

NEW COMMUNICATION KIOSK MANAGEMENT PLAN



October 2024

Introduction

New World Payphones (NWP) has an electronic communications network in many urban centres across the United Kingdom. As part of the estate, there are numerous legacy kiosks which are now tired-looking structures, featuring outmoded telephony equipment. This kiosk type has also experienced historic problems including anti-social behaviour and lack of access for people with mobility impairments.

NWP are therefore aware of the issues sometimes associated with telephone kiosks. In the main, due to the enclosed design and age of the legacy kiosks (factors NWP inherited on acquiring the estate) some kiosks have been misused and thereby associated with ASB. Following the 'broken window' theory, if a structure looks uncared for, this can lead to ASB. It follows that the removal or replacement of the existing tired-looking old kiosks with a new kiosk will of itself have ASB reduction benefits.

Moreover, the new communications kiosk includes features to design out crime. Most significantly, it is purposefully open in design, specifically to increase natural surveillance. This will have further anti-social behaviour reduction benefits. Further, the new installations will receive appropriate bi-weekly inspection, cleaning and maintenance to ensure they remain in good order going forward.

Local Councils frequently consult their Police Department regarding proposals for new kiosks and communication hubs. NWP are willing to support these discussions on crime prevention measures that can be put in place. These are then to be set out in support of this Management Plan, which will form part of any grant of consent. NWP have engaged with, and continue to cooperate with, many Police Departments across the United Kingdom. A Metropolitan Police Service Design Out Crime Officer was consulted to support the content in the Management Plan. This is reviewed yearly with support from the Police and Design Out Crime Officers (DOCOs).

Local planning authorities typically seek measures be put in place to ensure the proposal does not contribute or escalate any prevailing trends of anti-social behaviour ("ASB"). The subject of a suitably worded planning condition, the Management Plan would provide a robust basis on which NWP and the local authority (and its partners) can prevent and address issues as they arise.

Overview of New World Payphones

New World Payphones Ltd (NWP) is modernising its telephone kiosk estate across the UK. The traditional kiosk is in need of updating to reflect the modern society that we live in. NWP recognise the existing kiosks have historic problems including lack of access for wheelchair users, problems with calling cards, and often attract the use of anti-social behaviour.

NWP have chosen a new modern design, reflecting the instantly recognisable telephone kiosk heritage, ensuring it provides open access for all. It is a robust construction made of stainless steel which will aid reduction of vandalism and assist with ease of maintenance. As a responsible telephone operator NWP will also operate a high standard of cleaning on the new estate.

The kiosks will now be a multi-communication hub for the future. Telephony is still a key provision; it is an important lifeline for many people even with the proliferation of mobile phone use. Our kiosks are regularly used to report emergencies and are used by the vulnerable: 999, 111, Childline, Samaritans and Shelter are all examples of where service provision remains vital, along with the normal use of the general public.

The kiosk will also offer the additional benefit of touchscreen information to assist users with wayfinding / mapping information. The telephone itself will allow for cash, debit & credit card and contactless payments. To provide additional connectivity, small cell access nodes will be available in kiosks where they are able to be housed. Other location-based information may be included including NFC and Bluetooth, with ability to modernise provisions with the most up to date generation technology as it progresses.

Traditionally vinyl advertising has adorned one side of the kiosk glazing. This will be removed, and the new kiosk design will integrate a digital screen to the reverse of the structure, smartening its image. The overall area of the advertising is in line with existing size, the screen is however smaller than other advertising formats currently found on street furniture.

NWP has also reviewed its estate and established that not all locations are suitable for these services and in some areas, there may be too many kiosks. As part of our strategy, we will be looking to reduce the number of kiosks. This will enable us to remove kiosks from the pedestrian highway – in line with many Council's decluttering strategies.

NWP have also partnered with Trees for Cities as part of our environmental commitment. When removing a kiosk, we will offer the opportunity to replace a location with a suitable tree or provide a tree for planting in different location in discussion with the authority.

Overview of NWP Kiosk

The proposed NWP kiosk is ergonomic, well-designed and strongly built with specially designed components and durable and easily cleaned surfaces. The kiosks are therefore long lasting and suitable for being situated within urban environments where these standards are usually higher due to increased usage and demand. To support this, every two weeks the kiosks are washed and maintained, at no cost to the council, to ensure the accessibility and presentation are maintained for the lifetime of the unit.

Need for Public Payphones

Public call boxes can provide a safety net for people without access to a landline or working mobile phone. In areas with poor mobile coverage, a public call box can be the only option for making calls, including to the emergency services. Telephone kiosks continue to provide a necessary public service, as recognised by the regulator Ofcom; "For those without access to a landline or working mobile, or in areas with poor mobile coverage, a public call box can be the only option for making calls to friends and family, helplines and, crucially, emergency services" (Ofcom). Around 2.68 million people in the UK, and around 560,000 people in metropolitan London do not own a mobile phone. For people without a mobile, or for those in areas with poor mobile coverage, these can be a lifeline for making calls to friends and family, helpline services and accessing emergency services. Almost 150,000 calls were made to emergency services from phone boxes in the year to May 2020, while 25,000 calls were made to Childline and 20,000 to Samaritans. At the same time, the services people need from public call boxes are changing. NWP plans to reflect these changes, upgrading and adapting the communication kiosk to allow a base level coverage provision across urban areas fit for the 21st century.

ASB Background

According to the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 and Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, anti-social behaviour is defined as 'behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to persons not of the same household as the person'.

Metropolitan Police Service, has defined anti-social behaviour into three categories:

- Personal antisocial behaviour: is when a person targets a specific individual or group.
- Nuisance antisocial behaviour: is when a person causes trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community.
- Environmental antisocial behaviour: is when a person's actions affect the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings.

A 2023 policy set out by HM Government called the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan was published to combat the identified rise in anti-social behaviour. Within the introduction, Para 6 states "Anti-social behaviour is the main reason people do not feel safe in their local area" (Para 6). Within the Action Plan, there are numerous plans in place to support the reduction of anti-social behaviour and the fear of anti-social behaviour, including making communities safer, building local pride and prevention and early intervention.

Anti-social behaviour is identified as a national and local issue, with a collective approached required. All stakeholders and partners can take accountability to support its reduction.

Design Out Crime Policy Background

Within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Paragraphs 96 and 135 clearly state the requirements of the planning system to support design out crime as a material consideration within any application. The responsibility therefore rests not only on the Council and their Local Police Department to prevent crime, but also on the applicant to take proactive measures to support this goal. The opportunities to include crime prevention measures promotes safer places to live, work and visit. Local Councils also support this endeavour via their development management plans and site-specific policies to design out crime, recognising the vital role planning policy makes in crime reduction. The overarching Act which guides all proposals is The Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 (as amended). This is supported specially by the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, and the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It is clear that the role of crime prevention does not rest solely on one department or individual, rather it is a continuous and holistic approach which achieves the most suitable outcome.

Design Out Crime Prevention Opportunities

The goal of Design Out Crime is to proactively prevent the causes and opportunities of crime. Throughout the development process of NWP Kiosks across the United Kingdom, observations have been raised by numerous planning officers and police departments regarding crime prevention. In particular, they often request the following:

- A robust management plan. This should specify a clear escalation process on how problems will be dealt with, and reasonable timelines within which issues are to be addressed. The agreed management plan is to be followed and not altered without prior approval of the local Designing Out Crime Officer and the local planning authority.
- No facility for free calls to mobile phones.
- Any facility for free calls is able to be managed and blocked within agreed parameters. The algorithm 'threshold' must not be altered without consultation with approval from an appropriate Design Out Crime Officer.
- Any USB Port to be remotely adjustable to prevent 'long term' users of the device i.e. charging of mobile phones, where this becomes a problem.
- An agreed algorithm which enables the blocking of numbers that have reached a certain call (or attempted call) threshold within a set period.
- Specifically, should the removal of free call to mobile or landline facility, or USB charging point be deemed to be a solution to an identified problem then this facility must be removed, and a review completed.
- Any changes to the configuration of the communication kiosk requires NWP approval. This will be based on evidence provided by the Local Council or Police Department, balanced upon the need to for an inclusive telecommunication provision. NWP will work closely with local police departments to reduce anti-social behaviour while supporting digital connectivity and a necessary public benefit provision.

Integrated CCTV Camera

There is the potential to accommodate a camera above the advertising display side of the kiosk. The inclusion will be based on discussions with the local Police Department and Council representatives for approval. Depending on the location of the Kiosk, a CCTV camera can be enabled with necessary signage.

Identification of Anti-Social Behaviour

The introduction of a NWP Communication Kiosk is a substantial investment and a source of significant public benefit. NWP supports the reduction of anti-social behaviour wherever possible which is detailed within the proactive discussions with the Metropolitan Police Service in the creation of this management plan. Ideally, all design out crime measures can take place before installation, however emerging concerns can arise post installation which is required to be addressed. Once an issue has arisen, the local council and police service can be consulted for advice for best practices and proposed actions. These discussions can also be supported by other government bodies and emergency services where appropriate. A full description of the issue needs to be identified and any legal requirements met, depending on the severity of the issue. The NWP communication kiosks are remotely monitored and visited bi-weekly for routine cleaning and maintenance. When an issue is identified, site details are included on the kiosk and the appropriate contact details, which are also included towards the end of this management plan. If a matter is deemed an emergency, it would be recommended to immediately call the emergency services on 101 or 999.

Identification of Anti-Social Behaviour – Response Process

Anti-Social Behaviour can occur on any unit and any period of time, however there are more likely areas where ASB is statistically higher to arise. These areas can be identified through national statistics but also local data and experience. Through the below process, when ASB has been identified and NWP notified with the necessary data and statistics, NWP are able to react quickly to halt or reduce such undesirable behaviour taking place via the communication kiosk. The process is stated below.

Reports of ASB can occur legitimately, however all notifications need to be verified. If an action or number has been wrongly identified as a ASB issue, NWP can be contacted on the details towards the end of the management plan to consider reversing the action.

ASB can be identified by an internal or external stakeholder or a member of the public

When ASB is identified, NWP can be contacted via phone or email

Investigation can include reviewing data, written reports, verbal experiences and engagement with Council and Police representatives

Response to ASB issue is proposed and verified through internal and third party experts, where necessary

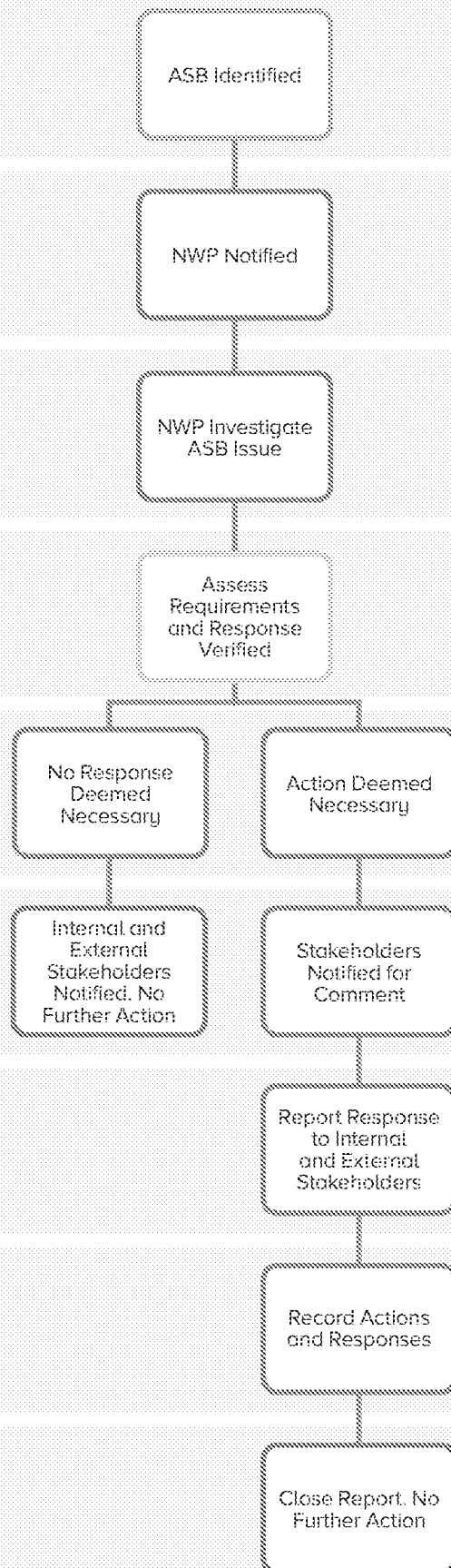
Actions agreed upon which are to be implemented

Stakeholders will be notified on agreed response

Confirmation of action within an agreed upon timeframe

Necessary actions and responses recorded in line with Company policy

ASB response complete



Communication Kiosk Management Plan

A thorough review of the above details has informed the proposed management plan below. The details will be reviewed continuously with any amendments being implemented at a timely period. The nine action points below are currently identified as focus areas to ensure the Communication Kiosk is managed according to best practice.

Facility for free calls to mobile phones

In order to support the inclusive operation of the Communication Kiosk, free calls can be made to mobiles, landlines, emergency services and to various charities.

Algorithms enabling the blocking of mobile numbers

If certain mobile or landline numbers have reached a certain call or attempted call threshold within a certain time period, and these numbers are identified and notified to NWP as being of actual or potential anti-social behaviour concern, algorithms will be enabled to block these numbers for a period of time or can be blocked indefinitely.

Publicly available WIFI

Should the unit's public Wifi be identified as an ASB problem, availability can be reduced or switched off entirely.

USB / charging points

The new Communication Kiosk does not have USB / charging points.

Handset is the only means to communicate. No external speakers

The new Communication Kiosk does not have external speakers. The handset is the only means to communicate when making calls.

The canopy is at a height and depth that will not encourage loitering

The new Communication Kiosk canopy and side fenestration is designed to provide a degree of weather protection and also shielding from traffic for people using the kiosk.

Provision of a small area of tactile paving

Tactile paving can be provided on the side of the new Communication Kiosk where the advertising display is located, to prevent people leaning against the kiosk structure.

Maintenance strategy including cleaning and regular checks

The new Communication Kiosk will receive, at a minimum, bi-weekly inspections, cleaning and maintenance to ensure the unit remains in good working order.

Details of escalation process should problems arise

In the event of any management or operational issues arising, please contact NWP on the details below:

New World Payphones

Review Process

The ongoing assessment and improvement of the management plan and related processes within a collaborative approach is integral the successful implementation of the Communication Kiosk. Through offering regular meetings with local police departments and a yearly review of the management plan, the details and processes will remain up to date and can be bespoke to the specific requirements of local authorities. Further, due to technological advancements, there is the opportunity to implement and resolve ASB challenges in new and innovative ways.

Further, as more information is available and a variety of conversations and on-site situations experienced, trends and recommendations can be identified earlier. As a result, the response to a ASB challenge can be quicker and in a more reliable way. This will improve the effectiveness of the kiosk in reducing ASB issues.

Further Information

Plans and specifications for the various new Communication Kiosks are provided separately as part of the application document.

If you have any questions regarding the management plan for the communication kiosk, please call 08007 313 699 or email feedback@nwpstreet.co.uk.