

Report for Community Well-Being Policy Development Group Meeting Tiverton Town CCTV Annual Report

1. Overview

The CCTV System continues to be well used by the Tiverton Policing Team in liaison with the CCTV Supervisor. There are a total of 16 camera covering the town centre and Pannier Market area. In addition there are also some operational camera monitoring the entrances and exits of the multi-storey car park.

2. CCTV Surveillance

The CCTV Supervisor is employed on a part-time basis but continues to volunteer as both a police volunteer and for MDDC by putting in many extra hours per week.

In the run up to Christmas it was very busy with an increase in shoplifting in the town centre and the police were running several operations over this period. Many additional hours were covered by the CCTV Supervisor, averaging in the region of 10-15 hours voluntary hours per week. As normal the operator worked until the early hours of the morning assisting the police in monitoring the Evening & Late Night Economy periods.

The Community Safety Officer and CCTV Supervisor are currently investigating the possibility of the Street Pastors assisting with monitoring of the CCTV system when the Supervisor is unavailable. If there are volunteers willing to work with MDDC on this then there will be a series of training sessions, monitoring and assessment during a trial period.

3. Incidents

During the last six months there have been 25 formal requests for footage from Tiverton police made to the CCTV Supervisor. This requires searching for footage of a specific incident, burning evidence to disc and supplying a written statement for court use. Much of this will relate to recorded evidence for when the cameras are unmanned.

When the CCTV Supervisor is on duty he has links with the police that include reporting incidents as they happen to duty police officers and helping with specific police operations within the town that may include drugs or shoplifting work.

An example some of the incidents that the cameras have assisted with are as follows:

- Damage to vehicles
- Damage to property
- Anti-social behaviour
- Theft of bicycle

- Protection of vulnerable persons
- Assaults - including use of knives
- Footage of individuals connected with burglaries out of town centre
- Domestic incidents
- Robbery from premises
- Shoplifting
- Missing Persons
- Search for persons or vehicles connected to incidents out of town centre

Whilst Tiverton isn't a high crime area there are continually crimes occurring that the police are dealing with. Many do not result in prosecution or appear in the local press or one reason or another.

If a serious incident occurs then the CCTV Operator may be called out by the police to search for any related footage.

4. CCTV Stakeholder Group

A group of interested parties including Tiverton Town Council, the Police, Street Pastors, Tiverton Against Retail Crime Association (TARCA) and the licensed trade meet to discuss the use of the system, the benefits and any trends or issues arising. This is coordinated by the Community Safety Officer and will meet several times a year, based on issues or concerns from members.

5. System Issues

Over the last six months there have been continual problems with one or two cameras experiencing operating issues at any one time. In consultation with CCTV experts it appears that the issues relate to the age of the equipment. The original system was installed as far back as 1998 and whilst some of the cameras and hardware have been replaced over that time the main infrastructure is still the same. For example the system is still using original wiring. We have been advised that unless there is new infrastructure and equipment we are likely to keep experiencing these non-specific, intermittent issues with the existing equipment.

The council is therefore planning to replace the existing system, reusing or relocating any camera units and equipment where possible. Technical specs and quotes are currently being obtained. Funds have been allocated to this within the capital budget and approved by Management Team.

For further information contact the Community Safety Officer on 01884 234996 or email communitysafety@middevon.gov.uk