



CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) POLICY

1. Introduction

Ashington Town Council operates a Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) system to enhance the safety and security of its residents, staff, and visitors, and to assist in the detection and prevention of crime. This policy outlines the legal framework, operation, and governance of the Council's CCTV system, which is managed by a third-party contractor, Asset Watch Ltd

2. Objectives

- To enhance public safety by deterring and detecting crime.
- To protect Council property and assets.
- To support law enforcement authorities in investigating incidents.
- To ensure compliance with applicable laws and safeguard the privacy of individuals.

3. Legal Framework

Ashington Town Council's CCTV system operates in full compliance with the following UK laws and regulations:

Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) & UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR):

The Council is committed to processing personal data captured by CCTV in a lawful, fair, and transparent manner. CCTV footage will only be used for specific purposes, including the prevention of crime, public safety, and supporting law enforcement.

Surveillance Camera Code of Practice (2013):

Issued under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, the Council adheres to this Code to ensure that the use of CCTV is proportionate, necessary, and transparent.

Human Rights Act 1998:

The Council will ensure that the use of CCTV respects the rights to privacy under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. CCTV monitoring will be carried out in a way that minimally interferes with individuals' privacy.

Freedom of Information Act 2000:

Members of the public have the right to request information, including CCTV footage, under the Act. All requests will be handled in accordance with the law.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA):

The Council will ensure that any covert surveillance complies with RIPA where applicable.

4. Operation and Management

The operation, surveillance, playback, and sharing of CCTV footage are managed by **Asset Watch Ltd**, a contractor appointed by Ashington Town Council.

The responsibilities of Asset Watch Ltd include:



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Camera Operation: Installing and maintaining CCTV cameras in key locations identified by the Council for crime prevention and public safety. Cameras are clearly visible and signposted.

Footage Access: Controlling access to recorded footage and ensuring only authorised personnel view or handle the footage. Footage may be shared with law enforcement agencies, NCC Community Safety Team, NCC Environmental Enforcement, and any Local Authority body when necessary.

Playback and Retention: Ensuring recorded footage is retained for a maximum of 30 days, unless needed for ongoing investigations. After this period, the data will be securely deleted.

Data Security: Protecting recorded footage from unauthorised access, loss, or damage. Asset Watch Ltd will ensure the system is regularly reviewed for security and compliance.

5. Sharing Crime Prevention Stories

Ashington Town Council recognises the positive impact that CCTV can have on public safety and community confidence. When CCTV contributes to crime prevention or detection, the Council may share stories of successful interventions, in collaboration with Asset Watch Ltd, while adhering to all legal requirements. The following principles will guide this process:

Anonymisation: Stories will be shared in a way that protects the identity of individuals, unless legal authorities permit otherwise. Personal data will not be disclosed without explicit consent or a legal basis.

Collaboration with Authorities: The sharing of crime prevention stories will be done in close cooperation with law enforcement agencies, ensuring the correct balance between transparency and confidentiality.

Public Communication: Stories highlighting the success of CCTV in preventing or solving crime may be shared through Ashington Town Council's communication platforms, including newsletters, social media, and press releases, ensuring full compliance with data protection regulations.

6. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing compliance with UK laws and any changes in legislation. Regular audits of the CCTV system will be conducted to evaluate its effectiveness and adherence to this policy. This includes a quarterly meeting with Asset Watch and Northumbria Police, and key stakeholders.

7. Complaints

Any complaints or concerns regarding the Council's CCTV system can be directed to the Executive Officer. Complaints will be handled in accordance with the Council's complaints procedure, and individuals have the right to escalate any concerns to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

8. Contact Information

For any queries regarding this policy or to request access to CCTV footage, please contact:

Ashington Town Council, Telephone (01670) 624521, admin@ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk