

# WITHAM'S VOICE

WINTER 2024

ISSUE 91



# IN THIS EDITION



This year Santa's Reindeer will be available to meet in The Grove Shopping Centre during the Christmas Fayre



**Page 4-5** Witham Christmas Fayre

**Page 7** Town Hall Banking Hub & Christmas Church Services

## ***Merry Christmas from The Mayor of Witham, Cllr Lucy Barlow***

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve the people of Witham for this first part of my mayoral year. I was 15 years old when I first decided that I would like to serve as the Mayor in my lifetime. I wanted to be that representative of the town in which I grew up.

I have found a warm welcome everywhere I have been invited so far. I was honoured to lead our D-Day service in June and look forward to celebrating the 80th anniversary of VE Day before my term of office ends.

I have also been raising money for my Mayor's appeal, this year supporting two wonderful charities, Kids Inspire and Homestart Essex. Both support children within their families to take care of their mental health and promote a nurturing home life. I'll have a stall at the Christmas fayre running tombolas to add to this fund.

It just remains for me to thank everyone that has supported me so far and to wish all the residents of Witham, a very Merry Christmas. I hope that 2025 brings health and happiness to you all.



# WITHAM'S WINTER GROTTTO



Each Christmas, our Heritage Room in the Information Centre is transformed into a magical Christmas Grotto, opened during the Christmas Fayre and for a few dates during December.

Santa and his helper, Sprinkles the Elf, will be returning this year to see who has been naughty or nice! Some of Santa's reindeers will also be in the Grove Shopping Centre during the Witham Christmas Fayre.



Numbers are limited so booking is essential.  
Ticket release dates will be advertised on our social media.

# SUNDAY CINEMA

**Venue:** Witham Royal  
British Legion Hall

**Admission:** £1  
(Includes Tea/Coffee  
& Biscuits)



**Date:** Sunday 15th  
December

**Film:** Love Actually

**Doors Open:** 2:00 PM

**Film Starts:** 2:30 PM

## DO YOU FEEL ISOLATED?

You do not have to feel alone any longer. Witham Town Council isn't just your local authority, it is also a safe space for all residents, whatever the weather. If you are feeling lonely and need some company, why not pop into the Information Centre for a chat and we could provide you with a list of clubs and social groups in the area. You may then find some like-minded individuals.

### Witham's Friendship Games Group

Witham Town Hall  
63 Newland Street Witham, CM8 2FE

Wednesdays  
10am-12noon





**Holmes & Hills**  
SOLICITORS



**THE GROVE**  
SHOPPING CENTRE



**Witham**  
town council

# **WITHAM CHRISTMAS FAYRE**

**SATURDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 2024**

**3PM – 7PM**

**Newland Street and the Grove Shopping  
centre**

**Crafters' Corner inside Witham United  
Reformed Church**

**FESTIVE FOOD & DRINK    SHOPPING  
LIVE REINDEER    CAROL SINGING  
ENTERTAINMENT**



# WHAT TO EXPECT

**Christmas Carol Service:** At 2pm the Carol Service will kick off the Christmas Fayre in the Grove Shopping Centre with Churches Together.

**Festive Vibes:** Newland Street will sparkle with twinkling lights, festive traders, and the cheerful sounds of the performers.

**Tasty Treats:** Satisfy your cravings with delicious food and drinks from local vendors. From sweet seasonal goodies to savoury bites, there's something to please every taste bud.

**Gifts Galore:** Find the perfect presents for your loved ones at the lovely gift stalls. Whether you're looking for handmade crafts, stylish accessories, or unique items, you'll discover something special.

**Crafters' Corner:** Step into the cosy United Reformed Church to explore the 'Crafter's Corner,' filled with beautiful, handmade items that are perfect for gifts or a little something for yourself.

**Main Event:** At 6:00pm, join us for the big moment—the Christmas lights switch-on ceremony!



# WITHAM GIFT VOUCHER



Witham Gift Vouchers make an excellent gift choice for Christmas or other special occasions. Whether used to indulge in lunch or dinner, a night out or some new clothes, the best reason of all to use Witham Gift Vouchers is to support local Witham businesses.

By spending in Witham, your money stays within the local economy and helps to boost the town. Witham Gift Vouchers are available to purchase from Witham Information Centre in multiples of £5 and £10 and are valid for 12 months.

A list of participating businesses can be found on our website. If you run a business in Witham and are interested in taking part in the scheme, please contact 01376 520627 or email [finance@witham.gov.uk](mailto:finance@witham.gov.uk).

## 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 which is the perfect gift for anyone who loves Witham. All of our items can be made into a beautifully wrapped hamper, with gift wrapping available for just £1.25.

The Information Centre will be open from 3pm to 7pm on Saturday 30th November as part of Witham's Christmas Fayre.

# TOWN HALL BANKING HUB

Following the closure of banks in the town centre, Witham Town Council are pleased to advise that some banking services will be provided in the Town Hall:

## Barclays:

- Mondays & Fridays 9am–4pm



## Halifax:

- Tuesdays 9am–3pm



## Lloyds:

- Fridays 9am–3pm

LLOYDS  
BANKING  
GROUP



# CHRISTMAS SERVICES



## Witham Methodist Church

### Sunday 22nd December

10:30am Family Carol Service followed by refreshments.

### Wednesday 25th December

Celebration Service led by Rev. 'Femi Cole-Njie.

## St Nicolas' Church

### 1 December

6pm Advent Procession

### Wednesday 4,11,18 December

8pm Advent Journeys

### 7 – 8 December

12noon–6pm Christmas Tree Festival

### 22nd December

6pm Carols by Candlelight

### Christmas Eve

4pm Crib Service

11:30pm Midnight Communion

### Christmas Day

9:30 Christmas Morning Communion



# ADVENT HAMPER SCHEME

The Advent Hamper Scheme is an initiative run by Witham Town Council that invites you to create a box filled with non-perishable essentials and Christmas items. This box, or hamper, is then donated to worthwhile causes throughout the town.

All you need to do is find a container – a cardboard box works perfectly. You can then wrap or decorate it if you wish. Throughout November, the idea is to add one item per day to this hamper, which could be a mix of non-perishable essentials and Christmas items.

However, you do not have to put 24 items in your hamper; you can alternatively add one or two items a week, or only fill your hamper up for the last week of November, it is completely up to you! Any donations at all are appreciated.

Once your Advent Hamper is complete, you can drop it off at the Witham Information Centre before the 11th of December. Here are some ideas for your hamper below:

## HAMPER ADVENT CALENDAR

 <b>Hot chocolate</b>	 <b>A handwritten card</b>	 <b>Fizzy or still drinks</b>	 <b>Pens</b>	 <b>CD's</b>	 <b>A jar of jam/marmalade</b>
 <b>A fluffy blanket</b>	 <b>Tinned goods</b>	 <b>A hat</b>	 <b>DVD's</b>	 <b>A scarf</b>	 <b>Fabric conditioner</b>
 <b>A box of biscuits</b>	 <b>Chocolates</b>	 <b>Hand towels</b>	 <b>A book</b>	 <b>Christmas decorations</b>	 <b>Hand cream</b>
 <b>Bath soak or shower gel</b>	 <b>A pair of gloves</b>	 <b>A puzzle book</b>	 <b>A hot water bottle</b>	 <b>A cuddly toy</b>	 <b>Toothbrush/toothpaste</b>



# WITHAM FESTIVAL

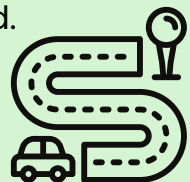
Witham Town Council was delighted to host the 25th Anniversary of the Witham Street Entertainment Festival on Saturday, 21st September 2024. The festival saw an incredible turnout, transforming the town into a lively hub of excitement.



**Do you have a few hours to spare? Do you have a willingness to help and would like to put something back into your community?**

Braintree Community Transport are looking for volunteers either driving your own car or one of our 12 seater minibuses, no commitment – hours to suit yourself. Out of pocket expenses are reimbursed and pensions/benefits are not affected.

To find out more please call 01376 557883 or email [community.transport@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:community.transport@braintree.gov.uk)



# HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

---

## Essex Police Community Special Constables

Are you passionate about safeguarding your community and making a positive impact on the lives of others? If so, joining Essex Police as a Community Special Constable might be the perfect opportunity for you! Become a Community Special Constable with Essex Police and make a difference in your community.

### **What is a Community Special Constable?:**

A Community Special Constable is a dedicated volunteer who works alongside regular police officers to maintain law and order in local communities. These individuals are committed to making a difference by promoting community safety, assisting in emergencies and tackling issues with crime. By becoming a Community Special Constable, you become an essential link between the police and the public, fostering trust and cooperation.

### **The Role of a Community Special Constable in Witham:**

As a Community Special Constable in Witham you'll have the opportunity to engage with the community on a deeper level. Your duties may include patrolling neighbourhoods, attending community events and providing a visible police presence. By building relationships with residents you'll gain valuable insights into local concerns, ensuring that the police can address specific issues effectively.

### **Why Should You Apply?**

Becoming a Community Special Constable allows you to actively contribute to a safer and more cohesive community. By volunteering your time and skills you can directly influence the lives of your neighbours, friends and family members, fostering a sense of unity and security.

### **How to Apply:**

Ready to take on this exciting challenge? Applying to become a Community Special Constable is straightforward. Visit the official Essex Police website:  
<https://www.essex.police.uk/police-forces/essex-police/areas/essex-police/ca/careers/special-constabulary/>

### **Support from Witham Town Council:**

Witham Town Council is proud that we were the first local council to 'go live' with the Community Special Constables Scheme. This was the first such scheme in Essex (and possibly the first of its kind in the country). This was the result of close co-operation between Essex Police and Witham Town Council over a long period of time and sees the Council funding any expenses for our volunteer police officers based in the town. Witham Town Council continues to work closely with Essex Police to support Witham's Community Special Constables.



At Witham Town Council, we hold a number of items of historical interest to the town that have been donated to us over the years. We are now undergoing a project to bring these items to you in the form of an online museum.

Each week we add something new to our online museum as we work our way through the photos and items in the Town Hall. If you see something that you would like to have a closer look at, you are welcome to contact us and we can arrange a viewing for you in the Information Centre.

Many items have been donated to us under Witham Town Council's Public Artefact Donation Scheme. If you have any photos, written records or items that you think may be of historical interest to the town and would like to donate, please contact us or pop into the Information Centre.

## Find a taster of the museum below:

### Silhouette of Dr Thomas Tomkin

This framed piece shows the silhouette of Dr Thomas Tomkin, still in its original frame, on one side, and the inscription from the back of the silhouette.

Born 1779, Dr Thomas Tomkin established a private lunatic asylum in The Retreat, Maldon Road, Witham. 'White's Directory of Essex' (1848) noted that 18 residents of Witham were cared for in "the private Lunatic Asylum, which was established here in 1819, by Mr. Tompkin, surgeon, and has room for 30 patients." The Retreat is now a collection of bungalows.





## TOWN HALL AND INFORMATION CENTRE

**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.

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

Agendas are on display on the  
noticeboard in Newland Street attached  
to Fenn Wright.

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

**For further information please contact  
the Town Hall:**

**Information Centre:** 01376 520627 (Op 1)  
[infocentre@witham.gov.uk](mailto:infocentre@witham.gov.uk)

**Office:** 01376 520627 (Op 2)  
[townclerk@witham.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@witham.gov.uk)

## YOUR COUNCILLORS

### CENTRAL WARD

**Barry Fleet:** [cllr.b.fleet@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.b.fleet@witham.gov.uk)  
**Ross Playle:** [cllr.r.playle@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.r.playle@witham.gov.uk)

### WEST WARD

**Jack Coleman:**  
[cllr.jack.coleman@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.jack.coleman@witham.gov.uk)  
**Ron Ramage:**  
[cllr.r.ramage@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.r.ramage@witham.gov.uk)  
**Jack Robertson:**  
[cllr.j.robertson@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.j.robertson@witham.gov.uk)  
**Artur Sloma:** [cllr.a.sloma@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.a.sloma@witham.gov.uk)

### SOUTH WARD

**Joan Coleman:**  
[cllr.joan.coleman@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.joan.coleman@witham.gov.uk)  
**Jacqueline Martin:**  
[cllr.j.martin@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.j.martin@witham.gov.uk)  
**Paul Heath:** [cllr.p.heath@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.p.heath@witham.gov.uk)  
**Tom Hewitt:** [cllr.t.hewitt@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.t.hewitt@witham.gov.uk)

### NORTH WARD

**Phil Barlow:** [cllr.p.barlow@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.p.barlow@witham.gov.uk)  
**Leanora Headley:**  
[cllr.l.headley@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.l.headley@witham.gov.uk)  
**Billy Taylor:** [cllr.b.taylor@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.b.taylor@witham.gov.uk)  
**Ethan Williams:**  
[cllr.e.williams@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.e.williams@witham.gov.uk)

### HATFIELD WARD

**Emmanuel Adelaja:**  
[cllr.e.adelaja@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.e.adelaja@witham.gov.uk)  
**Lucy Barlow:** [cllr.l.barlow@witham.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.l.barlow@witham.gov.uk)