

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION
ANNUAL REPORT
1st April 2020
to
31st March 2021

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1.0 METHODOLOGY

In order to comply with recommendations contained in the Information Commissioners CCTV Code of Practice published in October 2014 and Surveillance Camera Codes of practice. Bromsgrove District Council has produced this annual report which is publically available on the Council's website.

The topics required to be covered are as follows:

- a) a description of the scheme and the geographical area(s) of operation
- b) the schemes policy statement
- c) the objectives and scope of the scheme
- d) any changes to the operation or management of the CCTV scheme
- e) any changes that have been made to the policy
- f) any proposals to expand or reduce the operation of the scheme
- g) the aims and objectives for the next 12 months.

For the purposes of best practice the report will also include the following information:

- 1) the number of incidents recorded by the scheme
- 2) the number of incidents reported to the law enforcement agencies and where appropriate other bodies e.g. local authority
- 3) an assessment of the CCTV scheme's impact on crime levels and types of crime in the area covered by the scheme and
- 4) an assessment of the scheme's impact on its objectives, including;
 - the number of privacy impact assessments completed
 - the number of reviews of footage by police and authorized agencies and
 - the number of incidents per camera for the previous twelve months.

The above will assist in compliance with Principle 10 of the Surveillance camera code of Practice.

The dedicated CCTV control room which is situated in Redditch is a shared facility with Redditch Borough Council.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Description of the scheme

The Bromsgrove District Council CCTV system consists of 89 cameras that have been installed at strategically positioned locations in the following areas;

Location	Cameras
Bromsgrove	20
Sanders Park	3
Aston Fields	1
Rubery	15
Alvechurch	5
Brook Road Park	2
Barnt Green	4
Hagley	8
Wythall	5
Multi- Storey Car Park	27
Redeployable	3

Table 2.1 Camera Locations

The system is monitored by trained and dedicated staff.

2.2 Communication

There is a dedicated CCTV transmission link to a Police control room, which is capable of receiving and monitoring live images.

2.3 System Operation

The system is monitored by dedicated staff who have achieved or are in the process of achieving the accredited training now required by the Private Security Industry Act 2001. The system is operated and managed in accordance with current legislation and detailed CCTV Codes of Practice and Operational Procedures Manual.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT AND SCHEME DESCRIPTION

3.1 Closed Circuit Television

The scheme initially comprises of cameras located in specific external and internal locations with control, monitoring and recording facilities at a dedicated location. A problem orientated process was utilised to assess the appropriateness of CCTV in the area subject of this evaluation. The cameras have therefore been sited to capture images that are relevant to the purposes for which the scheme has been established. The purposes of the CCTV scheme are outlined later in this report (See 4.1).

3.2 Ownership

The scheme is owned by Bromsgrove District Council who are responsible for the management, administration and security of the system. The owners manage the system and ensure the protection of individuals and the public by complying with the Codes of Practice.

Should the public wish to make contact with the owners of the scheme they may write to:

CCTV and Lifeline Manager
c/o Redditch Borough Council
The Town Hall
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire
B98 8AH

The above contact point will be available to members of the public during office hours. Enquirers will be provided with the relevant documentation on request.

3.3 Policy Statement

Bromsgrove District Council has a Strategic Purpose to enable – Communities which are Safe, well maintained and green.

CCTV supports this purpose.

To promote public confidence by developing a safe and secure environment for the benefit of those living, working, visiting or using the area.

To inspire public confidence by ensuring that all public area Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems which are linked to the Bromsgrove District Council CCTV control room are operated in a manner that will secure their consistent effectiveness and preserve the civil liberty of law abiding citizens at all times.

4.0 THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SCHEME

4.1 Purposes of the scheme

The following are the objectives for which The Bromsgrove District Council CCTV system was established:

- to help reduce the fear of crime;
- to help deter crime, detect crime and prevent crime;
- to deter and detect ant-social behavior;
- to assist in the apprehension and identification of offenders;
- to enhance community safety, boost the economy and encourage greater use of the town centre / shopping centre .
- to assist the Local Authority in its enforcement and regulatory functions.
- for the maintenance of Public Order.
- to provide information for traffic management.
- Provide the police, other agencies and the Council with evidence to take criminal and civil action in the courts
- providing high quality evidence which may assist in the detection of crime and the apprehension and prosecution of offenders
- protecting property
- providing assistance with issues relating to public safety and health
- providing assistance and reassurance to the public in emergency situations

4.2 Scope of the scheme

The cameras have been sited to capture images that are relevant to the purpose for which the scheme has been established.

The scheme will be operated fairly, within the applicable law and only for the purposes for which it is established or which are subsequently agreed in accordance with the Code of Practice.

Operators are aware of the purpose(s) for which the scheme has been established and that the CCTV equipment is only used to achieve the identified purposes.

The scheme will be operated with due regard for the privacy of the individual.

Before cameras are placed in residential areas the residents in that area will be consulted concerning the proposed system. The results of the consultation will be taken into account.

The public interest in the operation of the scheme will be recognised by ensuring the security and integrity of operational procedures.

The system will only be operated by trained and authorised personnel.

Bromsgrove District Council and partners support the individual's right to privacy and will insist that all agencies involved in the provision and use of Public CCTV

systems connected to the Council's CCTV control room accept this fundamental principle as being paramount.

The scheme aims to provide surveillance of the public areas in order to fulfill the purposes of the scheme. The area protected by CCTV is indicated by the presence of signs. The signs are placed so that the public are aware that they are entering a zone which is covered by surveillance equipment. The signs state the organisation responsible for the scheme, the purposes of the scheme and a contact telephone number. Data will not be held for longer than necessary and disposal of information will be regulated.

The scheme is registered with the Information Commissioner. The registration number is Z5192939. The scheme will be managed in accordance with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations, Human Rights Act 1998 and all other relevant legislation including the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.

Reviews of Data Protection and Legal requirements are taken annually.

4.3 Personnel

All personnel involved with the monitoring of CCTV are SIA licensed and DBS checked accordingly.

4.4 Training

All employees engaged in the monitoring and operation of CCTV have received or are in the process of receiving training to the standards required by the Private Security Industry Act 2001. As a further requirement of the above Act all operators will be licensed by the Security Industry Authority

4.5 Operation of the scheme

The system is operated in accordance with a recognized Code of Practice and Procedural manual. The scheme is registered with the Information Commissioner, details of which can be obtained from the Information Commissioners web site. The scheme operates within the requirements of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Human Rights Act 1998 and relevant legislation.

4.6 Audit

As mentioned in the introduction to this report the scheme is required to be independently monitored this includes a review of the scheme's operation and working practices.

A full audit was undertaken on 23rd September 2015, which considered the following

a) the level of attainment of objectives and procedures.

The level of attainment of objectives is covered in the main evaluation. The statistics relate to the 2014/2015 period. Procedures are governed by the Code of Practice and Procedural Manual, these will be reviewed annually and comply with relevant processes and legislation in particular GDPR and Human Rights Act 1998.

b) random audits of the data log and the release of information

All administrative documentation, which incorporate the release of information, incident reports and print registers in connection with this scheme were examined and all appear to be completed in accordance with the Procedures and policies

c) the review policy

The review policy is outlined within the Code of Practice. Procedures are reviewed on an annual basis in order to comply with legislation.

5.0 CHANGES IN OPERATION, MANAGEMENT OR POLICY

As reflected in the Code of Practice, any major changes to the Code of Practice take place only after consultation with the relevant management group and upon agreement of the organisations with a participatory role in the operation of the system.

5.1 Major changes to the code are defined as changes which affect its fundamental principles and shall be deemed to include:

- additions and omissions of camera schemes
- additions to permitted uses criteria e.g. purposes of the scheme.
- changes in the right of access to personal data, except statutory requirements.
- significant legal implications.

5.2 Minor changes to this Code of Practice are defined as operational and procedural matters which do not affect the fundamental principles and purposes; these include:

- additions and omissions of contractors
- additional clarifications, explanations and corrections to the existing code

- additions to the code of practice in order to conform to the requirements of any statutory Acts and changes in legislation

A minor change may be agreed between the manager and the owner of the system.

The Code of Practice is subject to annual review. A copy of the Code of Practice can be obtained by writing to:

CCTV and Lifeline Manager
c/o Redditch Borough Council
The Town hall
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire
B98 8AA

6.0 PROPOSALS FOR THE SCHEMES INCLUDING AIMS, OBJECTIVES, GROWTH AND REDUCTON

6.1 Aims and Objectives of the Scheme

The aims and objectives remain the same and these are the prevention and detection of crime, to reduce the fear of crime and make the area safe environment.

6.2 System growth and reduction

Following a professional, external assessment of the CCTV scheme in 2018 and a 'Short Sharp Review' Task and Finish Group of Council Members recommendations were made to upgrade equipment to the latest technology and purchase some new cameras. Council supported this recommendation and funds were made available through the Council capital bid process that coincided with grant funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia.

The Bromsgrove District Council CCTV monitoring platform is now fully digital. It is capable of incorporating the latest digital technology and existing analogue cameras enabling a highbred approach to upgrading the scheme over time.

Rubery, Bromsgrove and Hagley schemes have been upgraded to fully digital with wireless transmission which will result in ongoing revenue savings. Other locations have been upgraded to a hybrid network of digital and analogue. Achieving the best solution and value

51 old obsolete analogue cameras have been replaced with new digital technology and a further 6 cameras will hopefully be replaced this financial year.

Although no new camera locations have been identified the Council has purchased 3 re-deployable cameras. This will allow for CCTV monitoring of an area to identify the true level of criminal or anti-social activity where it is perceived and reported to be happening. This will ensure appropriate solutions can be applied in problematic areas.

West Mercia Police force have been consulted and the Community Safety Partnership have analyzed crime data around the existing CCTV camera locations.

There is no areas identified for camera removal on this scheme.

There are no new locations identified at this time.

7.0 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

In order to achieve meaningful evaluation the CCTV scheme must be assessed against specific performance indicators which are relevant to the objectives of the scheme. This can be achieved by utilising baskets of indicators which are divided into the categories of Contextual, Key and Support Indicators

7.1 Contextual Indicators

Contextual Indicators relate to the circumstances or background surrounding the particular initiative. In this case the purposes of the CCTV are mainly to prevent and detect crime. Indicators will include both British Crime Statistics and Police Recorded statistics for this type of crime.

7.2 Key Indicators

Key Indicators are closely related to the actual objectives of the particular initiative and attempt to measure its effect. This will include the total crime for the police area. Also included in this category will be the number of incidents reported by the Bromsgrove District Council CCTV Control room to police and other agencies.

7.3 Support Indicators

Support Indicators are used to refute or verify the key indicators. The measurements will include the number of media seized by police which contain evidential value.

7.4 EVALUATION

7.4.1 Contextual Indicators

The statistical bulletin “Crime in England & Wales: year ending March 2021” provides the latest national overview of crime against households and adults.

It collects information from the Telephone Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) and police recorded crime statistics. The headline summary is as follows:

1 . Main points

Patterns of crime in the year ending March 2021 have been significantly affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and government instructions to limit social contact. While there were decreases across a range of individual crime types, particularly theft offences, these were offset by rises in fraud and computer misuse offences, resulting in no change in overall levels of crime.

The Telephone Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) indicated a 36% increase in fraud and computer misuse offences compared with the year ending March 2019¹ Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

TCSEW total crime excluding fraud and computer misuse decreased by 19% compared with the year ending March 2019. This was largely driven by substantial decreases in theft offences (20%). Over the equivalent time-period, total police recorded crime excluding fraud and computer misuse decreased by 13%.

The largest decreases in recorded crime were seen during the three-month period that coincided with the first national lockdown, with a 19% decrease in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019.

Although the TCSEW indicated no change in the total number of violence incidents, the total number of victims of violent crime decreased by 28% compared with the year ending March 2019². This was largely driven by falls in violence where the offender was a stranger.

Police recorded crime gives more insight into the lower-volume but higher-harm violence that the survey either does not cover or does not capture well. These data show that compared with the year ending March 2020:

- the number of homicides decreased by 16% to 600 offences
- there was a 14% fall in the number of police recorded offences involving firearms
- there was a 15% fall in offences involving knives or sharp instruments (knife-enabled crime), driven by substantial decreases in periods coinciding with national lockdowns

Statistician's comment

Commenting on today's figures, Billy Gazard from the Office for National Statistics Centre for Crime and Justice said:

“The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had a significant impact on patterns of crime. There were large decreases in theft offences, such as domestic burglary and theft from the person, as more people stayed at home and limited their social contact.

At the same time, there were substantial increases in fraud and computer misuse offences such as hacking, as fraudsters took advantage of behavioural changes during the pandemic, such as increased online shopping

The number of people who became victims of violent crime also fell, driven by decreases in violence where the offender was a stranger. This likely reflects a decrease in violence taking place in public spaces during national lockdown restrictions.”

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2021>
<https://www.police.uk/>

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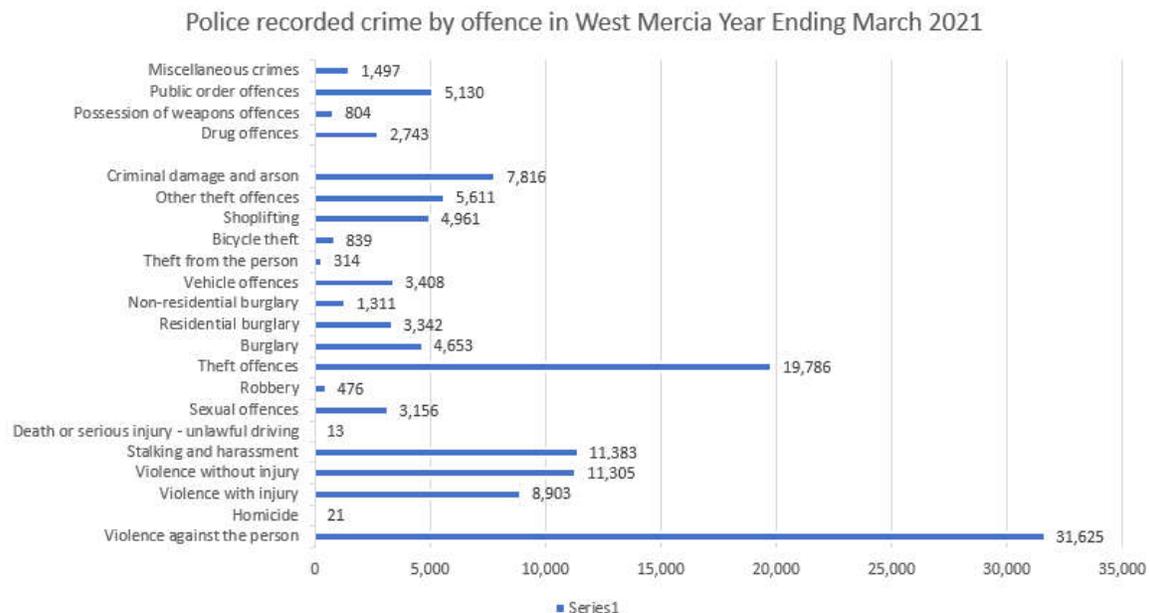
The pandemic has caused there to be a reduction in crimes that are detected through use of CCTV.

The police recorded 5.4 million crimes in England and Wales in the year ending March 2021, a 10% decrease from the previous year. This reduction was apparent across all regions of England and in Wales with decreases of between 5% and 18% in police recorded crime (excluding fraud and computer misuse).

Total recorded crime, including fraud and computer misuse, has fluctuated across the year ending March 2021. Although a small proportion of these fluctuations will be the result of seasonal effects on crime trends, most of the differences can be attributed to the introduction and subsequent easing of national lockdown restrictions throughout the year.

Total recorded crime saw substantial falls during April 2020 compared with April 2019 (26% decrease), coinciding with the introduction of the first national lockdown (Figure 3). Police recorded crime remained lower across subsequent months compared with respective months in 2019 but the difference narrowed as lockdown restrictions were gradually eased over the summer. Levels of recorded crime were only 4% lower in September 2020 compared with September 2019. Crime levels again decreased substantially as national lockdowns were reintroduced. Police recorded crime was 18% and 15% lower in January and February 2021 compared with the respective months in 2020. A phased exit out of lockdown began on 8 March 2021, with recorded crime 7% higher in March 2021 than in March 2020, when the first national lockdown was introduced.

7.4.2 Key Indicators

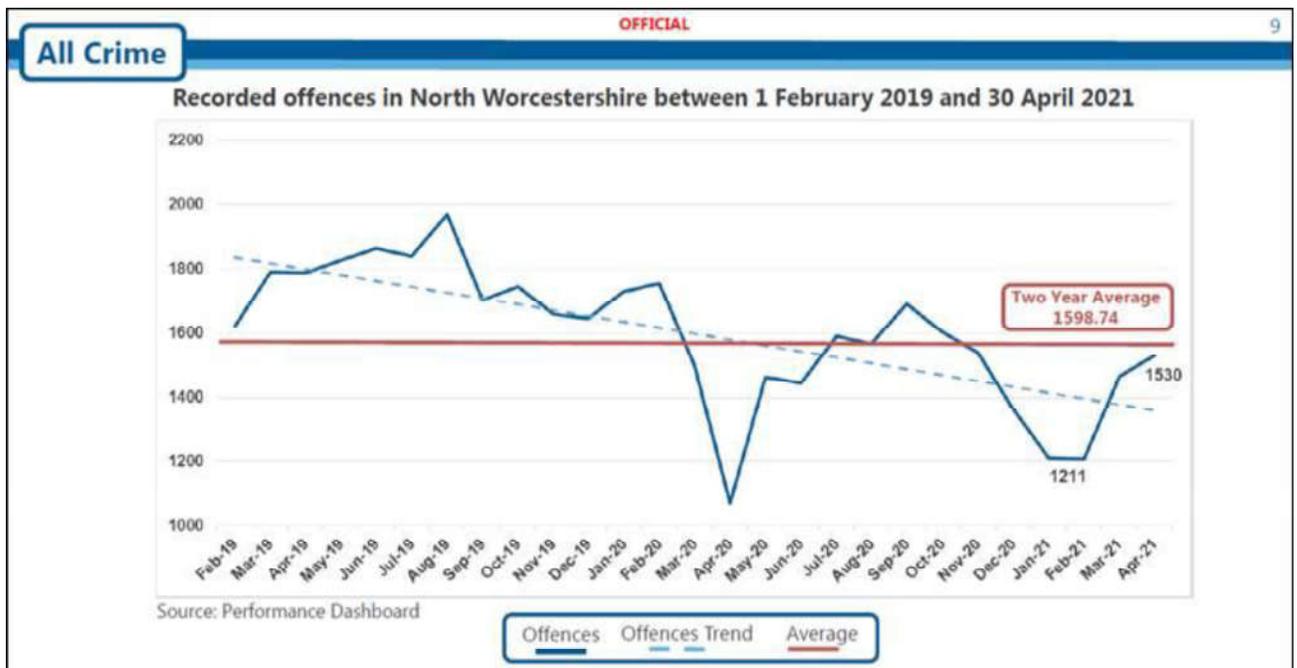


<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables>

In the two-year period Apr 2019 to March 2021 recorded offences gradually fell in North Worcestershire, with COVID-19 restrictions driving this change in the latter year. Crime rates were lowest in April 2020 (n = 1069), which was most certainly due to the introduction of the first national COVID-19 lockdown. The second national lockdown on 5 Nov 2020, instigated a steep decline in recorded crime over the next three-month period. Between November 2020 and January 2021, the volume of offences decreased by 18% (n = 903) when compared with the same three-month period in 2019/2020. Again, likely due to the COVID-19 lockdown on 5 November and the return to tiered systems, resulting in fewer opportunities for crime to take place.

Between February 2021 and April 2021, the volume of offences and incidents increased by 27% (n = 323) which correlates with the COVID-19 climate at that time. The UK began the 'Roadmap Out Of Lockdown' on 8 March 2021 and since then there has been a slow and gradual increase in crime reports between February and April 2021. April 2021 saw the re-opening of many businesses, hospitality venues and events which correlates with additional reporting of crimes and crimed incidents. It was predicted that this was highly likely continue to increase as the government progressed with its plans see the country return to normality after 21 June 2021.

Across North Worcestershire, 16,126 offences were recorded in the year ending March 2021 which was a 19% reduction on the previous year. In the same period 4,554 Antisocial Behaviour Incidents were reported, a 42% reduction on the previous year.



7.4.3 Bromsgrove crime statistics

The type of crimes that CCTV will address are not totally random or isolated events but combine into sets with common features. Such crimes will show patterns and form clusters, these will include times and dates or focus on particular types of property or victims and are committed by a range of methods.

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The availability of crime statistics for the policing area covering Bromsgrove is restricted to the online website for the Police mapping facility, Police.Uk¹. This site provides local level data for Safer Neighbourhood Areas, including the five areas of Bromsgrove District, which are policed by West Mercia Police. These areas are; Alvechurch & Wythall; Bromsgrove North & Rural; Bromsgrove South & Rural; Bromsgrove St Johns; and Hagley & Rubery.

<https://www.police.uk/>

7.4.4 Incident Reports by CCTV operators

During 2020/2021 operating staff completed **221** incident reports for the camera locations and this equates to **18.4** incidents per month. This is a decrease of 52 incidents for the year.

It should be noted that due to the Coronavirus Pandemic the Country has been in lock down, people were required to stay at home for the period of time between march to July and again from Christmas to April. The Night time economy did not reopen for most of the year. Therefore no decisions about camera usage will be made using data from 2020/2021.

During January and February 2021, monitoring of CCTV was limited due to a requirement for staff to work from home.

Incident by type	Alvechurch	Aston Fields	Barnt Green	Town Centre	Brook Rd Park	Hagley	Multi Storey	Rubery	Sanders Park	Wythall	Total
Abduction		1									1
Alarm Activation											0
Ambulance				1							1
Anti-social behaviour			1	13	1	4	13	6	2	1	41
Assault		1		10	1	1		2	1	1	17
Burglary		1	1	1		1		1		5	10
Car Crime								1		1	2
Cash in transit											0
Concern for Welfare	1			7	1		1	1	1		12

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Criminal Damage				5		4	1	1	1	1	13
Driving Offence			1	1	1				1		4
Drug / alcohol				3					2		5
Sexual Offence							1				1
Fire											0
Fire Arms											0
Fraudulent Activity				1							1
Insurance Review								1			1
Intelligence only	1			3					1		5
Knife				1		2				1	4
Missing Person				13		1		1	1		16
Parking Enforcement											0
Public Order	1			6			1	1			9
Racial Incident				1					1		2
Robbery				2		4		2	1		9
RTA				4		1		1		1	7
Suspicious Activity				17		3	1	1			22
Theft	1		1	25			3		1	3	34
Wanted Person		1		3							4
Total	4	4	4	117	4	21	21	19	13	14	

Table 7.2: Incident categories – Bromsgrove

The most prominent recorded incidents for the period under review were for Anti-social behavior. This again reflects the offence statistics for the area covered by the CCTV system and therefore provides an indication that operators are capturing relevant images.

7.4.5 Camera Usage

The criteria required by the British Standard in relation to the Annual report stipulates that the number of incidents per camera needs to be established. This is also reflected in Principle 10 of the Surveillance camera codes, which requires the owner to establish if the camera remains justifiable, whilst the Information Commissioners CCTV codes demands that an annual review of the system should be undertaken to establish if it continues to be justified. One of the only indicators is the use of the camera.

During the monitoring of an incident, it is normal practice to use a number of cameras and therefore the statistics bear no resemblance to the actual number of incidents, shown in the previous tables. However, it will provide an indication of the usefulness of the camera to the overall system.

During 2020/2021 due to the pandemic no assessment of camera usage will be made. The camera usage in this period has been unrepresentative of normal camera utilisation.

7.4.6 Viewing and Seizure of evidence

The viewing and subsequent copying/seizure of recorded images can act as an indicator to support or refute the effectiveness of the scheme in obtaining meaningful evidence. However, it is difficult, if not impossible to ascertain from police records whether the images viewed have been used as evidence to obtain a conviction at court, assisted in any other clearance process or been used for intelligence purposes. Whilst officers complete a log when they receive copy tapes, the audit trail is difficult to trace from this point and this is the case with most CCTV schemes.

During 2019/2020 there were 76 seizures. This is an indication that the system is being used by the end user.

7.4.7 Complaints

A member of the public wishing to make a complaint about the system may do so

through Bromsgrove Council's complaint procedure. Copies of the complaints procedure are available by writing to:

The CCTV System Manager,
c/o Redditch Borough Council,
Town Hall
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
B98 8AH

A complaints procedure has been documented. A record of the number of complaints or enquiries received will be maintained together with an outline of the action taken.

During the period of evaluation there have been no recorded complaints concerning the schemes in question.

7.4.8 Privacy Impact Assessments

During the period under review there have been no new cameras installed however Privacy Impact assessments have been completed on all existing camera locations.

8.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The CCTV Scheme

The table below shows a decline in the number of incidents reported to the Monitoring Centre. The most prominent recorded incidents for the period were for Anti-Social behavior. The large decrease can be wholly attributed to the Covid pandemic, decreased footfall and stay at home advice.

Year	Number of incidents	% increase /decrease
2020/21	370	-61.05
2018/19	950	-9.5
2017/18	1039	-10.7
2016/17	1164	-7.2%
2015/16	1254	-9.4%
2014/15	1384	

The Information Commissioners CCTV Code of practice requires makes the following requirements;

“You should review regularly whether the use of CCTV continues to be justified. You will have to renew your notification yearly, so this would be an appropriate time to consider the ongoing use of CCTV

...there should be a periodic review (at least annually) of the systems effectiveness to ensure that it is still doing what it was intended to do. If it does not achieve its purpose, it should be stopped or modified"

Information Commissioners Code of Practice

The purposes and scope of the scheme are detailed in Section four of this report and these include the prevention and detection of offences. Whilst it is not possible to make an assumption that the CCTV system is actually preventing offences it is a component part of the preventative package. To remove or modify the use of the CCTV system may also detract from a further identified purpose, this being to reduce the fear of crime. It is therefore recommended that at present the system is effective in achieving its purpose, however, there appears to be no current research available which indicates the perceptions of the public, residents and those working in the area covered by the cameras.

8.2 Future Evaluations

The CCTV scheme will be evaluated on an annual basis. This will ensure continued compliance with the British Standard best practice. It will also provide compliance with legislation and the Surveillance Camera Codes. It will also ensure continuous measurement of fluctuations and monitoring for any emergence of life cycles, which could cause a decline in the initiative.

8.3 Further Investigations

As stated, prior to any decisions there are further investigations underway on those cameras identified as 'at risk'. These will include the following;

- a) Environmental – obstructions, lighting, location
- b) Technical – quality of images, transmission, equipment
- c) Operational – for example are cameras;
 - part of a group of cameras which provide continuity for tracking, escape route
 - essential for influencing the fear of crime, security of staff and customers
 - used for another purpose
- d) Consultation
 - CCTV control room operators/management,
 - Police,
 - Community Safety partners
 - Businesses

Whilst the above list is not intend to be exclusive, it will assist in focusing on the additional considerations and investigation to be undertaken.

8.4 Options

Once further research has been concluded there should be a core number of cameras where decisions are necessary and the options may include the following;

- a) Improve environment e.g. prune trees, increase lighting etc
- b) Technical upgrade
- c) Increased monitoring (Technical or Human)
- e) Temporary disconnection (To ascertain effects on crime or public perceptions)
- f) Decommission and utilise re-deployable cameras, if technically achievable
- g) Decommission and do not consider any of the above

