

# Community Scrutiny CCTV Service Overview

11<sup>th</sup> October 2023



**Somerset**  
Council

# Background of CCTV service



Somerset Council has operated public open space CCTV cameras in Somerset since October 1994.

The cameras are permanently monitored 24 hrs a day, 365 days a year and the operatives are in close contact with the Police at all times via airwave radio, over 3 district channels.

The control room has a video wall with six large HD slim profile monitors. Each monitor can display one, large image for dealing with major incidents or hot spot areas, or up to 4, 6, 9, or 12 images from separate cameras at any time, and this is all controlled by the new Genetec VMS equipment, which was installed in February 2022.



## Overview of our aims, responsibilities and team

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- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to do all they reasonably can to prevent;
- Crime and disorder in their areas (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment),
- The misuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances
- Re-offending in their areas.

This will lead to improvements in people's quality of life as a result.

- Management responsibility for the monitoring, operation and technical maintenance of the *CCTV scheme is undertaken by Somerset Council* and its approved installation and maintenance contractor CDS (Computerised Data Systems).
- The CCTV Operations team consist of 1 Team Leader and 10 CCTV Monitoring Officers, all of whom are SIA licensed.
- Two members of staff, depending on operational requirements, undertake the 24-hour monitoring on a shift/rota basis.
- The scheme is operated in compliance with the internally approved CCTV Code of Practice, which has been agreed with the Police and has been prepared as guidance for Council staff and the operators of the system.
- This internal Code of Practice also reflects the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and associated regulations. This was reviewed in 2021 and is refreshed bi-annually.

## Not just a public space CCTV service

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In addition to monitoring our CCTV network, we offer three services which aid in the quality of service we deliver but also generate income to us as a local authority;

- 1. Business link radio system** – this is a service covering the three towns of Taunton, Bridgwater and Burnham on Sea (soon to incorporate Mendip). This service enable business owners, NTE venues and security to liaise with us on a 24-hour basis. This is charged at £25 per month and we currently have 102 members.
- 2. Private alarm monitoring** – Our VMS system enables security alarms to be linked back to our control room. We are able to monitor those that are covered by CCTV and alert police.
- 3. Private CCTV monitoring** – Businesses which require 24-hour monitoring of their CCTV can be covered by our team with a link back to the control room at Bridgwater House.



# Partnership working

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A list of priorities have been agreed with Avon and Somerset Constabulary, and our Town Council partners through monthly partnership meetings and fortnightly priorities meetings; The priorities are not listed in any particular order. They are all equally important and assist in evidencing the pressing need for the continued investment and use of CCTV to deter and prevent crime and disorder.

- Hate Crime
- Victimisation (including repeat victimisation)
- Vulnerability and Exploitation
- Anti-Social Behaviour (nuisance)
- Reducing Re-offending
- Serious and Organised Crime
- Road Safety
- Use of drugs
- Missing persons (adult and minors)



# Areas of coverage, CCTV locations and annual report

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The system currently monitors a total of 233 public space CCTV in the following towns;

Taunton 60

Bridgwater 79

Yeovil 29

Wellington 6

Burnham On Sea 6

Highbridge 2

Street 9

Wells 17

Glastonbury 7

Frome 10

Shepton Mallet 8

The locations of each camera and the relevant statistics relating to each individual camera can be found on the CCTV annual reports for each district.

The 2023 annual report will be a singular report covering each area within the Somerset Council boundaries and this will be published at the end of 2023.



## Reducing costs and improving results through external funding

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- In July 2022 the Local Authority undertook a CCTV upgrade project in the towns of Taunton and Yeovil, where a total of 22 CCTV cameras were upgraded from analogue to digital in order to improve standard of CCTV in our towns and also to improve the quality of evidence, we are able to provide to our partner agencies. This project was completed in May 2023.
- A further 11 were upgraded in Bridgwater through external funding between this period of time.
- Since June 2021 we have been successful in gaining £229,000 in funding to improve our CCTV network and keep the service as self-sufficient as is realistically possible.

The quality of our CCTV, combined with our partnership working has seen a reduction in crime over the last year across the towns of Taunton 20%, Bridgwater 22% and Yeovil 15%

Due to the constant drive to improve our system, we are continuously reviewing our CCTV network, including location of CCTV and need for additions and improvement. Current projects we are undertaking, all through external funding are;

1. 3 CCTV cameras in Brean – working with EDF to ensure the safety of tourists, HPC workers, local residents and businesses.
  2. Incorporating the CCTV network of West Somerset (Minehead, Williton and Watchet) to our CCTV control room system through PCC funding
  3. Incorporating Chard and Crewkerne CCTV to our CCTV Control room system through PCC funding.
  4. Installation of 3 CCTV cameras on Bristol Road, Bridgwater. Incorporating ANPR.
  5. Introduction of Business Link Radio to Mendip.
- **Over the last 9 years, Avon and Somerset Constabulary have paid the service a flat fee of £10,000 in order to produce copies of evidence for them. After discussions with the Crime Commissioner and numerous Neighbourhood Inspectors this will now be increased to £20,000 as of April 2023.**

# Generating greater revenue

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Moving forwards as a local authority, part of our business plan is to generate greater income.

We have identified three key areas where this can be achieved within the near to immediate future;

**1. Business link Radio System** - currently has 102 members, which at £25 per month generates £2550 per year.

Our aim is to double this within the next 6 months.

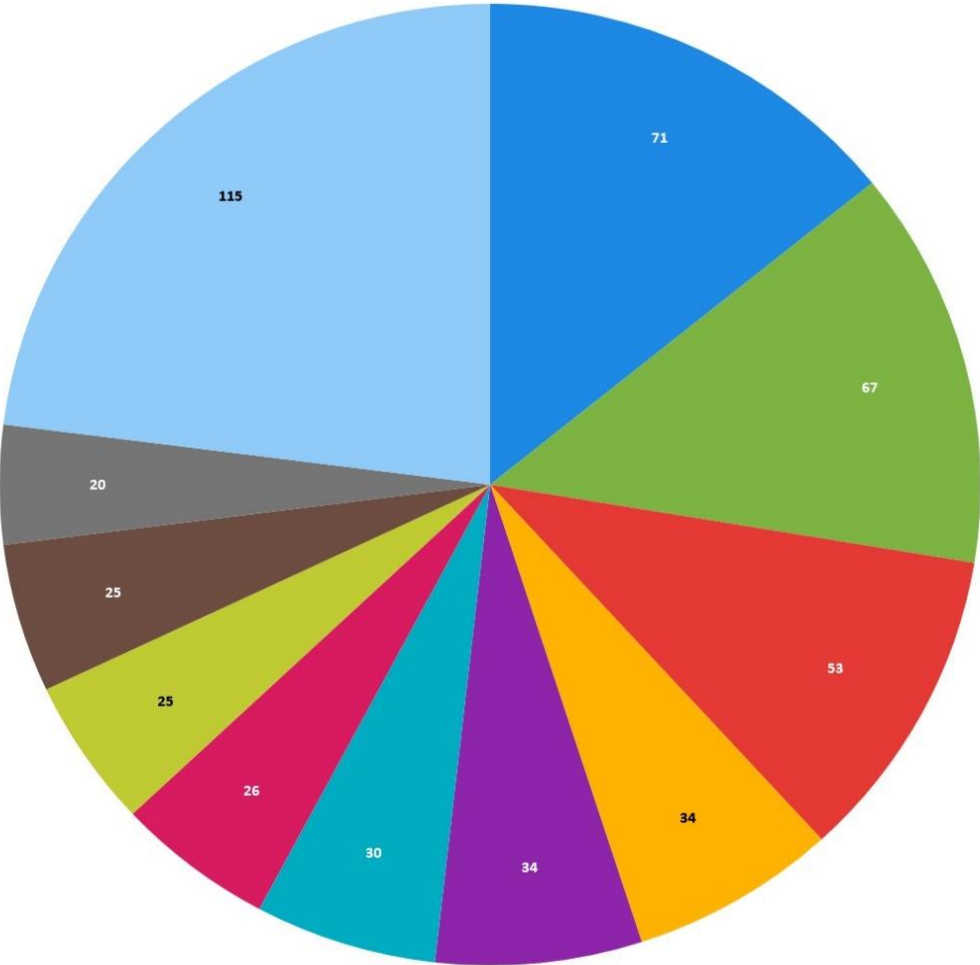
**2. CCTV monitoring** – we are now working with the YMCA Dulverton Group, Clarks Village and Bridgwater and Taunton College to take over the full-time monitoring of the CCTV systems for a monthly fee (this is dependant on the size of the system) All maintenance will be covered by the owners.

**3. Security Alarm monitoring** – We monitor the alarms of several businesses in Bridgwater including Showcase, Nandos and Allstars. We are also working with 6 Taunton Town Centre businesses and also Clarks Village in Street.

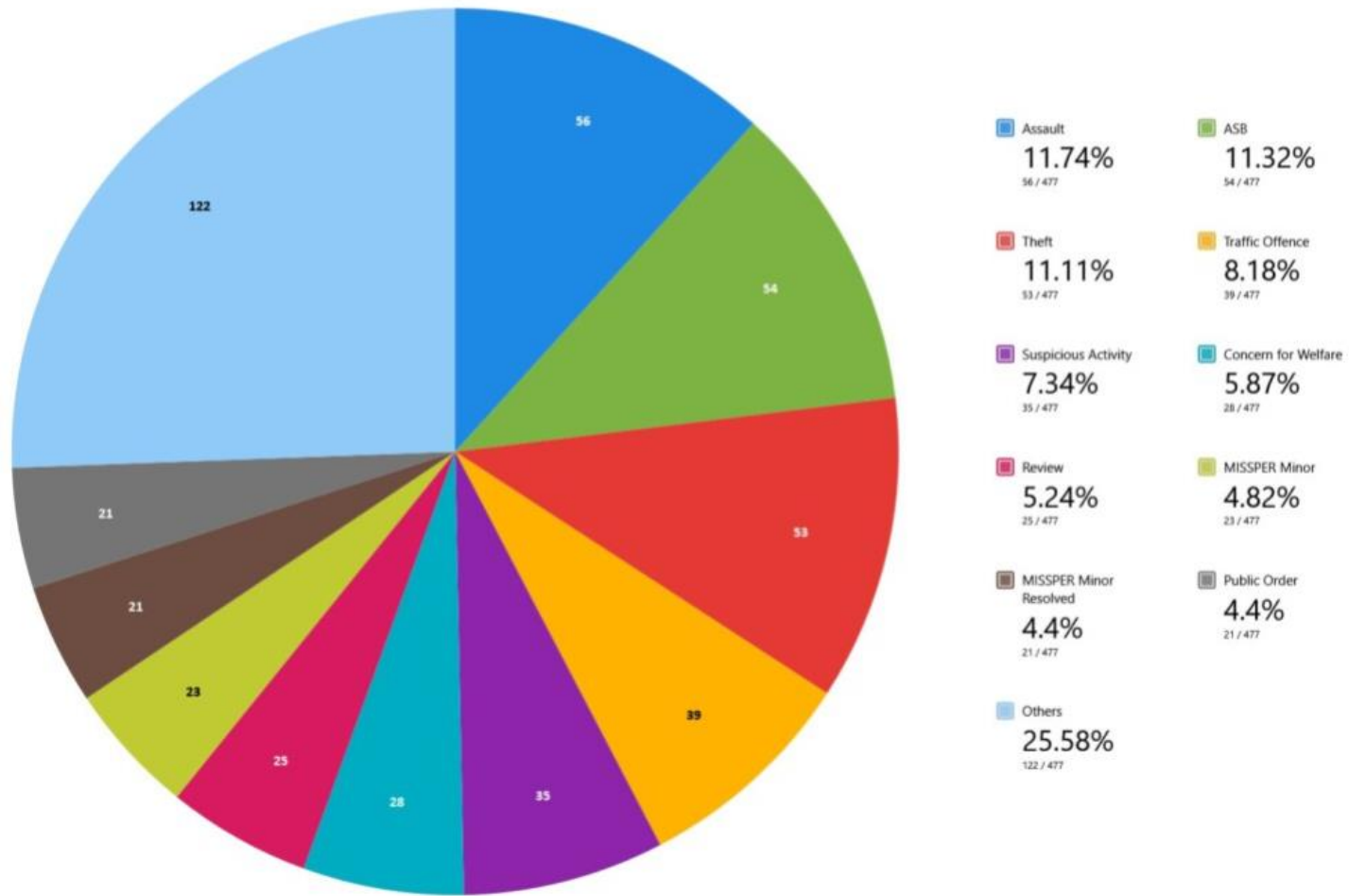




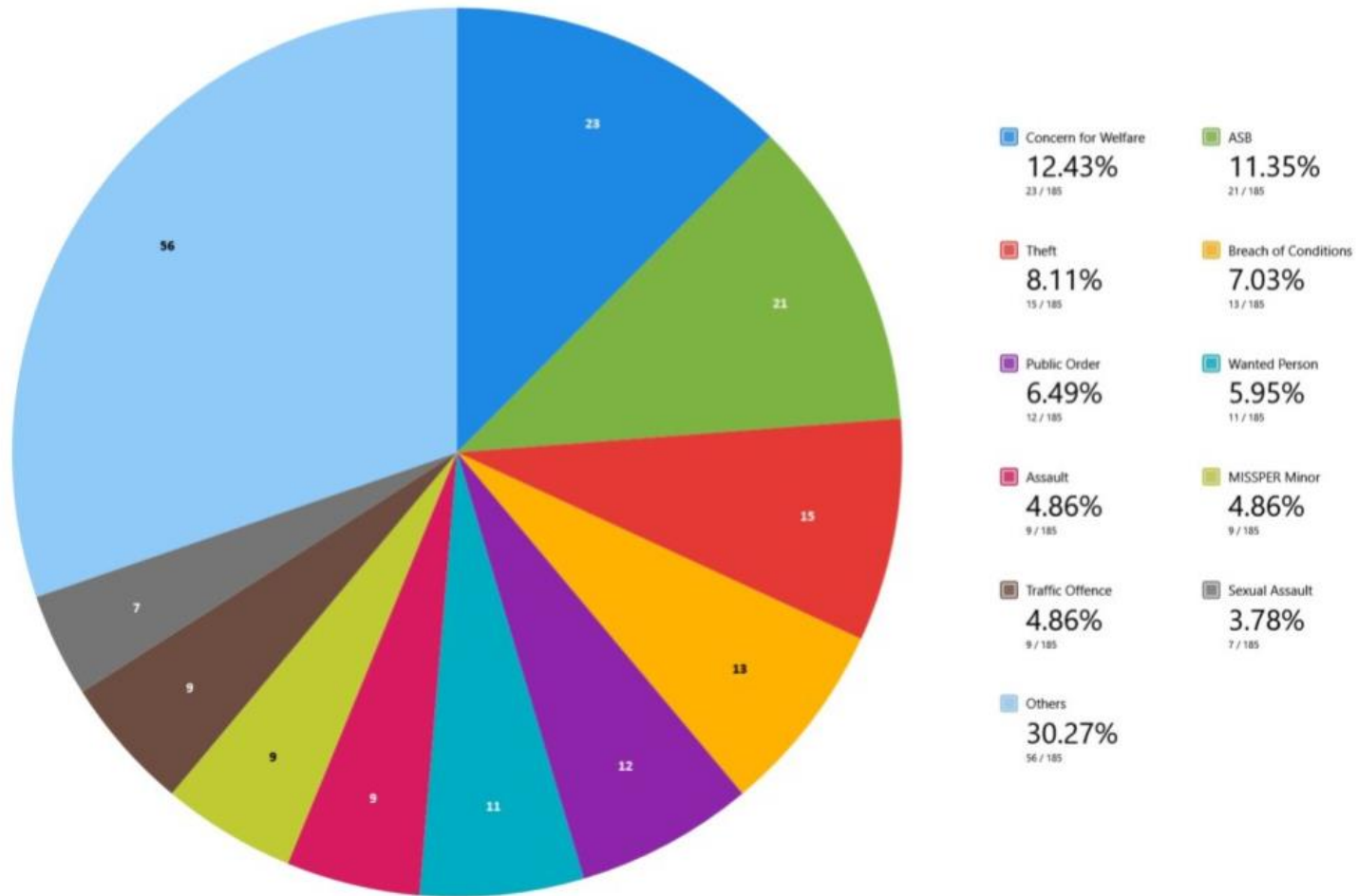
# Bridgwater April – July 2023



# Taunton April – July 2023



# Yeovil April – July 2023



Please feel free to ask any questions.

I would invite all members of the panel to attend our control room in order to gain an understanding of the role the team plays, how they represent Somerset Council over a 24 hour basis and the role they play in keeping residents, visitors and businesses safe.

Thank you.

