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### Activity: Research

#### The surveillance debate

##### Learning objective

At the end of this activity you should be able to:

- evaluate the issues surrounding the use of surveillance cameras.

In 2010 West Midlands Police sought to introduce a counter-terrorism scheme to surround two mainly Muslim suburbs of Birmingham with 150 automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras, some of them covert, thereby placing whole communities under surveillance.

A. Using the article below, answer the questions that follow.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/jun/04/surveillance-cameras-birmingham-muslims>

1. Where were the surveillance cameras placed?
  2. What reasons were locals given for the project?
  3. Who funded the cameras?
  4. How many ANPR cameras were installed in Washwood Heath and Sparkbrook? How does this compare to the city centre?
  5. Why might cameras be covert?
  6. Why do you think the councillors were not told about the source of the funding?
  7. What criterion has to be met in order to get Terrorism and Allied Matters (TAM) funding?
  8. According to police sources, what did the initiative seek to monitor? Who was to be tracked?
  9. Why was this area chosen for the initiative?
  10. What was Steve Jolly asking for and why?
- B. Some argue that the use of surveillance involves a trade-off between freedom and security – that we have to accept some intrusion into our liberty (including our right to privacy) as the price we pay to keep us secure against threats such as terrorism.
- As a class, using your answers from the questions above and your own knowledge, discuss which you feel is more important, freedom or security.