

CCTV Half Yearly Report

Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford

1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides information on how the district council's CCTV cameras¹ contribute towards deterring crime, reducing the fear of crime, increasing crime detection and protecting vulnerable people in the district.

The report is produced using information provided by the CCTV monitoring suite based in Abingdon. It is based on information drawn from the record of occurrences. A record of occurrence is completed by the operator on duty, each time a CCTV camera is used proactively to monitor a specific incident.

The report covers the four towns that have had CCTV installed; Didcot (nine cameras), Henley-on-Thames (20 cameras), Thame (15 cameras) and Wallingford (13 cameras). Reports are provided on a half yearly basis to each town council and other stakeholders in order to share information and help publicise the positive outcomes of CCTV to residents and businesses.

DATA SUMMARY

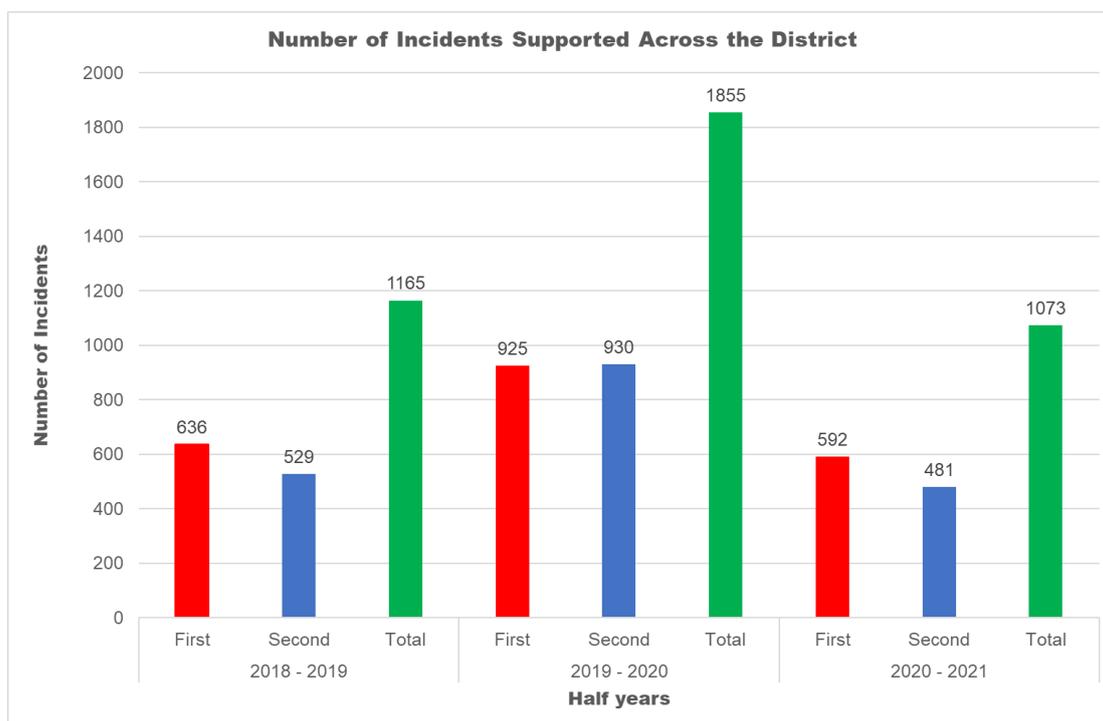
In South Oxfordshire, CCTV operators supported 481 incidents during the second half of 2020-2021. The operators also produced 39 evidence packs for possible court proceedings, carried out 35 reviews of CCTV footage (a review is undertaken as a result of a written request) and supported 31 arrests.

The following table displays the most common type of incident monitored for each town during the second half of 2020-2021, where CCTV was involved at some stage:

MOST COMMONLY MONITORED INCIDENTS				
	Didcot	Henley	Thame	Wallingford
1	Missing persons (29)	Suspicious Behaviour (15)	Suspicious Behaviour (10)	Fear for Welfare (8) Drunkenness (8)
2	Fear for Welfare (22)	Fear for Welfare (14) Shop Lifting (14) Theft (14)	Fear for Welfare (9) Missing persons (9)	Public Order (6)
3	Suspicious Behaviour (15)	Anti-social Behaviour (12)	Anti-social Behaviour (8)	Anti-social Behaviour (5)

¹ The report covers the district council cameras plus three which Henley Town Council installed in Mill Meadows as these are managed under the same scheme.

The chart below compares this half yearly total with previous half years:



For further breakdown please see table below:

	2018 - 2019			2019 - 2020			2020 - 2021		
	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total
Didcot	192	228	420	411	448	859	198	157	355
Henley	241	132	373	213	225	438	209	183	392
Thame	97	87	184	130	147	277	97	78	195
Wallingford	106	82	188	171	110	281	88	63	151
Total	636	529	1165	925	930	1855	592	481	1073

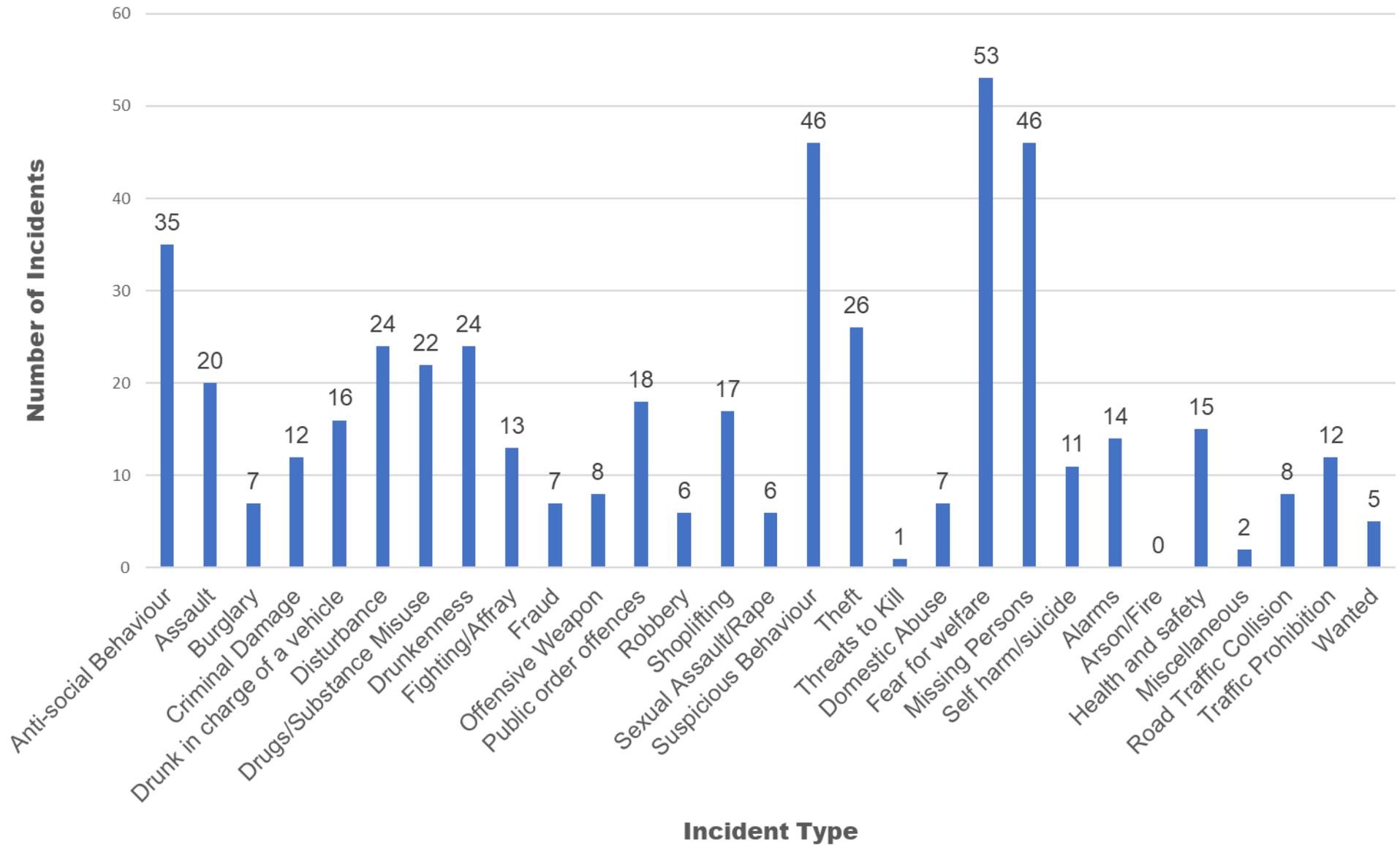
Demands on the CCTV service changed during the second half of 2020-21 as a result of the government restrictions introduced to help tackle Covid-19. The table below compares the number of incidents monitored between January and March 2021 with the same period in 2020. During lock-down there was some variety in the type of incident monitored by our operators; for example, the need to monitor incidents involving the night-time economy reduced as pubs and bars were closed.

	January - March 2020-21	January - March 2019-20
Didcot	118	270
Henley	42	102
Thame	28	78
Wallingford	25	43

TYPE AND NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

The chart on the next page shows the amount and type of incidents the CCTV operators have monitored and supported across all four towns, between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021.

Incidents by Type - 1 October 2020 - 31 March 2021

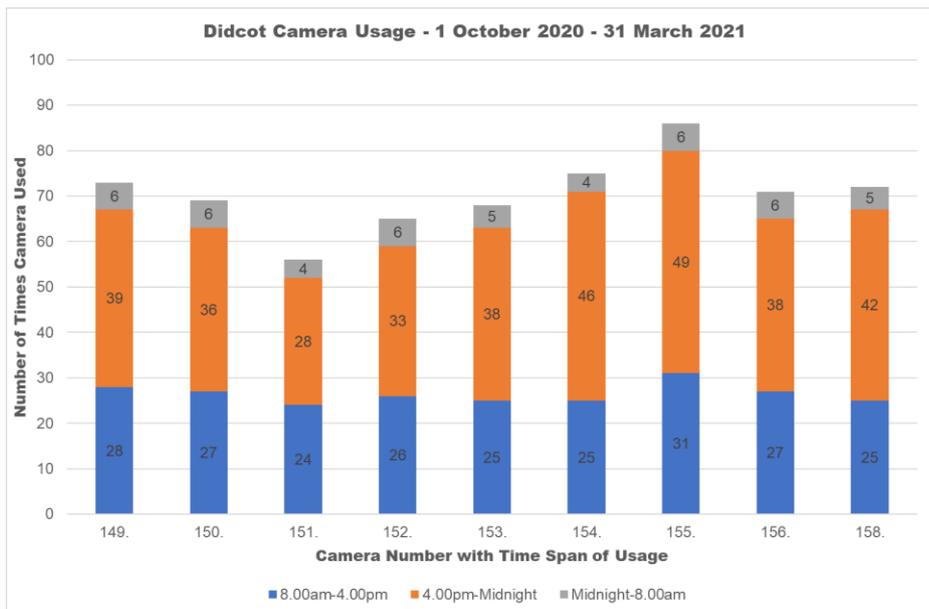


CAMERA USAGE

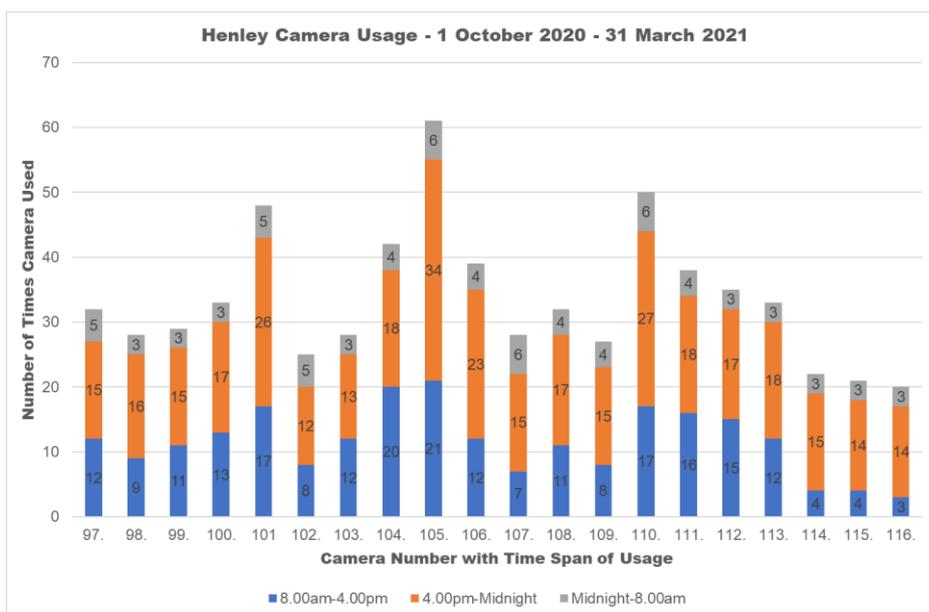
The following charts show camera usage for each town. These indicate the number of times that individual cameras were deployed in recorded, monitored events.

The number of times that each camera was used has been divided into three sections, covering a 24 hour period.

It is worth noting that for the period midnight to 8am, the vast majority of camera usage occurred between midnight and 4am.

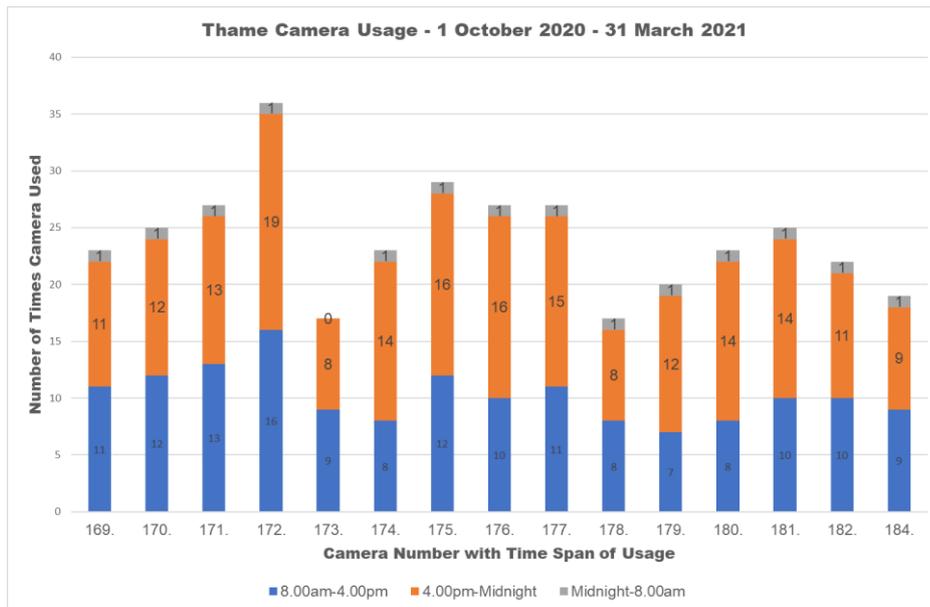


In Didcot, camera usage was much more evenly spread for this half year when compared to the second half of 2018 – 2019. This is likely to be due to lesser use of specific cameras that are used to monitor night-time economy e.g. 155 an 156.

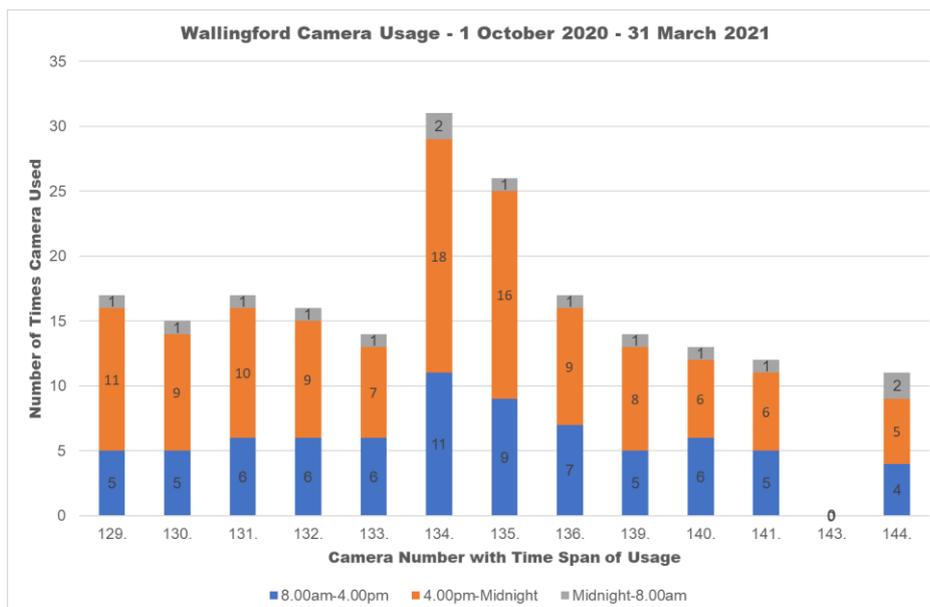


Camera 105 is situated in Henley town centre at the traffic lights serving the Duke St. - Hart St. – Bell St. junction and clearly has the greatest number of occurrences

attached to it; along with cameras 106 (Hart St.), 101 (The Bell Street) and 110 (bottom of Grey's Road).



In Thame, camera 172 is fairly central within the town, reflected in the highest usage.



Cameras 134, 135 and 136 in Wallingford are situated in the centre of the town, which is reflected in the highest number of recorded uses.

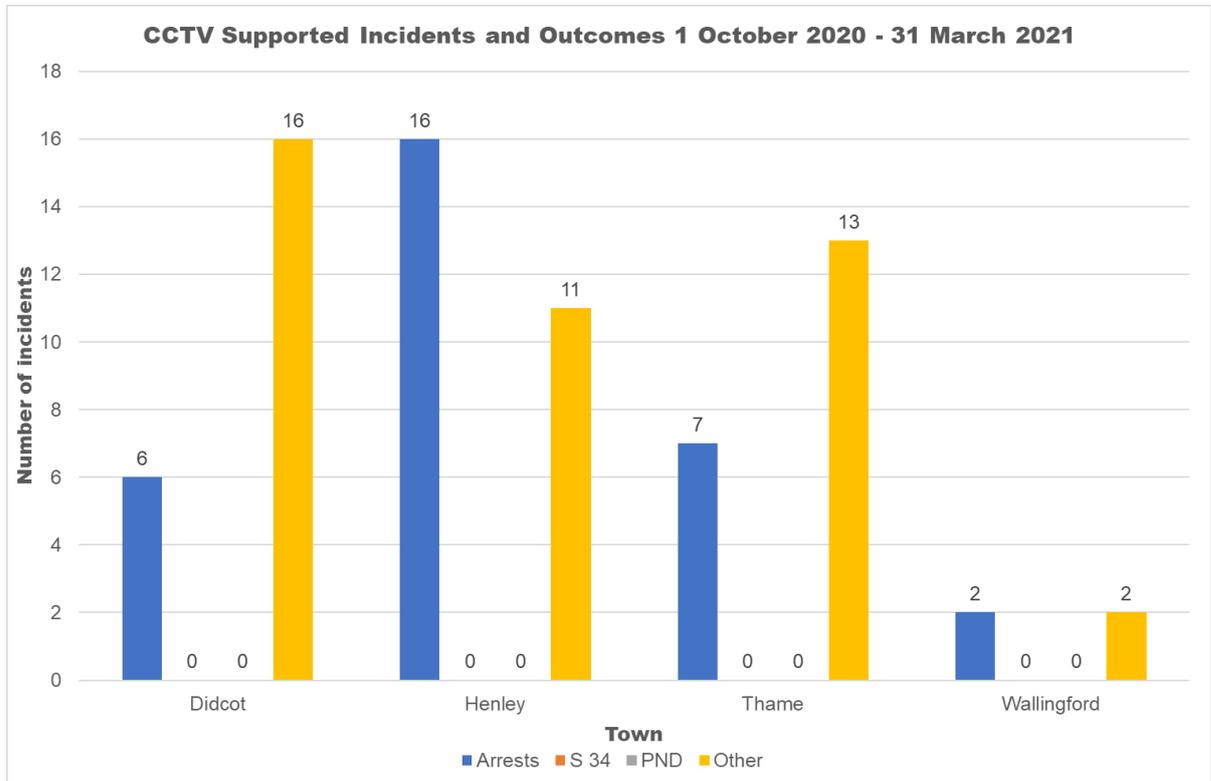
ARRESTS, SECTION 34S AND OTHER OUTCOMES

The chart on page six shows the outcomes the CCTV operators supported while involved in monitoring an incident. The police use their discretion on how an incident is resolved based on experience, the gravity of the offence, the resources that are available to them at that time and so on. While we cannot always be certain whether CCTV was solely instrumental in an arrest or the serving of a Section 34² or a Penalty

² A Section 34 allows the police to move someone from a specified area for a period of up to 48 hours if they believe the person poses a risk of anti-social related disorder.

Notice for Disorder³ (PND), we do know the cameras alert police to incidents they may not have known about. CCTV also gives the police the ability to assess and allocate resources and prioritise in real time e.g. should the situation allow, leaving CCTV to monitor incidents or offenders while officers attend other incidents.

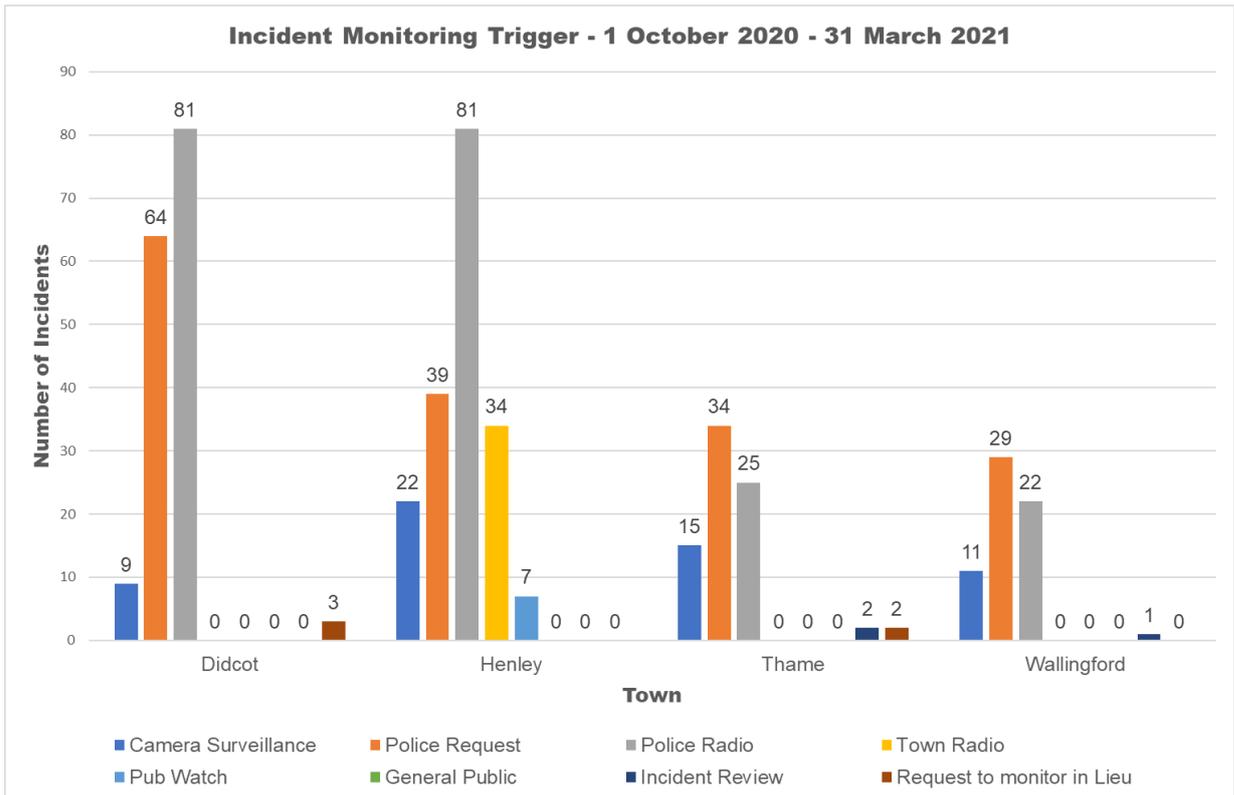
In the chart below, actions designated 'other' usually means that the police either gave verbal advice or a non-recordable sanction. For this period, it includes advice relating to Covid restrictions.



HOW CCTV MONITORING WAS INITIATED

The chart on the following page shows how many of the incidents monitored were as a result of the following: a direct request from the police (police requests); the CCTV operator hearing about an incident on a police radio (police radio); the operator proactively patrolling the cameras (camera surveillance); request from officers to review footage at the time of an incident e.g. to clarify details of a reported incident while they are on scene (incident review). Only Henley-on-Thames has a shop radio scheme.

³ A PND is the 'on the spot fine'



‘Request to monitor in Lieu’ refers to occasions where an operator has been specifically asked to monitor a situation by the police control centre where the nearest officers are engaged in a higher risk situation. In this role, our involvement could be before, during or after an event.

REVIEWS AND EVIDENCE PACKS

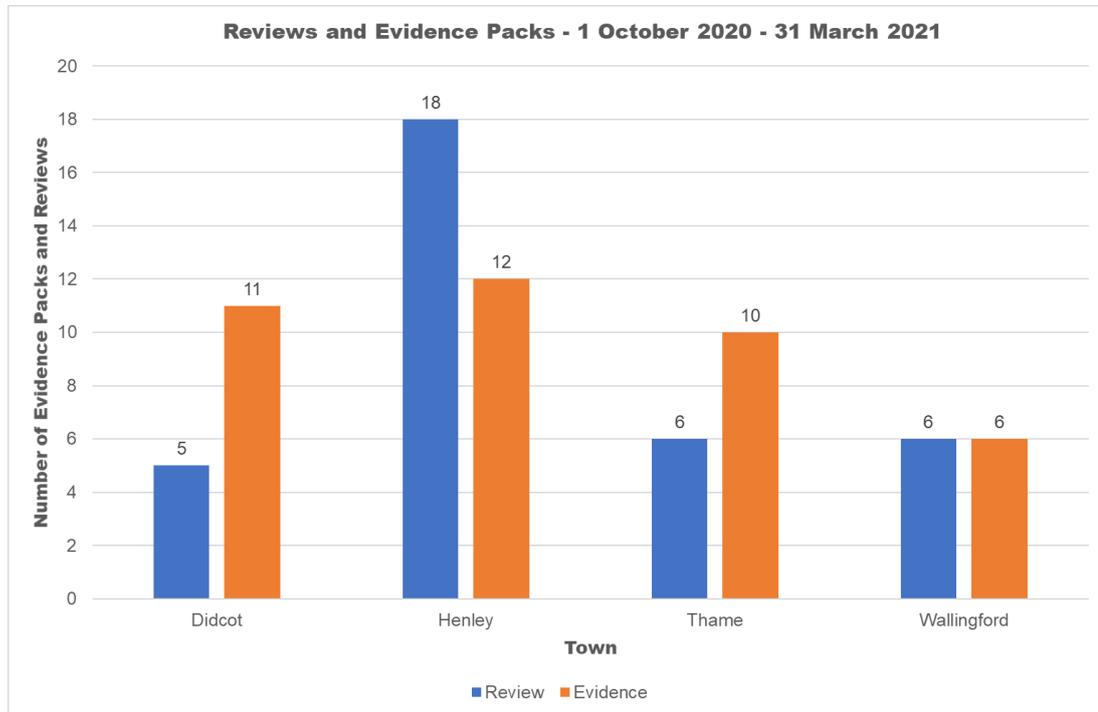
When not tasked by police, the operators patrol all the cameras and focus on ‘hotspot’ areas. All cameras are recording 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are set in ‘default’ positions which are agreed with the police as the area most likely to experience problems.

CCTV operators and the CCTV supervisor also respond to requests from members of the public and third parties under data protection legislation and subject access requests (SARs). The most common request is to examine car park or road cameras for evidence of ‘non-stop road traffic collisions’ in which the complainant’s car has been damaged. Altogether we received four such requests during this half of the year. We also received four requests from town and district council departments regarding incidents. In two of these cases, we were able to supply footage of specific incidents, caught on camera.

The chart on page eight shows the number of evidence packs the CCTV operators put together and the number of evidence reviews they undertook, as a result of formal written requests. The evidence packs are the recordings and statements which the CCTV operators produce for police, solicitors and the Crown Prosecution Service.

Activity that monitors past footage but does not result in an evidence pack being produced, is termed ‘a review’. This may be, for example, that the footage does not show an event clearly enough to warrant making a permanent DVD copy for evidential use.

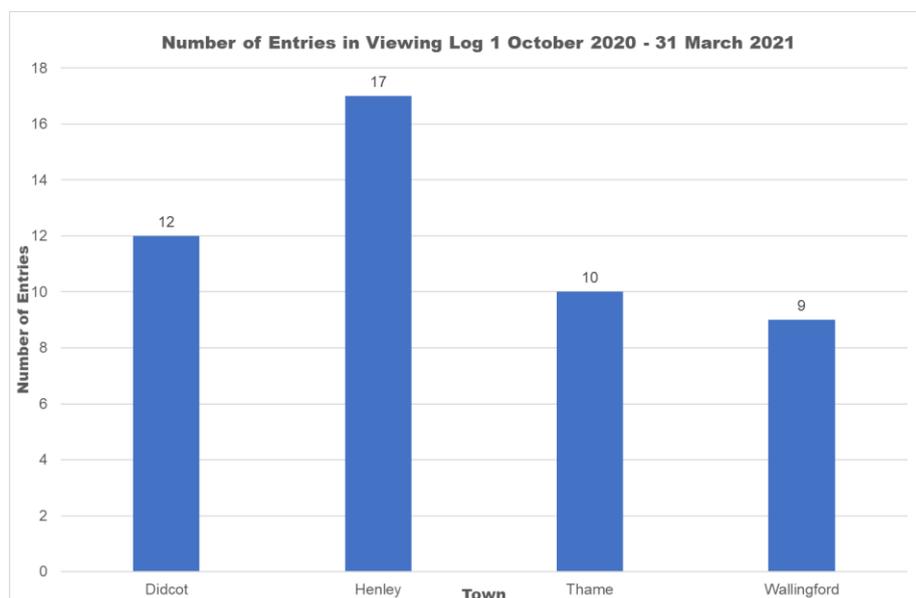
One of the greatest advantages of CCTV footage is in obtaining a guilty plea at the early interview stage. For many offences this early admission is due to the offence being captured clearly on camera and saves the expense of a full trial at either magistrates or crown court.



VIEWING LOG

At present, we are unable to accommodate visitors in the control room due in the Covid-19 situation (with the exception of CCTV maintenance staff). Therefore, when police officers ask to view footage, these requests are carried out by our operators on their behalf. The following chart reflects the number of times this occurred between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 across the four towns.

Please note that the viewing of footage may or may not be followed by a formal written request for footage.



CASE STUDIES

The following are examples of incidents dealt with by CCTV operators during the second half of 2020–21. They aim to demonstrate how our CCTV service helps to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

Didcot

The CCTV control room was passed a description of a man who was wanted by the police in connection with a serious offence. During the course of routine monitoring, our operator spotted the man and relayed details to the police control centre. While police officers were deployed, our operator was able to assist with live updates as to the man's movements and he was subsequently arrested.

A call had come into the police control centre; sounds of fighting and things being smashed had been heard at an address and a description of a man who the police wanted to speak to in connection with this event had been passed to CCTV. Our operator located a man matching the description and informed the police control room. Officers nearby were able to detain the man and he was subsequently arrested.

Four men, who had been asked to leave The Orchard Shopping Centre by security staff because of their anti-social behaviour, were refusing to move on. From the descriptions provided by the police control centre, our operator was able to identify the group and monitored them until they left in a vehicle. Details were then passed to the police to be logged for appropriate action to be taken.

Henley-on-Thames

The police control centre alerted our operator to a group of people who were gathered together near the bridge and were clearly not following government Covid guidelines. Our operator was able to monitor the group and advise officers of their exact whereabouts as they were on route. The group were given strong words of advice and ordered to disperse which our operator was able to monitor and confirm when they had complied.

The CCTV control room received a call via the local Store-net radio system; a considerable sum of beauty products had just been stolen from a town centre store and the suspect had made off on foot. From the description given, our operator was able to locate him in a different area of the town centre. While continuing to monitor the man, our operator guided an approaching officer to his location and he was arrested.

While monitoring the police radio, our operator heard about a vehicle that had left the road, mounted the pavement and ended up in the river. Using the appropriate camera, our operator was able to identify footage which captured the whole event. They updated officers already at the location and also supplied the police with an evidence pack to help with their investigations.

Thame

The police control centre alerted our operator to a young teenager who had been reported missing. From the description given, our operator was able to locate the young man and advise the control centre that he had just boarded a bus which was

leaving. Our operator was able to pass details to the police of the bus's destination from its signage and officers were dispatched. The bus was intercepted, stopped and the young man was returned to a place of safety.

The police control room gave our operator the description of a woman who had just been involved in a purse theft. Our operator was able to locate her and give approaching officers a clear indication of her whereabouts and direction of travel when she moved out of camera view. The woman was quickly detained and arrested.

Police officers on patrol had come across a man in the town centre who was begging for money. While they questioned the man, they requested that our operator review camera footage and report back to them regarding his movements and behaviour. Using this information, the police were able to charge the man with offences relating to fraud and Covid breaches.

Wallingford

The police control centre requested that our operator look out for a man who, it was reported, had broken the conditions of a criminal behaviour order. From prior knowledge of the man, our operator was able to locate him and give directions to officers on route. The man was subsequently arrested.

Over the police radio, our operator heard of a man who had been assaulted by three other males. From the descriptions given, our operator was able to review footage and track the three men around the town. This was passed on to the police control centre and officers were dispatched to the area. The officers detained a man outside one of the town pubs and our operator was able to confirm that he was one of the men from the previous footage. The man was arrested on suspicion of assault.

One of the town centre stores alerted the police to the presence of a man who appeared to be heavily intoxicated and who had previously shoplifted from them. Our operator was able to monitor the man and update officers on route. The man was detained pending further police inquiries.

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