Second Sunday in the month Royal British Legion Hall	2 pm
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(£1 to include tea and biscuits)

*Lots of the venues will waive charges if you are struggling financially – have a quiet word.*



Remember – The Hub to have a hot drink and see if there is anything in the community fridge for dinner, the Library, a place to browse and keep warm, and Wetherspoons charges £1.10 for coffee and you can drink as much as you like for that.

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2022

### Bethel Christian Fellowship:

Sunday 18 December	10:30 am	Family Christmas Celebrations
	6.30 pm	Traditional Carol Service
25th December	10:30 am	Christmas Morning Service

***All at: Wood End Farm, Hatfield Road, Witham CM8 1EH***

Note: Football World Cup Final is on 18 December at 3:30 pm.

### Witham Methodist Church:

Sunday 27 November	10.30 am	First Sunday in Advent - Gift Service Christmas gifts for Foodbank clients
Sunday 18 December	10.30 am	Carol service followed by mince pies and mulled apple juice.
Sunday 25 December	10.00 am	Christmas Day Service

### Guithavon Valley Church (Valley Church)

Sunday 18 December	11.00 am	Family Nativity Service
	5.30 pm	Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Day	10.30 am	Christmas Morning Service

### Baptist Church

Sunday 18 December	6:30 pm	Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Day	10.30 am	Christmas Worship

***All at the Royal British Legion Hall***

### United Reformed Church (URC)

Sunday 18 December	10.30 am	Nativity - A Messy Church Style Service
	6.30 pm	Traditional Candlelit Carol Service
Christmas Day	10.30 am	All Age Christmas Service
New Year's Eve	11.30 pm	Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration of Life

### St Nicolas Church (Anglican)

Sunday 4 December	9.30 am	St Nicolas Day - Bishop of Colchester
Saturday 17 December	6.00 pm	Christmas Carol Service
Christmas Eve	4.00 pm	Crib Service
	11.30 pm	Midnight Communion
Christmas Day	9.30 am	Christmas Holy Communion

### The Holy Family & All Saints Church (Roman Catholic)

Christmas Eve	5.30 pm	Vigil Mass
	10.00 pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	10.00 am	Christmas Day Mass

# WHAT'S ON IN WITHAM



Our Christmas Fayre will return on Saturday 3rd December 2022 from 3-7pm on Newland Street.

There will be lots of stalls for you to do your Christmas shopping at, as well as, food and drink to try. Crafters corner will be open in the United Reformed Church, local groups will be performing on the stage, and the event will culminate with the switching on of

the festive lights at 7pm.

To keep up with the most up to date information, follow us on social media.

## THE MAYOR OF WITHAM'S 60S MUSIC NIGHT

The Mayor of Witham is hosting a 60s Music Night on Saturday 8th April 2023, at the Royal British Legion Hall in Witham, which will include music from tribute bands "Who Are You" and "The Konks". This will be a night of drinks and dancing, with era appropriate dress encouraged!

Tickets are available from the Town Hall for £22.

For updates on all of our events, visit our website and social media pages.



**Witham**  
town council



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@town\_Witham



# WITHAM FESTIVAL 2022

After a three year break due to the pandemic, the Puppet Festival returned in the form of the brand new Witham Street Entertainment Festival that launched on Saturday 17th September 2022, with a conservation theme. The town centre was filled with guests from the natural world , from dancing sloths, to naughty squirrels and even talking trees! Further photos are available on Witham Town Council's, and please post any you took on the day.



## Are you tired of drivers speeding in Witham ?

We are looking to set up a Speedwatch Group of volunteers who will monitor problem areas . All training will be provided free of charge by the Police. Volunteers do not need to stop cars, they just use a camera that logs offenders. If you have some spare time to join this group, please contact the Town Hall.

## TOWN HALL AND INFORMATION CENTRE

Office: 01376 520627  
townclerk@witham.gov.uk

Information Centre: 01376 502674  
infocentre@witham.gov.uk

## 61 Newland Street, Witham, Essex, CM8 2FE

Witham Town Council Offices are open Monday - Thursday 9:00AM-5:00PM and Friday 9:00AM-4:00PM.

The Information Centre in the Town Hall is open from 9:00AM-4:30PM Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00AM - 4:30PM Wednesday and 9:00AM - 3:50PM Friday.

Both are closed Weekends and Bank Holidays.

Meetings of your Town Council are open for you to attend. There is usually an opportunity before the beginning of each meeting to speak directly to members of the council regarding current agenda items.

Full details are displayed at [www.witham.gov.uk](http://www.witham.gov.uk)

Agendas are on display on the noticeboard in Newland Street.

Meetings usually begin at 7:30PM and Planning Applications & Transport Committee meetings at 6:30PM. These are held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

**Policy & Resources:** 5th Dec

**Planning & Transport:** 5th & 19th Dec

**Town Council:** 19th Dec, 23rd Jan

**Environment:** 9th Jan

## YOUR COUNCILLORS

### CENTRAL WARD

**Michael Lager:** Tel: 01376 513747  
Cllr.m.lager@witham.gov.uk  
**Robert Williams:** Tel: 01376 510845  
Cllr.r.williams@witham.gov.uk

### WEST WARD

**Susan Ager:** Tel: 01376 512470  
Cllr.s.ager@witham.gov.uk  
**John Goodman:** Tel: 01376 516918  
Cllr.j.goodman@witham.gov.uk  
**Tom Pleasance:** Tel: 01376 501597  
Cllr.t.pleasance@witham.gov.uk  
**Sindhu Rajeev:** Tel: 07490 909902  
Cllr.s.rajeev@witham.gov.uk

### SOUTH WARD

**Kevin Atwill:** Tel: 07798 873544  
Cllr.k.atwill@witham.gov.uk  
**Chelsey Jay:** Tel: 07490 909902  
Cllr.c.jay@witham.gov.uk

### Paul Heath

Tel: 07734 320618  
Cllr.p.heath@witham.gov.uk

### Angela Kilmartin:

Tel: 01376 502872  
Cllr.a.kilmartin@witham.gov.uk

### NORTH WARD

**Philip Barlow:** Tel: 07774 196679  
Cllr.p.barlow@witham.gov.uk  
**Jack Bayford:** Tel: 07307 177163  
Cllr.j.bayford@witham.gov.uk  
**Steve Hicks:** Tel: 07836 690551  
Cllr.s.hicks@witham.gov.uk  
**Michelle Weeks:** Tel: 01376 515912  
Cllr.m.weeks@witham.gov.uk

### HATFIELD WARD

**Clare Lager:** Tel: 01376 513747  
Cllr.c.lager@witham.gov.uk  
**JoAnn Williams:** Tel: 07966 586574  
Cllr.j.williams@witham.gov.uk