

Video Doorbells – Your Responsibilities



Scottish Charity No. SC020981

Use of Video Doorbells / CCTV

If you are considering installing or already use a video doorbell in your home, you must think about data protection and privacy.

If you configure your video doorbell so it only captures images within the boundary of your property and sound recording is disabled, then you are exempt from complying with data protection law.

But if it captures images of individuals outside that boundary, such as your neighbours' homes or gardens, communal spaces or a public footpath or street, or records sound (even sounds inside the boundary) then your use of the video doorbell must comply with data protection law. You will be regarded as a "controller" and will need to comply by data protection law when using your video doorbell. This means that individuals who are concerned about your use of the video doorbell could ask for access to images, footage containing their images and sound recordings and make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) about you. You would also need to put appropriate signage in place. The ICO can issue fines against those who abuse individuals' rights.

We recommend you use video doorbells responsibly in a way that respects the privacy of others. Think about what areas you feel you need to cover, how you can position the video doorbell to avoid intruding on your neighbours' property or any communal or public spaces and disable any sound recording facilities, where available.

If you feel you need to capture images beyond your property, you will then need to have clear and justifiable reasons for doing so, write them down

and comply with data protection law by:

- Letting individuals know you are using a video doorbell by putting up signs saying that recording is taking place and why.
- Not capturing more footage than you need to achieve your purpose in using it.
- Ensuring the security of the footage you capture by holding it securely and making sure nobody else can watch it without good reason.
- Only keeping the footage for as long as you need it by deleting it regularly.
- Ensuring the video doorbell is not misused by other members of your household.
- Respecting the rights of the individuals whose images you capture. This includes not sharing footage with others and / or posting it to social media.

If we receive complaints about your use of video doorbells, we will direct any complainers to the Police and / or the ICO. We will also recommend complainers seek independent legal advice about their rights. We will not be involved in complaints, as this is a matter between you and the complainers.

The above guidance applies to all external viewing video equipment that you install, including video doorbells, CCTV and vehicle security cameras.

Concerns About Video Doorbell/ CCTV Use By Others

If you have concerns about the use of video doorbells by a neighbour, we recommend you raise any concerns informally with them first. Speak to your neighbour about:

- Why they are using the video doorbell.
- If they are using filters or privacy blockers to reduce intrusion into public or communal spaces and neighbouring properties or if they can point their cameras away from your home or public or communal space, where possible.
- If they will let you see what they are recording.
- What your expectations are around their use of video doorbells.

Doing so will hopefully allow you and your neighbour to find a middle ground that works for both of you.

If your neighbour does not engage with you positively, you may wish to report their video doorbell use to the Police. The Police will look for you to provide evidence that your neighbour is harassing you or committing a crime by using their video doorbell. You could also make a complaint to the ICO, who

may investigate your complaint if you can show that you have suffered harm because of your neighbour's use of their video doorbell. The ICO may even issue a fine against your neighbour in cases involving significant harm.

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) gives you rights in relation to any video footage that has been captured about you using a video doorbell. These rights include the right to access the footage, ask for it to be deleted, or object to being recorded. If your neighbour is regarded as a "controller" (see previous section), they must comply with your request within one month of receiving it.

We do not investigate complaints involving video doorbells.

The above guidance applies to all external viewing video equipment that your neighbour has in place, including video doorbells, CCTV and vehicle security cameras.

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