FAIRER WESTMINSTER

City of Westminster

Appendix A

Public Realm CCTV Cameras



CCTV POLICY
2025

This appendix is to be read in conjunction with Westminster City Council's overall policy and will outline the additional considerations and policies that would apply specifically to Public Realm Cameras managed by WCC.

In 2024, Westminster City Council took the decision to roll out and install 100 re-deployable CCTV cameras into our communities being subjected to crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues such as fly tipping. These cameras are utilised to address specific and persisting issues affecting the quality of life of our residents, businesses and visitors. Once the problem has been sufficiently dealt with, the camera will be moved to new and emerging hot spot areas elsewhere across the borough, subject to the criteria and processes outlined in this document. If the problems persist, the cameras may remain in place, subject to the WCC approval process. All the public realm Council CCTV cameras are monitored from a dedicated CCTV control room. All monitoring, image recording and handling is carried out in line with the WCC CCTV Policy and Privacy policy. Acoustic cameras deployed under the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) are managed independently of the Council's Public Realm CCTV service. Their operation and governance requirements are set out in Section 7 of this appendix.

1. Deployment Protocol

1.1. In deciding how and where our CCTV cameras are deployed, we will assess against the following criteria.

Risk of Harm, Community Impact and Effectiveness

• The problem to be addressed must be clearly identified, with supporting evidence such as:

o Recorded incidents (e.g., CAD reference numbers, police callouts, complaints from residents or Councillors).

o Community feedback indicating the nature, scale, and extent of the issue.

• Deployment must complement a wider problem-solving approach and be proportional to the identified issue.

1.2. Prioritisation Framework, where appropriate we will prioritise camera deployments based on the following criteria:

A. Urgency and Impact: Priority is given to locations with:

• High rates of anti-social behaviour, crime, or other significant issues.

• Immediate threats, such as recent spikes in incidents.

• Areas where CCTV deployment aligns with local ward crime and disorder priorities.

B. Feasibility: Deployment feasibility considers:

• Availability of existing infrastructure such as lighting columns.

• Structural integrity and suitability of installation sites.

• Cost and practicality of deploying cameras at the requested location.

C. All camera deployments will be subject to consultation prior to installation.

3.3. Requests for deployment are reviewed in coordination with local multi-agency partnerships, including:

• City Inspectors and local police teams.

• Ward Councillors through Neighbourhood Co-ordinator meetings.

3.4. Deployment proposals must clearly account for the consultation that has taken place detailing the problem, evidence, proposed problem-solving approaches and desired outcomes.

3.5. Deployment proposals must also adhere to the DPIA to ensure all deployments are fair, transparent and lawful. Should the proposed deployment not meet the criteria of the current DPIA in place, then a new DPIA must be completed.

3.6. Some CCTV schemes, including re-deployable cameras, may be introduced into the Council's network through alternative funding sources, such as the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL). These NCIL-funded deployments will adhere to the same criteria and problem-solving approach outlined in this document.

2. Deployment timescales

2.1. Deployments are limited to an initial 26-week period to:

• Assess the extent of the issue and the effectiveness of CCTV in addressing it.

• Support the identification of perpetrators or collect evidence for enforcement.

2.2. At the end of each 26-week deployment period, ongoing deployment or removal of the camera will be decided through additional consultation and assessment of the effectiveness of the camera.

3. Operational Guidelines

3.1. Re-deployable cameras are pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) units capable of 360-degree directional control, with a slight coverage limitation due to the obstruction of the lamp column to which they are mounted. The cameras are equipped with primarily 4G connectivity, allowing remote operation, real-time monitoring, and recording. They are linked to a central control room for operational management. Recorded footage is captured continuously and can be downloaded for specific incidents when requested within a 30-day period.

3.2. Our CCTV operators can be tasked by authorised personnel to pay particular attention to certain places at certain times. To do this the following details need to be determined and sent to the CCTV control room.

• Details of the problem, including evidence and specific locations.
• How the deployment fits within a broader problem-solving approach.
• Expected outcomes and evaluation criteria for effectiveness.

3.3. Neighbourhood Co-ordinators are responsible for preparing and submitting deployment requests. They must ensure that sufficient information and evidence are provided.

3.4. All tasking requests will be reviewed prior to submission to ensure compliance with legal, technical, and operational requirements. Additional consultation will take place where appropriate.

4. Footage Access and Storage

4.1. Recorded footage from our public realm CCTV cameras is retained for a maximum of 30 days unless it is downloaded in response to a specific incident or request.

4.2. Footage can only be downloaded when relevant to an investigation or enforcement action.

4.3. Access to footage is restricted to authorized personnel and follows established data protection protocols to ensure privacy and security. All requests for footage must adhere to these access control measures.

5. Installation and Maintenance

5.1. The deployment, redeployment and maintenance of cameras is undertaken by contractors under contract with Westminster City Council. Responsibility of managing that contract lies with the CCTV lead.

5.2. The contractors will liaise with the WCC CCTV service regarding any delays involved in the installation or removal of the cameras, for example if traffic management schemes are necessary to install the camera.

5.3. A CCTV advisory sign will always be fitted when a camera is installed. Principle 3 of the Surveillance Code of Practice states that there must be as much transparency in the use of cameras as possible, adequate signage ensures we are compliant with this principle.

5.4. The CCTV service is responsible for liaising with internal and external partners to ensure that software and audit lists are updated with location data.

6. Evaluation and Monitoring

6.1. The council has a responsibility to our residents and partners to ensure that deployable CCTV cameras can be installed in a timely and efficient manner.

6.2. The timescales listed in this policy for each partner should be achievable in most cases. If any delays do occur this should be reported to all partners as soon as possible.

6.3. The CCTV Lead will monitor the performance of each of these timescales, reporting into the CCTV Governance Group.

6.4. Should timescales not be met; the order of escalation should made in the following order:

- WCC CCTV Lead for Public Protection and Licencing Department
- WCC CCTV Service Strategic Lead for Public Protection and Licensing Department
- WCC Director of Public Protection and Licensing Department

7. Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Acoustic cameras

7.1. Acoustic cameras, deployed under the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), function independently from the primary Public Realm CCTV service.

7.2. This CCTV system records violations of the Nuisance Vehicles PSPO. For the full order, follow the link: www.westminster.gov.uk/pspo
Appropriate signage is displayed to notify individuals of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) currently in effect.

7.3. This CCTV activates only when vehicles exceed certain decibel levels, capturing a brief video of the event that is stored by a third party on their cloud system. These recordings are then downloaded to the WCC account for viewing.

7.4. Individuals are not recorded, as the cameras activate only in response to a vehicle's decibel level. If behaviour violates the PSPO, a request for registered keeper information is sent to the DVLA, followed by a letter to the keeper asking whether they were driving at the time of the incident.

7.5. In the event of a significant driving violation, law enforcement authorities may require access to the recorded material.