

# Marie Goldman

MP for Chelmsford



## On patrol with Essex Police teams to watch the great work they do

**W**ATCHED a fascinating ITV documentary the other week about the brilliant work Essex Police did, discovering the truth behind the mysterious deaths of a husband and wife in their home on Mersea Island. The documentary is called 'The Essex Millionaire Murders' and it's available on ITVX here: [www.itv.com/watch/the-essex-millionaire-murders/10a5975](http://www.itv.com/watch/the-essex-millionaire-murders/10a5975).

Documentaries like this are incredibly important to remind us of the great work the police do, with so much of it behind the scenes and rarely getting the recognition and thanks it deserves. As a society, we often fall into a habit of complaining. All too often, we moan about what's wrong without celebrating what's right.

With the police, we want to see more police visible on our streets, more crimes solved, with criminals caught and put behind bars. We get frustrated when we see other people flouting the laws that we abide by, and when we need help, we understandably struggle to maintain trust if it isn't immediately forthcoming.

I understand all of that – I've felt it myself on occasion. But just as it's right that we challenge and question what we see as failings, it's also right that we acknowledge and champion the great work that the police do to keep us safe every single day.

Why do I say all of this? Well, because last week was Essex Police's Week of Action. And before some clever-clogs sparks up to tell me they should be active all year round (they are), I want to say that this was a way for Essex Police to promote some of the great work that they are indeed doing all year round, but also to tell you about some of the new things happening, starting with the change from community policing to focus more on neighbourhood policing.

The idea is that each area will have dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Teams, with 74 additional officers added across Essex (including nine in Chelmsford). This is supported by funds from the Government's new Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and should provide more identifiable points of contact for each neighbourhood area as well as a more vis-



Marie Goldman MP out and about in Chelmsford with Essex Police teams  
PHOTOS: MARIE GOLDMAN MP



ible police presence. (Find out more here: [www.essex.police.uk/area/your-area/essex/chelmsford/](http://www.essex.police.uk/area/your-area/essex/chelmsford/))

Over the past couple of weeks, I've joined different teams from Essex Police around Chelmsford to find out more about what their day-to-day work entails.

I started out joining a couple of high-visibility foot patrols around Chelmsford city centre. I observed as they took part in national Operation Sceptre, searching for concealed blades around Central Park and Bell Meadow, pulling aside bushes and brambles and using a metal detector to check in hard-to-reach and hard-to-see areas.

I know the officers I was with found it a little frustrating not to find very much of interest, but we all agreed that it was a good sign as it means our lovely little city isn't as dangerous as perhaps it might oth-

erwise be. Walking about with uniformed police officers was a lovely experience. I saw the assistance they offered to members of the public who needed a helping hand.

But my favourite moments were when young children excitedly tugged at their parents' arms to allow them to come and say hello. One six-year-old little boy proudly told the officers of his plans to become a police officer when he grows up. It turned out that his dad was considering joining too – so two possible new recruits were all part of an afternoon's work for the officers I was with.

A big thank you to PCs Scott Smith and Rose Smith.

A few days later, I was out on another patrol. This time, I joined plain-clothed Sergeant Graham Thomas, part of the Chelmsford Town Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Graham has lots of experience with Essex Police, and it was really interesting walking around the city centre, learning what he was looking out for (criminals aren't as good at looking innocent as they might like

to think!), and chatting about the challenges he and his colleagues face every day.

We caught up with a couple of other members of his team in the high street, and I watched as they made an arrest. Graham tells me his step count rarely falls below 20,000 on days when he's out on patrol. It certainly did wonders for mine that day!

And finally, I spent a few hours in the back of a patrol car belonging to Jordan and Lilly from Essex Police's Local Policing Team.

Their role as a Response Team is to respond to the emergency calls that come in. That can be anything from a Road Traffic Collision (an RTC) to a missing person (referred to in shorthand as a 'Misper'), to a domestic disturbance.

And when they aren't responding to issues like these, they are often proactively patrolling around our streets, on the lookout for cars being driven without insurance (more than you would think!) and other things that aren't quite right.

I asked the two officers what the best and worst bits of their jobs are.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the best bits (much like in my job) are being able to help people.

Knowing that you can make the difference to their day – helping them out of a difficult situation, providing reassurance and assistance in their time of crisis. That's a real privilege.

The worst bits were frustrations about processes and procedures that take them off the streets – sometimes for hours on end. It's something I'll be raising further.

Skilled and experienced police officers are a precious resource and I want to understand why we can't do more to make sure they're as productive as possible doing the job they signed up for and love doing.

It was a truly eye-opening and helpful experience spending this time with various sections of Essex Police.

I'd like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all of them for the fabulous, critical work they do to keep us all safe. Our local heroes. Keep up the great work!

Thanks for reading.

Marie

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