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THE KING'S VISIT

Union flags - crowds waiting in Colchester High Street with flags adorning the city centre

PICTURE: STEVE BRADING

Crowds line streets for piece of history

by **GEORGE KING**
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THOUSANDS of flag-waving royalists lined the streets of Colchester to experience a "piece of history" as King Charles and the Queen Consort visited the city.

Residents and day-trippers eager to catch a glimpse of the iconic royal couple descended on the centre of Colchester yesterday.

Braving the cold, crowds of children, parents and people of all ages patiently waited for hours to witness the couple's arrival at Colchester Castle.

William, 22, who is a student at University of Essex, secured himself and his large Union Jack flag a prime spot directly opposite the war memorial.

He said: "For a long time in my life I have been a fan of the royals and I thought this was the perfect

opportunity to come out and give them my support.

"I have never seen the King before and so it really is exciting.

"I love the stability the royal family gives the country and the culture it brings. You don't get this anywhere else in the world. It's such a uniting factor."

Kim Wesbrook, 39, attended the historic visit with her friends and their young children.

She said: "This is part of history and it is a once in a lifetime experience. I also think it is really good for the kids to come and see the new monarch.

"The royal family is part of our country and I think it is important the kids show respect.

"Replacing the Queen will be hard for the King because she reigned for so long. It is a big ask but he will do his best for us."

Annie Purtell, 30, who headed to

the momentous occasion with her baby daughter made friends with fellow royal family fan Gina Hickman, 35, while waiting for the King.

"I think King Charles is really compassionate and will do really good for us," said Annie.

"I love the royals and I love watching the shows such as Victoria and The Crown. I also really like the historic royals too and I just think their lifestyle is so fascinating."

Although not Charles' biggest fan, Dawn Lamb, 44, said she was never going to miss his visit to the newly-crowned city.

She added: "It's such a historic occasion and I just think it's really nice for my son to see. I mean, when will the King be here again? Probably not in our lifetimes.

"I'll be honest, I don't mind the King, he is the same age as my dad, but I'm more for Will and Kate."



■ Royalist - William, 22, with his flag

Royals reveal zoo's rhino's new name

COLCHESTER Zoo's newest addition has been given a royal seal of approval after its name was officially unveiled by King Charles during his visit to the city.

The Stanway facility became home to a southern white rhino calf back in January when mother Astrid gave birth.

Her name was finally revealed by the King and the Queen Consort as part of their trip to Colchester.

The King unveiled a plaque revealing the baby's name to be Dara, meaning beautiful in Swahili.

Town crier Robert Needham announced the new name to the crowds gathered outside the castle. Before the name unveiling, the

King and the Queen Consort met representatives of Colchester Zoo to discuss a variety of conservation projects as well as educational, research and breeding programmes that the Zoo are proud to be involved with.

Andy Moore, conservation education manager at Colchester Zoo, said: "It was absolutely fantastic to meet the King today.

"It was a great opportunity for us to shine a light on the work Colchester Zoo does with species in Essex.

"It was really nice to be able to share that his majesty and it was nice for him to be able to unveil the name of our seventh baby rhino. It was a really special moment."



■ Revealed - the rhino is called Dara meaning beautiful