

CCTV Half Yearly Report

Wantage and Abingdon

1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides information on how the district council's CCTV cameras in Wantage and Abingdon 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 reported each time a CCTV camera is used proactively to monitor a specific incident.

We aim to provide this report on a half yearly basis to share information and help publicise the positive outcomes of CCTV to residents and businesses. We have 23 cameras operational in Abingdon and six in Wantage.

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 two 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 now have a third FTE operator in post with a fourth currently going through the police vetting process.

DATA SUMMARY

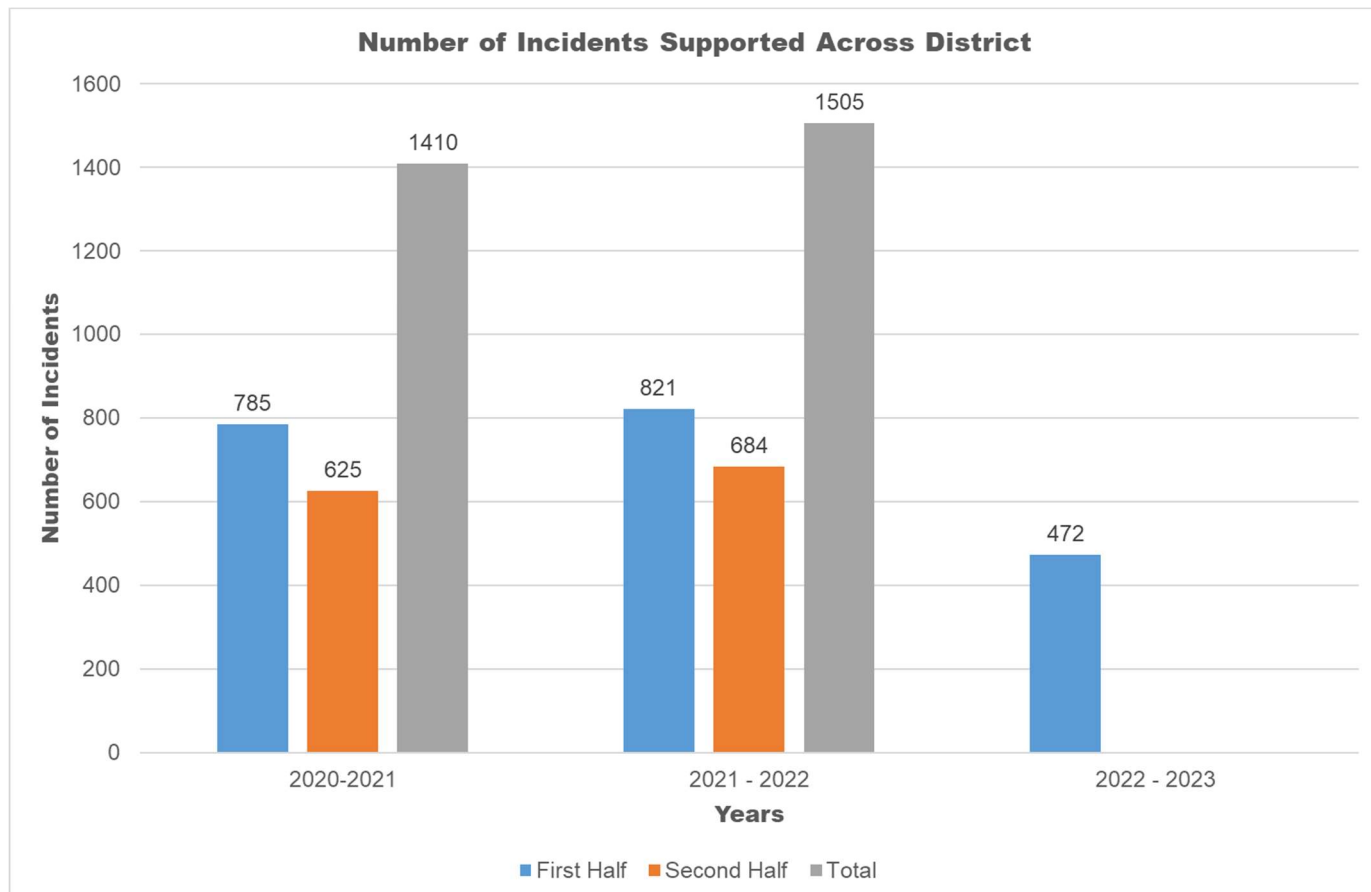
Across the Vale, CCTV operators supported 472 incidents during the first half of 2022-23.

The operators also produced 52 evidence packs for possible court proceedings, carried out 23 reviews of CCTV footage (a review is undertaken as a result of a written request) and supported 46 arrests.

The table on the top of page two displays the most common type of incident monitored for each town during the first half of 2022-23 where CCTV was involved at some stage.

MOST COMMONLY MONITORED INCIDENTS	
Abingdon	Wantage
Anti-social behaviour (58)	Fear for welfare (22)
Fear for welfare (53)	Missing persons (15)
Suspicious behaviour (32)	Fighting/Affray (10)

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



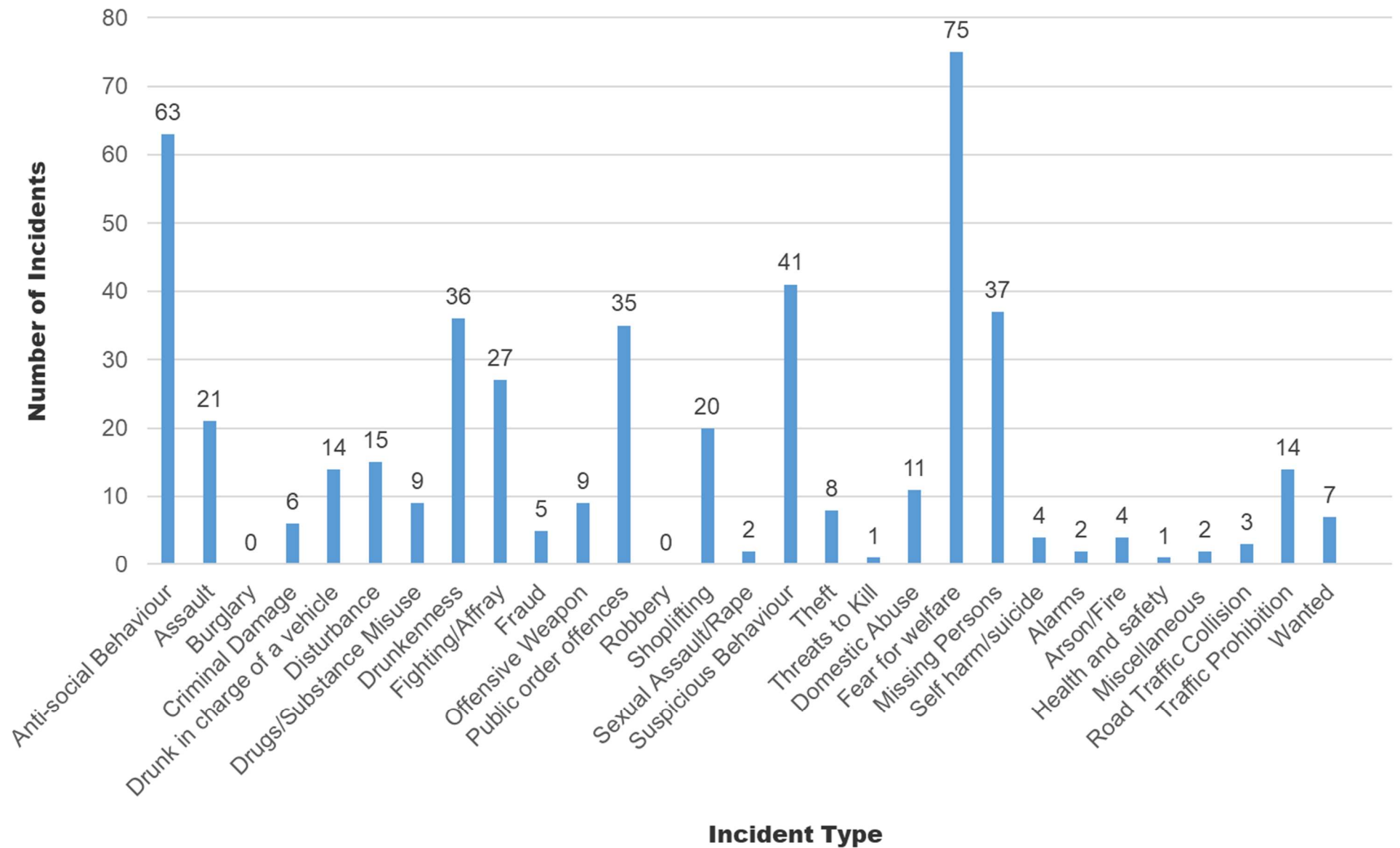
For further breakdown please see table below:

	2020-2021			2021 - 2022			2022-2023		
	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total	First	Second	Total
Abingdon	662	542	1204	672	614	1286	374		
Wantage	123	83	206	149	70	219	98		
Total	785	625	1410	821	684	1505	472		

TYPE AND NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

The chart on page three shows the numbers and types of incidents the CCTV Operators monitored from 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022 across both towns.

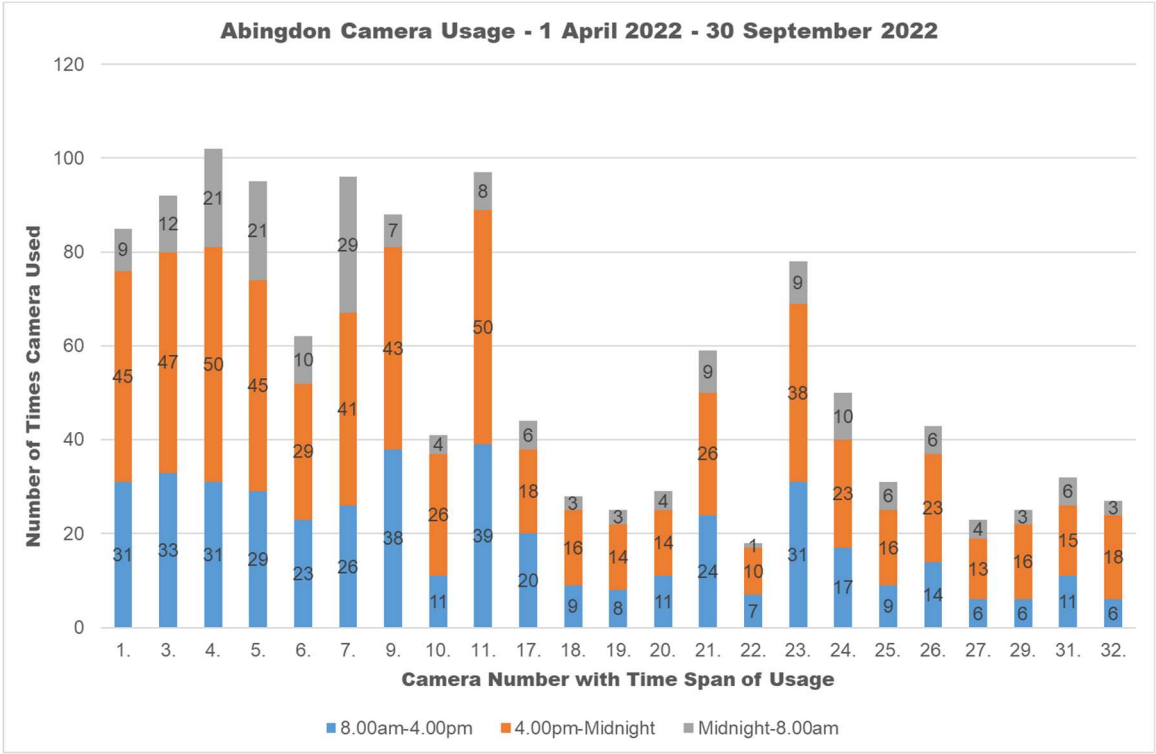
Incidents by Type - 1 April 2022 - 30 September 2022



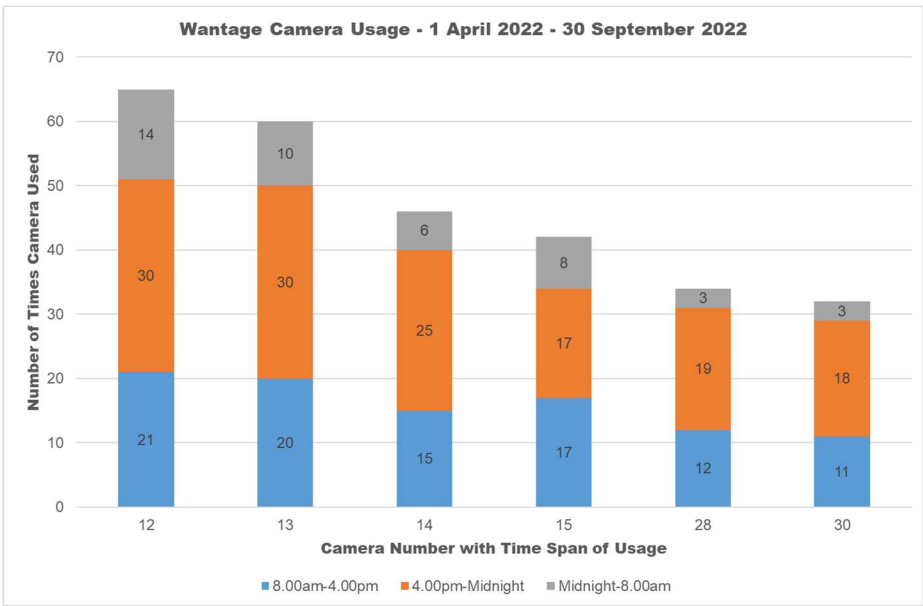
CAMERA USAGE

The following charts show camera usage for each town. These indicate the number of times that individual cameras are 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.



Camera 4 is instrumental in monitoring both daytime and night-time economy and shows the highest use. Camera 11 covers the shopping centre and saw high use. Camera 7 is the primary camera for night-time economy, as a result it saw the third highest use.



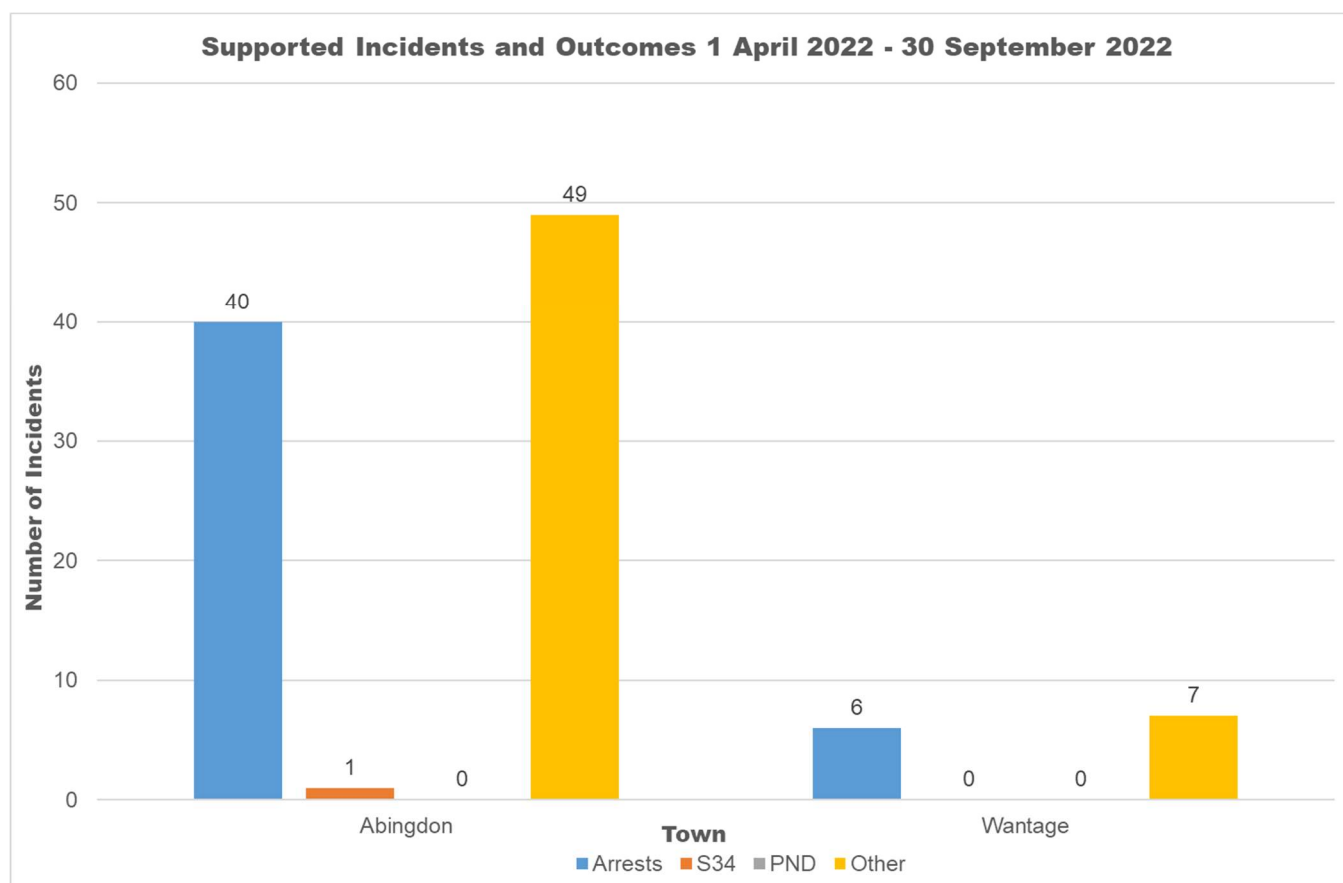
Camera 12 is used to cover the town centre and saw the highest use. Camera 15 has begun to increase in use since the opening of a new night-time premise.

ARRESTS, SECTION 34S AND OTHER OUTCOMES

The chart below 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. Whilst 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 priorities in real time e.g., should the situation allow, leaving CCTV to monitor incidents or offenders while officers attend other incidents.

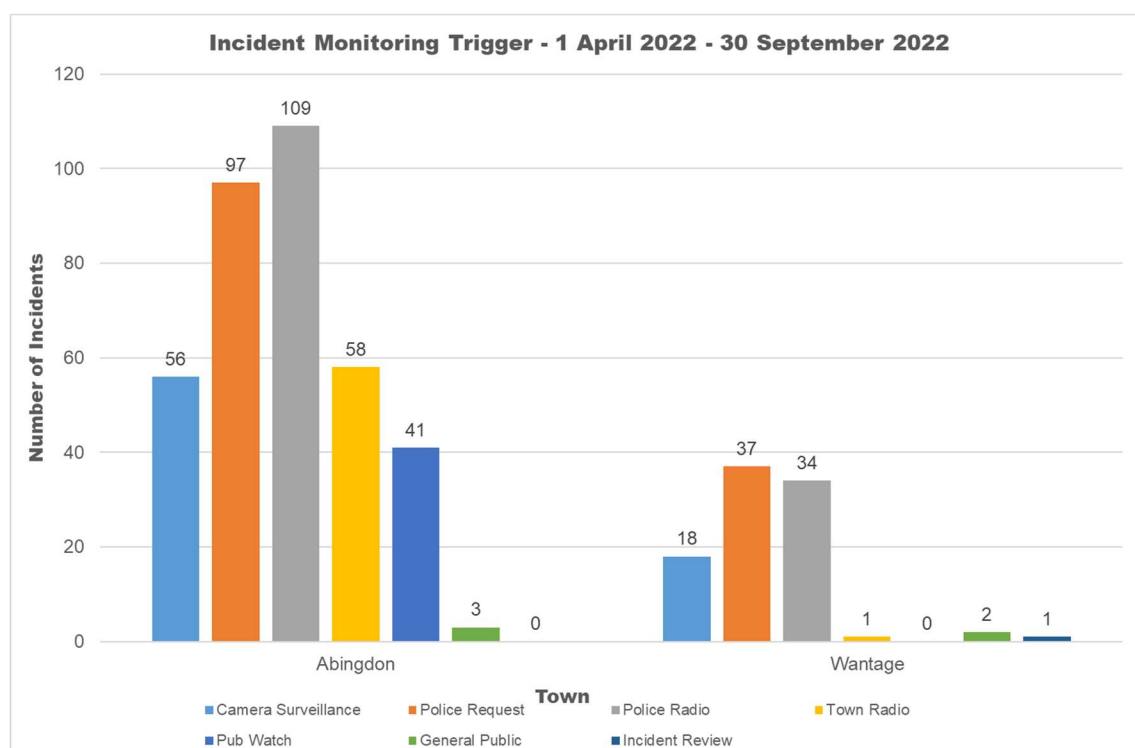
A Section 34 allows the police to move someone from a specified area for a period of up to 48 hours if they believe the person poses a risk of anti-social behaviour disorder. A PND is an 'on the spot fine'.

Actions on the chart designated 'other' usually means that the police either gave verbal advice or admonition or a non-recordable sanction, for example, replace items in a bin that had been kicked over.



HOW CCTV MONITORING WAS INITIATED

The chart on page six shows how many of the incidents monitored by CCTV 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); request to review footage at the time of an incident (incident review); the operator proactively patrolling the cameras (camera surveillance). Only Abingdon 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's most likely to experience problems.

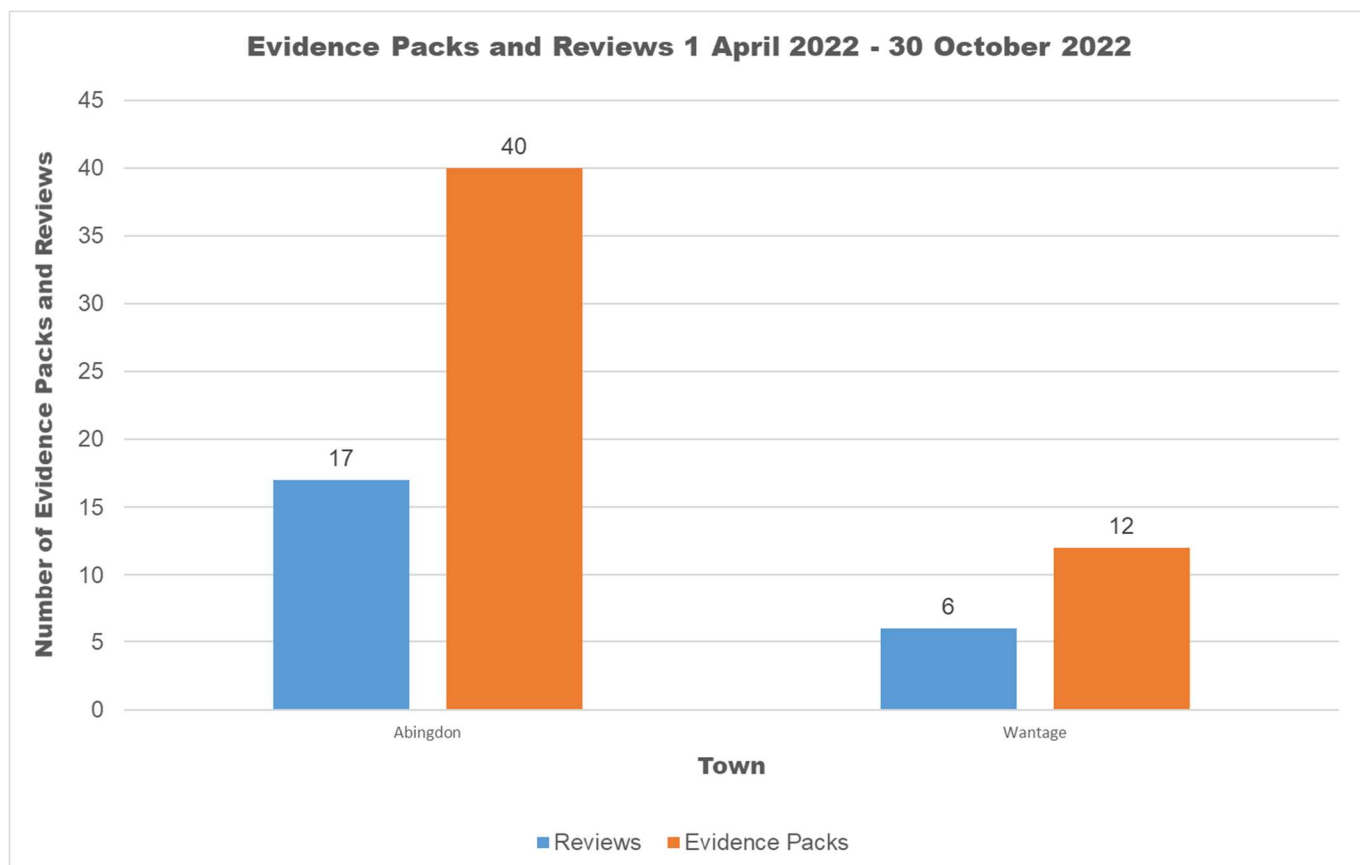
CCTV operators and the CCTV supervisor also respond to requests from members of the public and third parties under data protection legislation and subject access requests (SARs). The most common request is to examine car park or road cameras for evidence of 'non-stop road traffic collisions' in which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

The chart at the top of page seven shows the number of evidence packs the CCTV operators put together and the number of evidence reviews undertaken as a result of formal written requests.

Evidence reviews are checks through historical material. The evidence packs are the recordings and statements which the CCTV operators produce for police, solicitors and the Crown Prosecution Service.

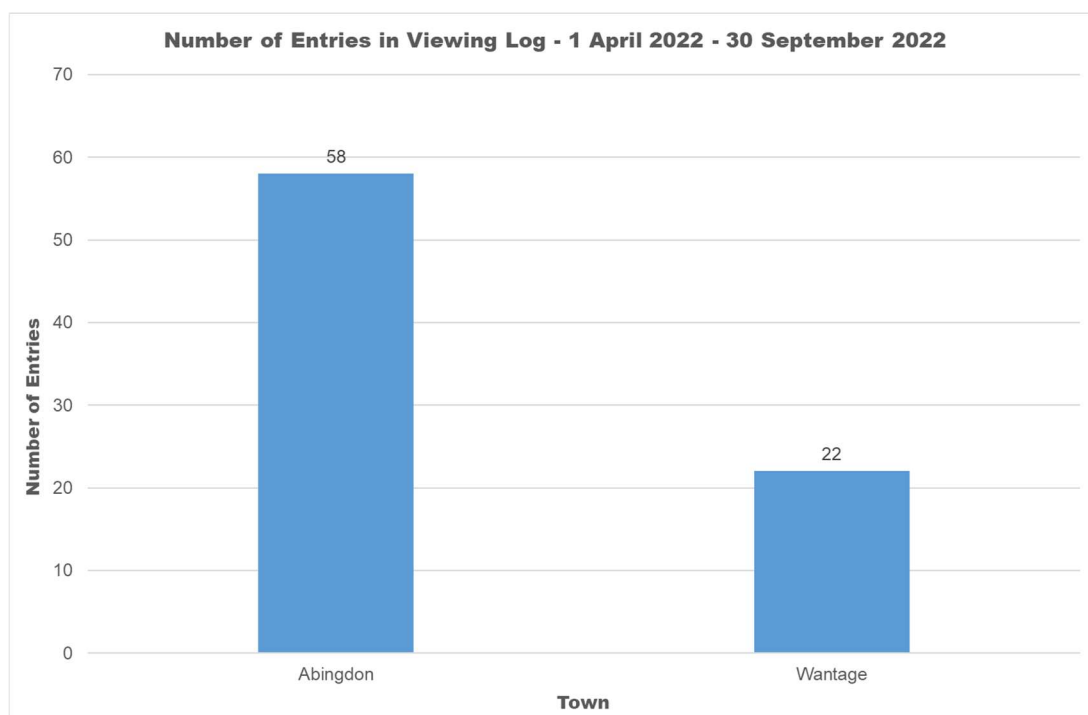
Activity that monitors past footage but does not result in an evidence pack being produced is termed 'a review'. This may be, for example, that the footage does not show an event clearly enough to warrant making a permanent DVD copy for evidential use.

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 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 April 2022 and 30 September 2022 across both towns.



CASE STUDIES

Abingdon

During the monitoring of the town's night-time economy, our operator observed four people who appeared to be drunk entering a vehicle. Due to concerns they may be over the drink drive limit, our operator informed police who stopped the vehicle and made an arrest.

Having received a call on the Store-net radio link about young people being on the roof of a shop in the precinct, our operator on shift located the group and notified police. They continued to monitor the group as they climbed to the highest point (some 60 feet off the ground). Police arrived and took appropriate action whilst ensuring the safety of the group.

Following a report of a person wanting to end their life, our operator found a person matching the description stood by the riverbank. They notified police and continued to monitor the situation; the female jumped into the river but police were quickly on scene and able to rescue her.

Wantage

During the course of their shift, our operator was asked to look for a missing school child. Noting their description, they were able to locate them in the market place and monitored the situation until police arrived on scene to take the child to a place of safety.

Our operator saw a large fight taking place in the market place where a man had been assaulted. They quickly informed police and continued to monitor the incident, obtaining images of the main protagonists and performing quick time reviews to ascertain all details. Six arrests were made.

During their shift, our operator observed somebody fall from a bench and suffer a medical episode so they contacted police and ambulance. As a result, ambulance staff quickly arrived where it was determined the person had suffered a seizure. They were treated at the scene before being taken to hospital.

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Author: James Bell (CCTV Supervisor)

Contact details: tel. 01865 309417, email james.bell@southandvale.gov.uk