



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

Proposal – CCTV coverage with number plate recognition Ullenhall Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 3rd June 2024

Objective

1. To win the support of the Parish Council for this scheme
2. To secure funding through the Parish Council for the six camera solution (scheme 2) at a cost of £8,000.00.

Headline Summary

- Overall levels of recorded crime in Ullenhall are relatively low however, there is a concerning incidence of suspicious property and car related criminal activity.
- It is commonly known that Ullenhall is an ANPR black spot used by criminals as evidenced by the excessive levels of discarded number plates, particularly along Forde Hall Lane and Gentlemen's Lane. The Police have confirmed this.
- It is proposed that a number of CCTV cameras are placed at key entry and exit points, hosted by willing residents and linked to a central controller. The system has both video and number plate recognition capability.
- Claverdon has such a scheme in place and the operation and learnings have been shared. This system is NOT part of the Police national network but is supported and endorsed by the Police.
- System data will be used to collect evidence of crime in the area and highlight to the Police activity of a suspicious nature. It provides a highly rich data set for broad analysis.
- This proposal offers two levels of installation: a basic three camera solution at £5,000 and a comprehensive solution incorporating six cameras at £8,000. There is likely a small annual maintenance fee.
- Warwickshire crime prevention funding has been investigated but will take some time. Other fund-raising suggestions have been explored.
- Additional road signage indicating an ANPR monitored area has been requested however, a local solution may be more successful.
- There are no compliance or privacy issues that cannot be managed.

Background

Over the last six months the Neighbourhood Watch initiative has seen an improvement and mobilisation of local interest in observing and reporting crime and suspicious activity. Meetings have been held with the local Police and the Warwickshire crime prevention team and support to help prevent crime in our area has been organised through Village Hall meetings and a Crime Prevention Fair.



Ullenhall

Neighbourhood Watch

Whilst the level of overall crime incidents is relatively low, it is clear that for those impacted the short and long-term consequences are traumatic. We have some very distressing accounts across our small village.

Coupled with direct activity in our village, there is a prevalent level of transitory activity. Car thefts from a wider Warwickshire return to Birmingham via routes not covered by the National Police ANPR monitoring cameras. Our Neighbourhood Watch group has collected and reported significant numbers of discarded plates, particularly along Forde Hall Lane and Gentleman's Lane.

"Our aim is to deter criminal activity in our area and help the authorities prevent crime and catch criminals."

System

The system we are proposing has been in use in Claverdon for several years and has proven to reduce the incidence of criminal activity and help identify criminals through detailed evidence. Residents remain very supportive of the initiative. The system is basically a network of CCTV cameras supported by host residents but connected to a single controller and viewed by a limited number of appointed administrators. It is not an open system. Equally, it is not connected to the National Police Network.

The cameras have recognition software to identify vehicle registration plates during the day and at night. Importantly, they also provide high resolution video showing the driver and passengers.

Host residents would be asked to provide an ethernet connection to their hub and allow the installers to position the camera to capture road traffic entering the village. Depending on the willing households, some locations may require camera mounting from a post.

Two solutions have been considered:

1. **Scheme 1** - An entry level solution comprising three cameras placed on Ullenhall Lane, Henley Road and Forde Hall Lane. This covers the main traffic flows and a primary exit route for stolen vehicles.
2. **Scheme 2** – An additional three cameras in order to capture entry and exits to Ullenhall via Church Road, Ramshill Lane and Dean's Lane. This scheme captures all entry and exit routes to Ullenhall.

Monitoring and Control

The software allows selection and search options. Specific registration numbers can be searched and the time of entry and exit over a specified period can be provided. A snap shot picture is presented and a click leads to a full video of the vehicle's approach.

Alternatively, activity can be recorded over specific time periods. As an example, a report can provide details of vehicles travelling along Forde Hall Lane between midnight and 6.00am. The ability to search and select is highly capable.



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

Police Liaison

The Police have endorsed this initiative and welcome efforts to deter crime in our Village. Police resources are directed toward data driven activity i.e. our own Whatsapp observations have no impact unless reported to the Police. They see this initiative as an extension of their own resources.

Signage

A request for signage has been made through the local authority and will need to be followed up. This is a key commitment that must be satisfied to comply with the IOC guidelines. In Claverdon, they decided to produce and install the signs themselves using a resident's business <http://www.signservice.co.uk/> at a cost of £150.



Cost and Maintenance

A quotation has been received from Warwickshire Audio Limited. They operate and maintain the system in Claverdon and service a number of security and home automation systems in Ullenhall.

Scheme 1 - A quote has been received and a budget of £5,000.00 covers the full installation with a small contingency to accommodate additional, unforeseen works. There are no annual maintenance costs included.

Scheme 2 – A quote has been received and a budget of £8,000.00 covers the full installation with a small contingency to accommodate additional, unforeseen works.

The system requires very little maintenance other than software updates and routine servicing.



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

Compliance and Privacy

Claverdon has provided an overview of data privacy and compliance issues and the Police have raised no concerns when questioned. We're confident that this system can operate with no barriers with regard to data or privacy matters.

1. Legislation defined by Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

<https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/home-cctv-systems/#rules>

If CCTV records beyond your property boundary, data protection law applies and there are rules you must follow. You must:

- Consider what area needs to be covered and what images or audio, or both, will be captured – you shouldn't capture more than you need to;
- Install signage that indicates CCTV is in operation;
- Ensure the footage recorded is stored securely and is only accessible by people who need to access it;
- Delete the footage regularly or automatically, or both; and
- Be able to respond appropriately to a request for the footage from people who appear in it.

2. Claverdon (CASE) Example template

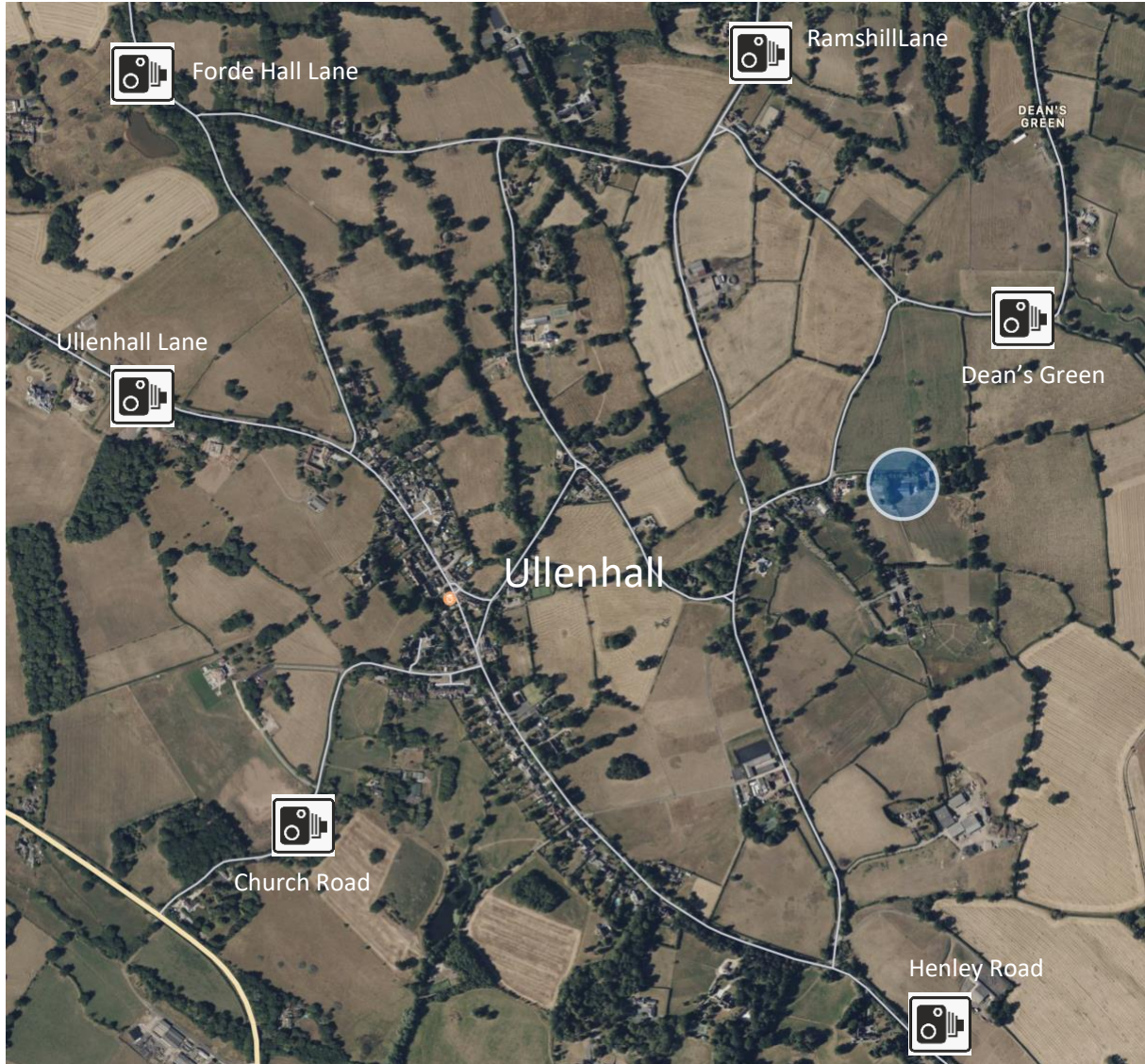
Case accepts the principles of the 1998 Act based on the Data Protection Principles as follows:

- data must be fairly and lawfully processed;
- processed for limited purposes and not in any manner incompatible with those purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate;
- not kept for longer than is necessary;
- processed in accordance with individuals' rights;
- secure.



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

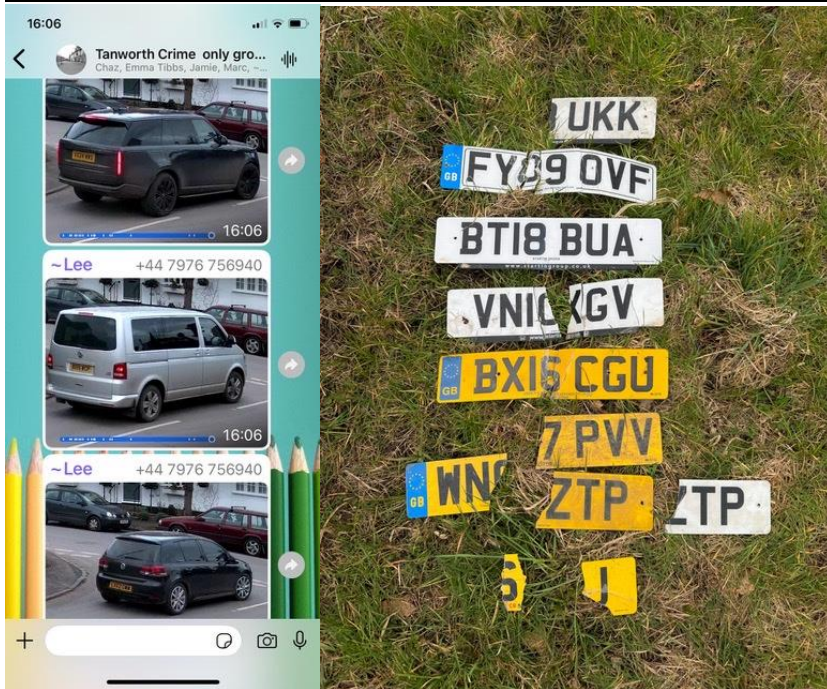
App 1: Proposed Camera Locations





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App 2: Incidents during May





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App 3: Copy of Claverdon's data protection policy measures

Claverdon Area Safer Environment (CASE) CCTV/ANPR Policy

Introduction

This Policy is to control the management, operation, use and confidentiality of the CCTV system located in Claverdon Village and owned by CASE.

It was prepared after taking due account of the Code of Practice published by the Data Protection Commissioner (July 2000). This policy will be subject to periodic review by CASE to ensure that it continues to reflect the public interest and that it and the system meets all legislative requirements.

CASE accepts the principles of the 1998 Act based on the Data Protection Principles as follows:

- data must be fairly and lawfully processed;
- processed for limited purposes and not in any manner incompatible with those purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate;
- not kept for longer than is necessary;
- processed in accordance with individuals' rights;
- secure.

Statement of Purpose

To provide a safe and secure environment for the benefit of those who might visit, work or live in the area. The system will not be used to invade the privacy of any individual, except when carried out in accordance with the law.

The scheme will be used for the following purposes:

- to reduce the fear of crime;
- to reduce the vandalism of property and to prevent, deter and detect crime and disorder;
- to assist the police, the Parish Council and other Law Enforcement Agencies with identification, detection, apprehension and prosecution of offenders by examining and using retrievable evidence relating to crime, public order or contravention of bye-laws;



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

- to deter potential offenders by publicly displaying the existence of CCTV, having cameras clearly sited that are not hidden and signs on display;
- to assist all “emergency services” to carry out their lawful

duties. **Changes to the Purpose or Policy**

A major change that would have a significant impact on either the purpose or this policy of operation of the CCTV scheme will take place only after discussion at CASE Committee meeting(s) and resolution at full CASE meetings by a majority vote. All agendas and post meeting minutes are available on request via email to: caseclav5@gmail.com .

Responsibilities of the Owners of the Scheme

CASE retains overall responsibility for the scheme.

CASE

CCTV Code of Practice

Management of the System

Day-to-day operational responsibility rests with Paul Johnson and Les Edwards who can be consulted out of hours, if and when necessary.

CASE will schedule an external contractor to access the system to carry out maintenance checks annually and essential repairs if and when required.

Breaches of this policy will be investigated by the CASE Secretary and reported to the Data Controller.

A CCTV system prevents crime largely by increasing the risk of detection and prosecution of an offender. Any relevant tape or digital evidence must be in an acceptable format for use at Court hearings. This policy must be read and understood by all persons involved in this scheme and individual copies of this policy will therefore be issued for retention. A copy will also be available for reference in the secure recording area(s).

Control and Operation of the Cameras, Monitors and Systems

The following points must be understood and strictly observed by operators:

1. Trained operators must act with due probity and not abuse the equipment or change the pre-set criteria to compromise the privacy of an individual.
2. The position of cameras and monitors have been agreed following consultation with the Parish Council.



Ullenhall

Neighbourhood Watch

3. No public access will be allowed to the monitoring system unless for lawful, proper and sufficient reason with formal approval of the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of CASE. The Police are permitted access to recording media if they have reason to believe that such access is necessary to investigate, detect or prevent crime. Any visit by the Police to view images will be formally logged by the operator.
4. Operators should regularly check the accuracy of the date/time displayed.
5. Digital records should be securely stored to comply with data protection and should only be handled by the minimum number of persons essential for carrying out reasonable monitoring activities. All digital images will be erased after a period of 30 days.
6. Images will not be supplied to the media, except on the advice of the police if it is deemed to be in the public interest. The Parish Council Liaison would inform the Chairman of CASE of any such emergency.
 7. As records may be required for evidence at Court, each person handling a digital record may be required to make a statement to a police officer and sign an exhibit label. Any extracted data that is handed to a police officer should be signed for by the police officer and information logged to identify the recording, the officer's name and police station. The log should also show when such information is returned to CASE by the police and/or the outcome of its use.
8. Any event that requires checking of recorded data should be clearly detailed in the log book of incidents, including Crime Numbers if appropriate.
9. Any damage to equipment or malfunction should be reported immediately to the person responsible for maintenance and a call logged showing the details. When a repair has been made this should also be logged showing the resolution details including date and time of completion.
10. Any request by an individual member of the public for access to their own recorded image must be made on an 'Access Request Form' and is subject to a standard fee. Forms are available from the CASE by email request only and will be submitted to the CASE committee for consideration and reply, normally within 10 days.

Accountability

Copies of the CCTV Policy are available in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, provided it does not breach security needs.

The Police will be informed of each installation and provided with a copy of this CCTV Policy.



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

Any written concerns or complaints regarding the use of the system will be considered by the CASE committee and a formal response issued via email.

THIS POLICY MUST BE COMPLIED WITH AT ALL TIMES.

I have read the above policy and agree to abide by these instructions. I will discuss any concerns with the Parish Clerk at any time.

Signed

Print Name

Date/...../.....

(CASE committee members are issued with their own copy of this policy and shall sign to confirm receipt and compliance.)

ACCESS REQUEST FORM – CCTV IMAGES

Recording Date:	Place of Recording:	Time of Recording:
Applicants Name and Address		Description of Applicant and any distinguishing feature (e.g. clothing):
Post Code:		
Tel. No:		
Signature of Applicant:		<i>(A recent photograph may be necessary to aid identification)</i>
<i>(or parent/guardian if under 18)</i>		
Reason for request:		
<i>(Continue overleaf if necessary)</i>		



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Received by:	CASE Signature:	Rec.Date:	Rec.Time:
Fee Charged <i>(or N/A):</i>	Fee Paid <i>(or N/A):</i>	Request Approved: YES/NO	Date Applicant Informed:



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

App 4 – Use of CCTV Evidence in Court

Legal Aspects of CCTV Footage as Evidence

In the UK, the use of CCTV footage as evidence in court is subject to various rules and regulations. The primary legislation governing this is the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), which incorporates the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The DPA requires that CCTV footage is processed fairly, lawfully, and transparently, ensuring the rights and freedoms of the individuals involved are respected.

In addition, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has published the CCTV Code of Practice, which offers further guidance on the proper use and management of CCTV systems. Compliance with this code is essential to ensure that any CCTV footage obtained is admissible as evidence in court.

Key factors to consider when using CCTV footage as evidence include:

Lawful Basis: For CCTV footage to be admissible in court, it must have been obtained lawfully. This means that the system should have been installed for a legitimate purpose, such as crime prevention or public safety. The use of CCTV must also be proportionate and necessary to achieve its intended purpose.

Privacy Notices: Signage must be in place to inform individuals that they are being monitored by CCTV. This ensures that individuals are aware of the purpose of the CCTV system and how their personal data is being processed.

Data Retention: CCTV footage must only be retained for as long as necessary to fulfil the purpose for which it was collected. The ICO recommends a retention period of 30 days for most CCTV systems.

Access Requests: Individuals have the right to request access to CCTV footage of themselves under the DPA. The footage must be provided within one month of the request, and any necessary redactions must be made to protect the identities of others in the footage.

Technical Aspects of CCTV Footage as Evidence

For CCTV footage to be admissible in court, it must be of sufficient quality and clarity to support the case being made. Factors to consider include:

Image Quality: The footage should be clear enough to allow for the identification of individuals, objects, and events. Low-resolution footage may not be sufficient for this purpose.

Timestamps: Accurate timestamps are essential for establishing the sequence of events and determining the relevance of the footage to the case. Footage without timestamps or inaccurate ones may be less persuasive in court.

Chain of Custody: The chain of custody refers to the process of handling and preserving evidence, ensuring that it remains unaltered from the time it is collected until it is presented in court. Proper documentation of the chain of custody is essential for establishing the authenticity and reliability of the CCTV footage.



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

Benefits and Limitations of CCTV Footage as Evidence

CCTV footage can offer several benefits as evidence in court, such as providing impartial, objective records of events, corroborating witness testimonies, and deterring criminal activity. However, it also has its limitations. Factors such as poor image quality, system malfunctions, and privacy concerns can all impact the usefulness of CCTV footage as evidence.

Conclusion On Using CCTV Footage in Court

CCTV footage can be a valuable source of evidence in UK court proceedings, provided that it is collected, processed, and managed in accordance with the DPA, GDPR, and ICO guidelines. It is essential for organisations and individuals to be aware of the legal and technical requirements for using CCTV footage in court in order to ensure its admissibility and effectiveness.

By complying with the relevant legislation and guidance, and by considering factors such as image quality, timestamps, and chain of custody, CCTV footage can be a powerful tool in supporting the pursuit of justice. However, it is also crucial to remain aware of the potential limitations of this type of evidence and to utilise additional forms of evidence where necessary.

Ultimately, using CCTV footage as evidence in UK courts can contribute to increased transparency and public confidence in the justice system, as long as it is approached with care, consideration, and a commitment to upholding the rights and privacy of all individuals involved



Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch

Draft invitation to host cameras

Dear Resident,

On behalf of the Ullenhall Neighbourhood Watch group, I would like to invite you to support plans to reduce criminal activity in our village by hosting a traffic monitoring ANPR camera.

Cameras are discreet and the same as those used for home CCTV coverage. Our plan is to install them on roads in and out of Ullenhall. The aim is to deter crime in our area by deterring criminal activity and providing valuable evidence to authorities in order that they can increase the conviction rate. Ullenhall is well known as an ANPR blackspot for criminals returning to Birmingham evidenced by an unprecedented level of discarded number plates along our lanes.

This is a private, Ullenhall initiative and is modelled on a successful scheme operating in Claverdon. I have attached the full and detailed proposal for your information. Your support would be to provide a location for an outward facing camera with sight of approaching traffic and connected to a single port of your broadband router. All costs associated with installation and maintenance are covered. The only requirement would be to keep the camera clear and unobstructed.

If you are willing to form part of this important scheme, kindly register your interest by leaving me a short message or calling as follows:

e-mail:

Mobile:

With kind regards

Neighbourhood Watch Group