

Spring 2024

OP WAVE BREAKER ADOPTED AS NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

In 2021, Essex Police Marine Unit began running Operation Wave Breaker in an effort to tackle a significant rise in reports and incidents of anti-social behaviour caused by personal water-craft (PWCs).

During 2020, there were 99 reports/incidents of PWC related ASB along our coastline. After the first year of action, that number reduced to 84, and the decline continued in 2022 to 74. Last year, we saw that number reduce further to 37.

The operation has 3 key strands - Engagement, Education and when necessary, Enforcement. The first two go hand-in-hand with each other; stopping riders and having informative conversations with them about water safety, byelaws and restricted areas is usually enough to prevent the third strand becoming necessary.

Keeping the marine community, including residents and our partner agencies, updated with what we are doing is essential and so we have maintained regular updates on social media as well as various features in the local and national media, including BBC Look East.



The success of the operation has been a joint effort with our Local Authorities including Southend as well as Colchester City Councils along with Maldon District Council.

Now, the College Of Policing has adopted the operation as best practice for all forces around the UK to follow when dealing with PWC related anti-social behaviour.

We are really proud of what we have achieved and are already planning our operational activity for this coming summer.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Southend City Council has recently extended their Public Spaces Protection Order to cover out onto the water. Since then, the team have issued two PWC riders with £100 fixed penalty notices relating to breaches of the PSPO conditions. Our team are the first in the UK to issue PSPO tickets to PWC riders and we are working with several interested Councils who are looking to adopt PSPOs for their areas.

We are also in the process of delivering Op Wave Breaker presentations to other forces around the UK.



Marine Crime

Our team looks into and investigates marine related crime reported in and around Essex. This can include fraud offences as well as thefts of boats, engines and other marine related equipment, the majority of which can be very expensive.

Over the winter we have seen a spate of outboard thefts from yards around the Rivers Crouch and Blackwater, as well as a couple of boats taken too. We increased our patrols in the effected areas as well as those which we felt could be vulnerable to falling victim to thieves, offering crime prevention advice and reassurance.

Overall, marine crime is relatively low in Essex but we still rely on you, the public, to help us by reporting anything that doesn't look right. This could be anything from a boat which looks out of place to people/activity around marinas during the night. Even if what is reported turns out to be nothing untoward, we would rather go and look into it to make sure.



We are conducting shore patrols around our marine community on a weekly basis. This doesn't just include coastal locations but also our inland waterways including the residents on the house boats on the River Lee Navigation and Paper Mill Lock.

We are currently working to secure a property marking machine which, if successful, we will use to help make your marine related equipment less attractive to thieves.

Marine Watch

Essex Police Marine Watch is a free service to the marine and freshwater communities. It is aimed at boat owners, persons who partake in water-based activities, or services, local members of the public and also visitors to the coast and internal waterways of Essex. Visit the Essex Police website to find out more - www.essex.police.uk



Fraud

At the beginning of January, officers were conducting routine patrols around the boatyards of Tendring when they were made aware of a boat which appeared to have recently been abandoned. They began making enquiries including checking CCTV and the local ANPR camera systems and started to piece together where the boat had come from. A subsequent conversation with an insurance company loss adjuster confirmed that the owner of the boat had reported it stolen and made an insurance claim. Working with the adjuster, the officers were able to establish that the boat had been moved there by the victim and that the insurance claim was fraudulent. As a result of this, an adult female from North Essex has since been interviewed by officers and has been given a conditional caution.



Winter Training

We are often told how lucky we are to work on the water, especially when the weather is good. Sadly, the couple of warm months that we see each year soon pass. However, we are out on the water throughout the year and in all weather. During the colder months, we concentrate on getting the majority of our training completed before our coast starts to get busy again. This ensures that we are still out and visible around the coast throughout the year.

Our training includes various Royal Yachting Association courses as well as National Marine Policing Tactics. We are fortunate enough to have some fantastic local 'props' to use (with permission!) and a range of conditions in which to practice. We also train with our colleagues from our partner agencies including Essex County Fire and Rescue, HM Coastguard, Border Force and Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries And Conservation Authority.



Danger—UXO

At the beginning of December the team were tasked to assist the EOD with unexploded ordnance that had been found by a member of the public on the beach at Shoebury. On this occasion a controlled explosion was carried out and the device removed. However, we are often called to similar incidents along our coastline.

If you find something that doesn't look right or appears out of place, move away from it and call 999 straight away.



Supporting Safe Commercial Shipping

Here in Essex, we have some of the busiest commercial shipping lanes in the UK. With Harwich and the approaches to Felixstowe and Ipswich Ports in the North, Tilbury and London Gateway in the South, as well as Brightlingsea and Baltic Wharf in the middle, we see a significant number of ships passing through our waters.

Twice a year, we are tasked by the Joint Maritime Security Centre to take part in a UK-wide week of action to support commercial shipping safety, known as AquaPol Security Week. This includes boarding ships and completing the following

- Ship security checks
- Crew welfare and documentation checks
- Looking for signs of modern day slavery and trafficking
- Checking for signs of Organised Crime Group influence
- Providing visible patrols to reassure the Commercial Shipping Community

In November we worked with our colleagues from Kent Marine Unit, Border Force, Harwich Haven Authority as well as the Crouch Harbour Authority to conduct the Aquapol activity.

These weeks of intensification are in addition to the team's routine ship boarding activity throughout the year. You can follow us on X (formerly Twitter) to see more of our work in this area.



Officers joining the Harwich Haven Authority Pilot Boat crews for joint patrols



**PROJECT
KRAKEN**

**STRANGE ACTIVITY
BY THE SHORE?**

REPORT IT. LET'S SORT IT.

To report anonymously, call the Coastal Crime Line powered by Crimestoppers on 0800 011 3304. In an emergency, always call 999.

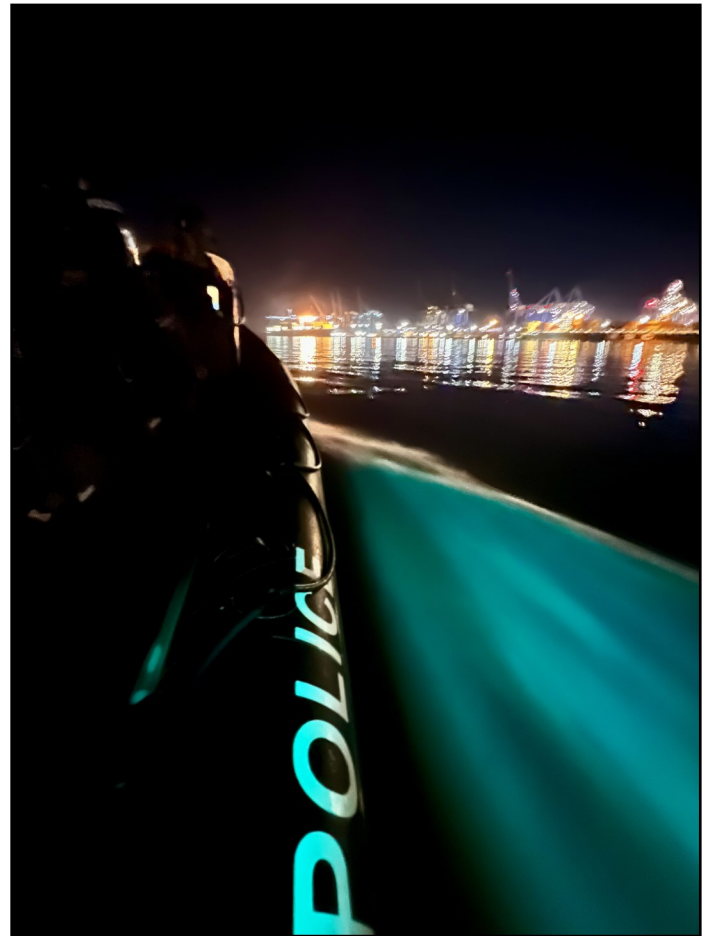
Border Force | Crimestoppers | NCA | ACT | Active Coastal Team



Snapshots Of Our Work In Your Areas



Our RHIB 'Sentinel' out on patrol off the Clacton Coast as Storm Isha hit the UK in January



Completing night patrols around Harwich. Not only does night work enable us to see who is moving about our coast after dark, it also provides good training conditions for the team



We were joined on board by some of our specialist recovery dogs for training on the River Crouch at Burnham



Out on the water engaging with all sections of the marine community is key to building trust and confidence in the Police



Officers boarding vessels on the River Thames at Tilbury

Follow us on Twitter @EPMarine



Do it online at:
essex.police.uk

IN AN EMERGENCY
ALWAYS CALL **999**

About Our Team

We are a team of Essex Police Officers based at Burnham on Crouch who have responsibility for Policing the entire coastline of Essex from Mistley in the North right round to Crayford Ness on the border with the Metropolitan Police as well as the inland waters.

The team consists of 1 Sgt and 5 Pcs, however we are supported by 9 marine reserve officers who work in other departments across the force but can provide us with support when required.

We have a 24ft RHIB (Sentinel) which is kept at Bradwell Marina and also have joint use of 2 Seadoo PWCs (jet skis) which Maldon District Council purchased for us to patrol on.

We are currently awaiting delivery of a 40ft replacement vessel for our former boat, Alert 4.

We conduct patrols both on the water and land and our primary focus is -

- ◆ Ensuring the coastal and inland waters of Essex are safe for everyone to use
- ◆ Reducing Marine related crime and tackling water based anti-social behaviour
- ◆ Being visible in our Marine Community and supporting our partner agencies
- ◆ Engaging with our Community to ensure we understand their concerns and act accordingly to resolve them

We are able to provide specialist water search capabilities to both Essex Police as well as other forces around the UK. In the last couple of months we have provided underwater search capabilities to Suffolk and Norfolk Police.

We are trained to national standards and can board commercial vessels from small coasters to large container ships.

We are also trained in search and rescue techniques and often provide support to the HM Coastguard.

Area of responsibility

Sgt 2867 Alex SOUTHGATE

Vacant

Pc 1390 Daren CHAMBERS

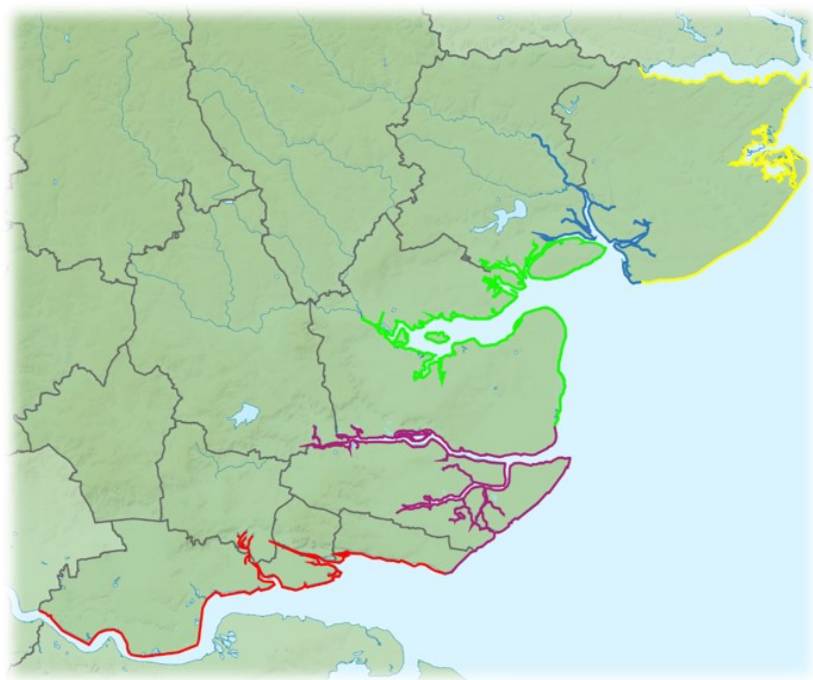
Pc 2858 Paul RAWSON

Pc 72958 John Perry

Pc 78110 Fin CLARK

The marine unit cover the coastal waters from Manningtree to Crayford Ness, approximately 362 nautical miles.

12 miles seaward, and all inland reservoirs and rivers in the county of Essex.





Out on joint patrols with colleagues from Kent & Essex IFCA



Patrolling up to Wivenhoe and Rowhedge on the River Colne



We regularly tie up at Southend Pier and go for a foot patrol, engaging with pier visitors



Providing underwater sonar scanning for Suffolk Police



The nature of our role includes body recovery. Here the team are practicing recovery using our training mannequin



Shore patrols at Dovercourt Bay

Email us at -
marineu@essex.police.uk



Do it online at:
essex.police.uk

IN AN EMERGENCY
ALWAYS CALL **999**

Flood Water Safety Advice



More than 12% of the UK population live in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. Floodwater can be very dangerous but there are a few things you can do to stay safe

How to manage a car in flood water

- Call for help, remove your seatbelt and release any children from their seats
- Turn on all of the lights and sound the horn to attract attention (provided this won't delay your escape)
- If the water level is low, open the windows and stay in the car
- If the water level is high or water is entering the car, escape out of the windows, sunroof or doors onto the roof of the car. If the car starts to move quickly with the water flow, get off of the car, stay upstream and swim vigorously to safety

- Keep an eye on weather reports for flooding in your area. Do not travel in heavy rain unless absolutely necessary
- Do not ignore road closed signs
- Never attempt to cross or drive through floodwater if you don't know how deep the water is. Just two feet of water will float a car
- Never try to swim through fast flowing water or floodwater – you may get swept away or be injured by an object in the water
- Don't assume fords are safe to cross just because the road is not closed. Always look at the river level gauge and use your common sense
- Floodwater may be contaminated. Never allow children or pets to go near or play in floodwater
- Prepare a flood kit in case your home floods or you are trapped in a vehicle for any period. This should contain a change of clothing, wellies, waterproofs and blankets as well as a torch, charged mobile, medication and a first aid kit and a list of useful numbers, including flood alert lines



Digital 101

You can report non-emergency crime by calling **101** or by using **Digital 101**, our quick and easy to use online service that's available at any time.



Digital 101 is available on the Essex Police website: [essex.police.uk](https://www.essex.police.uk)



If you, or anyone you know, is interested in protecting and serving Essex, you can follow us on social media, or search #FitTheBill

#FIT THE
BILL