

Appendix D –Update: Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Community Safety Project October 2025

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1. Introduction

This update outlines the progress made as part of the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership (WLUP) Community Safety Project following the original Evaluation Report presented to the board on 26th June 2025. With £400,000 of investment, the project has focused on improving safety, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in Wednesbury through:

- Upgraded and expanded CCTV coverage
- New deployable cameras
- A new town centre radio system
- Targeted nuisance bike interventions
- Introduction of Safe Spaces scheme
- Strengthened partnership working between council teams, police, and local businesses with the formation of Wednesbury Town Business Safety Partnership

2. Key Outcomes and Data

Arrests and Crime Detection

- Arrests supported by CCTV and radio communications have increased significantly.
- Shoplifting reports rose by 81 incidents (March–Sept 2024 vs March–Sept 2025). While this may seem negative at first glance, it reflects improved reporting and stronger collaboration between businesses, police, and council teams.

“We’ve seen a marked improvement in police response and suspect apprehension thanks to the new CCTV and radio systems. Arrests have tripled, and we’re now one of the best performing neighbourhood teams in Sandwell. The collaboration between council teams, businesses, and the community has been vital.”

— PCSO Waterfield, Wednesbury Neighbourhood Police

Nuisance Bike Reports

There has been a marked reduction in nuisance bike activity across Wednesbury, particularly in Friar Park where interventions were focused.

Council ASB nuisance bike reports data.

Ward	2023	2024	2025
Friar Park	91	55	22
Wednesbury North	9	5	3
Wednesbury South	6	6	9

Friar Park consistently had the highest number of reports but also saw the most significant reduction — a 60% drop from 2024 to 2025. This coincides with WLUP-funded interventions including deployable cameras and bike inhibitors installed in July 2024.

Reporting Sources

CCTV remains the primary source of nuisance bike reports, accounting for over 50% each year. Other sources include telephone, online forms, and police referrals.

Friar Park’s extensive CCTV network has played a key role in detection and response.

[News](#)

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The last few weeks have seen Sandwell neighbourhood teams tackling local issues such as robbery, burglary and anti-social behaviour.

An off-road bike has been seized by Wednesbury Neighbourhood Team as part of our ongoing commitment to tackle illegal off-road bike activity. Over the past few months, we have held many operations in Sandwell to clamp down on antisocial behaviour.



3. Community Impact and Feedback

CCTV & Radio System

- CCTV operators and community safety officer have supported police action days, leading to drug seizures, knife recoveries, and arrests.
- The radio system has enabled real-time communication between traders, organisations, CCTV staff, and police — resulting in faster response times and more coordinated interventions.
- CCTV footage has directly supported arrests for violent crimes, burglary, metal theft, and drug offences to name a few incidents.
- 73% of surveyed businesses rated the CCTV improvements as “very effective” in addressing safety concerns.

“We needed a system that was fit for purpose – with upgraded CCTV coverage in hotspot areas and deployable units that can be moved based on data-driven insights. The improved communication between town centre businesses and CCTV operators has helped us coordinate responses more effectively, leading to better detection and collaboration. The project has increased engagement between council teams, police and the community, with some great outcomes. The radio system has also been a game-changer – operators can see who’s using the radio and replay messages if they’re busy with other towns, which has improved response times and situational awareness.” - Jason Flannagan Council CCTV control room manager

Safe Spaces

Safe Spaces in Wednesbury have been used by vulnerable individuals seeking refuge or support in the town centre. Logged incidents since the launch of the scheme include:

- A boy approximately 14 years old came into the store and explained that there was an older man following him outside. He was concerned that the man was going to steal his bike. He left his bike with security, contacted a friend, and waited in the store for the older friend to arrive so they could leave safely together.
- A boy approximately 14 years old came into the store, saying that he was not safe and needed to wait in the store for a while before going back out, but would not give any more details.
- A female came into the store distressed, said she had been followed and assaulted by a male. The male had come into the store’s cafe; police were called, were on the town centre radio so arrived within a minute and dealt with the alleged offender and victim.
- A female aged approximately 19, came into the store, said she was being followed by a man around the town centre. She phoned a friend who came for her after 20 minutes and they left together
- A customer who was experiencing domestic violence had noticed the Safe Space and Ask for Angela notices in the pub. She came to the bar and asked for Angela. The staff

reacted appropriately, took the lady to a place of safety and services were provided for her to get to a place of safety

While not all incidents were formally logged due to staffing issues, anecdotal evidence suggests regular use by young people and vulnerable adults.

4. Business Feedback

Gallagher Retail Park

- A security guard was formally recognised for helping police arrest a suspect wanted for 13 offences, using the town radio system.
- Businesses praised the rollout of bleed kits (organised with VRP), safe space scheme, youth and public health engagement and improved coordination with council and police teams.

"I wanted to extend my sincere thanks to the council and the WLUP Community Safety Engagement Officer for the initiatives introduced in Wednesbury. These measures have not only helped us reduce crime and anti-social behaviour across the retail park, but they've also had a positive impact on staff morale and engagement.

This award is for the initiative you showed when helping the Police arrest a male who was wanted for 13 separate offences and for Recall to Prison. The manner in which you co-ordinated the arrest with the Police by use of your two way Radio draw applause by the team Sergeant in charge. He commented on your professionalism in terms of keeping the male under surveillance until he was arrested. This highlights the excellent team work with the Police at Gallagher RP. Well done and thank you." - Email sent to the security employee who won an award for his work using the Radio System

The safety partnership and radio system have made our team feel safer and more connected to the council and other businesses; the proactive partnership working has created a real sense of shared responsibility. It's motivating for our employees and clients to see that their concerns are being heard and acted upon, and that the council is investing in long-term solutions that benefit both businesses and the wider community.

We look forward to continuing to work together to build a safer, more vibrant town"
– Dan Seery, Retail Park Manager

Morrisons

- Staff reported a major improvement in tackling shoplifting thanks to the radio system and CCTV support.
- Police response times have improved, and businesses are now able to warn each other in real time.
- The youth bus event, ASB materials, and support from homelessness services teams have been well received.

“ We have received so much support from the council and police teams over the past year, together with improved reporting and regular follow ups between us the CCTV team, police and other teams in the council, we have experienced more engagement and dealing with the issues we face including shoplifting, aggressive begging by our cashpoint outside and drug use to name a few things we have been tackling together. We are reporting far more and have noticed the difference this has made, if the police hear us businesses on the radio, they are normally able to be directed by the CCTV team to where the issues are and the police are arresting and dealing with many more issues, so we are seeing real results ” – Security Guard

5. Value Added: Boxing Club Case Study

The WLUP Community Safety Officer has played a key role in supporting the sustainability and development of the Wodensborough Amateur Boxing Club, a vital community asset on Friar Park.

Support and Outcomes:

- Funding from the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) Holiday Activity Funding enabled the club to run two rounds of holiday activities for local youth during the summer and half term holidays in 2025.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding secured a new boxing ring.
- WLUP council contractors repaired fencing and other council contractors have committed to further ongoing support (storage, roofing, heating) under their social value targets
- Collaboration with the Community Payback Team supports ongoing maintenance of club grounds.

“We’ve had incredible support through this project. The introductions and referrals have helped us grow and sustain the club. The council’s investment and partnership work have made a real difference that we are so pleased to receive. Great that the young people can use the space now surrounding the club more safely with the bike measures in place, we have noticed the difference”

“I have family members involved in gangs. I didn’t want to go down that path. I train at the club when I’m not in college and help out too. It’s positive activity and I feel good knowing I’m helping others.”

— Young Volunteer

“I’ve struggled with mental health, especially in recent years. Volunteering at the club has helped me massively. I’m glad the council sees the value in clubs like ours — we’ve produced world champions here.”

— Adult Volunteer