



## **February 2026**

The rain seemed relentless through the month resulting in less people out in the evenings and weekends during our shifts, but we want you to know that we are still out on patrol around the town and on the estates. A key element is that we are still gathering information to assist with ongoing investigations and we are continuing to promote a visible and reassuring presence in the town centre, engaging with shops and staff around shoplifting and focusing on tackling an slight increase in anti-social behaviour. Please continue to report any issues in your immediate neighbourhood so we can focus our efforts to help you.

The Community Special Team are continuing the fortnightly Community Beat Surgeries, located outside The Witham Hub on a Saturday between 11am & 1pm and we are always pleased when people drop by if they have any concerns in their neighbourhood, seek advice or just say hello!

[Community Special Constables | Essex Police](#)

## **February 5<sup>th</sup>**

I had managed to finish my day job a little earlier and this enabled me to begin my volunteer shift in Witham with a visit to Conrad Road at school finish time. There have been numerous reports on social media and during our Community Beat Surgeries of dangerous driving and inconsiderate parking causing a hazard to the students leaving the schools in the area. I parked up behind the school buses and waited for the children to exit New Rickstones Academy. The staff were pleased to see my visible presence, and I had some very positive interactions with the students who I see during my normal patrols. Unfortunately, the weather was being very typical for the month, and the rain ensured that everyone dissipated quickly with no incidents.



As part of my additional role as a Special Sergeant, I manage a small team, and I returned to Braintree Police Station to meet with one of my officers. I returned to Witham for mobile patrols in the Police marked carrier and visited locations around the town centre and the Grove before I was called back to Braintree to assist with detaining and conveying a suspect to Chelmsford Custody. Unfortunately, the detained person was not medically fit to be left alone and I had to assist in maintaining their welfare until medical assistance arrived with my shift finishing just after midnight.



## February 7<sup>th</sup>

I began my shift with a visit to a resident who had found a small bag of white powder discarded near to their property. The contents suggest potentially a Class A drug and if this had been found by a child or a pet it could have had devastating consequences. Although many will see this as a low-level incident it does help to provide information on the type of drug, typical distribution quantities and methods of delivery. As well as identifying areas where there may be dealing. The bag was collected and will be disposed of securely.

If you or someone you know needs support for the misuse of drugs, then they can seek assistance from some of the groups shown below.

[Home - Open Road Visions](#) (self-referral service for over 25's)

[Essex Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service | Essex County Council](#) ( self referral service for 24 years and lower)

[Essex Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service | The Children's Society](#)

Due to the excessive and persistent rain, I headed down to the RiverWalk following reports of flooding and the river Brain had burst its banks in several locations, the most affected area between Guithavon Road and Bridge Street which was impassable. While it can seem fun for some to try and navigate this, the river becomes hidden and with fast flowing water, debris and murky water there is a very high risk of drowning. Fortunately, most people I saw around the area were happy taking photos and young children enjoyed the new found puddles in safe areas.



I returned to the town centre for foot patrols visiting the few hardy market traders braving the rain in the Newlands Precinct before continuing over the road to the Grove Centre. I did follow up on the shoplifting incident from the previous Saturday with staff at the stores involved and gathered further information which will help link the suspects to other more widespread crimes across a large area of East Anglia.

I returned to my vehicle to head over to the Templars estate for foot patrol and on Munro Road I found a delivery van, engine on, unlocked and no driver present. Intending to provide some strong words of advice for leaving the vehicle unattended, it transpired the driver was not on the vehicle insurance and was a provisional licence holder without supervision. A further inspection of the vehicle caused serious alarm when I found the front passenger tyre with serious wear defect with the steel cords clearly visible. This is an extremely dangerous condition and could have resulted in failure at any time. The driver was reported for his traffic offences and prevented from driving the vehicle. I waited with the van until an insured driver arrived, the tyre was replaced and at this point the van could resume the

final deliveries for the day. If these conditions could not have been met – the vehicle would have been seized, including everyone's parcels!



### **February 13<sup>th</sup>**

I arrived in Witham at the Templars estate following reports that a male had been acting suspiciously in the area, there had been 2 separate reports one on Cressing Road and another in Hemingway Road. With several other units also attending I parked in Bronte Road and proceeded on foot patrol. Initially I was unable to see anyone matching the description and so I widened the search and visited the shop on Shaw Road. Fortunately, there were several residents in the shop that all identified the last seen location for this male and I headed there promptly. The other police units continued to drive around the estate and visited the Southfields estate as well. Being on foot was the key because I was able to find an address from the information I had been provided and I was able to ensure there were no concerns to other members of the public. With the incident closed I then attended an address on Poplar Close where it had been reported that a property was insecure. The flat had been previously boarded up and when I arrived at the address, this had been removed allowing access. With my body worn video camera recording I entered the property to check for any person or signs of theft or damage. Fortunately, there was no one present and no evidence of damage, so I was able to arrange for a company to come and secure the premises again.

For the remainder of my shift, I joined the Local Policing Team searching for a high-risk missing person in the Halstead area. During the search I found a car abandoned on a country road which was connected to drug supply and a Police information report has been submitted. I finished my shift and while driving home I was able to call up and inform the control room that I had just passed the missing person in their vehicle on the way home. This helped officers to reach them, and they were later returned home safely.



## February 14<sup>th</sup>

I began with foot patrol in the Newlands Shopping Centre where I met with several people including a person who shared information relating to potential drug activity in their neighbourhood. Being approachable during foot patrol helps people to be able to speak to me directly and I can gather and process information that they may not otherwise have shared and I have been able to be a consistent presence in the past 8 years of my volunteering as a Witham Community Officer. I continued my patrols on Newland Street and visited the town park before heading into the Grove Centre to begin the Community Beat Surgery outside The Witham Hub. The weather had finally improved and although it was cold, the sun was shining and this encouraged more people into the town centre and I had a lot of positive engagements and further information shared about issues around the town.



Following the Beat Surgery I visited the footpath/cycle path between Motts Lane and the Rivenhall estate where there had been reports that damage had been caused to the young saplings and the fencing that had been recently planted by the Witham Tree Group but pleased to see that repairs had been made and there was no further damage. I resumed my patrols on the Hatfield Road estate and I met with a young boy all dressed in a Police uniform who had spotted me walking around. After speaking with the parents of the children playing out on the green, I fetched the marked Police Public Order van and they were able to look



inside, hold the public order shields, visit the “cage” and try out the lights and sirens. This type of engagement is a key part of building a positive relationship with children and showing that we are here to help and keep them safe and remove any fear they may have of our presence. Thank you to the parents for allowing me to share the photo below.



### **February 16<sup>th</sup>**

I had recently been sent a significant amount of evidence in connection with suspected drug supply and possession and to ensure that this information is managed properly I spent the evening shift at Braintree Police Station entering reports into the database. This intelligence will then be allocated to a dedicated proactive team for review and may lead to a warrant or further investigation. This may not appear to be the most exciting of tasks, however, it creates a base for all future actions to tackle the issue reported by the resident.

### **February 18<sup>th</sup>**

I had been made aware of recent issues at the Witham Library, particularly involving large groups of teenagers that had been descending on the premises. The teenagers typically all dressed in black, with hoods up and face coverings have appeared intimidating to staff and just as I arrived outside the library with the marked police vehicle, I saw the group exit and run off down towards Collingwood Road. I parked up and entered the library much to the relief of staff. In this instance the teenagers had not caused any specific issues or criminal activity, but their numbers had caused the staff concern. While I stayed in the library talking with staff the group reformed on the opposite side of the road and began shouting towards the library, when I approached the door they all ran off towards Mayland Road, and I quickly established that this was intended to become a game of cat and mouse. I remained at the library until it closed, and staff left



with no further issues, but this is when the rain and wind started. I did conduct a short foot patrol to the Aegon building following previous incidents where the group had been playing in the underground car park, but I was pleased to see that the group had disappeared. I continued my patrols in the town centre where I found damage to the front of the Newlands Shopping Centre, but this appeared to be environmental damage rather than any criminal activity (this was confirmed by CCTV the following day)



With the wind increasing and driving rain I returned to my vehicle for mobile patrols before I volunteered to attend an incident in nearby Hatfield Peverel whereby a person had entered a residence before being chased out by the homeowner. To provide reassurance to the homeowner, I carried out an area search of the immediate area and fortunately a person flagged me down to indicate that they had seen someone walking towards Terling. The road was flooded in several areas and unlit making it very treacherous to drive along, let alone walk but I did eventually locate the person standing at the side of the road. Due to the danger to the person, I got them into the police vehicle and began the enquiries about the recent incident. The person admitted to drinking heavily and was looking for somewhere to bed down for the night but had become completely disorientated and was a very long way from home. With no offences confirmed at the incident location I returned the person to a place of safety before returning to Witham to complete my patrols for the shift.

## February 21<sup>st</sup>

I began my foot patrol in the town centre but increased my normal radius to include parts of the River Walk between Guithavon Road and Maldon Road and apart from spotting a Little Egret on the bank of the River Brain and speaking to several people out walking there were no concerns along the route.





I headed up Maldon Road calling in to the park before visiting the Grove Centre where I called in to The Witham Hub before moving across to the Newlands Precinct. Recently there has been a noticeable increase in anti-social driving on Newland Street and I wanted to see if my presence on the high street made a difference. Several vehicles were noted for future enquiries but there did seem to be an improvement over my previous patrol experiences. To maintain a visible presence, over the next 2 hours I visited the library and shops speaking with staff providing reassurance before being called to assist with a vulnerable elderly couple who were in the middle of an online scam. Fortunately, a staff member at the Tesco Store had recognised an attempt to buy a high value gift card as a common method for a scammer to obtain funds by deception. I confirmed the facts with the couple and recorded a fraud for further investigation, while the staff member assisted with contacting their banks. Unfortunately, this is becoming extremely common and the scam very sophisticated and believable, often preying on emotions to manipulate the victims. The link below provides more information about some of the types of fraud.

[Advice about personal fraud | Essex Police](#)

Just as I came to the end of recording the crime I was alerted over my radio to an emergency on the other side of Witham. Although I was on foot away from my vehicle, I still knew that I would be able to get to the incident location before the arriving officers from Braintree, so I headed straight there. Grabbing a first aid pack I ran down the River Walk from Ebenezer Close where I met up with an Ambulance Crew. They directed me onto a footpath leading alongside the river behind Oxlip Road and I was then joined by the officers arriving on scene. Fortunately, I know the area very well due to previous patrols and made my way through the twists and turns until I caught sight of the person on a muddy pathway leading towards the fields of Faulkbourne Hall. With the Ambulance crew member and the Braintree Local Policing Team Sergeant we were able to restrain the person to ensure they could get the necessary medical treatment. Due to the location and the recent weather, we were relieved when we got back to the ambulance and with the patient safely on board return to our vehicles. I finished my shift covered in mud but with a feeling of accomplishment that I had spent the day helping lots of people across Witham.



## February 26<sup>th</sup>

I started in the library arriving in Witham to provide further reassurance and visibility following the previous evenings attendance by the Town Team Officers. Over the course of the evening, they had been patrolling to



deter the recent increase in anti-social behaviour at the library. These targeted actions are necessary to protect the visitors and staff but should not be required and we appeal to the parents of the children involved to understand that this is not acceptable. There is going to be direct interaction with the local secondary schools to provide input around this behaviour which is drawing Police resourcing away from investigating other criminal activities. The library has had to take some steps with temporary security staff, CCTV camera and recently reintroduced a cutout of a Police Officer to try and deter any trouble. Fortunately, I was able to remain at the library until closing time and there were no issues while I was there.



While I was at the library, I moved several cars on from the Zig Zag lines approaching the crossing point and took the details of one vehicle that completely ignored a pedestrian already crossing. In this instance the pedestrian was unharmed but pleased that I was present and able to react.

I returned to my vehicle and continued mobile patrols around the town centre before widening the patrol area to include Haygreen Road, where an electric bike made off from a suspected drug exchange into the Maltings estate. Unfortunately, it can use many of the pathways and alleys and I was unable to relocate the rider, if you have any information that can help us to prevent this behaviour then please speak to an officer or you can report anonymously through CrimeStoppers. I moved on to the Hatfield Road estate before looking around Dengie Close, Lawrence Avenue and Blackwater Lane leading to the Whetmead Nature Reserve.





For the final part of my shift I drove across the town to Dorothy Sayers Drive following a report from a concerned resident that the boardings on the derelict flats had been damaged again. When I inspected the rooftop, I did find the boarding broken away exposing one of the flats and after notifying my control room I carried out a careful search of the premises. In every room there was severe damage, with exposed beams and damaged flooring, a roof skylight had been pulled away allowing a lot of rain into one of the rooms, further weakening the structure. The flat had obviously been unoccupied for many years but in this current state it was extremely dangerous and I was pleased to conclude the search with no other person present. IF you know children or anyone else that may not have caused the initial damage to the boarding but may then decide to enter the building, it is very important that you warn them of the danger.



I returned to the Police Station and contacted the current building owner who has since had the boarding repaired. I will continue to patrol the area to try and deter further damage.

## February 28<sup>th</sup>

The last day of the month and I was joined by fellow Witham Community Special Connor Penrose for our patrols in Witham. We began with foot patrol in the town centre, visiting the market stalls in the Newlands Precinct and stopped to speak with people on Newland Street, visited the library and the Witham Town Park.



The second part of our shift was dedicated to the Community Beat Surgery in the Grove Centre and although it did seem a little quieter this time, we did have some great engagements including one young boy who



wants to be a Police Officer when he grows up. He was able to try on a hat, hold some handcuffs and posed alongside us, which his Mum said would make his day! With the surgery complete we set up a speed 100 check on Spa Road. This check is carried out to provide a snapshot of 100 vehicles travelling along a road and helps to determine if there is a persistent speeding problem. Spa Road was chosen due to the increased pedestrian crossings by children to and from the skate park, where many of them do not use the traffic light crossing. During the hour we were on site, 17 drivers were visually warned for exceeding the 30mph limit, but 2 drivers were stopped with speeds registering at 39mph and issued with Traffic Offence Reports.



With the speed checks completed, we carried out further mobile patrols to investigate a vehicle in the Witham Oaks Academy car park, searched for a suspicious vehicle on Calamint Road and patrolled Bramble Road, the Hatfield Road estate, Maltings estate and Constance Close before heading back towards Braintree to return the vehicle. On the way back we had to make a stop due to a young person sitting on the bridge over the A120 and after some negotiation we managed to get them into our vehicle before returning them safely home.

This concludes the report for February

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[StreetLink - Connecting people sleeping rough to local services](#)



You can find Witham Community Special Constable patrol updates on Twitter / X by searching and following

[Essex Police Witham \(@EPWitham\) / Twitter](#)



Contact Essex Police

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Non-Emergency  101 or  Report it Online

<https://www.essex.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

