

# **CCTV Half Yearly Report**

## **Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford**

### **1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report provides information on how the district council's CCTV cameras<sup>1</sup> 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.

Due to staff changes and subsequent recruitment and vetting procedures, it is worth noting that for the majority of this period, the service was staffed by the equivalent of three full time equivalent (FTE) operators (rather than the normal four full time operators). Our high service standards were maintained but fewer operators meant that the control room could not be manned as often as normal and therefore fewer incidents were monitored/occurrences recorded. As an update, we have filled the remaining fourth operator post with the successful candidate currently going through the police vetting process.

#### **DATA SUMMARY**

In South Oxfordshire, CCTV operators supported 440 incidents during the second half of 2022-2023. The operators also produced 51 evidence packs for possible court proceedings, carried out 32 reviews of CCTV footage (a review is undertaken after a written request) and supported 39 arrests.

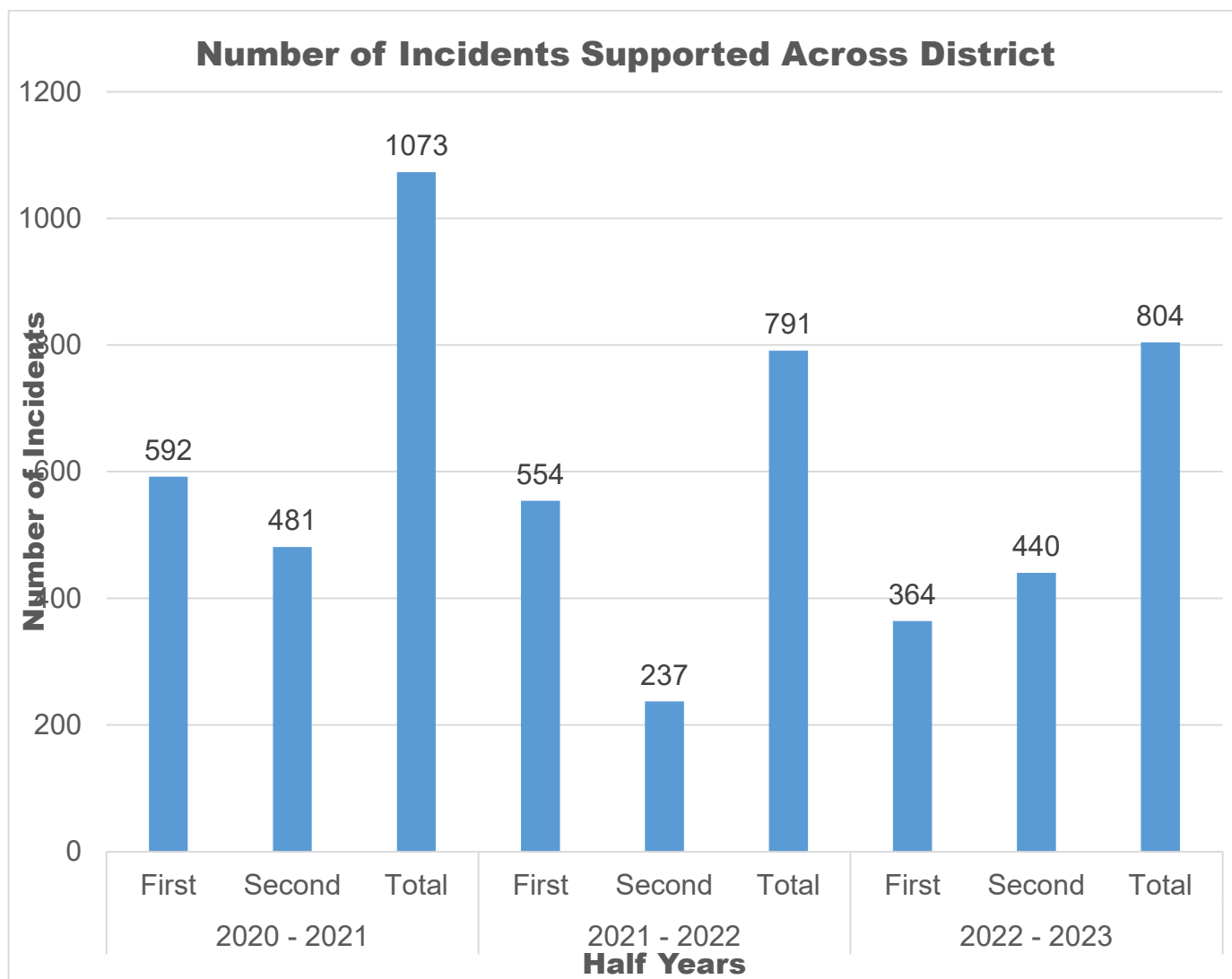
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<sup>1</sup> The report covers the district council cameras plus three which Henley Town Council installed in Mill Meadows as these are managed under the same scheme.

The following table displays the most common type of incident monitored for each town during the second half of 2022-2023, where CCTV was involved at some stage:

<b>MOST COMMONLY MONITORED INCIDENTS</b>				
	<b>Didcot</b>	<b>Henley</b>	<b>Thame</b>	<b>Wallingford</b>
1	Missing persons (27)	Drunkenness (14)	Missing persons (13)	Missing person (17)
2	Fear for Welfare (19)	Fear for welfare (12)	Anti-social behaviour (7)	Fear for welfare (14)
3	Anti-social behaviour (15)	Anti-social behaviour (9) Public order (9)	Drunk-in-charge (6)	Fighting/affray (8)

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



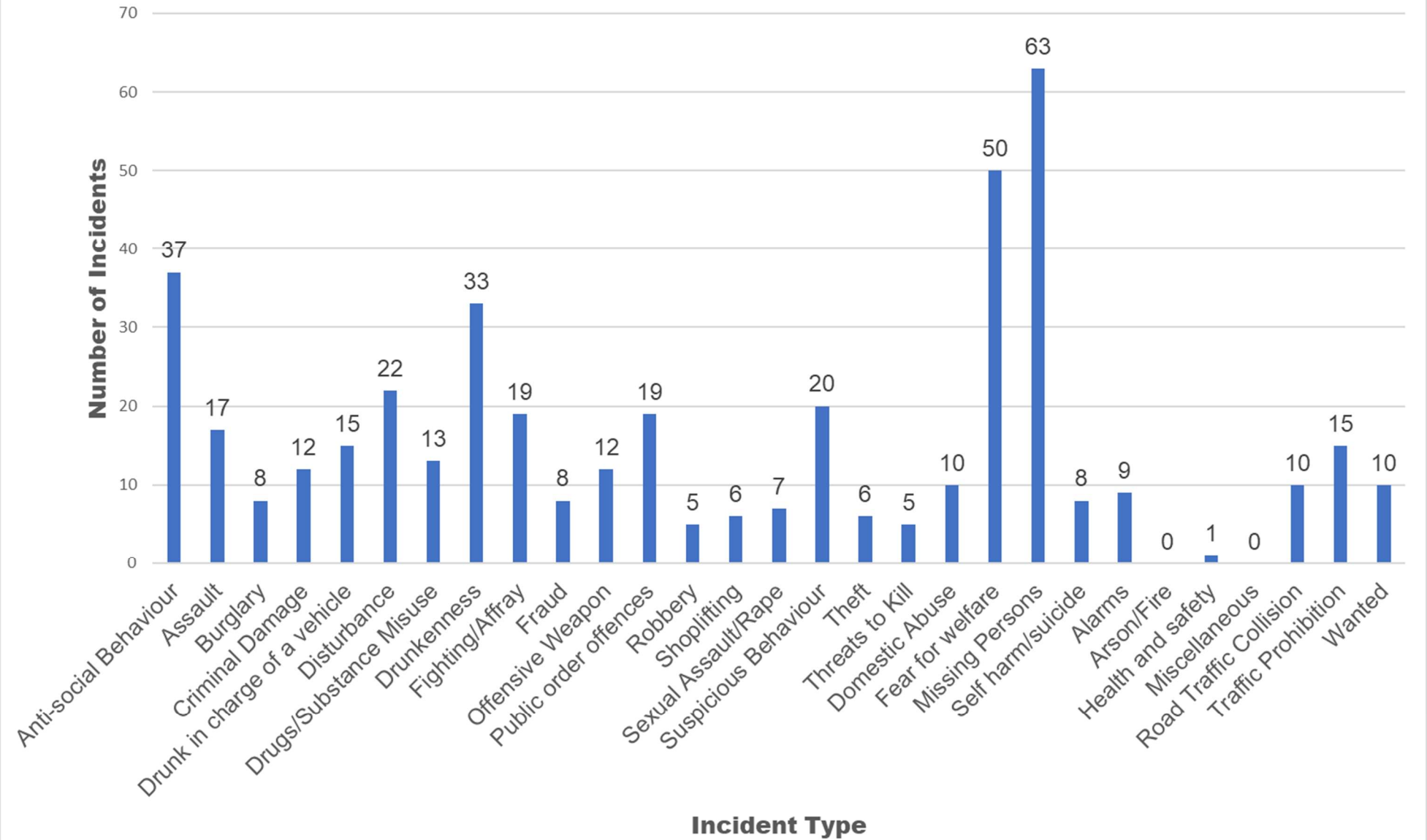
For further breakdown please see table below:

	<b>2020 - 2021</b>			<b>2021 - 2022</b>			<b>2022 - 2023</b>		
	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Total</b>
Didcot	198	157	355	156	148	304	126	146	272
Henley	209	183	392	218	89	307	69	113	182
Thame	97	78	195	87	58	145	76	87	163
Wallingford	171	110	151	93	49	142	93	94	187
<b>Total</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>1073</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>804</b>

## **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 2022 and 31 March 2023.

### Incidents by Type - 1 October 2022 - 31 March 2023

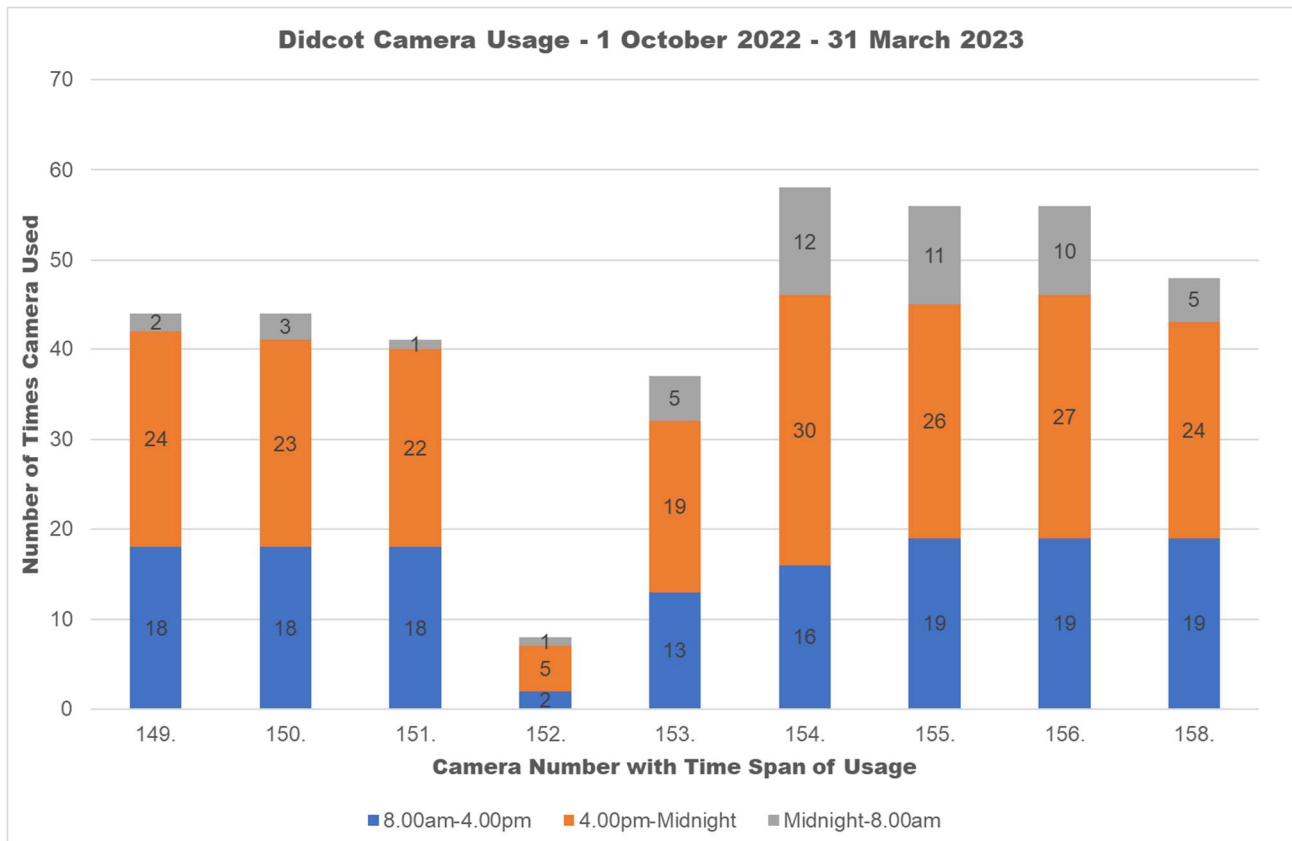


## CAMERA USAGE

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

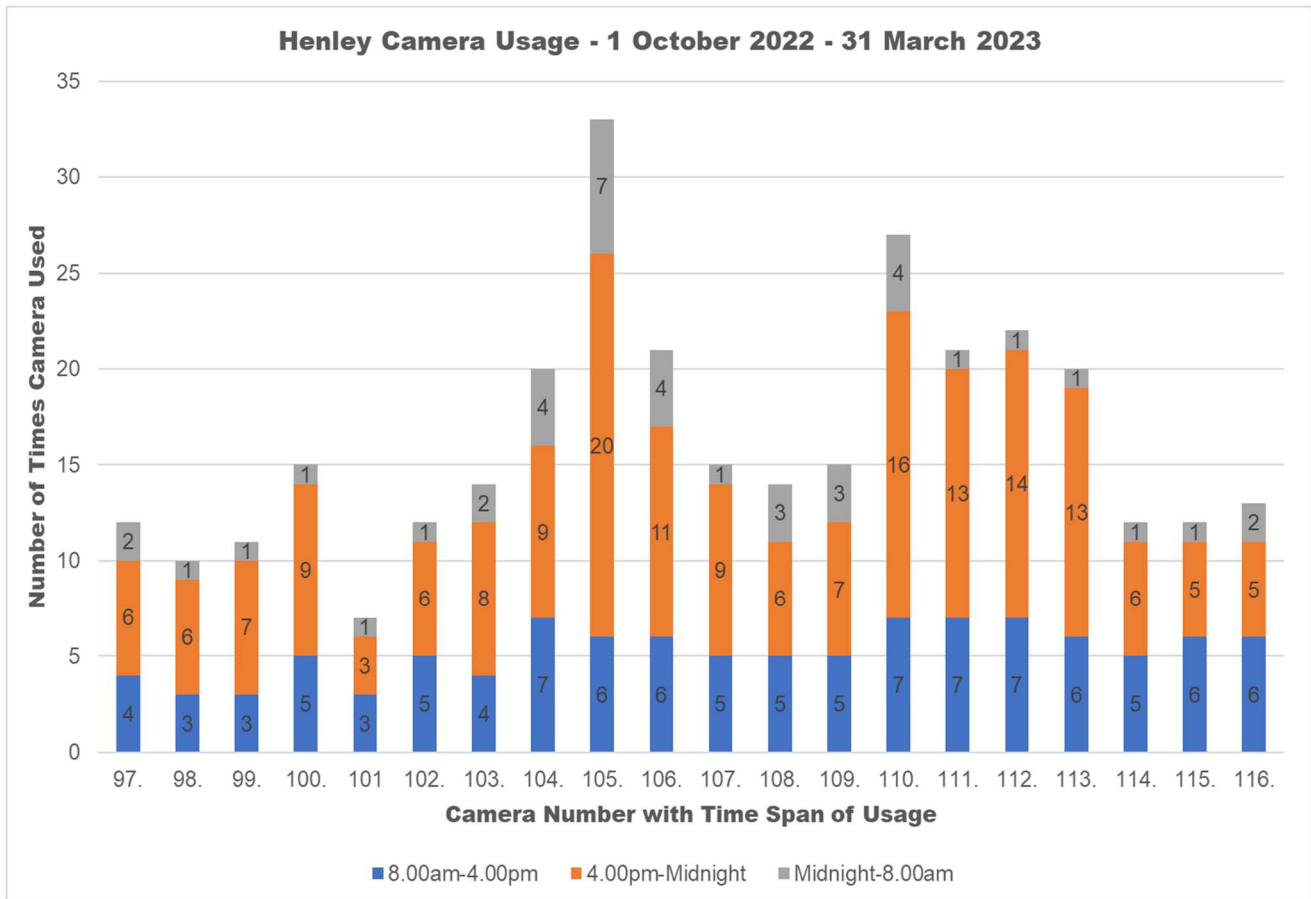
The number of times that each camera was used has been divided into three sections, covering a 24 hour period.

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

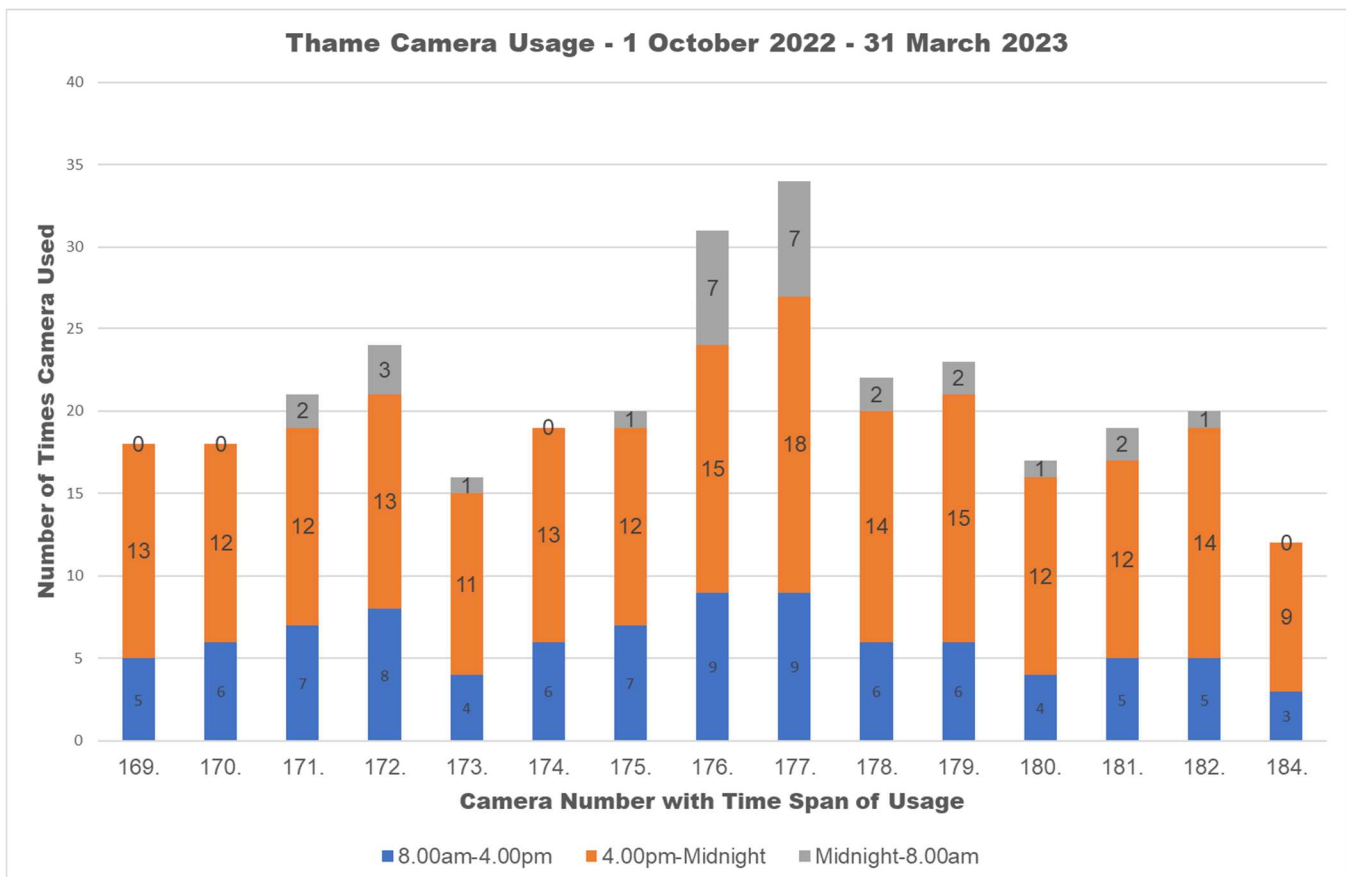


Camera 154 (which monitors the junction of Station Road and the Orchard centre) recorded the most usage. Cameras 155 and 156 are incremental in monitoring night-time economy and had the second highest usage.

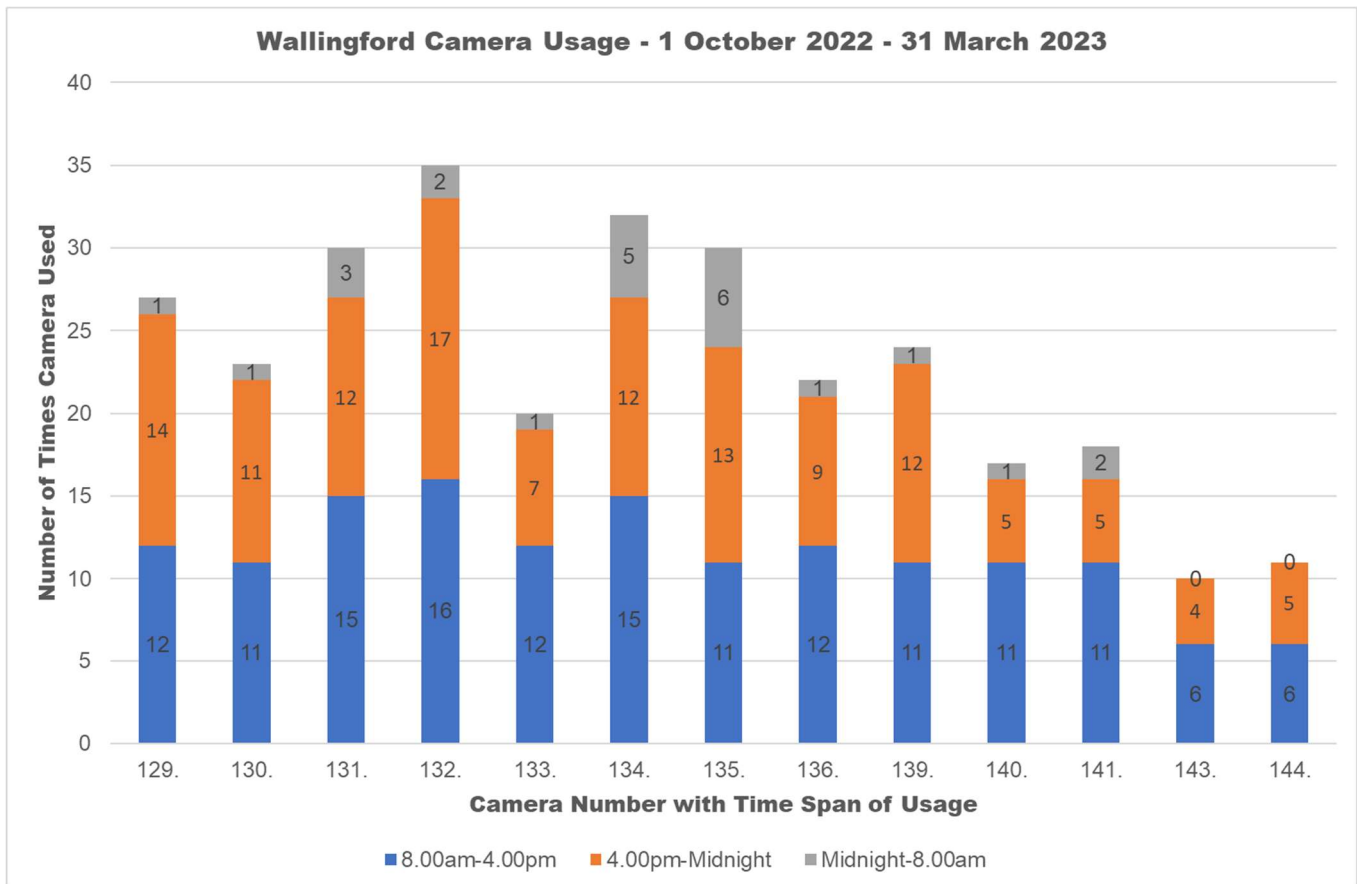
Camera 152 is currently obscured by foliage; action is being taken with Oxfordshire County Council to try and resolve this.



Camera 105 is situated in the town centre at the traffic lights serving the Duke St. - Hart St. – Bell St. junction and had the greatest number of occurrences attached to it; camera 110 which is on the junction of Duke Street and Greys road, had the second highest.



Camera 177 had the highest usage due to its use monitoring the night-time economy. Camera 176 was used second most frequently, as it also supports the monitoring of the night-time economy. Camera 172 on the High Street is instrumental in monitoring the town centre.



Camera 132 saw the highest usage across all cameras, due to its position on one of the main roads into town. Camera 134, which is used for both night-time and daytime monitoring, saw the second highest usage.

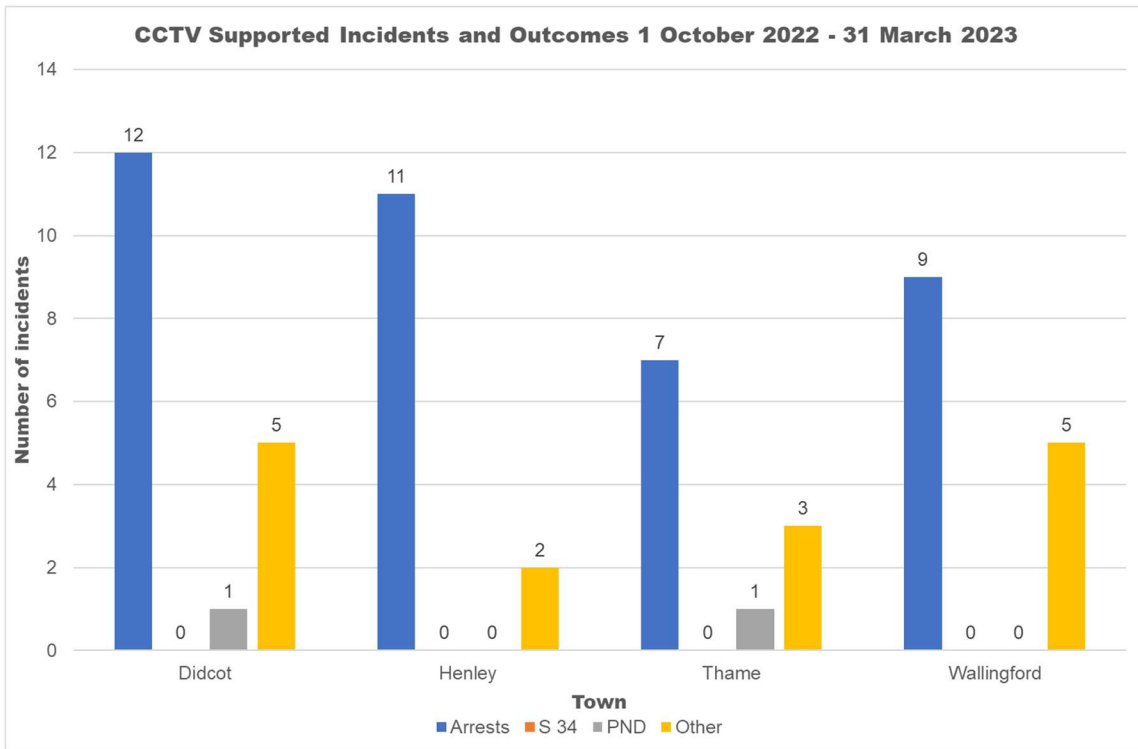
## ARRESTS, SECTION 34S AND OTHER OUTCOMES

The chart at the top of page eight 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 34<sup>2</sup> or a Penalty Notice for Disorder<sup>3</sup> (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 at the top of page seven, actions designated 'other' usually means that the police either gave verbal advice or a non-recordable sanction. Some of these included assisting door staff in removing intoxicated people from a premise and moving a group from an area where anti-social behaviour had occurred.

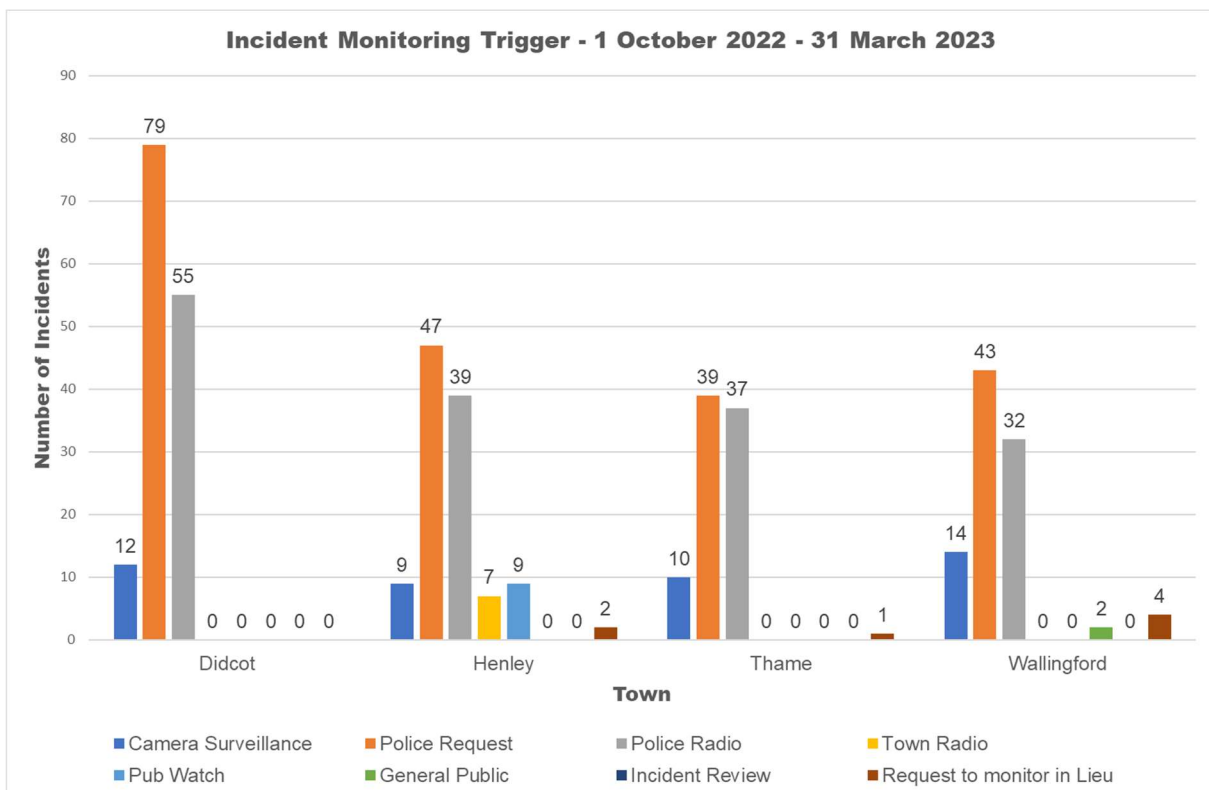
<sup>2</sup> A Section 34 allows the police to move someone from a specified area for a period of up to 48 hours if they believe the person poses a risk of anti-social related disorder.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

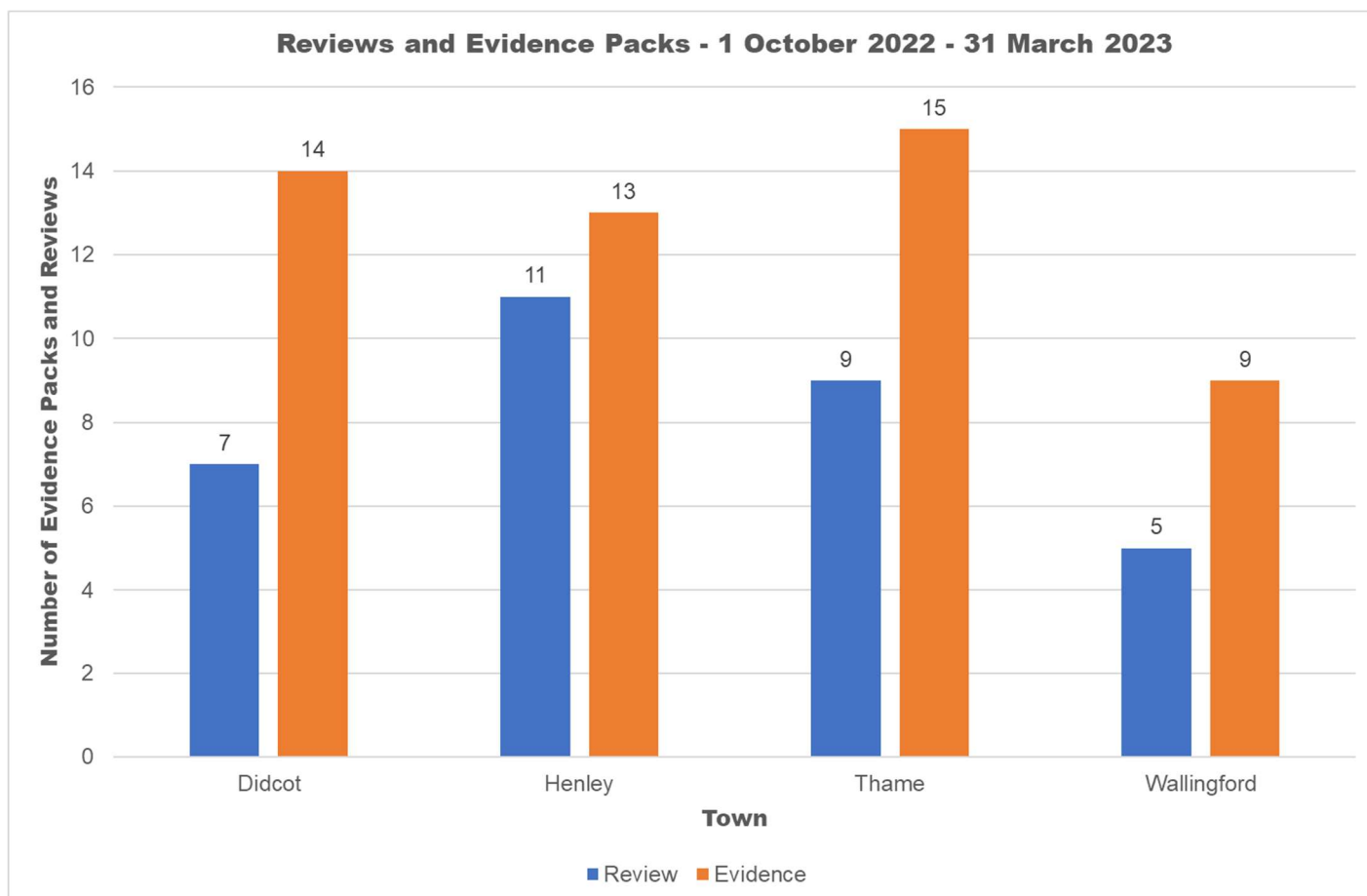
CCTV operators and the CCTV supervisor also respond to requests from members of the public and third parties under data protection legislation and subject access requests (SARs). The most common request is to examine car park or road cameras for evidence of 'non-stop road traffic collisions' in which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

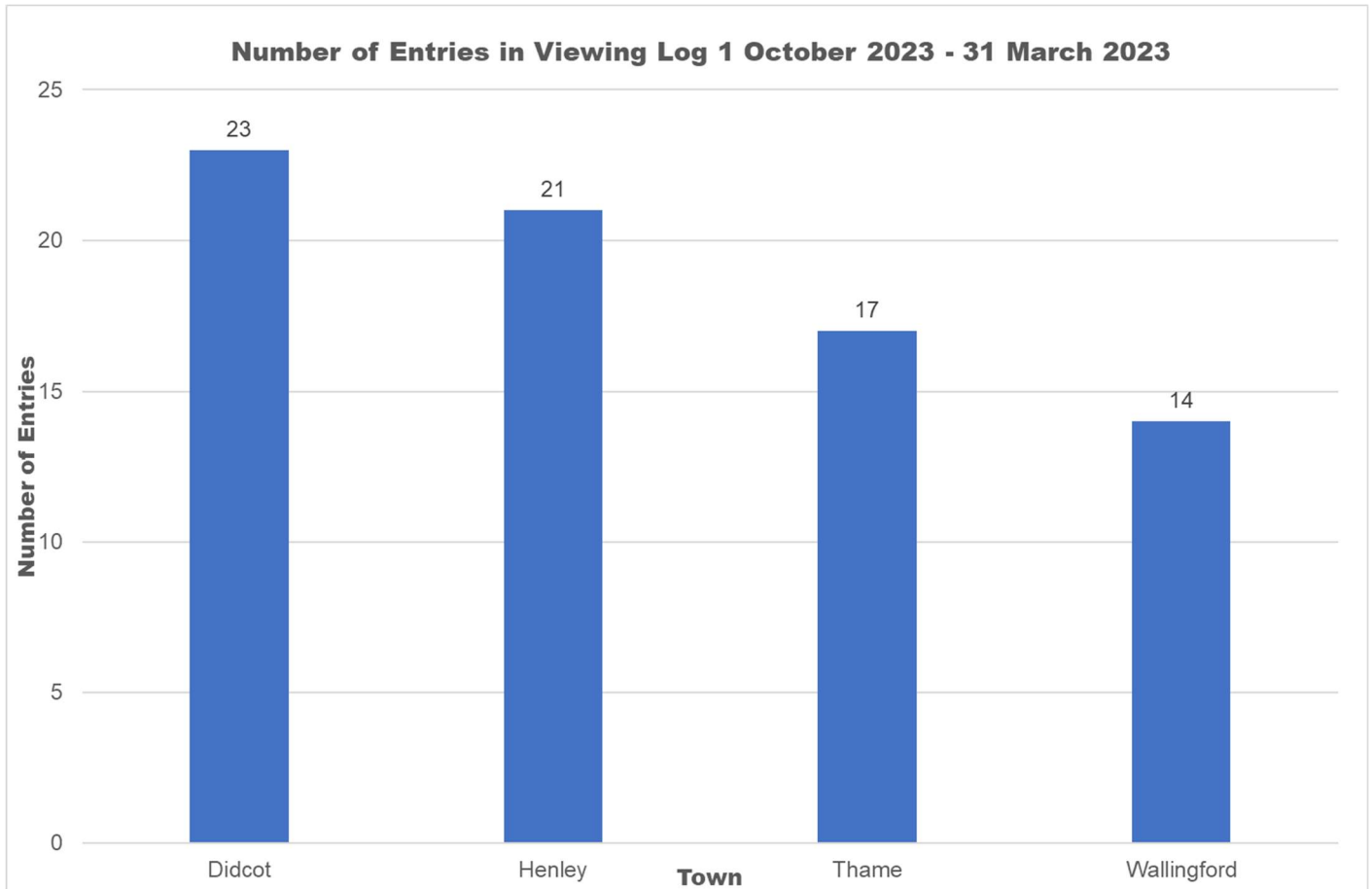
One of the greatest advantages of CCTV footage is in obtaining a guilty plea at the early interview stage. For many offences this early admission is due to the offence being captured clearly on camera and saves the expense of a full trial at either magistrates or crown court.



## VIEWING LOG

When authorised personnel (mainly police officers) visit the CCTV control room to view footage, the details are entered into a viewing log. The following chart reflects the number of times this occurred between 1 October 2022 and 31 March 2023 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 second half of 2022–23. They aim to demonstrate how our CCTV service helps to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

### **Didcot**

Over the police radio, our operator heard about a young person who had been reported as missing. Using the description that was given, our operator located the missing person. As a result, police officers were able to attend and return the person home safely.

A man had been reported to police for driving under the influence of alcohol. The CCTV operator on duty saw the associated vehicle being driven along the Broadway. They quickly informed police who stopped the vehicle and made an arrest.

Whilst monitoring the CCTV cameras, our operator observed a fight taking place in the town centre. They continued to monitor the incident whilst passing updates to the police control room. Officers quickly attended, separated those involved and dispersed the crowd.

### **Henley-on-Thames**

Our CCTV operator received a report that four men had smashed the perfume cabinet of a local store and made off with products. Our operator was able to locate and track those involved and kept the police informed of their whereabouts. As a result, four people were arrested.

Having heard over the police radio about two missing schoolchildren, the operator on shift conducted a search of the town centre using the cameras. They located two young people who matched the given descriptions and updated the police; officers were directed to the location and were able to confirm that they were the ones who had been reported as missing.

Whilst conducting a routine patrol of the town centre cameras, our operator noticed a man collapsed on the pavement. After quickly conducting a review of camera footage, they established it was likely a medical episode and alerted both South Central Ambulance Service and local police.

### **Thame**

During a daytime shift, an elderly woman had gone missing whilst out with her carers. Using the details of her last known location, our operator on duty completed a comprehensive fast-time camera footage review and were able to establish her direction of travel and provide a detailed clothing description to police. With this information, the woman was located minutes later and returned to a place of safety.

Whilst carrying out routine monitoring of the cameras, the CCTV operator noticed a vehicle driving erratically in the town. Concerned for the safety of the driver and other road users, they passed the vehicle details to the police control room. The car was subsequently stopped by officers and the driver was found to be over the legal limit for alcohol.

Having observed what appeared to be a drug deal taking place, our operator passed the information to the police and continued to monitor the situation. The two people involved in the

incident separated but the operator was able to keep track of both whilst providing live updates to the police. They directed officers to both individuals and one arrest was made.

## **Wallingford**

Via the police radio, our CCTV operator heard a report of a burglary in progress at a property in the town centre. They quickly located a person at the rear of the property and directed officers to the location. They continued to monitor the situation as the person was detained and arrested.

Whilst monitoring the night-time economy, our operator spotted a fight breaking out outside one of the pubs in town. They immediately informed the police control room and continued to monitor until police units arrived. Our operator then provided concise information to the officers on scene, enabling them to identify and arrest the main offenders.

The operator on shift observed a group of young people being anti-social and putting rubbish into a post box. No police units were available to attend at the time but our operator proactively contacted the premises next to the post box. As a result, they took steps to deter people from congregating and no further issues have been reported.

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