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1. Introduction, Objectives and Scope

Introduction

- 1.1 This policy provides information on the circumstances in which we will use CCTV, and how residents can obtain copies of their personal data.
- 1.2 It also gives details of our position on resident's use of surveillance, including Ring doorbells and mobile recording.

Objectives

- 1.3 We will use CCTV and other fixed position surveillance tools to improve safety and security, especially where there is a potential risk of crime or threat to the safety and well-being of individuals and property.

We will comply with the law and (wherever possible) prevailing good practice when capturing and using video and audio footage from our surveillance systems.

We will balance the benefits of CCTV use with the associated impact on resident privacy and regularly review our CCTV systems to ensure their use remains justified.

- 1.4 We will only use surveillance cameras where necessary, for a specific purpose, to meet a pressing need. This need will usually be to:

- Detect and deter crime and ASB in public areas;
- Identify offenders to assist with successful prosecution or other enforcement action;
- Protect our residents and staff; and/or,
- Reduce the fear of crime and make neighbourhoods feel safer.

Scope

- 1.5 This policy applies to all areas managed by Lewisham Council's Housing Services. This includes:
 - Residential properties and gardens including communal areas
 - Community facilities, buildings and land within managed neighbourhoods
 - New or existing housing developments

- 1.6 This policy and the associated procedures should be followed by all Housing Services staff (whether permanent, temporary or voluntary), all contractors and third parties working for or on behalf of us, and all Lewisham Council residents (regardless of tenure).
- 1.7 This policy excludes any door entry systems installed by us which do not record sound or visuals

2. Systems managed by us

Installing new CCTV systems

- 2.1 Following our objectives (pa.1.3), we will only use surveillance systems where necessary. This means that we will first consider solutions which are less intrusive and expensive than CCTV (*e.g. additional lighting or upgrading a lock*).
- 2.2 Where and when we believe it may be appropriate to install CCTV in an estate or communal area, we will write to residents who would be impacted to confirm:
- The purpose of the CCTV;
 - Whether it is temporary or permanent;
 - Who to contact if the system is damaged;
 - Whether there is a cost recoverable from a service charge for the CCTV;
 - That we have the appropriate authorisation to install CCTV;
 - That we have the appropriate controls to keep the data secure;
 - That we have conducted a data privacy impact assessment (DPIA); and
 - How they will be able to access their data.
- 2.3 We will consult residents if any cost of the proposed system would be recovered from their service charge.
- 2.4 We will decide during development of new build properties whether to install a surveillance system. This decision will be informed by a Data Privacy Impact Assessment and will usually be reviewed once the building is occupied.

Ongoing requirements

- 2.5 Every surveillance system will have a completed DPIA, which will be updated regularly.
- We will complete a visual check of all surveillance systems every six months, and an enhanced check every three years.
- Every system [excluding hidden systems] will have visible signs alerting residents to the recording, with our contact information.
- 2.6 We will remove cameras when they are no longer required for their original purpose. Before removing fixed cameras, we will consult local residents.

Sound Recording

- 2.7 We will only record sound via CCTV cameras when tackling anti-social behaviour and crime, not for general observation.

We will put up signs and make it very clear if audio recording is in use (except when being used covertly – see 5.7).

Covert CCTV

- 2.8 In some circumstances, we may use covert (hidden) CCTV systems.

We will only use these systems when we suspect criminal activity (such as tenancy fraud or anti-social behaviour), and other methods of evidence gathering has not been successful.

It is very uncommon for covert CCTV to be used, and is usually requested by the police for a specific cause

- 2.9 The use of hidden CCTV will always be time limited and authorised by the Council's corporate CCTV team, who will obtain authorisation under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) from a Magistrate.
- 2.10 Where we use hidden CCTV, no signs will be displayed, and we will have no obligation to tell any individual that CCTV is in place.

3. Handling CCTV footage

How we manage CCTV footage

- 3.1 We will usually retain images and audio recordings for 31 days, after which they will be erased.

However, if the information relates to an ongoing anti-social behaviour case, we will erase images and audio recordings within twelve months of the case closure or the conclusion of any legal proceedings (whichever comes later).
- 3.2 We will keep a record when we review images, download images, disclose data legally to a third party, move the data to another location, or process a Subject Access Request.

Only staff authorised and trained to operate CCTV equipment can review, download and share data. We hold a central list for all our cameras and staff authorised to operate our CCTV equipment.
- 3.3 Where CCTV systems are managed by third party managing agents that we have appointed, they must follow this CCTV Policy.

Where CCTV has been installed and is being managed by a third party, we will direct any enquiries to this third party.
- 3.4 If a resident has captured evidence of criminal activity on their personal device, they should share this information with the Police. We will not store this information, except where necessary for an active ASB case.

Requests for use as evidence

- 3.5 You may make a request for footage to be used as evidence in a civil or criminal case.

In these circumstances, we will require the request to come from your insurance company, solicitor, or the Police.
- 3.6 We may impose an administration fee for the search and/or provision of CCTV images. This charge will be viewable on our website.

Subject Access Requests

- 3.7 You have a right to request a copy of your personal data, and this can extend to images of you captured by our cameras. You can make a Subject Access Request by contacting us at subjectaccessrequest@lewisham.gov.uk. You can find more information [on our website](#)
- 3.8 We may refuse to respond to your request where the act allows, particularly where it might prejudice the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension and prosecution of offenders, and the exercise of the Council's statutory functions.

- 3.9 Before submitting a SAR, please bear in mind that it is unlikely our CCTV cameras will have recorded any footage that includes images in which you personally can be seen or accurately identified.

4. Resident use of surveillance

Private surveillance systems

- 4.1 In this section, 'private surveillance systems' refers to, for example, 'Ring' doorbell cameras.
- 4.2 We hold no responsibility to oversee or manage these systems. Residents may install these systems without seeking formal permission from the Council.
- 4.3 However, we retain the right to withdraw this implied permission and request that any system is removed, if it:
- Contributes to neighbour disputes or allegations of harassment;
 - Causes disruption or distress to others;
 - Breaches privacy or data protection principles.

Residents who install these systems are responsible for their own compliance with GDPR. This includes:

- Ensuring that their system does not intrude on public or communal spaces unnecessarily;
- Informing individuals that recording is taking place;
- Responding appropriately to any data access requests.

They may wish to consult [this advice from Which on their legal responsibilities](#). We encourage residents to consider the potential impact on their neighbours before installing any such system.

- 4.4 If a resident is concerned about a neighbour's use of surveillance systems, [they should refer to this Information Commissioner's Office guidance on their rights and options](#).
- 4.5 If a customer's private CCTV system becomes a factor in a neighbour dispute, or an allegation of harassment is made, we may exercise our right to withdraw permission and require any system to be removed.

Other resident recordings

- 4.6 Residents and visitors are reminded that should seek consent if they wish to:
- film our employees;
 - record conversations (including phone conversations) with our employees;
 - record other residents and visitors in communal areas in and around our buildings; or,
 - share any such recordings on social media platforms.
- 4.7 Our tenancy and lease agreements contain clauses prohibiting nuisance and harassment. We will take action under this clause if a resident harasses, interferes with the peace and comfort of, or causes offence to their neighbours, our employees, agents or contractors through any of the behaviours in paragraph 4.6.
- 4.8 If a leaseholder requires the council to enforce the mutual covenants relating to nuisance against their fellow leaseholders, pursuant to the council's standard lease terms- the council is entitled to seek an indemnity from that leaseholder for their costs and expenses of pursuing such action. The Council will only take action where there is sufficient evidence to justify doing so.

5. Monitoring and controls

- 5.1 We will review this policy and its procedures in line with any changed to legislation, regulation and good practice.
- 5.2 We keep a list of all active CCTV/surveillance systems for which we have managed contracts. These are available on request.
- 5.3 We will regularly review the suitability and effectiveness of the CCTV/surveillance systems we have in place. We will keep a record of Data Protection Impact Assessments, and these will be reviewed where there are significant changes.
- 5.4 Information will be stored in line with data protection principles. We have processes in place to erase data beyond the dates stated in the policy.

6. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 6.1 An Equality assessment was undertaken during the development of this policy. No adverse impacts were identified regarding any protected characteristic.

7. Communication and Consultation

- 7.1 In the development of this policy we consulted with residents by means of a survey and a workshop discussion. Residents wanted clear links to relevant legislation, including how we will handle requests from residents who wish to install surveillance of their own. We also used feedback from complaints and ASB cases where this has already been an issue or source of conflict. Residents asked us to confirm that we will consult with them where we may be considering deploying or removing CCTV, and how we will check that it is an effective solution.
- 7.2 This policy will be communicated through Lewisham Council's website. We may also produce additional information and reminders for residents - such as newsletters and information for new tenants, or at the point of request.
- 7.3 We consulted with staff from key departments when developing this policy to help us to arrive at a balanced and informed approach. This included those managing CCTV contracts; those managing housing and ASB, those responsible for health and safety; and those responsible for data protection matters.
- 7.4 Complaints regarding the application of this policy will be handled in line with our main complaints process.
- 7.5 Amendments to this policy not reflecting a major change of policy may be made by the Executive Director for Housing in consultation with the Director of Law and Corporate Governance. Such changes will be reported to Members annually.

8. Related information, legislation and regulations

- 8.1 Relevant legislation, regulation and good practice includes, but is not limited to:
 - Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)
 - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA18)
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012



- Information Commissioner Office – CCTV Code of Guidance
- Home Office - Surveillance Camera Code of Practice

8.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following LBL policies:

- Data Protection policy
- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) policy
- Alterations and Improvements policy
- Knowledge and Information Management Strategy.
- CCTV Code of Practice

Replaces: CCTV and Surveillance Policy 2024

Updates to clarify certain processes and responsibilities (e.g., requesting CCTV footage, installing home surveillance) and to improve wording and formatting.

Date approved: 21/01/2026

Effective date: 02/02/2026

Next review: February 2028

Approved by: Mayor and Cabinet

Policy owner: Director of Housing Resident Engagement and Services

Appendix – Glossary

The following are terms and definitions as may be used in the context of this policy:

CCTV: means fixed-position cameras designed to capture and record images of individuals and property.

Surveillance Systems: means any devices or systems designed to monitor or record images of individuals or information relating to individuals. The term includes CCTV systems as well as any technology that may be introduced in the future. (For example doorbell cameras).

Overt CCTV: means cameras which are in place with the full knowledge of staff, residents and those using public or communal areas. There will be accompanying signage.

Covert CCTV: means CCTV which is in place without the knowledge of all staff or residents. Covert CCTV images are captured without the knowledge of those being recorded. (Routine covert CCTV is not used by Housing Services).

Data: In respect of CCTV, this generally means video images. It may also include audio recordings and static pictures such as printed screen shots.

Personal Data: means data relating to a living individual who can be identified from that data (or other data in our possession). This can include video images of identifiable individuals.

Processing: is any activity which involves the use of Personal Data, including obtaining, recording or holding data, or carrying out any operation on the Personal Data including organising, amending, retrieving, using, disclosing or destroying it. Processing also includes transferring Personal Data to third parties.

Subject Access Request: means a written request to Lewisham Council asking for access to the personal information it holds on you.

Data Subjects: All living individuals about whom Lewisham Council holds Personal Data as a result of the operation of its CCTV.

Data Controllers: Lewisham Council is the Data Controller of personal data used in the process of managing housing stock.

Data Users: Lewisham Council's employees whose work involves the processing of personal data. This will include those whose duties are to operate CCTV cameras/ surveillance systems to record, monitor, store, retrieve and delete images. Data Users must protect the personal data they handle in accordance with this policy.

Data Processors: means any person or organisation that is not a Data User (or other employee of a Data Controller) that processes personal data on our behalf and in accordance with our instructions (for example, a supplier which handles Personal Data on the Council's behalf).

DPIA: means Data Protection Impact Assessment. A DPIA is an internal process designed to identify risks arising out of the processing of personal data, and to minimise these risks as much as possible.

EVA: means Environmental Visual Audit. An EVA is when Lewisham Council, in partnership with police and other relevant agencies, conducts a walk-through in a neighbourhood or local area to identify issues of concern and potential solutions.