Northgate businesses demand their slice of CCTV scheme

By Norman Williams

BUSINESS people in Northgate, Aberystwyth, fear they have been overlooked in the town's proposed closed-circuit TV scheme, and are petitioning for a camera in their area to deter vandalism and other crime.

They want a CCTV camera installed to cover the north end of North Parade and Northgate Street.

Yvonne Edwards, who runs the newsagents on the corner of North Parade and Thesopian Street, is one of the business-people pressing for a camera in that area.

She said: "A CCTV camera covering this area would surely act as a deterrent to vandals. This is a major thoroughfare out of town for people going home late at night. We suffer a lot of vandalism, with windows being broken and the like."

Hundreds of students walk along North Parade and Northgate Street after a night out, and other late-night revellers often try to hail taxis before the vehicles reach the recognised rank near the railway station.

The petition is being supported by Aberystwyth Town and Cyngho Sir Ceredigion councillors Bob Griffin and Eric Griffiths.

Cllr Griffin said: "I appreciate the concern of these business-people. It is a busy thoroughfare late at night, and it warrants a CCTV camera to monitor activity."

"There are just as many businesses per square foot in that area of town as in other parts identified as key sites for CCTV. And I will also be pushing for a camera for the north end of Aberystwyth promenade."

"There is always a displacement fear with CCTV - a fear that those intent on crime will concentrate their activities outside the areas captured on CCTV."

Cllr Eric Griffiths shares the concern.

He said: "I have already written to Aberystwyth police station about this. I believe that seven sites for CCTV have already been identified. The closest CCTV site is near the NatWest Bank, but it will not cover Northgate."

"There is a bad record of vandalism in Northgate, and I would like to see a camera positioned there as well."

Chief Inspector Brian Wiley, based at Aberystwyth police station, confirmed receipt of the letter from Cllr Griffiths.

And on the proposed locations of CCTV cameras, Cllr Wiley said: "We put forward our views on proposed sittings of CCTV cameras based on crime statistics in the town centre."

"But I have noted the representations of Cllr Griffiths, and I'm sure this matter will be discussed at the next meeting between the police and Cyngho Sir Ceredigion, which is scheduled for June."