

Witham's Voice

Spring 2022

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Your quarterly newsletter

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IN MEMORY OF Councillor Paul Ryland



Witham Tree group assisted by the late Cllr Paul Ryland's friends and family planted a tree by the zebra crossing near Asda in his memory.

The family requested donations for the Witham Tree Group, in lieu of flowers with over £2500 raised. Cllr Ryland was a keen environmentalist and always pushed for more trees to be planted in Witham, as well as fighting to protect the ones we have.



Witham Town Council held a relaunch of its traditional market into a vibrant Christmas Fayre and light switch on in December with thousands of revellers turning out for the event. Newland Street was lined with stalls from local traders, choirs, entertainers and panto's Widow Twankey, as well as craft stalls in the hall at the United Reformed Church. Some familiar faces also included Olaf and Spiderman.

Throughout December Santa and his elf were in the Witham Information Centre grotto meeting local children and giving them a very special gift.

The Town Council would like to thank all local businesses, Witham URC and our many thousands of residents who turned out to support the return of a truly Merry Christmas.

YOUR COUNCIL

Below is an update on some of the recent actions and outcomes of Council meetings.

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.

Memorial Restoration

Following vandalism, Witham Town Council employed the artist originally involved with the project, Brave Arts to restore and repair the damage. As you can see from the photos, the work has been completed and we were pleased to be able to return the mural to its former glory.



Closure of Unofficial Footpath

The public footpath near the Gimsons development near Helen Court has been temporarily closed since September while building work takes place, with the official diversion being made to Maldon Road. During this time, pedestrians have been using an unofficial cut through across the grass on the River Walk around the back of Helen Court. However, due to the current ground conditions and health and safety concerns, access across the grass has now been closed and pedestrians should follow the official diversion to Maldon Road.

Information accurate at time of print, but is subject to change



Grant Awarding Policy

The Town Council still has some funding available to groups and organisations in the town. If your group needs funding for a particular project do contact the Town Council on 01376 520627. Applicants must have raised 25% of the total cost of the project elsewhere before an application is submitted.

Graffiti Clean-up

Our Operations Team have been busy cleaning graffiti left on the Riverwalk. This seems to be an on-going issue in Witham and we strive to do what we can to stop this. If you see any acts of vandalism taking place please report this online to Essex Police or by telephoning 101.



Station Adoption

Witham Town Council are pleased to be working with Greater Anglia and Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership as Station Adopters of Witham Railway station. The voluntary scheme was created to improve communication between train operator and station users with station adopters playing an active role in keeping stations aesthetically pleasing through gardening and community art projects.



Witham Town Council's Operations Team plant seasonal flowers and plants in the pots and containers installed on the four platforms found at the station to provide attractive displays for those using the trains. Town Councillors Sindhu Rajeev and Michelle Weeks have recently become station volunteers and will be assisting with the scheme and future projects to enhance the appearance of the station. Winter planting has recently been carried out so Councillors and Council staff met at the Witham station with Community Rail Support Officer June Povey.

Witham's Community Special Constables In Action

With S/SGT Simon Jesse

Witham's Specials have been recruited and are supported by the Town Council, and that we are actively seeking more to help keep this town safe.

December 3rd

For my first patrol of the month, I headed out to check on a couple of areas that had recently seen drug related activity. While I was in these locations, I carried out searches in the nearby area for discarded or hidden items. Fortunately, in this instance I did not find anything and there were no further signs of drug activity. I returned towards the Town Centre where I conducted foot patrol through the Witham Town Park and through to the Grove Centre. As I exited the Centre onto Newland Street, I witnessed a vehicle travelling at speed in the direction of The Avenue. Almost immediately over the radio I was alerted that this vehicle was suspected to be a drink driver that had been reported by a member of the public, driving erratically, contravening a red light and did not have any lights on. I returned quickly to my vehicle and fortunately located it on the garage forecourt at the ESSO garage. I quickly identified the driver who was in the shop and the driver was promptly arrested under Section 4 of the Road Traffic Act for being unfit to drive through drink. In order to convey the person to custody I was supported initially by a BTP (British Transport Police) Officer who was nearby and then a Braintree Special Constable unit who arrived so we could safely transport the person to custody for the evidential breath test. Following the test, a positive result of 94 was recorded with the legal limit currently 35! This driver had intended to complete his journey which was a further 55 miles away in extremely foggy conditions. The driver had been to a company Christmas event and taken the decision to drive home.

December 4th

Today was the Witham Town Council Christmas Fayre & Lights Switch-On in the Town Centre and we wanted to provide visible policing and reassurance for the market and the events during the afternoon and evening. Special Constable Mabey & Special Constable Eaketts joined me, and we had some amazing engagement with families and young children which was very rewarding. With various performing street artists and a selection of stalls and food providers there was a real community feel about the event with Newland Street closed off to cars. Fortunately, there were no reported incidents during the event and with the lights illuminating the Town Hall, the Christmas Tree and Newland Street we continued our presence around the town until the close.



December 9th



In company with Special Constable Eaketts we started off our duty with foot patrol on the Templars estate, visiting each of the Courts. There were a few families out with children looking at some of the fantastic Christmas light displays and we provided some visibility and reassurance. We then headed over to Newlands Drive following a request for visible patrols on Lockram Lane. A report had been submitted for potential anti-social behaviour including suspected drug dealing taking

place. With information reported by residents we can target specific areas to prevent this behaviour and improve your community. Please continue to report this so we can help you. You can do this by calling 999 if you see a crime or suspected criminal behaviour taking place in front of you or call 101 to report an activity that has already happened. You can also use the Essex Police website to report this. We now also provide a Live Chat function between 7am & 11pm where you can chat to an advisor who can record your concerns directly. If you would prefer to remain anonymous you can still contact Crimestoppers who will then pass the information to Police without your details. We would like to encourage you to report because it is your community, and you are the best eyes and ears where you live.

December 24th

Christmas Eve and I wanted to provide visibility and reassurance for the last minute shoppers and to address a couple of local issues. One of these involved an E-Scooter rider who had narrowly missed a local resident near to Magnolia Close and I carried out foot patrol in each of the neighbouring roads and housing areas to try and identify the offender and to provide a visible deterrent. Further patrols will be carried out to try and locate the E-Scooter which may be seized for destruction. I then headed around Forest Road to Cypress Road & Manor Road to check on previous anti-social behaviour areas but fortunately there were no issues. These areas have had an increase in Police patrols and through positive engagement with residents and local teenagers we have seen a sharp decline in reported cases. Following this I headed out on foot patrol from the town along Maldon Road and onto the River Walk where I disrupted a drug deal in progress. After following one of parties to gather further information I have submitted a Police Information Report and passed this on to a specialist team for future actions.

Police Station re-opens in Town Hall

Essex Police will be holding a surgery at Witham Town Hall in the Information Centre every other Tuesday from 10-12. The surgery will be held in our Heritage Room, where you will be able to talk to the Police in confidence. Some dates include March 22nd and April 5th.

WHAT'S ON IN WITHAM

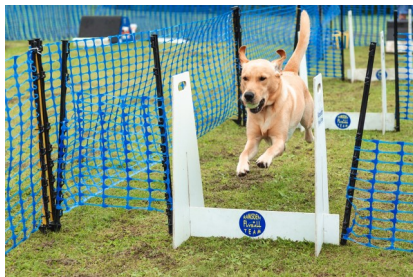


Witham Town Council will be hosting its annual Easter Quest again this year on Saturday 16th April. This is a fun, free event for all the family, including games, entertainment and lots of treats!



Witham Dog Show

Taking place on the picturesque River Walk, Witham Dog Show is a great family day out for you and your pooches. During the summer (on a date to be arranged) this features multiple fun show classes suitable for all abilities, you will have plenty of chances to show off your four-legged friends. Also joining us will be a variety of stalls offering dog and pet supplies.



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



Witham
town council



@WithamTC



@WithamCouncil



@town_Witham



SPOOKTACULAR TRAIL

On Saturday, 29th October the River Walk will be turned into a spooky trail filled with sweets, games and fun characters, making it a perfect day out for all the family.



APR

The Mayor of Witham's Civic Service

3

The Mayor would like to invite you to her Civic Service at St Nicolas Parish Church, Witham on Sunday 3rd April. Please arrive at 2:45pm for a 3:00pm start.

JUN

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

2

This will be an event on the River Walk filled with food drink and entertainment for all the family along with the lighting of a ceremonial beacon.

Witham Festival 2022

To be confirmed

Join us for an old favourite with a brand new twist! This year we will be celebrating slightly differently, but we still promise a fun day out for the whole family!

DEC

Witham Christmas Fayre 2022

3

Join us on Saturday 3rd December for our Christmas Fayre and enjoy the festive atmosphere whilst shopping for gifts and treats. Santa may also be paying a visit again to the WTC grotto so keep an eye out for further details!

COVER COMPETITION



In celebration of the return of our dog show this year we are asking that your child sends in their best artwork of a furry friend, it could be theirs or one that they know. The winner will be used as the cover of our summer edition of the voice!



Submissions can be sent in to admin@witham.gov.uk or to the Town Hall.

Closing date April 30th.



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

Don't forget Sunday, 13th March is the next Sunday Cinema - Witham Library - doors open at 2, film starts at 2:30pm - the film, coffee, tea and biscuits all for £1 !!!
Next month it is Some Like it Hot with Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, and Jack Lemmon .

For any questions or further dates please call 01376 520627

Hope to see you on Sunday!

Sponsored by Witham Town Council

SUNDAY CINEMA
AT WITHAM LIBRARY

£1 CHARGE
DOORS OPEN AT 2PM FOR 2.30 START

12 DECEMBER 2021
MAMA MIA
Meryl Streep and Pierce Brosnan

9 JANUARY 2022
WEST SIDE STORY
Natalie Wood and Rita Moreno

13 FEBRUARY 2022
THE PINK PANTHER
Peter Sellers and David Niven

13 MARCH 2022
BRINGING UP BABY
Cary Grant and Kathryn Hepburn

10 APRIL 2022
SOME LIKE IT HOT
Marilyn Monroe, Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Town Council is developing plans to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of HM The Queen by holding a community event on the River Walk. Food drink and entertainment for all the family along with lighting a ceremonial beacon as part of a nationally designated chain of events. On Thursday 2nd June, more than 1500 beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

For further information please do keep an eye out on our social media or contact the Town Hall on 01376 520627



The Queen's Green Canopy

Do you remember the cascade of poppies on the Town Hall to mark the 100th anniversary of WW1? Well, we have decided to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by having a green canopy on the Town Hall. So we are once again seeking volunteers who can crochet or knit to make a leaf.

Instructions below on how to crochet a simple leaf but use your skill or imagination to create a leaf measuring no more than 15 cms (6ins) in length.

- Use scraps of green wool. Thicker wool and bigger crochet hook will produce a larger leaf.

- For our leaf we used double knitting wool and a size 5 crochet hook.

- Abbreviations: chain stitch (ch), single stitch (sc), double stitch (dc).

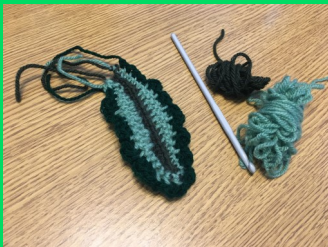
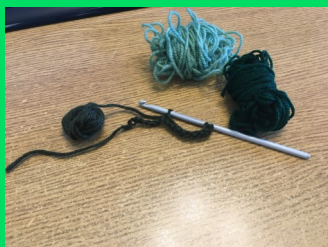
- Start by making a row of ch 20, then go back with a sc into each but the first chain stitch.

- For the next row, start with a ch then do 4 or 5 sc before dc, until the last 4 or 5 stitches when you revert to sc. Continue with sc round the point of the leaf and down the other side starting with 4 or 5 sc, dc the middle section, ending with sc to the end.

- Repeat the last row and pull through the yarn to finish your work. Do leave a length of yarn so that the leaf can be secured to the net which will be hung on the Town Hall.

We made an oak leaf using different coloured wool and using alternate single stitch and double crochet with a chain stitch between.

Once you have finished your leaf, please bring to the Information Centre at the Town Hall and do sign the Commemoration Book as an official record of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



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

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

Town Council: March 14th, April 11th and May 9th

Environment: April 26th

Policy & Resources: March 29th

Planning & Transport: March 14th & 29th, April 11th & 26th and May 9th

YOUR COUNCILLORS

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