

# CCTV Half Yearly Report

## Didcot, Henley, Thame, and Wallingford

### 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024

#### 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 to share information and help publicise the positive outcomes of CCTV to residents and businesses.

#### DATA SUMMARY

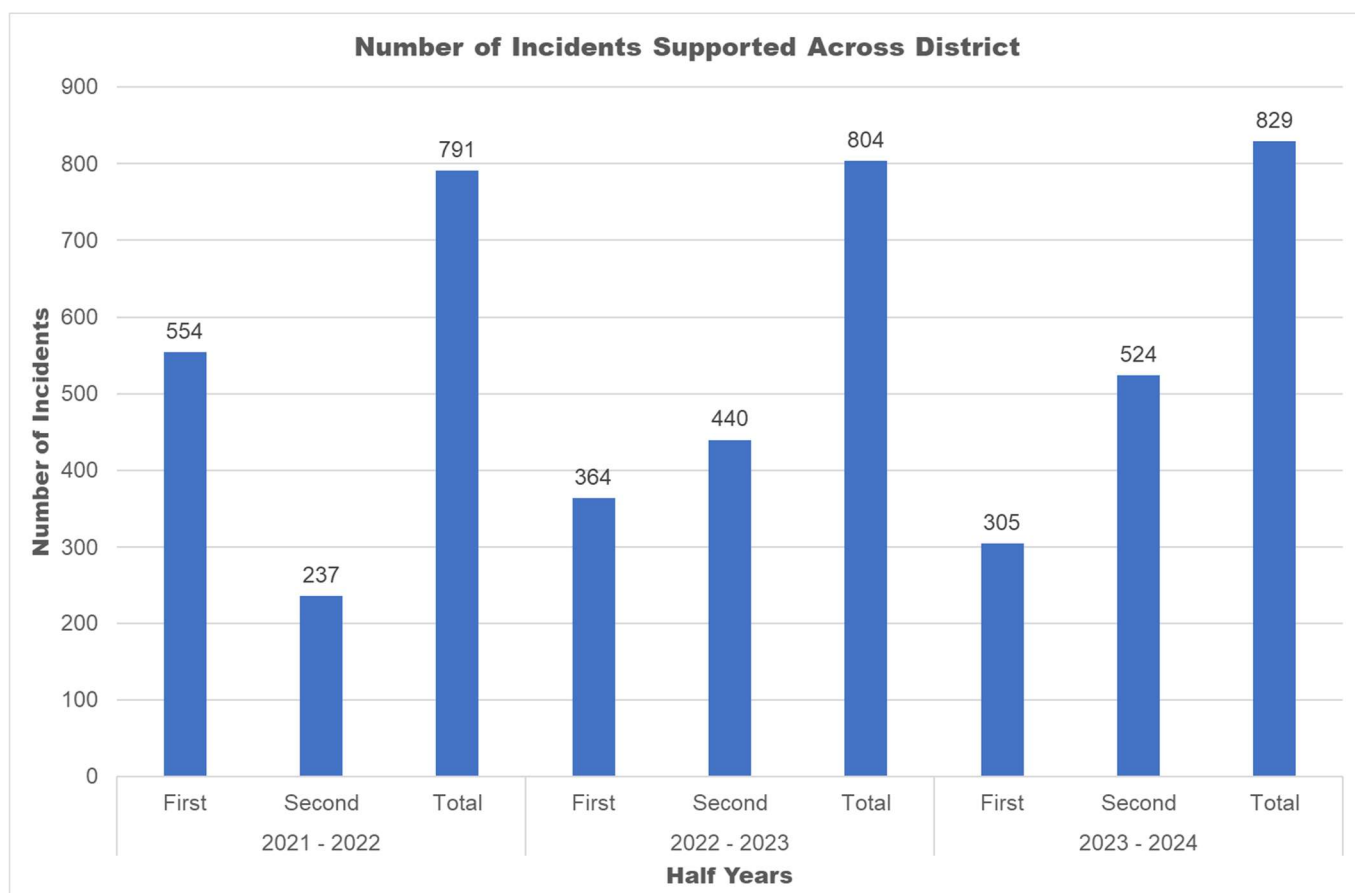
In South Oxfordshire, CCTV operators **supported 524 incidents** during the second half of 2023-2024, this is an **increase of 19 per cent** when compared to the same period of the previous year. The operators also **produced 31 evidence packs** for court proceedings and **supported 40 arrests**.

The following table displays the most common type of incident monitored for each town during the second half of 2023-2024, where CCTV was involved at some stage:

MOST COMMONLY MONITORED INCIDENTS				
	Didcot	Henley	Thame	Wallingford
1	Missing persons (21)	Shoplifting (21)	Missing persons (19)	Drunkenness (12)
2	Fear for Welfare (21)	Fear for welfare (20)	Anti-social behaviour (6)	Theft (8)
3	Assault (11)	Anti-social behaviour (14)	Theft (6)	Fighting/affray (8)

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



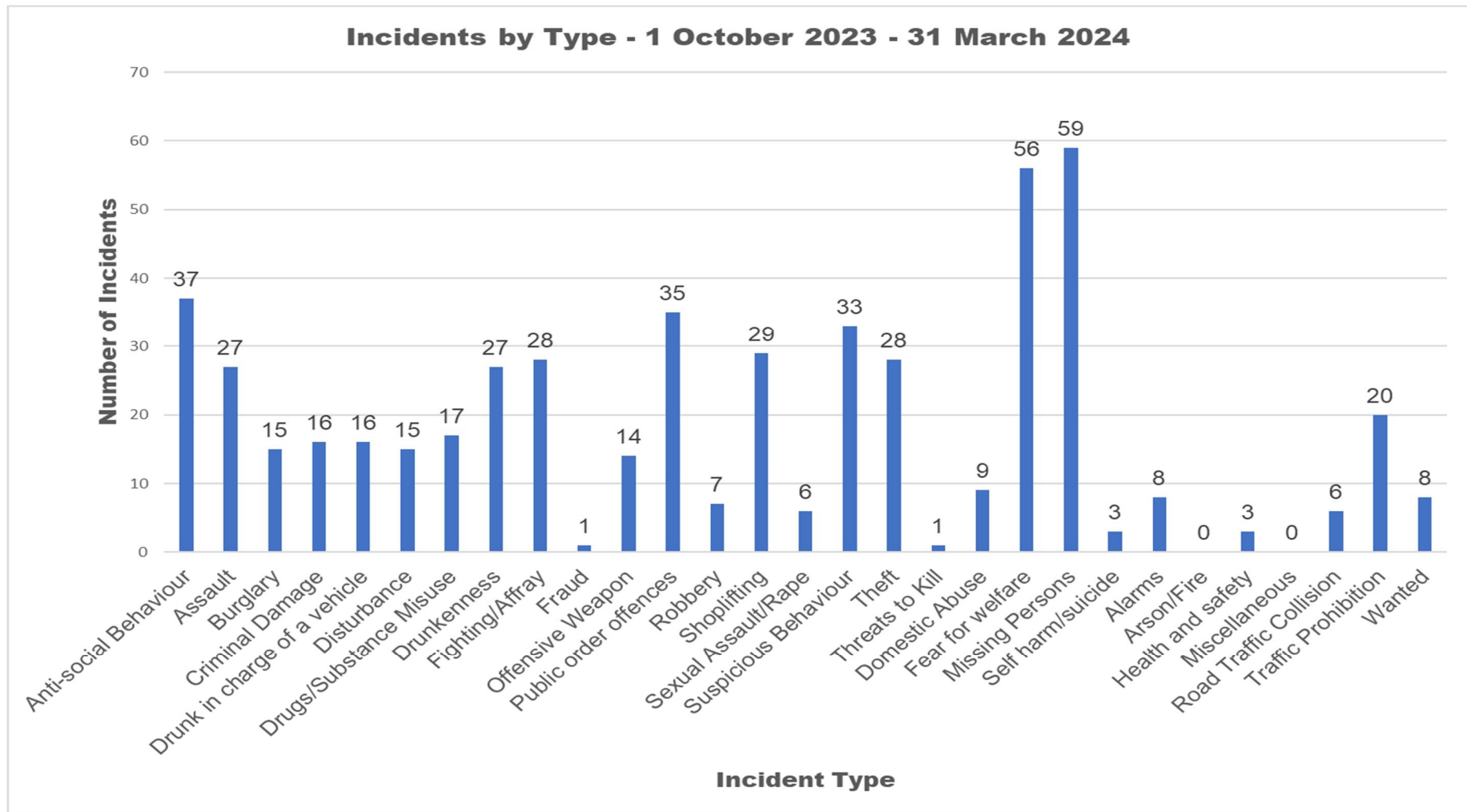
As you can see from the graph, the number of monitored incidents has increased compared to the same period in the previous year. It is worth noting that the CCTV team has recently recruited a new team member, increasing operational capability. This is likely to result in an increase to the half yearly figures going forward, enabling our service to provide comprehensive support to the police and assist in protecting the wider public.

For a breakdown of monitored incidents by town please see the table below:

	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total
<b>Didcot</b>	156	148	304	126	146	272	87	151	238
<b>Henley</b>	218	89	307	69	113	182	82	181	263
<b>Thame</b>	87	58	145	76	87	163	63	88	151
<b>Wallingford</b>	93	49	142	93	94	187	73	104	177
<b>Total</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>829</b>

## TYPE AND NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

The chart below shows the amount and type of incidents the CCTV operators have monitored and supported across all four towns, between 1 October 2023 and 31 March 2024.

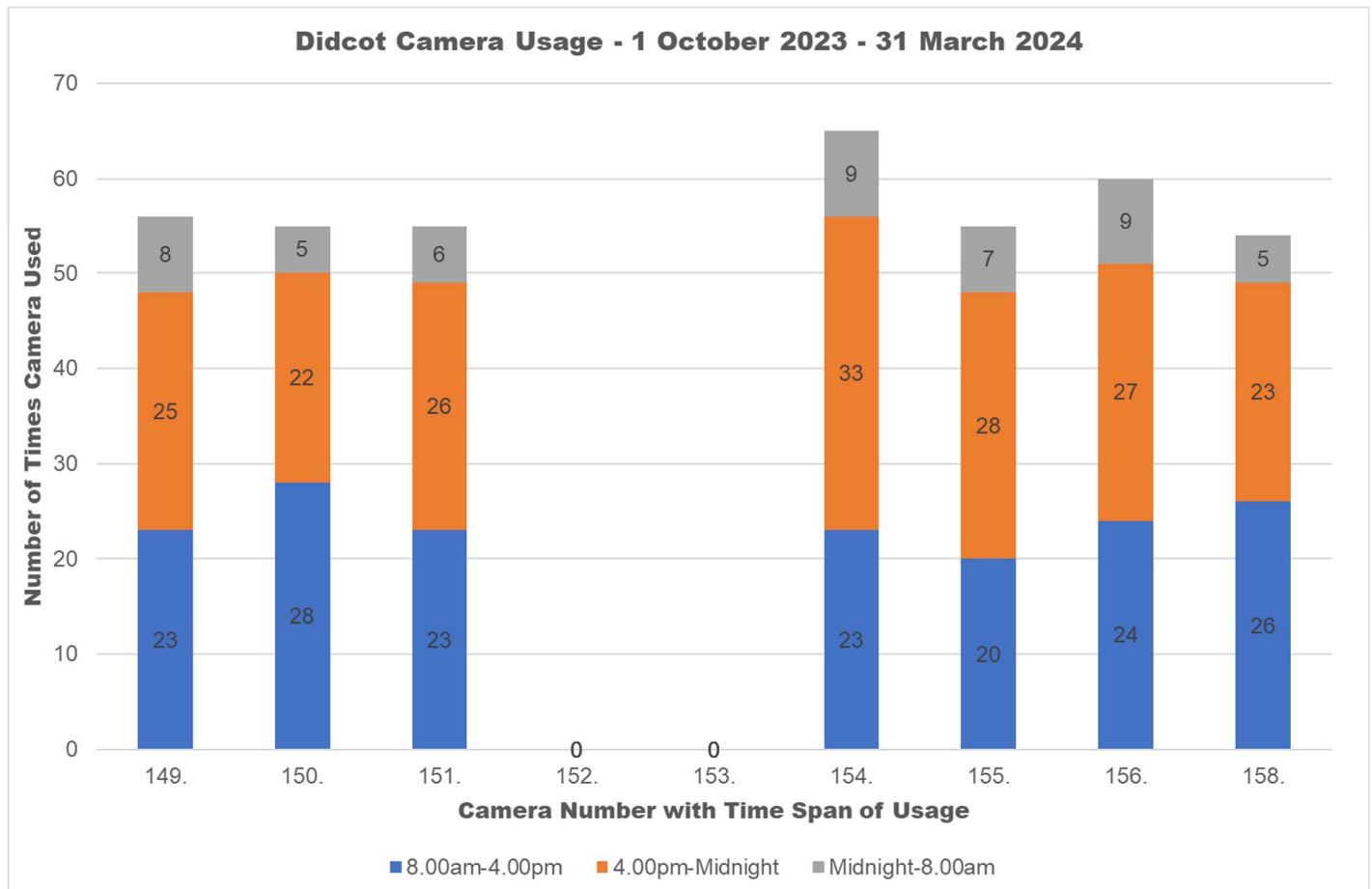


## CAMERA USAGE

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.

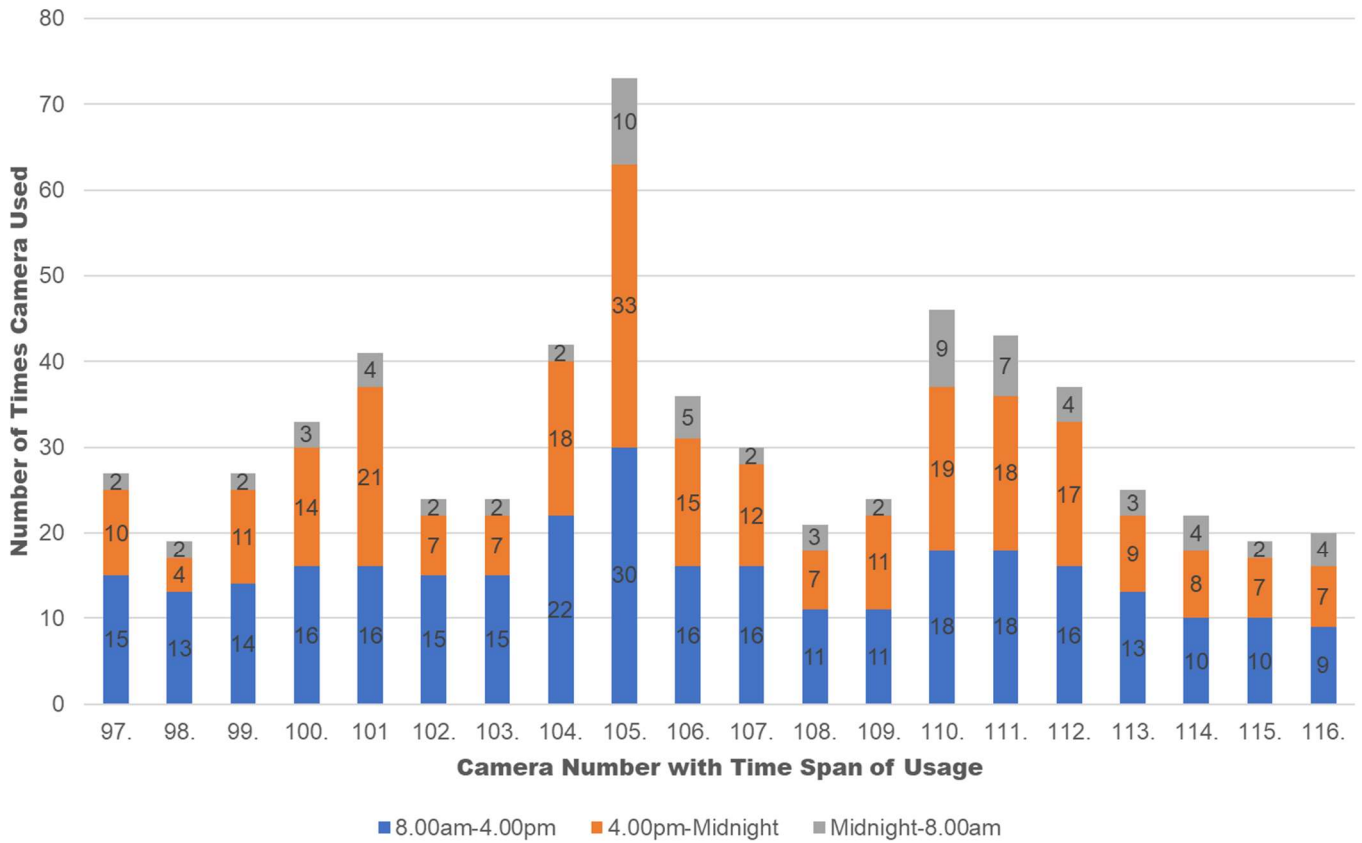
It is worth noting that for the period midnight to 8am, most of the camera usage occurred between midnight and 4am.



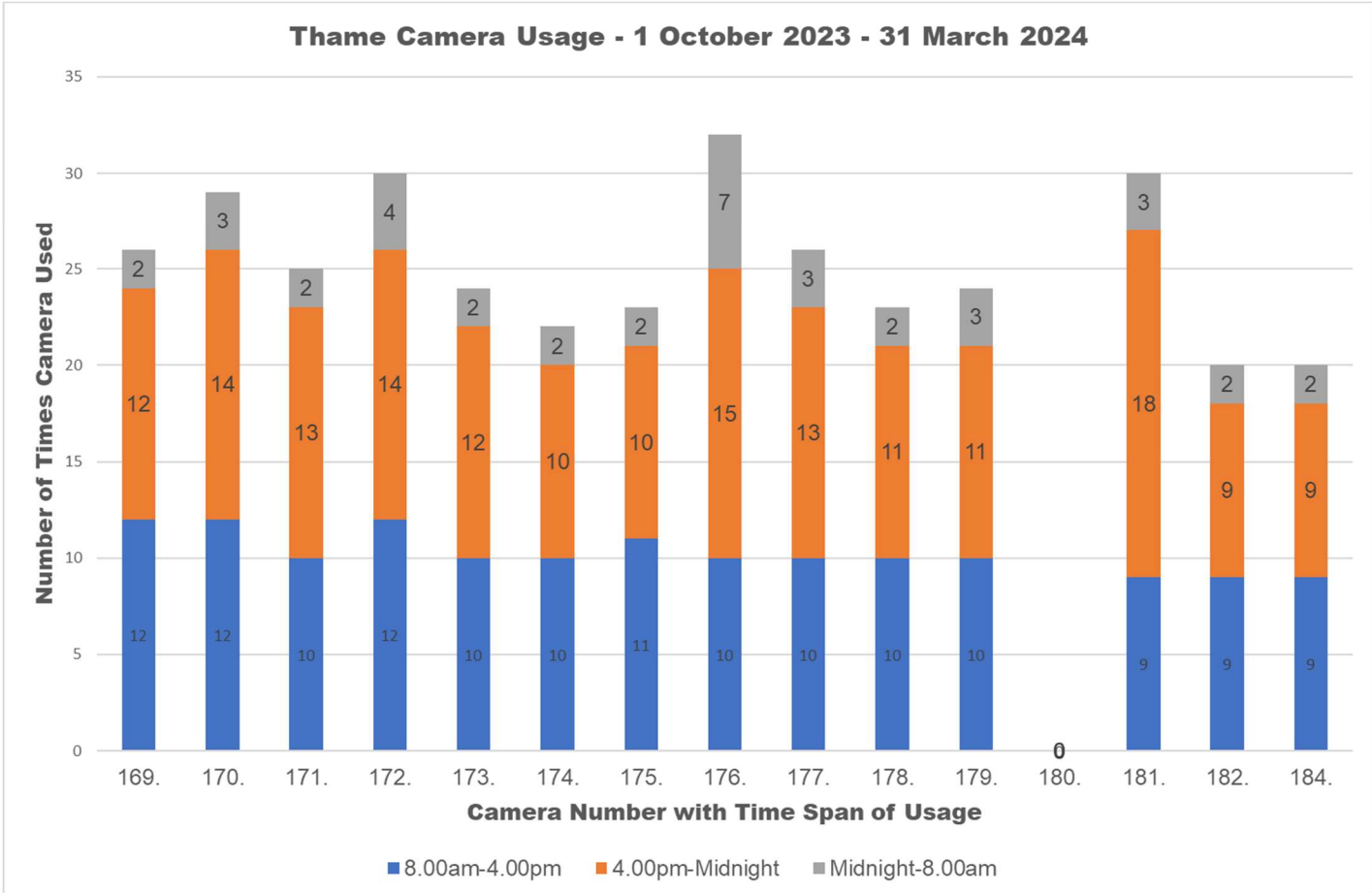
Cameras 154 (which monitors the junction of Station Road and the Orchard centre) and camera 156 (often used to monitor night-time economy) recorded the highest usage.

It is worth noting that camera 152 was not replaced after the storm damage due to its outlook being totally obscured by a tree (this camera will be moved to a nearby location as part of the upgrade project). Camera 153 was non operational during this period as following the storm, it could not be brought back online because of a major power issue. This has now been resolved.

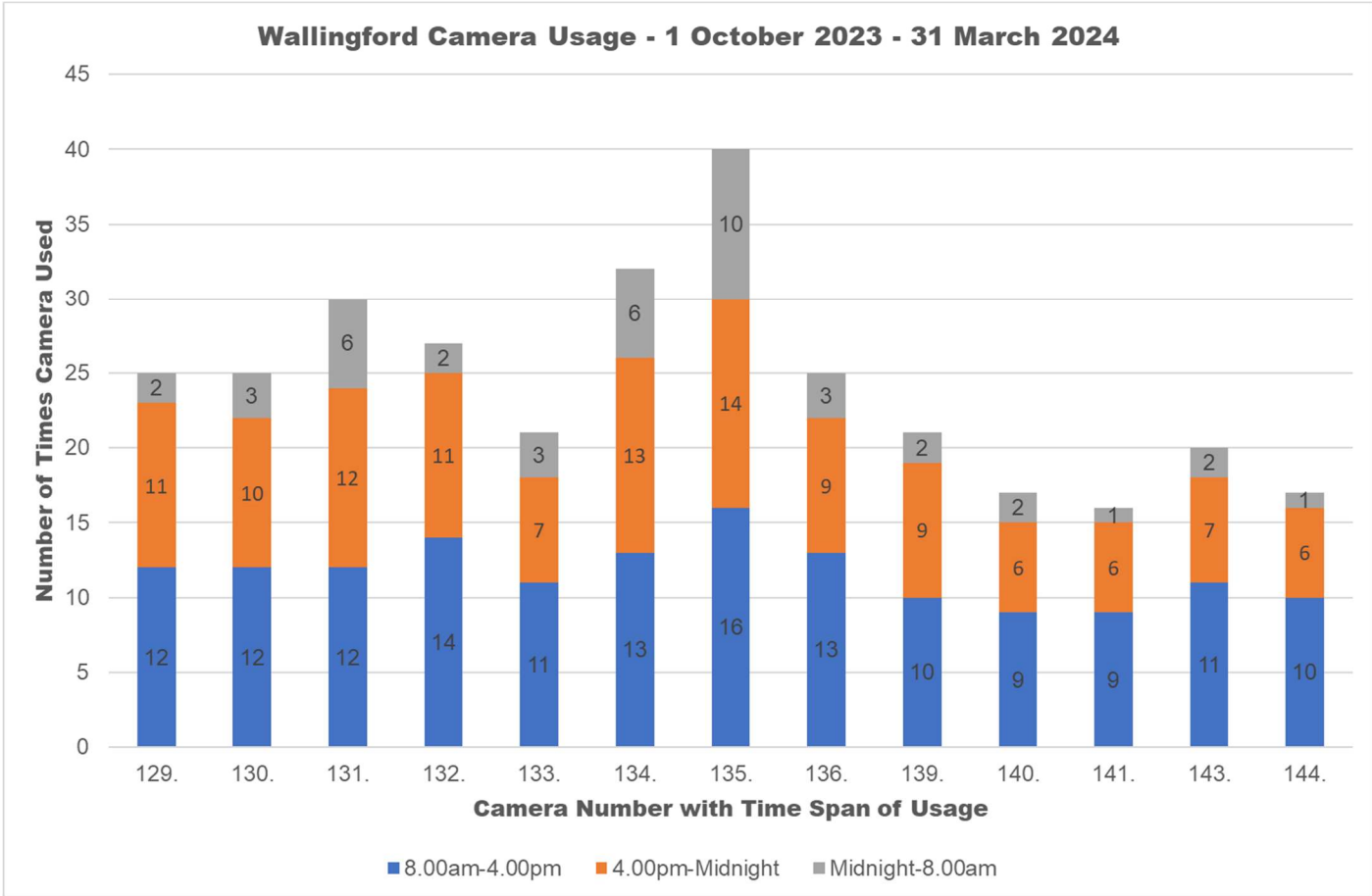
### Henley Camera Usage - 1 October 2023 - 31 March 2024



Camera 105 is situated in the town centre at the traffic lights serving the Duke St. – Hart St. – Bell St. junction and has the greatest number of occurrences attached to it; it is used for both daytime and nighttime economy.



In Thame, camera 176 on the High Street was used for the most occurrences; it covers the Town Hall and bus stops as well as being used to monitor the nighttime economy. Camera 172, which is used to monitor the High Street and several main bus stops, saw the second highest use. Camera 180 suffered an irreparable fault last year and is in the process of being replaced.

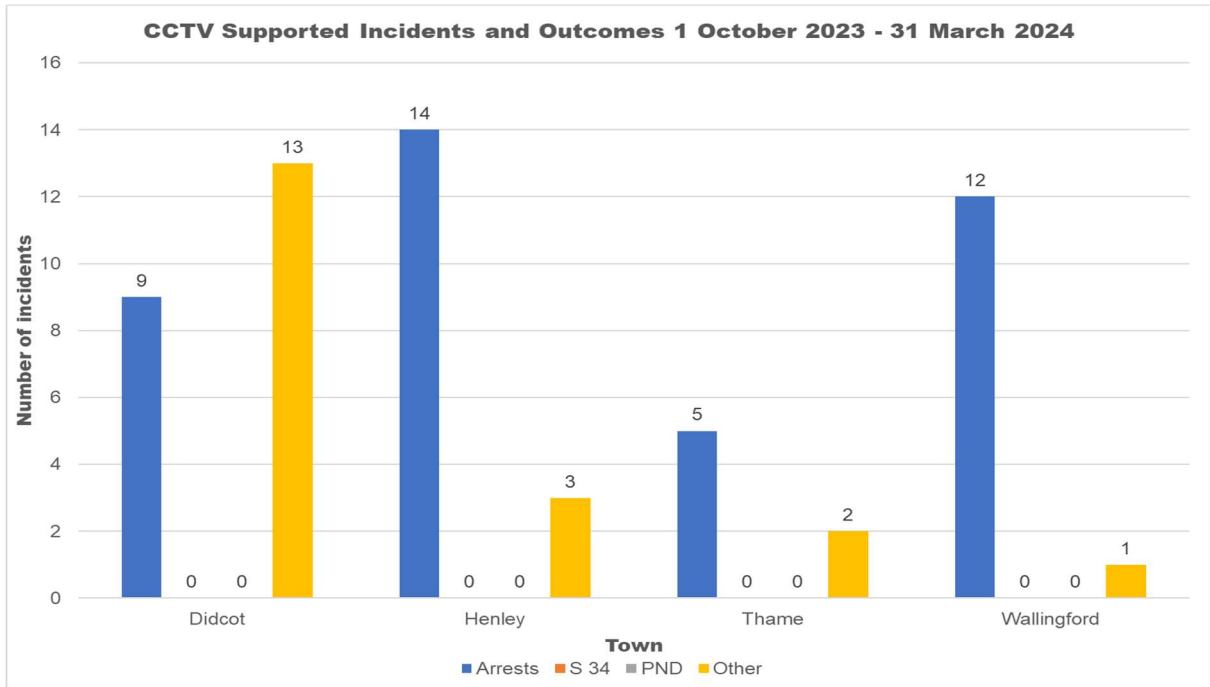


Camera 135, which is used for both nighttime and daytime monitoring, along with camera 134, saw the highest usage. Both are situated in the Marketplace.

### ARRESTS, SECTION 34S, AND OTHER OUTCOMES

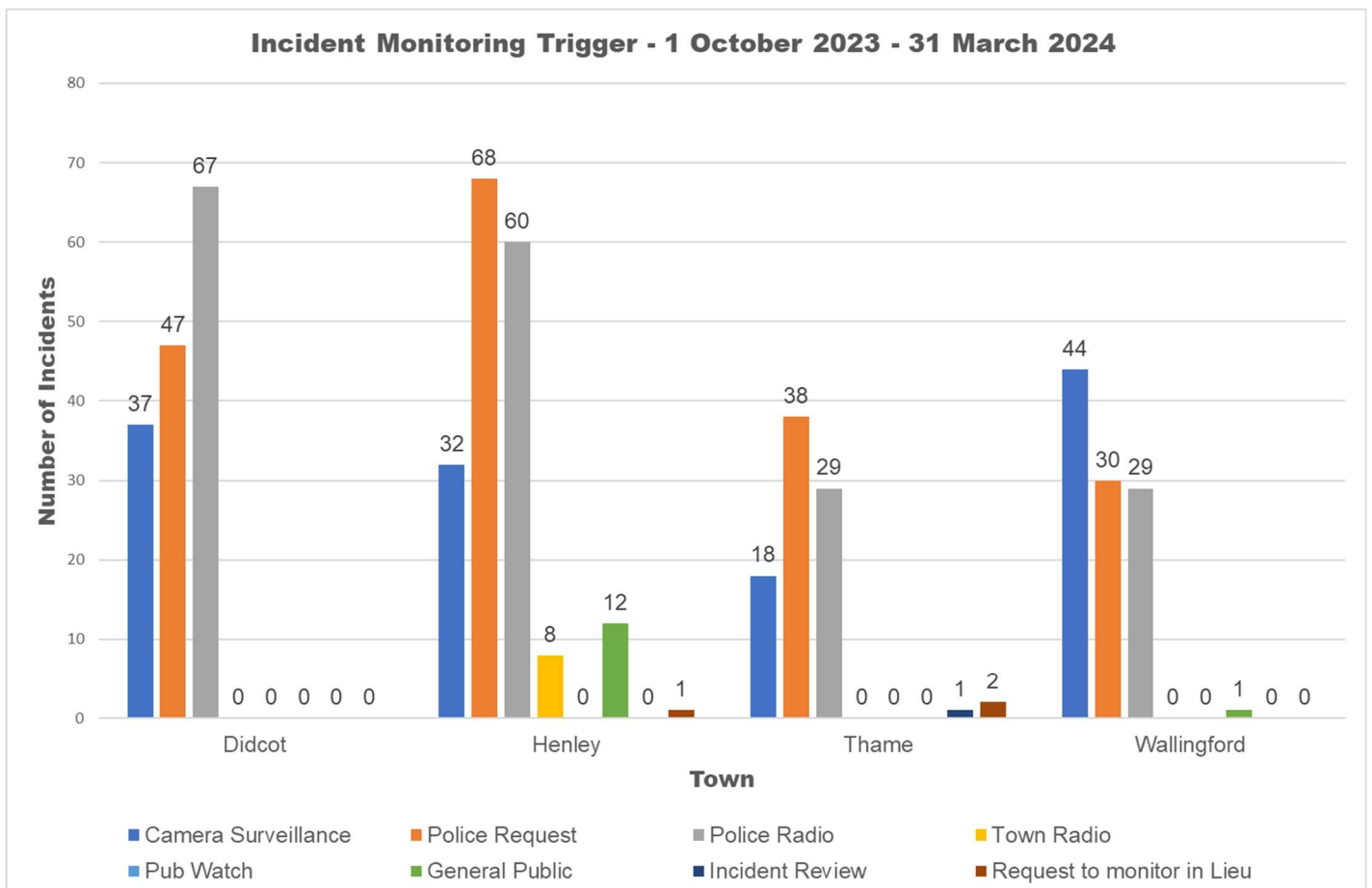
The chart at the top of page eight shows the outcomes the CCTV operators supported while involved in monitoring an incident. The police use their discretion on how an incident is resolved based on experience, the gravity of the offence, the resources that are available to them at that time and so on. While we cannot always be certain whether CCTV was solely instrumental in an arrest or the serving of a Section 34 or a Penalty Notice for Disorder (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.



## 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).





## 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 where they remain whilst not being actively moved by an operator. These positions are agreed with the police as covering those areas that are most likely to experience community safety issues.

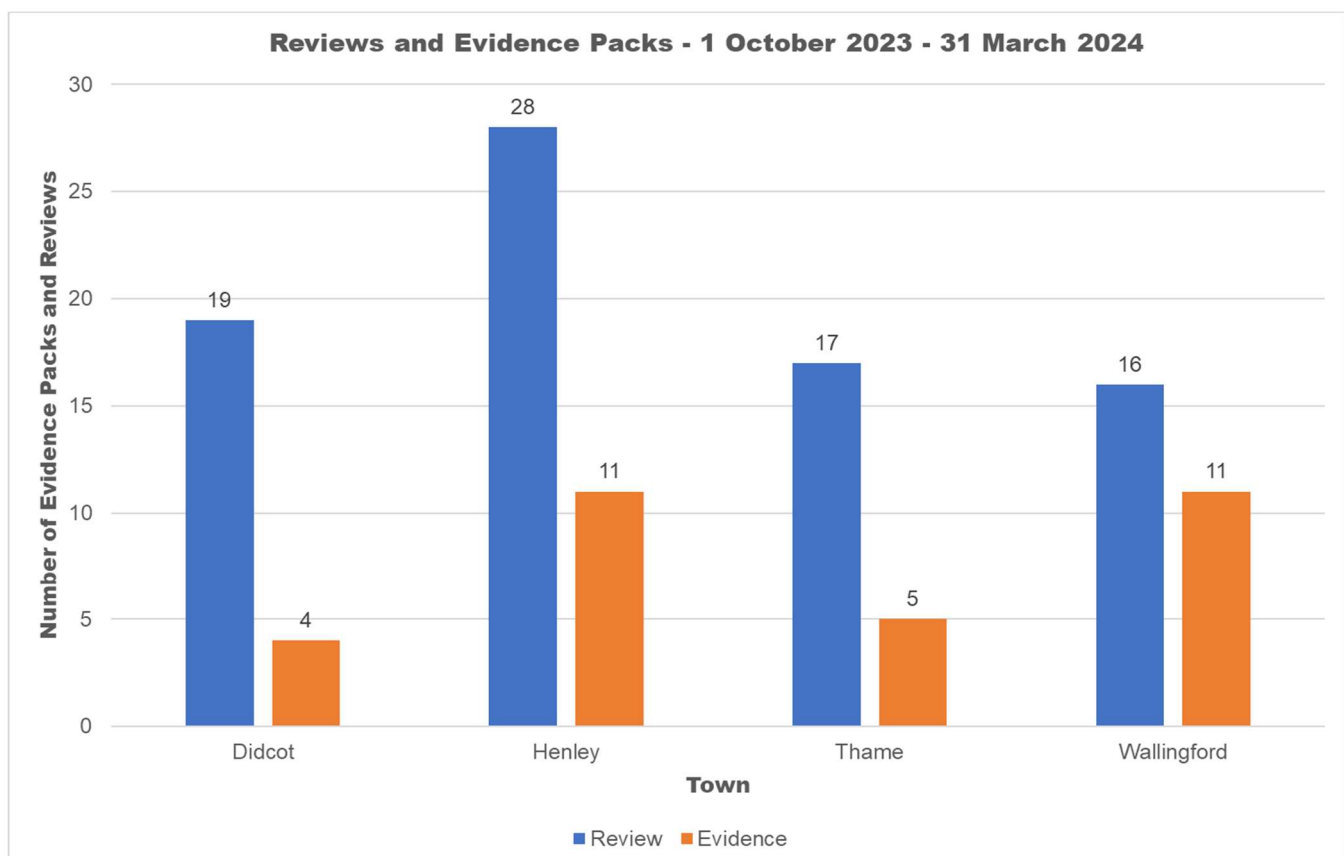
CCTV operators and the CCTV supervisor also respond to requests from members of the public and third parties under data protection legislation and subject access requests (SARs). The most common request is to examine car park or road cameras for evidence of 'non-stop road traffic collisions' in which the complainant's car has been damaged. Altogether we received 19 such requests during this half of the year, we were able to supply footage of specific incidents, caught on camera. Several others were passed to the police and footage provided as evidence.

The chart below shows the number of evidence packs the CCTV operators put together and the number of evidence reviews they undertook, following receipt of formal written requests.

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 copy for evidential use.

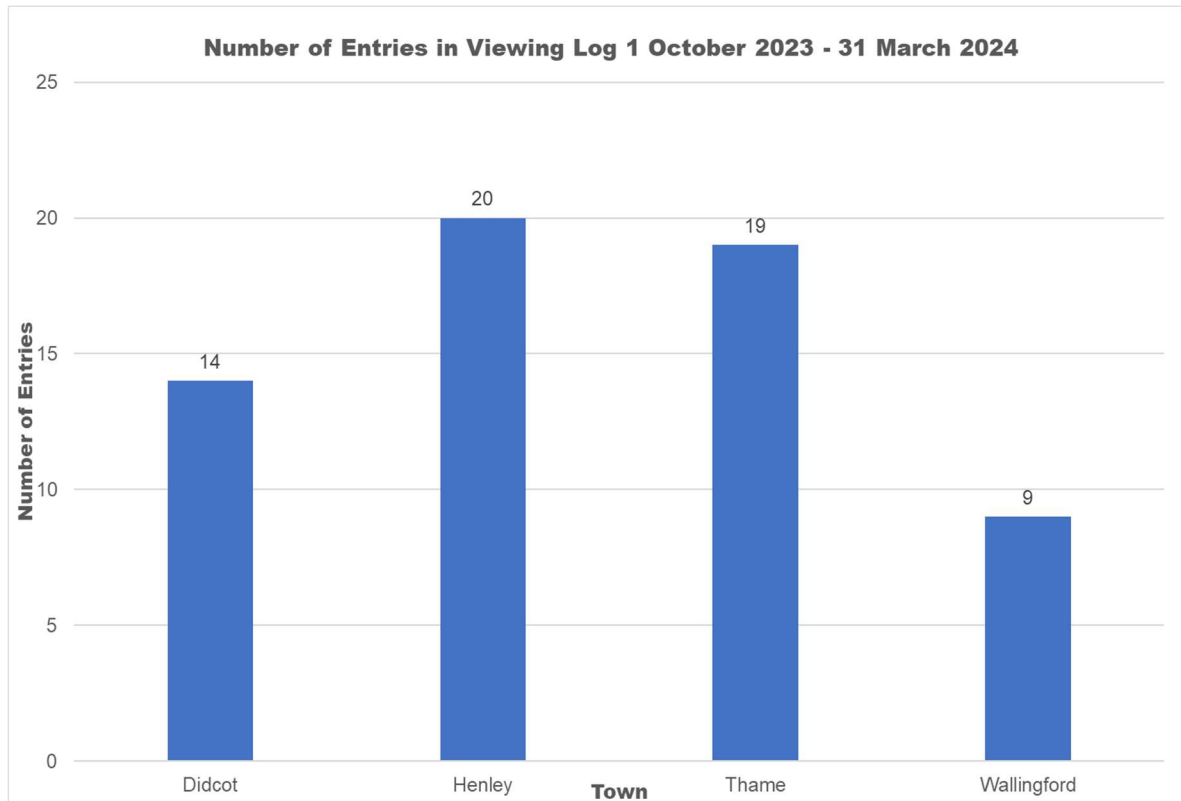
One of the greatest advantages of CCTV footage is in obtaining a guilty plea at the early interview stage. For many offences, this early admission is due to the offence being captured clearly on camera and saves the expense of a full trial at either magistrates or crown court.



## VIEWING LOG

When authorised personnel (most often police officers) visit the CCTV control room to view footage, the details are entered into a viewing log. The chart below reflects the number of times this occurred between 1 October 2023 and 31 March 2024 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 2023–24. They aim to demonstrate how our CCTV service helps to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

### Didcot

One evening, our operator conducted a quick time review of CCTV footage after police had received a report that three teenagers had been chased by an older man. They were able to confirm the incident and obtain a detailed description of the offender. They then tracked the man in question and gave a direction of travel to police who quickly located him. He was subsequently arrested for an assault on a lone woman.

The police received a report of a person being seen with a firearm in the town and passed the description to our CCTV team. Using this information, they spotted a group of young people and quickly established that they were in fact playing with toy BB guns. The operator informed the police, and the attending officers gave words of advice to the children.

Whilst on shift, our operator spotted several men taking what appeared to be drugs before getting into vehicles with several passengers inside. This information was passed to the police and officers were dispatched.

## **Henley-on-Thames**

At the beginning of February, a local business informed our CCTV team about a prolific shoplifter who had been targeting their shop. By working with the store, the team was able to work out likely times and days when the offender would next attend. By working proactively, an operator spotted the man entering the store and then leaving again, within which time a theft had been committed. Our team alerted the police and after a short pursuit, the man was arrested.

In January, Henley was subject to severe flooding and several roads were closed due to safety concerns. Our team proactively monitored the situation and kept the relevant authorities updated. Whilst monitoring one of the road closures, an operator observed numerous vehicles ignoring the signage and driving into flood water, putting themselves and others at risk. They informed the police, who attended and adjusted the closure to prevent further risk.

The police passed details to the CCTV control room of a vehicle that they suspected to be using cloned registration plates and had failed to stop when instructed to do so by officers earlier that day. An operator on shift sighted this vehicle driving through Henley and passed the information to police. This enabled units to get ahead of the vehicle and safely stop it. One arrest was made.

## **Thame**

During an afternoon shift, our operator on duty was made aware of two separate robberies; one was in Henley and other in Thame and both had targeted vulnerable women. The operator conducted a review of the relevant cameras, in the hope of establishing a link between the offences. Through some excellent work, they located a vehicle in the location of both offences, as well as the victim and offender in Thame. Using this information, police were able to determine a suspect and subsequently made an arrest.

Whilst conducting a routine camera patrol, the operator on shift observed a woman who appeared to be very unsteady on her feet. Conducting a quick review, the operator established that they had just left a licensed premises. The woman proceeded to get into a vehicle and drive off. Further monitoring by our operator showed the standard of driving to be poor so they informed the police. Officers stopped the vehicle and arrested the woman for being drunk in charge of a vehicle.

Our team was asked by the police to look out for a missing person in the Thame area. Using the information provided, our operator conducted a review of CCTV camera footage and managed to locate the missing person boarding a bus. Having passed this information to the police, officers were subsequently able to locate the person and return them to a place of safety.

## **Wallingford**

During a routine patrol of the cameras, the operator on duty spotted a work van parked in one of the town centre car parks. Whilst monitoring, they observed the driver drinking from a can of what appeared to be alcohol, before snorting a white powder. They obtained images of the driver and the van before passing the information to police who dispatched officers to conduct a stop.

Whilst monitoring the nighttime economy, a member of the team saw a man acting aggressively. Using their extensive experience in interpreting body language, they determined it was likely the situation could escalate and informed the police. Prior to the police arriving on scene, a fight broke out. The operator monitored the situation, keeping all offenders and victims in view until officers arrived. Several arrests were made.

Our CCTV operator spotted a man on the roof of St Mary's Church who then disappeared from the scaffolding, presumed to be inside the church itself. They informed the police and officers quickly attended, making an arrest.

Date of report: April 2024

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