

CCTV Half Yearly Report

Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford

1 April 2021 to 30 September 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

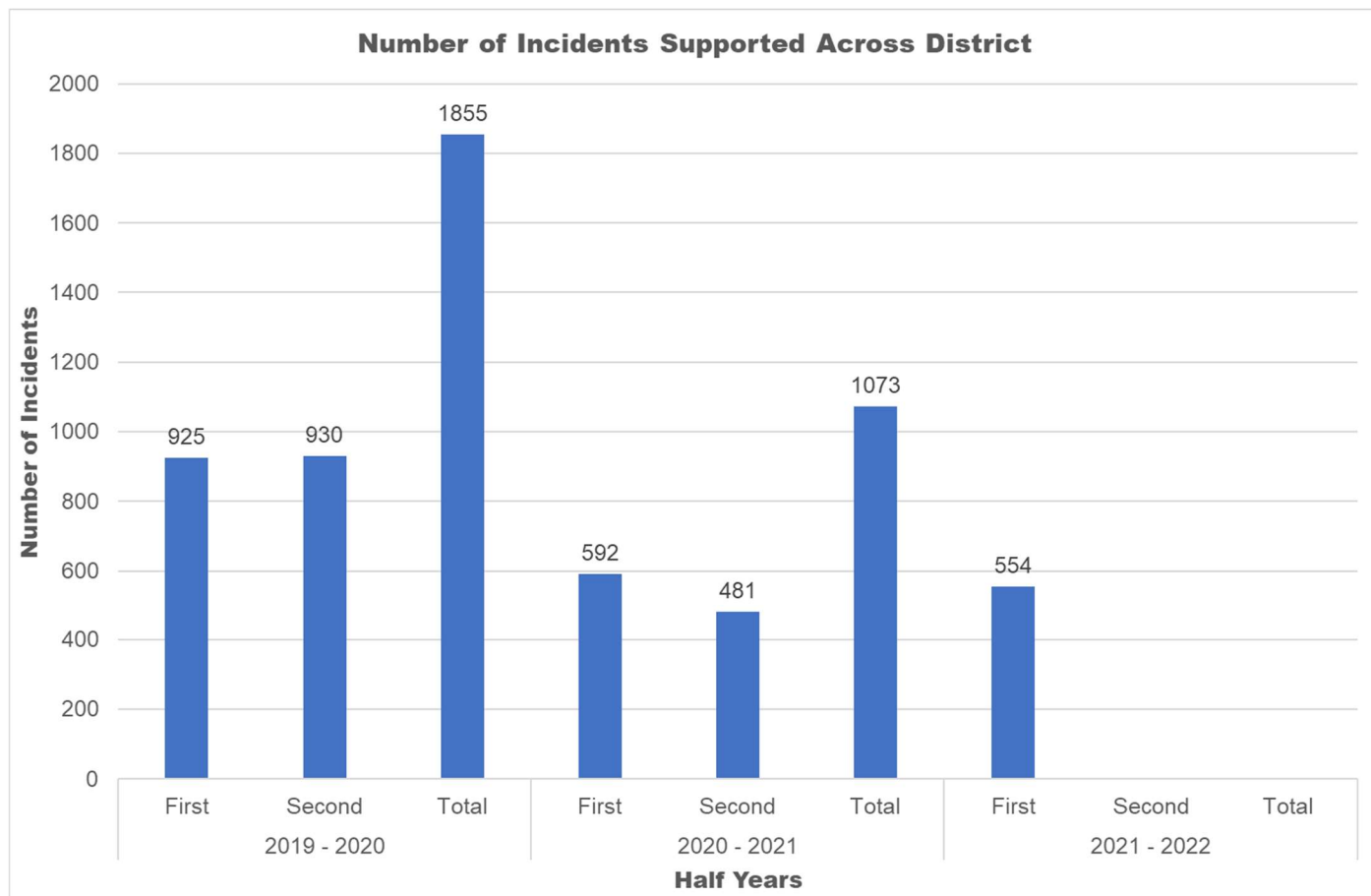
In South Oxfordshire, CCTV operators supported 554 incidents during the first half of 2021-2022. The operators also produced 59 evidence packs for possible court proceedings, carried out 21 reviews of CCTV footage (a review is undertaken as a result of a written request) and supported 54 arrests.

The following table displays the most common type of incident monitored for each town during the first half of 2021-2022, where CCTV was involved at some stage:

MOST COMMONLY MONITORED INCIDENTS				
	Didcot	Henley	Thame	Wallingford
1	Missing persons (49)	Drunkenness (29)	Fear for Welfare (17)	Fear for Welfare (10)
2	Fear for Welfare (18)	Fear for Welfare (24)	Missing persons (14)	Suspicious Behaviour (10)
3	Offensive Weapon (8) Drugs/Substance Misuse (8) Suspicious Behaviour (8)	Missing Persons (20)	Anti-social Behaviour (6)	Disturbance (8)

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:



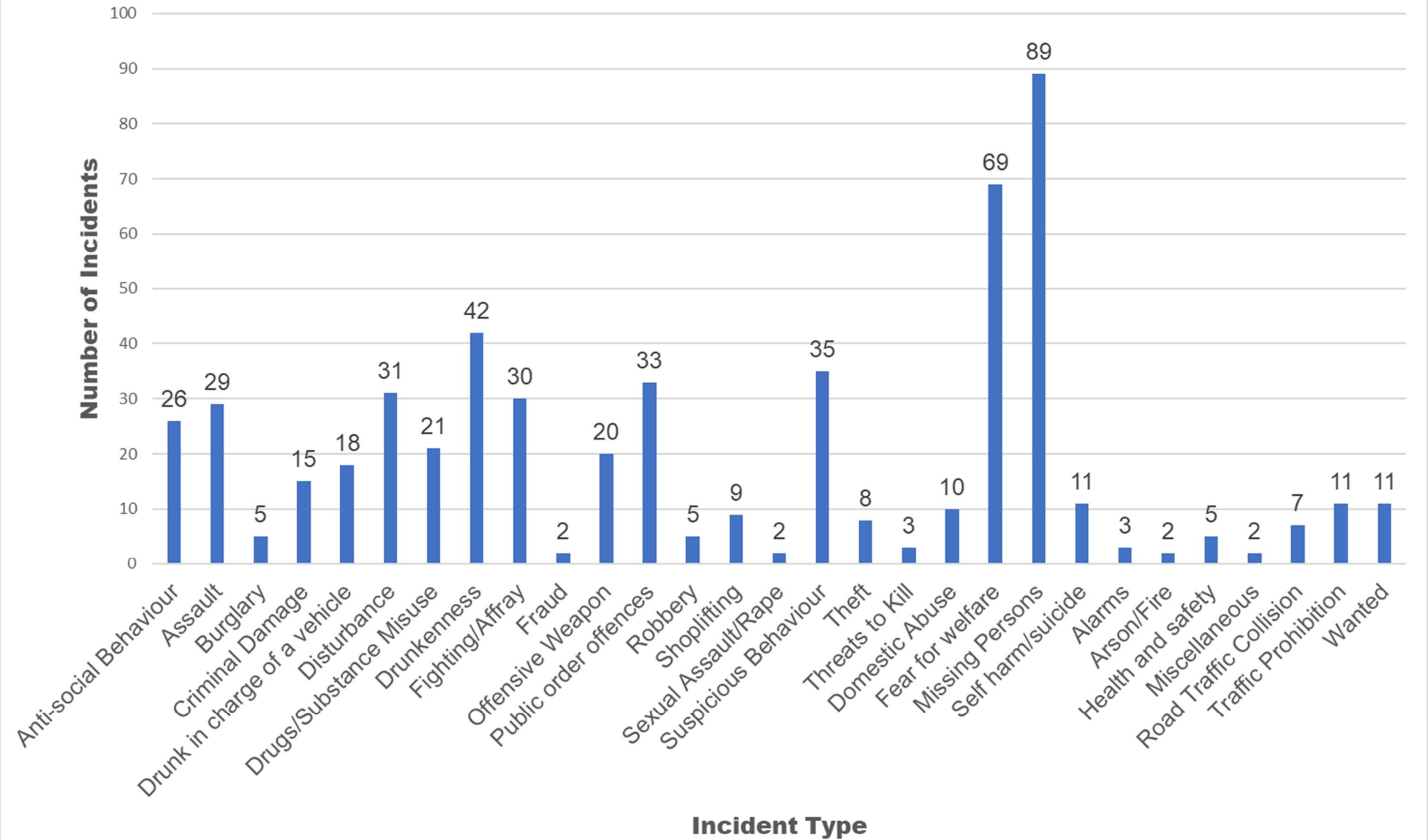
For further breakdown please see table below:

	2019 - 2020			2020 - 2021			2021 - 2022		
	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total
Didcot	411	448	859	198	157	355	156		
Henley	213	225	438	209	183	392	218		
Thame	130	147	277	97	78	195	87		
Wallingford	171	110	281	88	63	151	93		
Total	925	930	1855	592	481	1073	554		

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 April 2021 and 30 September 2021.

Incidents by Type - 1 April 2021 - 30 September 2021

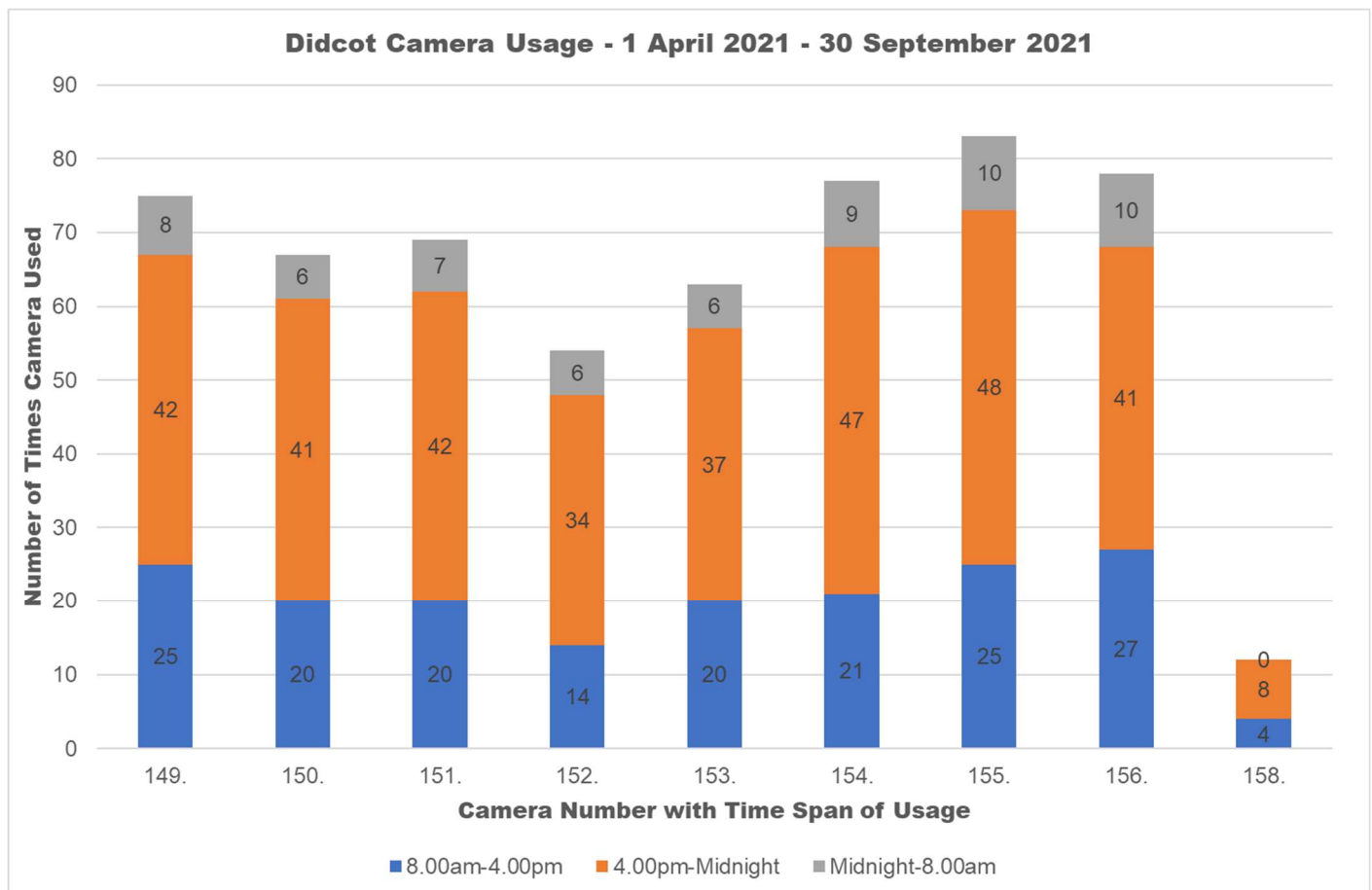


CAMERA USAGE

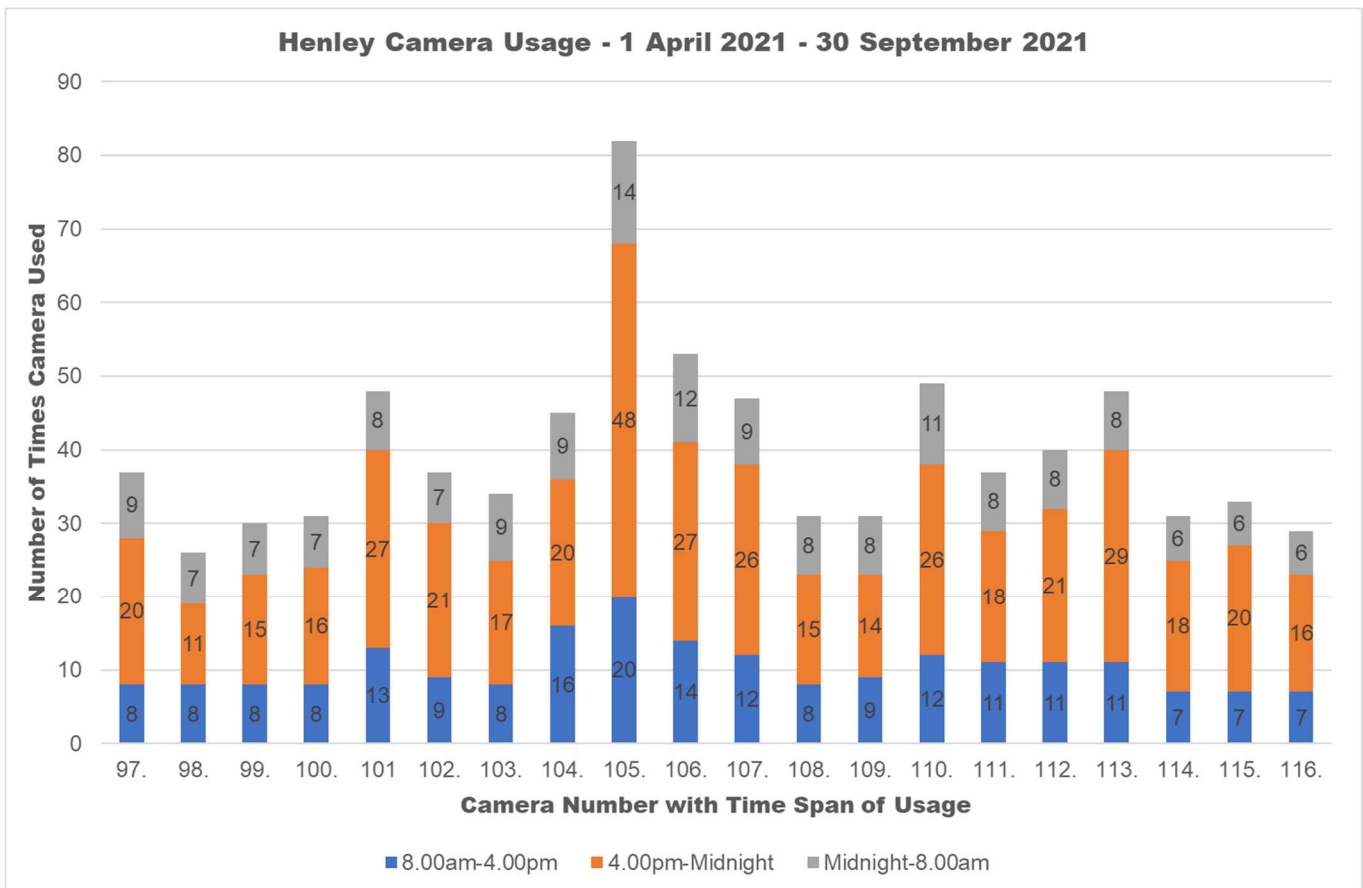
The following charts show camera usage for each town. These indicate the number of times that individual cameras were deployed in recorded, monitored events.

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

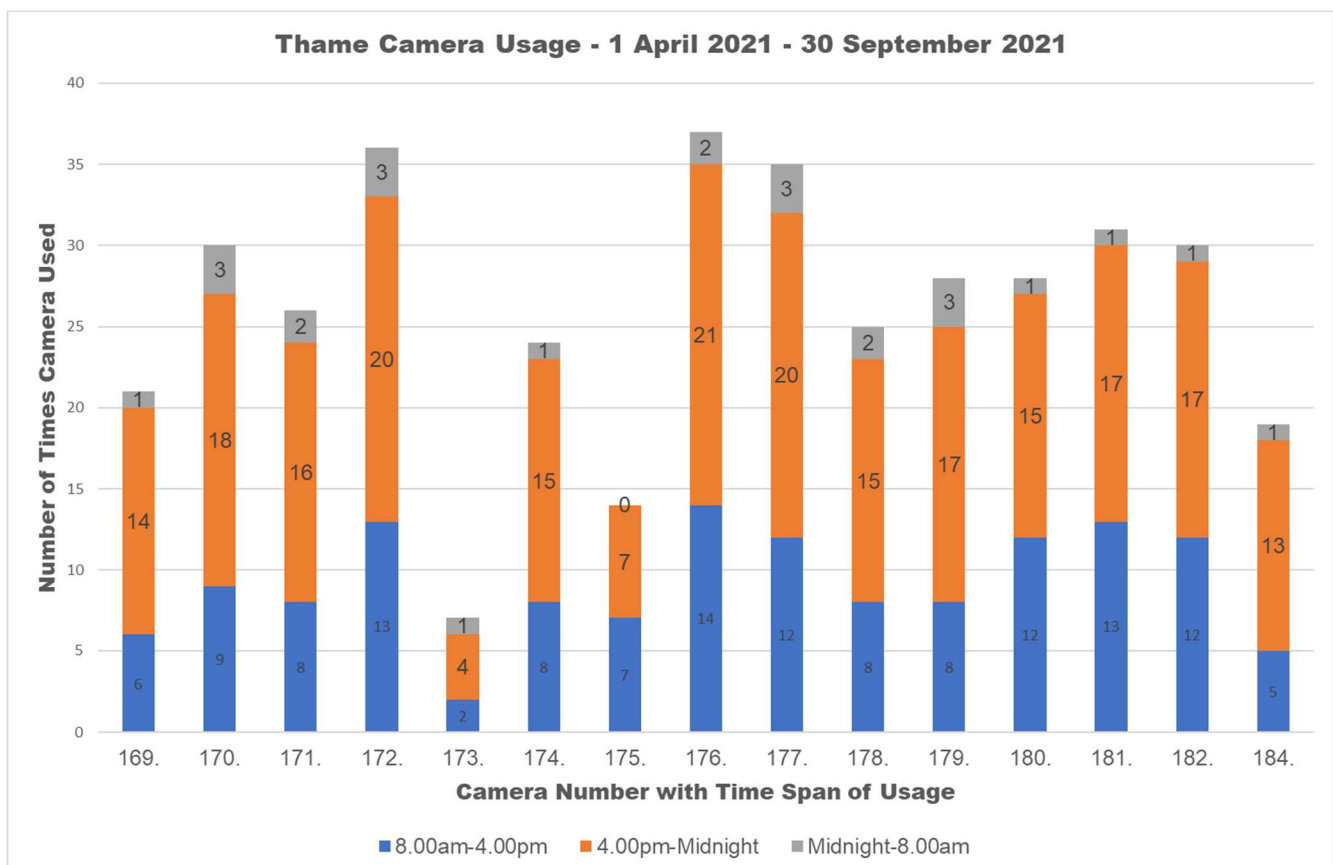
It is worth noting that for the period midnight to 8am, the vast majority of camera usage occurred between midnight and 4am.



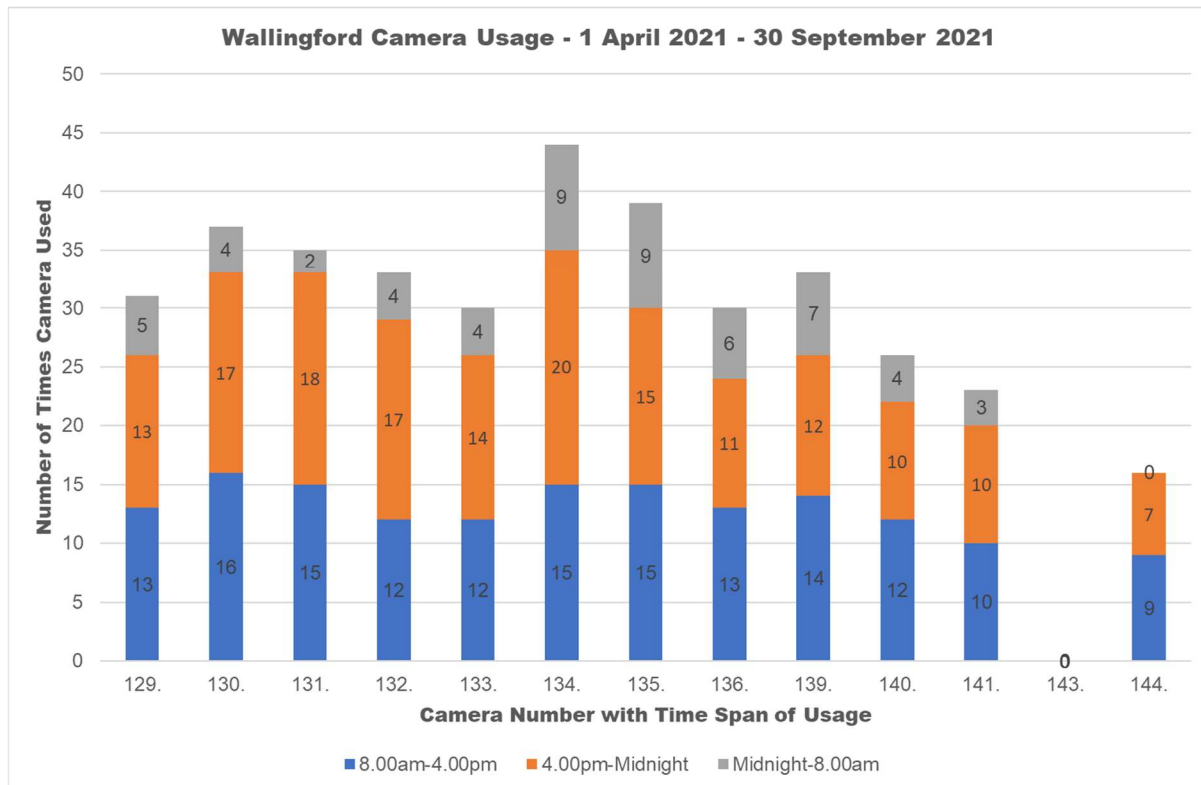
Cameras 155 and 156, which are instrumental in monitoring night time economy, created the most usage for this half year. For part of the half year period, camera 158 was non-operational due to a technical issue and this is reflected in the low recorded usage of the camera in the graph above. The fault has since been resolved.



Camera 105 is situated in the 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.) and 110 (bottom of Grey’s Road). Camera 113 (Hobbs Boat Yard) had higher usage for this period as it was used more often in monitoring for missing persons and other incidents towards Mill Meadows.



In Thame, cameras 173 and 175 were non-operational for part of this time, reflected in slightly reduced usage. Camera 173 unfortunately developed a fault from new but due to supply issues caused by Covid restrictions, this took a while to rectify. Camera 175 had an issue with an electronic component in the base of the pole due to water ingress. Unfortunately, as with camera 173, the supply of replacement parts for our engineers was an issue. Cameras 176 and 177 were used more often, as they support monitoring of the night-time economy. Camera 172 on the High Street is instrumental in monitoring the town centre.



Cameras 134,135 are fairly central to the town, which is reflected in the highest number of recorded uses. Camera 143 is currently awaiting replacement.

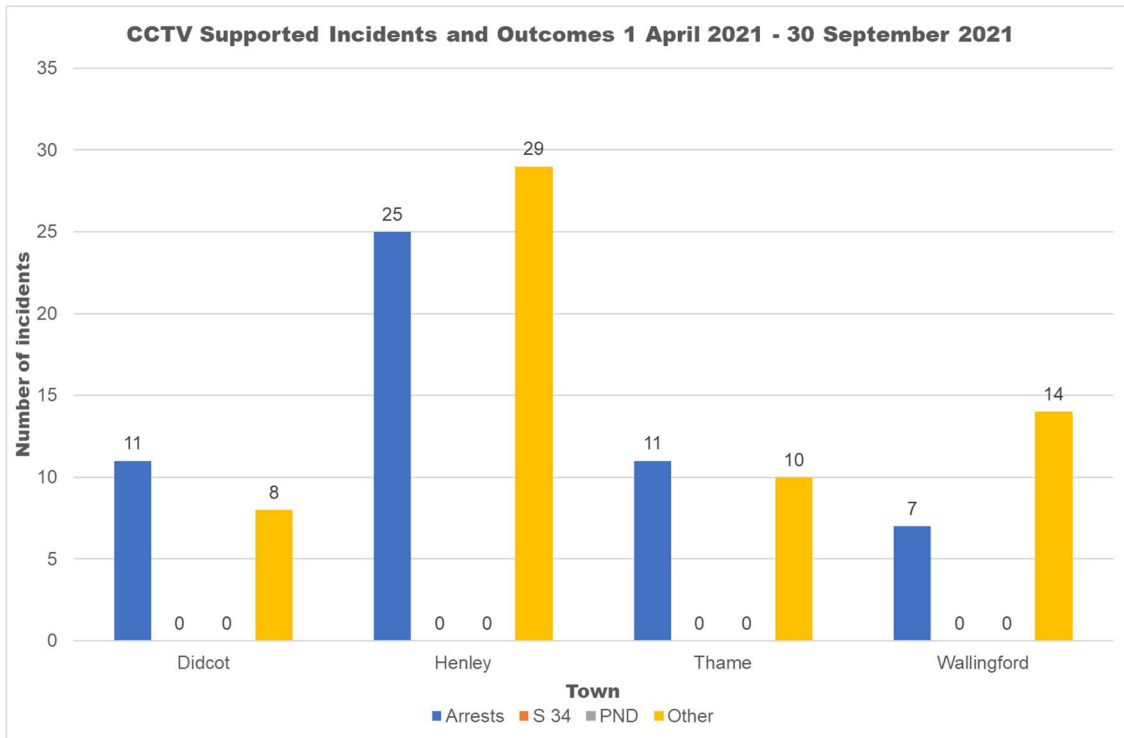
ARRESTS, SECTION 34S AND OTHER OUTCOMES

The chart at the top of page seven 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 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, actions designated 'other' usually means that the police either gave verbal advice or a non-recordable sanction.

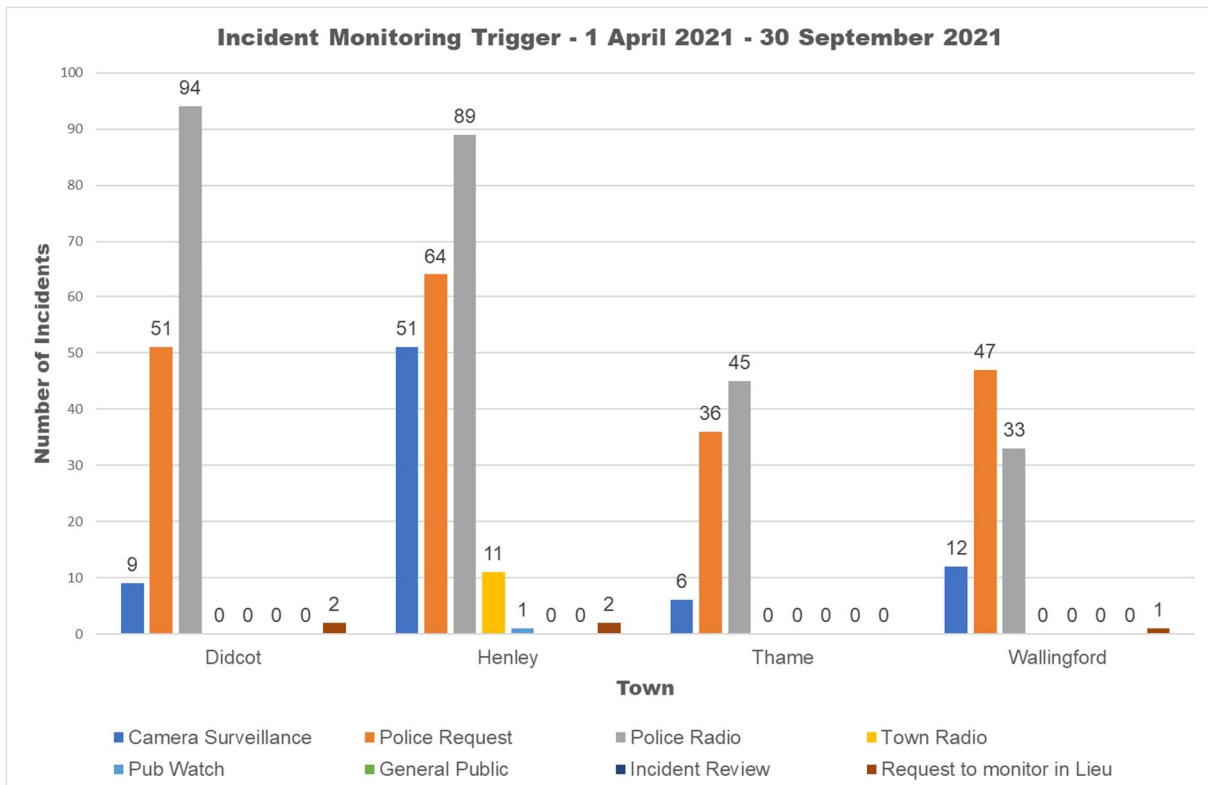
² A Section 34 allows the police to move someone from a specified area for a period of up to 48 hours if they believe the person poses a risk of anti-social related disorder.

³ A PND is the 'on the spot fine'



HOW CCTV MONITORING WAS INITIATED

The chart below 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.



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.

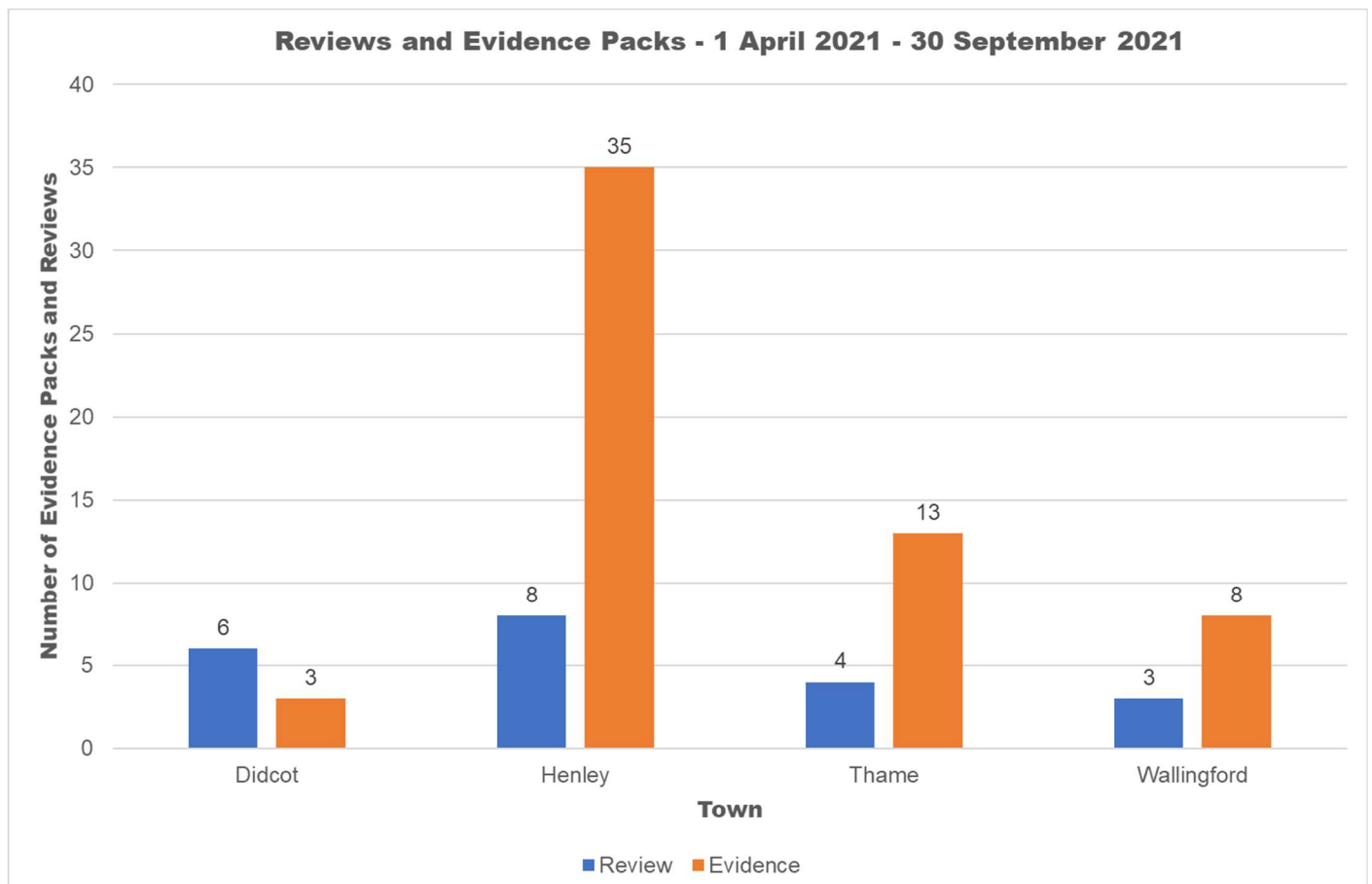
CCTV operators and the CCTV supervisor also respond to requests from members of the public and third parties under data protection legislation and subject access requests (SARs). The most common request is to examine car park or road cameras for evidence of 'non-stop road traffic collisions' in which the complainant's car has been damaged. Altogether we received three such requests during this half of the year. We also received two 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 below 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.

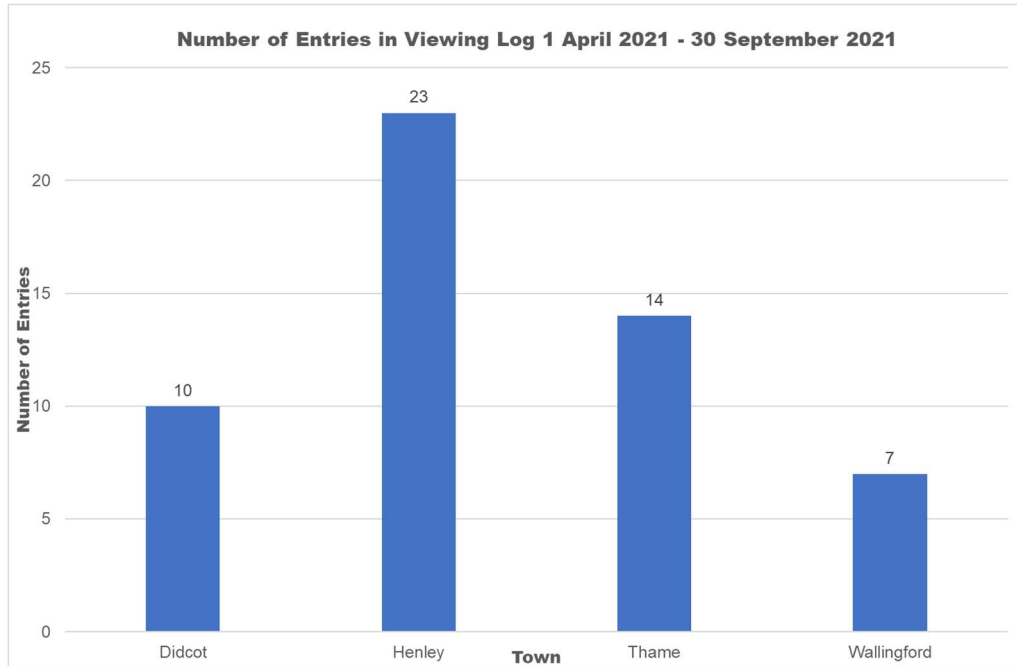
One of the greatest advantages of CCTV footage is in obtaining a guilty plea at the early interview stage. For many offences this early admission is due to the offence being captured clearly on camera and saves the expense of a full trial at either magistrates or crown court.



VIEWING LOG

During this period, we were 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 asked to view footage, these requests were carried out by our operators on their behalf. The following chart reflects the number of times this occurred between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021 across the four towns.

N.B. These visits 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 first half of 2021–22. They aim to demonstrate how our CCTV service helps to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

Didcot

From a description given earlier by the police, our operator noticed a man who was known to be involved in county drug lines. He was with another man, possibly in possession of drugs. Our operator alerted the police control centre and officers were dispatched. Both men were arrested in relation to drug offences.

Over the police radio, our operator heard of a man who had made off from police officers as they were trying to detain him. From the description given, our operator was able to monitor the area in which he was last seen and managed to pick him up on camera. Via the police control centre, our operator was able to guide officers to the man's location and he was subsequently detained.

Our operator heard over the radio of an altercation between a group of men and women. From the description given, our operator was able to locate the group and update officers as they were en-route. The attending officers were able to defuse the situation and send the parties on their separate ways with strong words of advice. Our operator was able to monitor the area to make such that those involved complied with this advice.

Henley-on-Thames

Our operator was alerted to a disturbance in the vicinity of a town centre pub. The incident soon became serious, degenerating into a wider scale disorder. Our operator was able to keep the police informed of developments as officers were en route. Three arrests were made at the scene.

Our operator noted the description of a young woman who was intoxicated and in considerable distress. Using multiple cameras, our operator was able to locate the woman and advise the police control centre. Officers arrived and took her to a place of safety.

Our operator alerted the police control centre to an incident involving an officer attempting to restrain an aggressive woman. The woman had previously been ejected from a town centre pub and had to be physically prevented from re-entering because of her intoxication level. Our operator was able to give running commentary to the police control centre as the officer requested back up. The woman was subsequently arrested.

Thame

The police control centre requested that our operator monitor for a man who was wanted in relation to a previous investigation. From the description given, our operator located a man getting onto a bus in the town centre. Having been given details of the bus, officers were able to stop the bus and the man was arrested.

It had been reported that a member of staff in a town centre store had been assaulted by a member of the public. From the description given, our operator was able to locate the man and noted that he got into a taxi which left the town. Our operator passed on this information to the police control centre, including details of the taxi's contact number which was clarified by using the 'zoom' feature on the camera.

The police control centre put out observation details for two girls, reported missing from a local school. From the descriptions given, our operator was able to locate the girls at a town centre café and officers were dispatched. The girls were given words of advice and returned to a place of safety.

Wallingford

Our operator heard via the police radio of a potentially serious assault that had occurred just outside the town centre. Two people were arrested at the scene, but officers were interested in other possible suspects who had fled. From descriptions given and the direction of travel, our operator was able to locate two men from reviewing CCTV footage. They then prepared an evidence pack to assist officers with further enquiries.

A man had been reported behaving suspiciously and the police urgently needed to speak with him. From details given, our operator was able to review camera footage and give officers in the town his last known position and direction of travel. The man was subsequently located and detained.

Reports had come into the police control centre of an unusual build up of traffic in the town centre. Our operator was able to locate the source of this build up as a fault in the sequencing of traffic lights. This was reported back to the police control centre who were able to take remedial action.

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