

# **Nine new CCTV cameras installed at remote park and ride**

**A remote park and ride used by NHS workers after parking relaxations at Edinburgh hospitals were withdrawn has had nine new CCTV cameras installed after concern about their safety.**

Incidents involving gatherings of youths, antisocial behaviour and car racing, sparked concern about Sheriffhall Park and Ride's 'vulnerable users'.

A meeting of Midlothian Council last week heard that problems including poor lighting, non functioning CCTV coverage and an increase in youth disorder at the site had made it a priority site for an upgrade in the county's camera coverage.

A report to councillors said that NHS Lothian had relaxed parking enforcement at its Edinburgh hospitals during the pandemic but reimposed them in 2022 meaning only staff with permits could park there leaving thousands of workers needing an alternative way to get there.

Health chiefs run chartered buses to the park and ride at Sheriffhall for staff but it had seen a high number using the site.

The report said the change in parking rules had resulted in a "high volume of staff being displaced and forced to utilise

Sheriffhall park and ride.”

It added: “Through winter 2023/24, councillor and Police Scotland concerns were raised with regards vulnerable user groups utilising the park and ride, poor lighting, non-functioning CCTV and a significant uplift in antisocial behaviour particularly by youths in modified cars.”

Two years ago video footage emerged on social media site Tik Tok of car enthusiasts gathering at the park and ride at night, speeding their vehicles around the large car park while watched by crowds of people.

The park and ride was regularly promoted on social media as a venue for car meets sparking anger among locals and those using it for travel,

Improvements at the park and ride include the installation of speed bumps, improved LED lighting and the installation of nine new CCTV units.

Councillor Colin Cassidy said the investment would be welcomed by the public adding: “Especially at Sheriffhall, it is a very deserted area and a lot of people use it at night coming off duty from the hospital so it will hopefully give them a little comfort to know that there is an eye watching over them.”

And Councillor Stephen Curran said local concerns about antisocial behaviour at the park and ride would be reduced by the additional security.

He said: “I am a huge advocate for CCTV and the upgrade to the systems is welcomed. I was at Danderhall Community Council and it has been very welcome news there that we have managed to get cameras installed at Sheriffhall park and ride.

“We have a huge youth problem there with antisocial behaviour and vehicles, particularly in terms of noise that goes on until 2 or 3 in the morning. I have absolutely no doubt it makes that place safer and less intimidating at night.”

NHS Lothian restricts staff parking at its Edinburgh hospitals to permit holders only after 11.30am but it is estimated only 1800 of the estimated 8000 people working at the sites have been issued with the permits.

Health chiefs said, at the time, the restrictions were needed to manage the parking spaces available at their campuses safely.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter