

Richmond and Wandsworth Councils: CCTV Code of Practice 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Code of Practice

This Code of Practice regulates the operation of Richmond and Wandsworth Councils' closed-circuit television (CCTV) system. It outlines the rules and guidelines that must be followed by the Council, Police, and any other parties or organisations involved in the management, operation, or administration of the CCTV system.

1.2 Ownership of the CCTV System

The CCTV system is owned by the Richmond and Wandsworth Borough Councils and is managed by the Joint Control Centre on behalf of Housing Estate Services. Since 2021, the Joint Control Centre (JCC) has been responsible for monitoring CCTV coverage across both boroughs, consolidating the control rooms of Wandsworth and Richmond into a single, centralised facility.

1.3 Contributors to the Code of Practice

This Code of Practice was reviewed and updated in 2024, in collaboration with the Council's Community Safety Team.

1.4 Future Revision and Consultation

This Code of Practice will be reviewed annually by the CCTV Steering Group and will be subject to consultation with Community Safety and the Assistant Director of Housing Management where significant change is proposed.

1.5 Supplementary Documentation

The Code of Practice is supplemented by the following documents:

- Revised WBC CCTV Procedure Manual
- [WBC CCTV Strategy 2024-2029.pdf](#)
- [LBR CCTV Strategy 2024-2029.pdf](#)

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Richmond and Wandsworth Councils have a longstanding commitment to developing and improving Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) systems across the boroughs. Since the inception of the public domain CCTV system, there has been significant growth in investment, technology, usage, and public awareness of CCTV.

2.2 The original focus was to provide reassurance to local residents, businesses and visitors that should a crime and disorder incident occur, there were monitoring facilities that could capture and record incidents and facilitate any follow up prosecutions.

2.3 Legislation now requires CCTV system owners to comply with laws on data protection, human rights, surveillance, crime, freedom of information and traffic regulations.

2.4 The Richmond and Wandsworth CCTV system currently comprises 1,390 cameras, primarily used for crime prevention, public safety, town centre monitoring, and traffic enforcement. In Wandsworth, 1,290 cameras are in operation, located across housing estates and in town centres. Richmond operates approximately 100 cameras across town centres and public spaces.

- 2.5 Across Wandsworth, there are a number of third-party CCTV networks in operation such as Transport for London (TfL) on red routes, at stations and on trains, and private networks for commercial premises.
- 2.6 Richmond and Wandsworth Councils use CCTV to enhance public safety, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, manage traffic, support police operations, improve security in retail areas and housing estates, and assist emergency services during incidents or emergencies.
- 2.7 The number of requests for CCTV footage from the Council increased significantly in the 2023/24 financial year, reaching 3,573. A network link to the Metropolitan Police South West Basic Command Unit, allows the Police to remotely view footage. Requests for downloaded data must still be made to the Joint Control Centre. The system provided to the Police will remain the property of Richmond and Wandsworth Councils and will be subject to the same strict guidelines followed by the Joint Control Centre (JCC). The JCC does not permit downloads by the Metropolitan Borough Command Unit; only viewing is allowed under a data-sharing agreement.
- 2.8 The prevalence of CCTV surveillance should not simply be accepted as inevitable or as an automatic justification for the ongoing use of CCTV by both Councils. Any use of CCTV must be consistent with the Council's public safety aims and efforts to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 2.9 This Code of Practice has been updated to include recommendations made by the CCTV Steering Group, to meet current and future statutory requirements as well as to demonstrate clear direction for CCTV usage in Richmond and Wandsworth boroughs.
- 2.10 CCTV must benefit the communities of Richmond and Wandsworth without compromising individual privacy. The Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner's guidance on evidence-based installation and data sharing will be adhered to at all times.
- 2.11 There is a distinct division of roles regarding the management of CCTV systems; one focusing on crime prevention and another on enforcement. Both are of equal importance in providing reassurance to the public and helping to make Richmond and Wandsworth safer boroughs.

3. SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF CCTV CAMERAS IN RICHMOND AND WANDSWORTH

Richmond and Wandsworth employ a range of CCTV cameras across various settings to meet specific surveillance needs. These include monitoring busy town centres, enforcing traffic regulations, improving public safety on housing estates, and addressing crime hotspots with redeployable units. Each camera type supports the council's commitment to public safety.

3.1 Town Centre / Public Space cameras

Cameras in public spaces including town centres are primarily used to identify antisocial behaviour, crime and disorder and late-night disorder for public safety and crime prevention purposes in the main shopping and commercial areas. It is consistent with the Council's public safety aims to continue to use these cameras for the purposes identified.

3.2 Town Centre and Traffic Enforcement camera

These cameras are located in the town centres across both boroughs. They are used for the specialist purposes of responding to crime and disorder as well as being used to enforce traffic and parking regulations through the issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs).

3.3 Housing Estate cameras (Wandsworth)

Located on the Council's residential housing estates, these are predominantly used for estate management purposes and to identify anti-social behaviour and crime where incidences occur. They also provide for increased security at entrances and vulnerable locations and have a key role in deterring vandalism and misuse of public areas.

3.4 Redeployable CCTV cameras

These cameras are installed at specific locations on a temporary basis and predominantly used to collect evidence in identified hotspots of criminal activity or anti-social behaviour.

3.5 All Public Space and Housing Estate cameras may employ video analytics to assist CCTV operators, for example, by identifying specific colours or patterns in both vehicles and clothing.

4. CRIME PREVENTION PURPOSE STATEMENT

4.1 The CCTV system is established to assist in reducing crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour and the fear of crime by helping to provide a safer environment for those people who live and work in the area and for visitors travelling through the area.

4.2 The main purposes of the CCTV system are to provide the Police with assistance to detect, deter and prevent crime and disorder; to help identify, apprehend and prosecute offenders; to provide the Police/Council with evidence to enable criminal and/or civil proceedings to be brought in the courts and to maintain public order.

4.3 The key objectives of the use of the CCTV system are, to:

- Deter crime and to provide public reassurance.
- Detect, prevent or reduce the incidence of street crime against the person.
- Improve general security in the main retail areas of both boroughs, both in terms of personal safety and security of buildings and premises, in order to make the town centres more attractive areas in which to shop, work and visit.
- Increase security in a number of housing estates in Wandsworth, both in terms of building security and in order to provide evidence to tackle antisocial behaviour and nuisance identified in these areas.
- Improve the operational response of Police in the boroughs of Richmond and Wandsworth and assist in the policing of major civil disorder incidents. Both councils' CCTV systems plays an important role in helping the Police detect crime and identify potential investigative opportunities.
- Assist the Police with specific operations aimed at apprehending criminals or intelligence gathering and in the event of acts of terrorism or civil emergencies; and
- Use the cameras as a deterrent and improve the detection of fly-tipping violations and other waste management related matters throughout both boroughs.

4.4 The CCTV system will be operated at all times with due regard for the privacy of individuals and in accordance with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. It will not be used to invade the privacy of any individual in residential, business or other private premises, buildings or land.

4.5 Any user found contravening the privacy of individuals in breach of the Code of Practice will be subject to investigation under the Council's disciplinary code of practice.

4.6 Subject Access requests

Recorded material is not provided to members of the public or media organisations for profit, gain or commercial exploitation. This does not affect the right of individuals to access any personal data under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR or the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is known as a Subject Access request.

4.7 Recorded material may be supplied to media organisations for purposes which are specifically approved by the Senior Responsible Officer (Director of Housing Management) such as searches for missing persons and information deemed to be in the public interest.

4.8 Requests for CCTV Material

All requests for CCTV material will be in writing, logged and subject to a signed handover detailing the basis for the request and authorising officer. This process is subject to regular review. Application forms are available through the Council's websites:

Richmond:

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/community_safety/crime_prevention/cctv/cctv_members_of_public

Wandsworth: <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/community-safety/crime-prevention/cctv/cctv-members-of-public/>

5. TRAFFIC REGULATION ENFORCEMENT PURPOSE STATEMENT

5.1 The CCTV system ensures the safe and efficient operation of the road network through the detection of contraventions of traffic, bus lanes and parking regulations.

5.2 In order for operators to determine non-compliance with such regulations, the system enables fully trained staff to:

- Review traffic activity and approve violations of traffic regulations.
- Identify vehicle registration number, colour and type of vehicles contravening traffic regulations.
- Initiate the serving of Penalty Charge Notifications (PCNs) to the registered keepers of vehicles identified as contravening the regulations.
- Record evidence clips of each contravention to ensure that representations and appeals can be fully answered.
- Enable timed and dated pictorial evidence of such contraventions to be produced for adjudication or as information to the owner of such vehicles.
- Enable the immediate dispatch of a civil enforcement officer and towaway truck for targeted enforcement against vehicles contravening regulations.

- 5.3** The CCTV system will be operated at all times with due regard for the privacy of individuals and in accordance with the requirements of the [Human Rights Act 1998](#), [Data Protection Act 2018](#), [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#). It will not be used to invade the privacy of any individual in residential business or other private premises, buildings or land. However, CCTV officers can apply privacy screening to any camera and redact video footage when necessary, occasionally doing so for other departments as well.
- 5.4** Key objectives of the use of the CCTV system for traffic and parking enforcement and management are to:
- Use cameras as a deterrent and improve driver compliance with traffic regulations.
 - Facilitate the detection and prosecution of offenders in relation to non-compliance with existing regulations.
 - Assist the Police in traffic management, for instance identifying and responding to traffic trouble spots.
 - Assist with achieving the key objectives of other town centre schemes operated by Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. (e.g. roadworks, footway/pavement enhancements, street furniture etc).

6. MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNCIL CCTV SYSTEM

- 6.1** The CCTV system is managed from the Joint Control Centre based in Wandsworth Town Hall. It is managed solely by the Council but utilised by the Police daily and benefits from a permanent Police Officer working with the dedicated CCTV Monitoring team. In addition, a series of local arrangements and procedures are in place, listed from 6.2 to 6.6 (below).
- 6.2 Security access to viewing equipment**
A number of satellite viewing stations, where temporary PCs may be set up, exist outside of the secure Joint Control Centre. For tackling and responding to crime and disorder issues. Police can request access any of the CCTV cameras from within their local and regional operational control rooms with priority access should a serious incident occur. In addition:
- Traffic Enforcement is monitored from within Wandsworth Town Hall.
 - The Events Team Control Centre in Battersea Park has access for crime, disorder and community safety issues.
 - Housing Area teams (x 4), Housing Estate Services (Wandsworth) and other Council departments have access to view and review CCTV.
- 6.3** Each of these satellite viewing facilities has secure viewing procedures and must comply with the Council's CCTV procedures and protocols. The facility exists to monitor and review viewing activity through regular audits.
- 6.4** CCTV footage is restricted to the Joint Control Centre, with no recording or download capabilities permitted at satellite viewing facilities or remote sites.
- 6.5** Only authorised personnel suitably vetted to an appropriate level (Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checked), will be allowed to operate the CCTV system.

- 6.6** Access to the Joint Control Centre is restricted. Only authorised persons with specific requirements are allowed access. All access is recorded using a visitors log and by appointment.
- 6.7** **Fault management**
Automated fault checking is an integral component of the Video Management system. Faults are prioritised for repair within the terms of the CCTV maintenance contract.
- 6.8** **Recording retention**
All recordings are stored within the Joint Control Centre at the Wandsworth Town Hall complex for a minimum of 31 days on digital storage hard drives. Unless specifically retained in response to requests or investigations.
- 6.9** **Procedures and protocol documentation**
An internal CCTV procedure manual is under continuous review. It is regularly updated to ensure compliance with legislation including the Data Protection Act 2018; Protection of Freedoms Act 2012; UK General Data Protection Regulation (2021) and the associated data protection principles found in the [Information Commissioner's Office guidance](#).
- 6.10** **Installing New Cameras**
Any proposal for the permanent installation of new CCTV cameras must be supported by evidence and recommendations from the CCTV Steering Group. Redeployable installations are based on evidence-led requests from the police or councillors and are usually limited to a two-month period unless further evidence justifies an extension. All cameras are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with BS CCoP. A business case must accompany each proposal, outlining the need, cost analysis, budget impact and anticipated benefits. The CCTV Steering Group will maintain oversight throughout the process.
- 6.11** **Redeployable cameras**
The deployment of temporary cameras must be approved by the CCTV Steering Group, with clearly stated objectives and reason for deployment. These may include temporary replacement for a faulty high priority camera; as part of Police or related security operation; in response to identified crime and disorder issues; in response to identified antisocial behaviour; investigating blue badge fraud; to deal with fly-tipping; for public safety and large events; and to investigate perceived road safety issues including banned traffic movements.
- 6.12** **Public information**
All areas covered by the permanent camera network will have appropriate signage. The signage will identify Richmond or Wandsworth Council as the operator and give contact details of the relevant Council should any queries arise.
- 6.13** **Requests for Information**
Any request from an individual for the disclosure of personal data which he/she believes is recorded by virtue of the system will be directed to the Joint Control Centre. The principles of Sections 7 and 8 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (Rights of Data Subjects and Others) shall be followed in respect of every request. Exceptions can be made subject to Section 29 of the Act Page 11 of 14 (prevention or detection of crime). Each application received will be assessed on its own merits.

6.14 Preventing misuse of the system

The purpose of the CCTV system is to provide overt surveillance of public areas, including housing estates in Wandsworth. Wherever possible the cameras will be sited to view just public areas and not overlook private dwellings or other areas where privacy is expected. It will not always be possible to achieve this as certain cameras have the capability of viewing private/unwanted locations e.g. through the zoom facility. Wherever possible, privacy zones - blank areas configured through the Video Management System - will be placed on the cameras to reduce any intrusion into private space. Consideration must always be given to Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (right to respect for private and family life). There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except as such in accordance with the law.

6.15 Directed Surveillance

Directed surveillance is defined in Section 26(2) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 as surveillance which is covert, but not intrusive and undertaken:

- for the purpose of a specific investigation or specific operation;
- in such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person (whether or not one specifically identified for the purpose of the investigation or operation); and
- in situations where getting authorisation in advance is not practical due to the urgent nature of the events or circumstances.

6.16 Authorisation of Directed Surveillance (Regulatory of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 RIPA)

Applications to carry out directed surveillance can only be made by the senior authorising officer of those public authorities listed in or added to Section 32(6) of the 2000 Act. The Richmond and Wandsworth Executive Director of Finance is the designated officer to oversee the Council's use of its surveillance powers under the act and to ensure designated authorising officers meet RIPA and Freedom Bill standards. Within the Police such authority sits with designated Superintendents. For specific purpose of preventing or detecting crime or preventing disorder the Council uses RIPA for the following types of investigations:

- parking permit fraud
- crimes under Environmental Health and Trading Standards legislation
- fly-tipping and environmental waste
- unauthorised occupancy of Council housing; and
- fraud and corruption.

Appropriate documentation must accompany authorisations with explicit details of purpose, location, duration and the name of the responsible officer in line with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. Camera operators will not deploy CCTV for directed surveillance without the existence of such authorisation confirmed by the Joint Control Centre Manager.

6.17 Media

Recorded material is not provided to members of the public or media organisations for profit gain or commercial exploitation. This does not prejudice the right of individuals to access any personal data under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 nor the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

6.18 Audit

Regular checks on the operation of the CCTV system will be undertaken by the Joint Control Centre Manager and will include examination of control records; data histories and their contents and will be undertaken on a sufficiently regular frequency to ensure safeguarding of the system. In addition, the systems in operation will be subject to the Council's formal external audit process on a programmed basis to provide an independent audit process.

6.19 Scrutiny and Overview

The Joint Control Centre will produce an annual report on the Council's CCTV system and operations to formally report on the effectiveness of all new installations; detail the use and effectiveness of CCTV deployable cameras; provide a breakdown of camera types e.g. Housing, Town Centre surveillance and dual use with traffic enforcement; the effectiveness of the cameras both in terms of operation, cost and benefit; and whether it is appropriate or possible to remove camera's to rationalise the network. The report is issued by the Steering Group on behalf of the Director of Housing Management, the Senior Responsible Officer in the Housing Department.

6.20 The CCTV Steering Group

A dedicated CCTV Steering group was established in 2024 and receives reports on the operation of housing estate cameras in Wandsworth. The group formally reports on the effectiveness of all new installations; details the use and effectiveness of deployable cameras; the effectiveness of the cameras both in terms of operation, cost and benefit; and whether it is appropriate or possible to remove cameras to rationalise the network. The CCTV Steering Group has adopted a Terms of Reference following publication of both councils' CCTV strategies.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

7.1 The CCTV system is owned by Richmond and Wandsworth Councils and is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Joint Control Centre (based within the Housing department).

7.2 Confidentiality

All staff engaged in the management and operation of the CCTV system apply strict confidentiality in respect of all information gained or observed. This shall prohibit the disclosure of any such information to any third party (accept as may be required by law).

7.3 Complaints

Richmond and Wandsworth Councils is committed to operating the CCTV system in an open and fair manner. Any complaints will be investigated thoroughly and promptly according to the Council's Suggestions and Complaints guide on the Council's website. All complaints will be reported as part of the annual report to the relevant committee.

- [Wandsworth Council complaints guidance](#)
- [Richmond Council complaints guidance](#)

7.4 Related documents:

- [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000](#)
- [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)

7.5 More information can be found on each Council's website:
www.richmond.gov.uk
www.wandsworth.gov.uk