

IMPACT REPORT



BIG BROTHER WATCH
2022

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KEY SUCCESSES

2022 was one of the most successful years on Big Brother Watch's record, concluding two pandemic years and seeing both long-standing and more recent campaigns to defend privacy and free speech resulting in major successes.

Here are just some of our key campaign successes in 2022:

- Mandatory Covid passes ended across the four nations, bringing our legal challenges in England and Wales to a close
- The Coronavirus Act 2020 and all emergency coronavirus powers were repealed
- Digital strip searches of survivors of rape and sexual offences were outlawed, with new laws and guidance passed via the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill
- Additional anti-protest measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill were defeated
- Defeated powers to suppress "legal but harmful" speech in the Online Safety Bill
- Government ceased installing Chinese state-owned surveillance tech on sensitive government sites
- Filed first legal complaint against a retailer (Southern Co-operative supermarkets) using live facial recognition (Facewatch)
- Issued formal complaint to data watchdog about mass facial recognition service, PimEyes
- Big Brother Watch was directly referenced in 16 debates in Parliament on a range of technology and human rights issues
- The Home Secretary issued a written statement about bulk interception reforms following our successful judgment in 2021 from the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in Big Brother Watch v UK

CAMPAIGNS



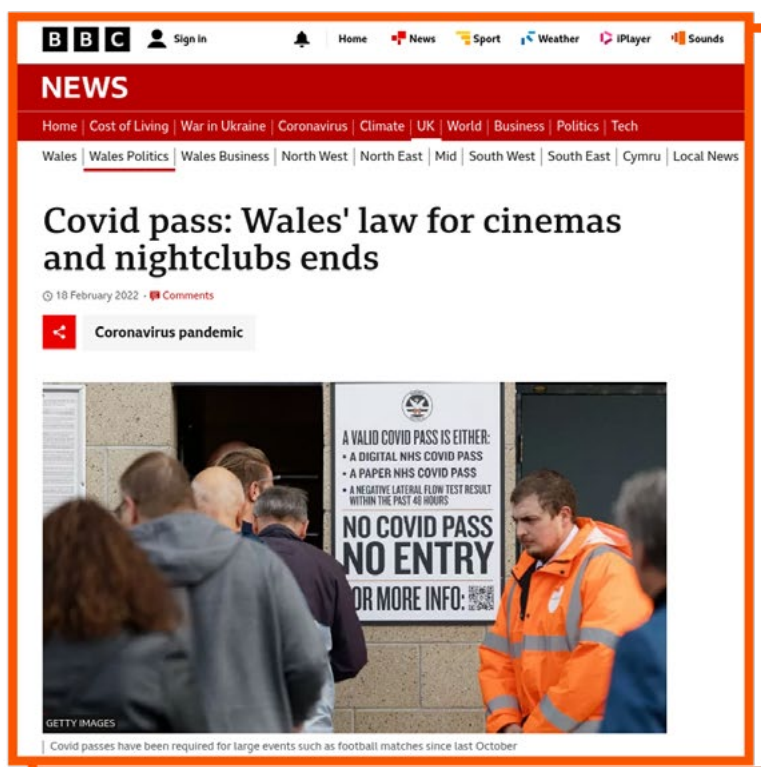
CAMPAIGNS

Pandemic powers and vaccine passports

As we entered January 2022, emergency pandemic laws were in place and Covid passes were mandatory in a variety of public settings across the UK – however, our tireless campaign soon delivered a wave of resounding successes.

We issued a full [legal claim](#) against mandatory domestic Covid passports in Wales, securing strong media coverage on Sky, ITV, and Global among others. Despite the Welsh Government’s refusal to publish our correspondence, we also found an innovative way to nevertheless publish their astounding disclosure from our legal proceedings that they knew Covid passes “might” have only a “small” and “unmeasurable” impact on public health, at best. We publicised this in the media including via an interview on BBC Wales, on social media, and we emailed every Senedd member.

The Welsh Government soon announced that the mandatory Covid pass regulations would expire on 18th February, and we were able to end our legal challenge.



Meanwhile, the UK Government quickly pledged to end mandatory Covid passes in England by 26th January, and likewise we were able to withdraw our legal challenge.

We maintained pressure on Scottish and Northern Irish executives, including through regional 'email your MSP/MLA' campaigns and letter writing.

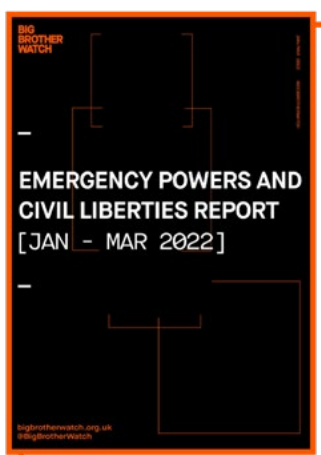
By the end of February mandatory Covid pass regulations were repealed across the four nations.

We also maintained pressure on the Government to repeal mandatory vaccines for health care workers and liaised with unions about potential legal challenges. The Government held a consultation on repealing mandatory vaccines in January, to which we submitted a joint response with Liberty calling for an urgent repeal. We also encouraged our followers and supporters to respond to the consultation. In total, 90,000 people responded and 90% of respondents called for mandatory vaccines to be repealed.

The mandatory vaccine requirement was repealed on 15th March 2022.

We worked behind the scenes to help people facing unlawful fines and prosecutions under Covid laws. We also sent a joint letter with rights and justice NGOs to the Justice Secretary, urging again that all lockdown fines were independently reviewed given the large scale of injustice, and achieved press coverage in the Independent, Evening Standard, and other media outlets. The UK was one of the first Western countries to repeal emergency powers whilst other European countries, where civil society was not so robust in its opposition to excesses of state overreach, society-altering Covid restrictions remained.

We pushed back on new forms of health surveillance in both the public and private sector. To conclude our campaign against thermal biosurveillance, we commissioned and published an expert legal opinion from Schona Jolly KC on the data protection, privacy and equality issues associated with mandatory thermal scanning – confirming our concerns that, absent a strong evidence basis and strong safeguards, such surveillance is likely to be unlawful. We are not aware of any cases in the UK where thermal scanning has been retained in any surveillance system. This work was important not only to contest the expansion of bio surveillance during this time, but to set clear and authoritative precedents for the future.



We maintained scrutiny of powers and collected evidence of rapidly changing laws. In January 2022, we submitted written evidence to the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee's inquiry into the Coronavirus Act, which was repealed in March. We later published our final Emergency Powers and Civil Liberties report covering January – March 2022 – our 14th report in the series, which documented the dismantling of virtually all Covid-related restrictions across the four nations. Through these reports, sent to all parliamentarians, we meticulously analysed the ways in which hundreds of unprecedented laws fundamentally altered the balance of power between citizens and the state during the pandemic, and ushered in a new era of police and ministerial authority.

We created a 40+ minute documentary, [Pandemic Police State](#), with interviewees including Steve Baker MP, Dawn Butler MP, Reclaim These Streets and others, which we published on YouTube to document our work over the two year period.



In March 2023, as all Covid restrictions were repealed, we held a '[Liberty After Lockdown](#)' comedy fundraiser event in partnership with Comedy Unleashed, with excellent comedians including Geoff Norcott performing.



The actions of the Government demonstrated the frailties of the institutions and procedures designed to safeguard our democracy – but our robust and thorough response demonstrated how important and effective Big Brother Watch is, working with our allies, in protecting privacy, civil liberties and the rule of law in even the most turbulent of times. It is a credit to our supporters that we had the strength during this critical year to mount such a successful defence of liberty in the UK.

Protecting protest rights

As environmental protests surged across the country, the government's anti-protest rhetoric and legislative agenda continued at pace.

In 2022, we provided **at least 10 written briefings for parliamentarians on the anti-protest powers** in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill ('Police Bill') and the Public Order Bill, drawing attention to the wide powers police already have to deal with criminal behaviour and obstruction of highways, and campaigning for amendments to safeguard the important democratic right to protest.

Big Brother Watch's lobbying was a key factor in securing cross-party amendments in both Bills. Several anti-protest powers that the government added to the Police Bill at a late stage were defeated.

The anti-protest Bill that followed, the Public Order Bill, introduced 'protest banning orders' for campaigners accused of being 'disruptive' without any criminal threshold needing to be met. The orders can incur restrictions on internet use and physical movements (e.g. banning attendance at demonstrations) and can even require a person to wear a GPS ankle tracker.

We lobbied against these extreme, counter-terror style Public Order Bill anti-protest powers and launched a petition with 38 Degrees that achieved over 100,000 signatures. We staged a petition hand-in at the Home Office. The Bill carried over into 2023 and we will continue to fight against these extraordinary powers.



In November 2022, we co-ordinated 10 rights groups to write a letter to the Home Secretary following police use of Police Act powers to arrest three journalists for 'conspiracy to cause a public nuisance' by reporting on a protest. Our intervention was covered by the Independent and Evening Standard.


In December 2022, the Guardian covered our finding that the Metropolitan Police had illegally filmed children as young as 10 demonstrating at a climate protest in 2019. We had complained to the ICO about our observations at the time, and the ICO issued the

reprimand to the Met in 2020 – but we only obtained a copy via FOI in 2022. The story achieved strong media attention, including on the Radio 4 Today programme.

Damien Gayle *Environment correspondent*
@damiengayle
Mon 5 Dec 2022 11.02 GMT

f t e

Big Brother Watch's FOI request shows force rebuked by watchdog for recording 2019 school strike action in London



Young people and children take part in a climate protest in London in March 2019. Photograph: Jack Taylor/Getty Images

Police unlawfully spied on children as young as 10 taking part in a climate strike protest in London, documents have shown.

The previously unseen papers reveal the **Metropolitan police** were rebuked by the information commissioner's office (ICO) for video surveillance of the March 2019 protest, which was attended by up to 10,000 children and young people.

Ruling the data-gathering unlawful, the watchdog said the force had failed to consider the privacy rights of the children at the protest, and had not considered their entitlement to added data protections in light of their age.

Defending freedom of expression

Online Safety Bill

In 2022, our multi-year campaign to defend free speech in the context of online harms legislation resulted in a major success.

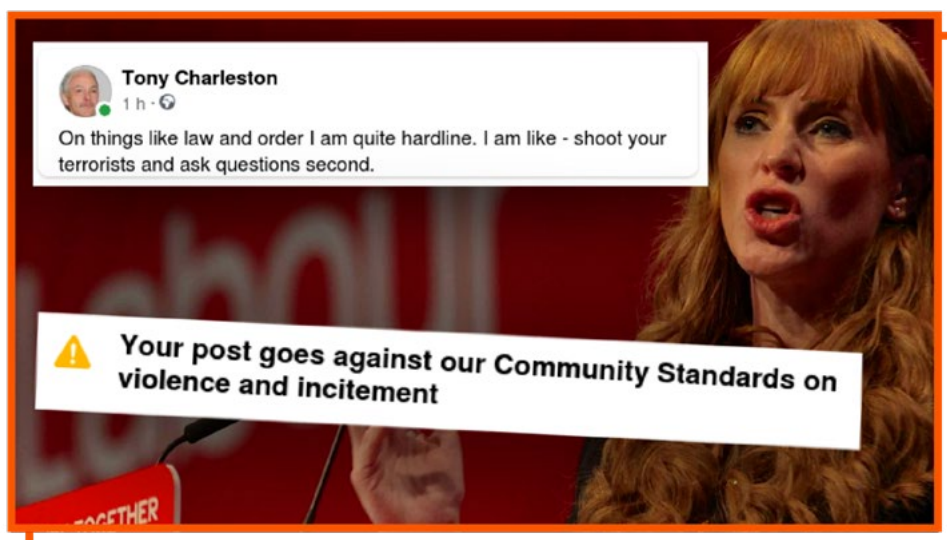
In November 2022, the government dropped powers to suppress 'legal but harmful' speech in the Online Safety Bill!

This was a remarkable, unlikely achievement that was only made possible by years of effective lobbying in parliament and the press.

We published **at least 8 briefings on the Online Safety Bill** across the year, and also responded to an OFCOM consultation on online safety regulation.



In March 2022, we published a stunt in which we used dummy social media accounts to report controversial statements that politicians had said. We found that Facebook removed comments made by (then Prime Minister) Boris Johnson, Nadine Dorries and Labour Deputy Leader Angela Rayner for breaching their terms and conditions – and as such, this is speech that the Online Safety Bill would force tech companies to consistently censor.



The story was covered by the [Mail Online](#) and Guido Fawkes, leading Dorries to respond directly to it in her opinion piece for Conservative Home.



Throughout 2022, we had worked closely with pro-free speech Conservative MPs, including by supporting a joint letter from high profile MPs calling on the Government to drop 'legal but harmful' censorship powers from the Bill.

This became a wedge issue during the Conservative leadership campaign and we contacted each candidate about their position on the issue, as well as issuing a Big Brother Watch 'manifesto' against which we assessed candidates. The leading candidates, Truss and Sunak, clearly signalled that they would reform the Bill to protect freedom of expression online.

Preceding our major win, across 2022 we pursued many joint advocacy projects with the Save Online Speech coalition of free speech and digital rights NGOs ([saveonlinespeech.org](#)), which we co-ordinate. We issued a number of letters including to (then Culture Secretary) Nadine Dorries, the Chair of the Online Safety Bill Committee, the new Culture Secretary Michelle Donelan, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression on our concerns with the Online Safety Bill, the range of evidence being heard, and the risks of suppressing lawful speech. We also wrote a joint letter with the Global Encryption Coalition against powers that could force tech companies to introduce client-side scanning to monitor private messaging platforms. We also attended a roundtable with the Culture Secretary about reforms to the Online Safety Bill in the autumn.

Other

We brought together several free speech groups to issue a joint statement in response to PayPal's withdrawal of service to the Free Speech Union and associates, soon after which PayPal reversed its decision.

We also supported Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and Julian Assange's family throughout

2022 in campaigning against his extradition and for his immediate release. We attended a number of demonstrations, published videos for social media, handed in petitions to the Home Office with RSF, issued a statement in response to the Home Secretary's authorisation of Assange's extradition, and chaired a panel discussion at a screening of a documentary about his father's campaign for justice, Ithaka.

Challenging mass CCTV and Chinese state-owned tech companies

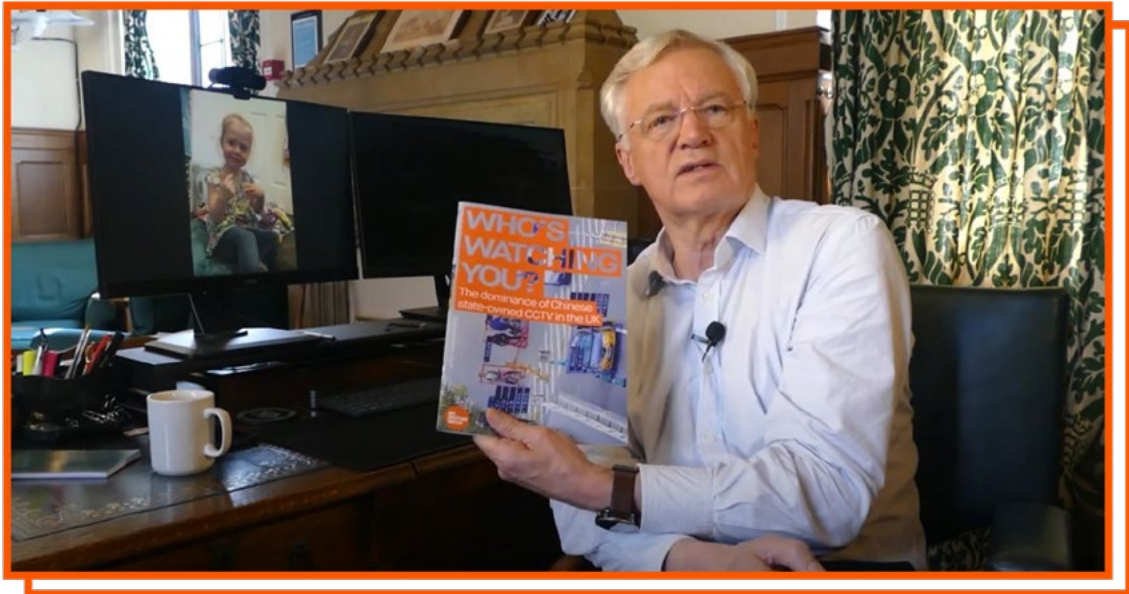
In February 2022, we published our report *Who's Watching You: the dominance of Chinese state-owned CCTV in the UK*, revealing that the majority of public bodies use surveillance cameras made by Chinese state-owned tech companies, principally Hikvision. This includes 3 out of 5 schools, over half of NHS Trusts, and almost a third of police forces. We publicised the report widely, including securing exclusive coverage of the launch with the Times newspaper.



We launched a campaign website, BanHikvision.com, printed #BanHikvision stickers, and launched a public petition calling for surveillance equipment made by Chinese state-owned companies to be banned, owing to their association with serious human rights abuses, particularly against Uyghurs in China, and the well-documented security risks.



Following the launch, we worked with David Davis MP to draft Written Parliamentary Questions on procurement of Hikvision and Ministry of Defence security advice.



Due to pandemic measures, we had to delay our parliamentary launch event, which was in June. We hosted an excellent line-up of speakers including Iain Duncan-Smith MP, Nus Ghani MP, Catherine West MP (Shadow Foreign Minister), Alistair Carmichael MP, Baroness Chakrabarti, the Biometrics Commissioner Prof. Fraser Sampson, and Rahima Mahmut, director of the World Uyghur Congress and Stop Uyghur Genocide. The event also attracted high profile parliamentarians and was very well attended.



We followed the event by publishing a joint statement from [60 parliamentarians](#) in July, calling for ban on Chinese state-owned surveillance equipment in the UK and, importantly, a national CCTV review. We secured strong press coverage for the campaign, with a BBC exclusive.



During 2022, we generated growing public awareness of the issues with mass CCTV in the UK in the press and social media, particularly the volume of cameras that are made by Chinese state-owned companies, and we staged a number of demonstrations against Hikvision with allied groups including Stop Uyghur Genocide and Free Tibet.



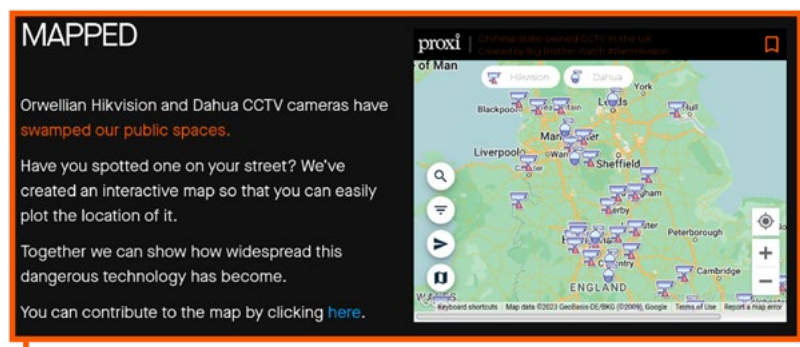
We wrote [letters to government departments](#) calling for them to remove Hikvision and similar cameras from their buildings, and secured coverage in the Telegraph. **The Department of Health and the Department for Work and Pensions announced that they will remove all such cameras from their properties.**

We lobbied for an amendment to effectively ban Hikvision and similar companies from the public sector in the Procurement Bill, issuing at least four written briefings for parliamentarians.

On 30th November, an amendment to the Procurement Bill that requires the government to set out a timetable for removing surveillance equipment by companies involved in serious human rights abuses was successfully passed in the House of Lords!

The Government is likely to try to remove this amendment in the House of Commons. However, the Government announced in November that Hikvision cameras would no longer be installed in [‘sensitive’ sites](#).

In December, we launched an interactive map on our campaign site BanHikvision.com where members of the public can add any locations where they have spotted a Hikvision camera.



We kept the pressure on through our investigations and press work, securing an exclusive with the Guardian on Hikvision pushing its sinister "[ethnicity recognition](#)" product in the UK, and an exclusive with the Times revealing that Hikvision is being given privileged access to UK business [crime data](#).

Fighting facial recognition

Public sector: Live Facial Recognition

As soon as mask mandates were lifted in early 2022, police in London and Wales began using live facial recognition for the first time since the pandemic began in 2022.

Big Brother Watch observed all six deployments in London and showed our ability to scramble resources and act quickly, staging small demonstrations on each occasion despite being given no formal warning, and handing out flyers to passers-by. We had great public engagement, with the public reaction continually positive to us. We also collected important observations about wrongful stops including misidentifications, wrongful inclusions on the watchlist, and out of date data – disproportionately affecting young black men. We were able to offer support to all those affected.

In March, (then) Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Cressida Dick made a surprise appearance at a live facial recognition deployment on Leicester Square. During this particular deployment, the facial recognition equipment was broken for most of the day and the police achieved no matches at all. Our director confronted Dick about the extreme use of surveillance and we captured the exchange on film, which was covered by Guido Fawkes. Our video clip of the exchange was viewed over 200,000 times on Twitter.



Also in March, police nationally adopted the new College of Policing guidelines on live facial recognition, which are incredibly enabling. We had responded to the consultation on the guidelines in 2021, although did not expect that the police would seek anything other than the widest possible guidelines to use LFR. They allow police to put innocent people, victims, potential witnesses, people with mental health problems, or possible friends of any of those people on facial recognition watchlists. We issued comments to the press,

which were reported by the [Independent](#). We briefed parliamentarians on the new College of Policing guidance.

A string of Metropolitan Police deployments of live facial recognition took place over the summer, utilising paid actors of different ethnicities to walk in front of the cameras, testing for demographic accuracy biases. A report is expected to be published in 2023.



In July, our director was called to give oral evidence to the **Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee in the House of Commons on smart technology** (to which we also submitted written evidence), and raised the issue of live facial recognition among other issues. Her comments that over 36,000 people were scanned by police facial recognition without consent in a shopping area in London in one day, with no correct matches, were reported by the [Mail Online](#).



In September, new Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Sir Mark Rowley came into post. We co-ordinated a joint [letter](#) between 14 rights groups calling on him to stop using “privacy-eroding, inaccurate and wasteful” live facial recognition surveillance. We placed the story with PA, and it was reported widely.

Public sector: Retrospective Facial Recognition

In March 2022, we secured a meeting with the Metropolitan Police, including the national facial recognition lead, to discuss their policy development on retrospective facial recognition – biometric surveillance can that be used to sift recorded footage, or to identify photos of people. We asked the Met to invite a number of relevant human rights and digital rights NGOs to the meeting, including Liberty, Open Rights Group and defenddigitalme.

Multiple police forces are now on the brink of adopting retrospective facial recognition technology and the draft national police policy would enable this incredibly powerful tool to be used for almost any purpose. This biometric surveillance endangers privacy, justice, protest rights, and risks perpetuating discrimination. Big Brother Watch continues to leads the field in the UK for policy and research expertise on facial recognition technology and in 2023 will work towards pursuing policies that ensure technologies can only be used in ways that protect these important democratic rights.

Private sector

Whilst we have successfully stemmed the flow of live facial recognition in the UK, it has not entirely gone away. We have remained responsive to tips and requests from members of the public about uses of live facial recognition.

For example, in 2022 we assisted a group of construction workers in successfully challenging mandatory facial recognition checks for access to their work site.

Importantly, we are seeking to create precedents where facial recognition is being used in harmful ways that could be easily replicated across the public sector.



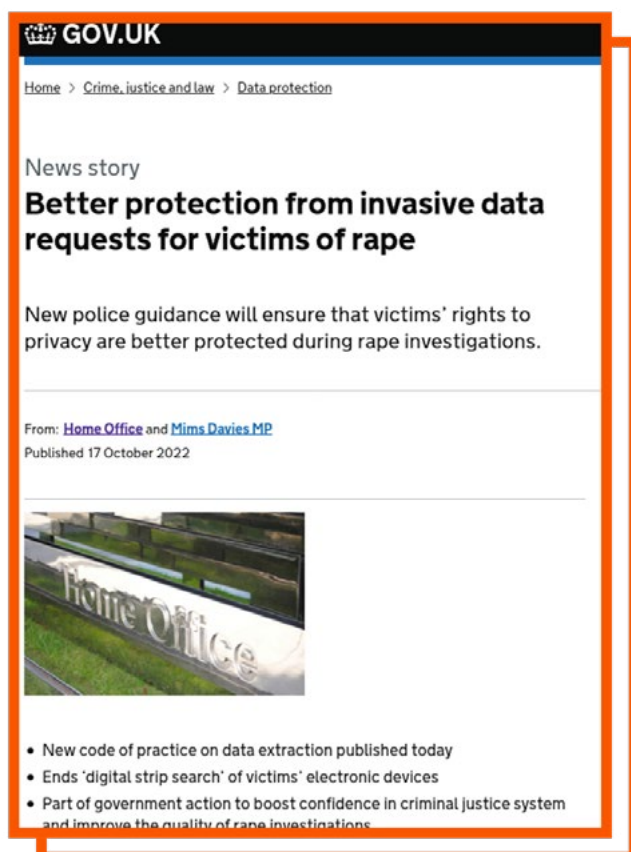
In 2022, we submitted a [legal complaint](#) to the Information Commissioner about the **Southern Co-operative's use of live facial recognition** (from the company Facewatch) in its supermarkets, in what is the first challenge to facial recognition in retail. We secured strong media coverage on the BBC, including on the Radio 4 Today programme, as well as in the Guardian, Daily Mail, and many others. The ICO has confirmed Facewatch is under investigation and we expect an outcome in 2023.

We also made legal representations to the ICO about the company PimEyes, an online facial recognition search engine, urging the regulator to investigate. We achieved good media coverage, including again from the [BBC](#). As a result, the ICO is liaising with international partners (the German data regulator, for example, is investigating PimEyes).

End digital strip searches

In 2022, we achieved a resounding success following our multi-year campaign to end digital strip searches. New laws and guidance were introduced to reform digital extraction processes and ensure that the indiscriminate requests for digital strip searches that we campaigned against for so long are explicitly prohibited.

We ended digital strip searches!



We lobbied to reform the powers on digital extraction in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. Whilst we had some limited success, the Home Office drafted broad powers and committed to implementing stricter controls in the subsequent Code of Practice. We engaged with the Home Office, including by meeting ministers, throughout the drafting process and wrote a response to the Code of Practice consultation on behalf of 9 rights groups spanning human rights, digital rights and women's and victims' rights. Many of our suggestions were taken on board in the revised Code of Practice, which was implemented from October.

We are aware that police practices do not always match police policies, and that this may be a risk particularly in the first year following reforms. We are keeping an ear to the ground for any potential issues in this regard to ensure that our reforms have been achieved both on paper and in practice.

AI and 'smart' tech

We submitted written evidence to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee's inquiry into connected technologies, and our director also gave oral evidence to the Committee. The Committee is due to report in 2023.

We submitted written evidence for the Commons' Science and Technology Committee's inquiry on AI governance. Which is also due to report in 2023.

ID cards

We lobbied parliament against mandatory voter ID in the Elections Bill, including by issuing four written briefings circulated in parliament. We worked closely with rights and democracy groups, with regular meetings and some demonstrations.

REPORTS



REPORTS



Who's Watching You? The dominance of Chinese state-owned CCTV in the UK

Published 7th February 2022, with a [Times](#) exclusive

Emergency Powers and Civil Liberties: January – March 2022

Published 23rd March 2022, sent to all parliamentarians

The Streets Are Watching: how billboards are spying on you

Published 12th October 2022, with a [Vice](#) exclusive

EVENTS







EVENTS

We hosted a comedy fundraiser event in collaboration with free speech comedy night, Comedy Unleashed, at the end of the pandemic titled 'Liberty After Lockdown' featuring an excellent line-up of comedians including Geoff Norcott. The event and our raffle raised just over £2,000 for Big Brother Watch.

In 2022, we also launched a series of online panel discussions on YouTube called 'Thought Crimes', exploring key campaign issues such as online censorship, digital IDs and citizen scoring with expert guests. Our series of five online events has attracted over 10,000 views on YouTube.

Thought Crimes | Our monthly live conversations ▶ Play all

Join Big Brother Watch to have exclusive access to our live conversations and Q&A's featuring special guests each month. <https://bigbrotherwatch.org.uk/join/now/>

			
Britain's DARK HISTORY of political surveillance -...	The truth about China's surveillance state - Thought...	Digital ID A human rights nightmare? - Thought Crime...	The sinister world of citizen scoring - Thought Crimes...
Big Brother Watch 3.1K views · 3 months ago	Big Brother Watch 1.4K views · 4 months ago	Big Brother Watch 2.5K views · 6 months ago	Big Brother Watch 1.9K views · 7 months ago

TALKS



TALKS

In 2022, our spokespeople spoke at a range of public events.

Our director, Silkie Carlo, spoke at:

- London School of Economics (LSE) at a debate co-ordinated by the Biometrics Commissioner and the Centre for Research into Information, Surveillance and Privacy (CRISP), debating the Chief Constable of South Wales Police and others on facial recognition
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) about AI, big data and algorithms in decision-making
- School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) on data, privacy and journalism
- Electronic Privacy Information Centre about algorithms and discrimination in criminal justice
- The inaugural meeting of Committees of Inquiry APPG, about protest rights
- World Ethical Data Forum about smart cities
- The Battle of Ideas on biometric surveillance
- Left Lockdown Sceptics' conference on effective campaigning
- Labour Grassroots event on protest rights and the Public Order Bill
- Chaired a panel with Stella Assange and others at a film screening of Ithaka

Our Head of Research and Investigations, Jake Hurfurt, spoke at:

- Bias in AI group (based from Durham University) on AI and automated decision-making in the welfare system
- Kings College London War Studies department on welfare, poverty and surveillance
- University of St Andrews in a debate on the regulation of Artificial Intelligence
- Public Law Project Discrimination Law Conference on AI, surveillance and welfare

Our Legal and Policy Officer, Madeleine Stone, spoke at:

- UNISON on vaccine mandates and racism
- The Senedd Digital Rights and Democracy Group's Biometrics in Schools meeting
- An event on The Future of CCTV
- An event on The Dangers of AI-Driven Mass Surveillance
- NetHope conference on facial recognition
- Biometrics Institute panel on public vs private surveillance

Our Legal and Policy Officer, Mark Johnson, spoke at:

- Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) debate on voter ID
- The Battle of Ideas on free speech online
- Law for Life on free speech and the Online Safety Bill
- Article 19 event in parliament on the right to protest
- Westminster Policy Forum on Public Order Bill

TALKS



MEETINGS

In 2022, we further extended our relationships across civil society, government, the media and tech companies, ensuring we build strong connections with stakeholders across all of our key campaign areas.

We met parliamentarians across all parties, officials from the Home Office and DCMS, the Chief Digital Officer for London, and several Government Ministers.

We met various regulators and their representatives, including the Biometrics Commissioner, Information Commissioner, and representatives of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and OFCOM.

We met representatives from the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police and South Wales Police.

We met representatives from tech companies including Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and WhatsApp.

We met representatives from NGOs, including Adam Smith Institute, Alan Turing Institute, Amnesty Tech, Arise, Article 19, Centre for Policy Studies, Centre for Women's Justice, Child Poverty Action Group, Christian Institute, Clean Up The Internet, Electronic Frontier Foundation, Fair Vote, Foxglove, Free Speech Union, Free Tibet, Global Partners Digital, Hong Kong Watch, Index on Censorship, Liberty, Le Mouton Numerique, medConfidential, Netpol, Open Rights Group, Privacy International, Public Law Project, Refuge, Reporters Without Borders, Stop the Traffik, Stop Uyghur Genocide, StopWatch, Unjust, Work Rights Centre – and many more.

We met representatives from various unions, including the TUC and IWGB.

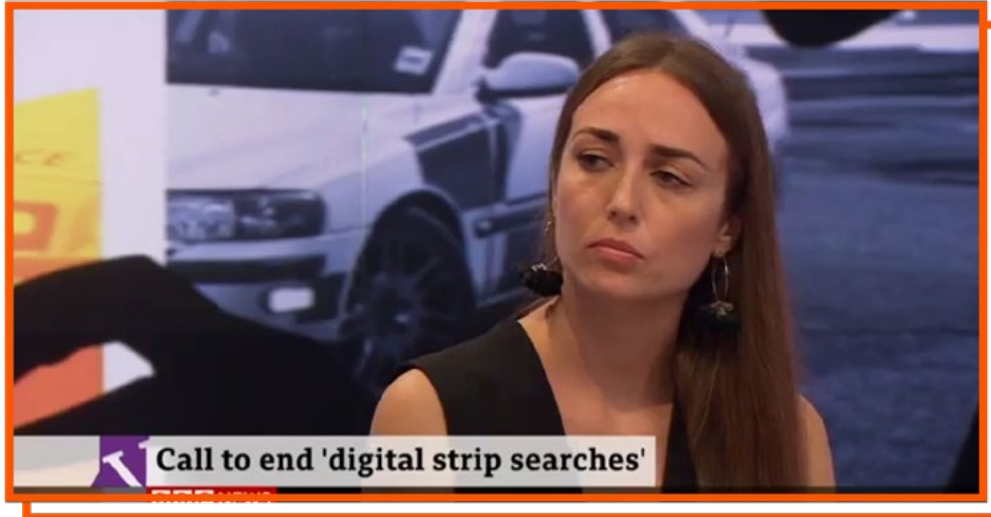
MEDIA



MEDIA

Big Brother Watch had an excellent year of media coverage – both securing strong coverage of our proactive work and investigations, and being featured regularly on key platforms responding to developments across our civil liberties remit.

Our director, Silkie Carlo:



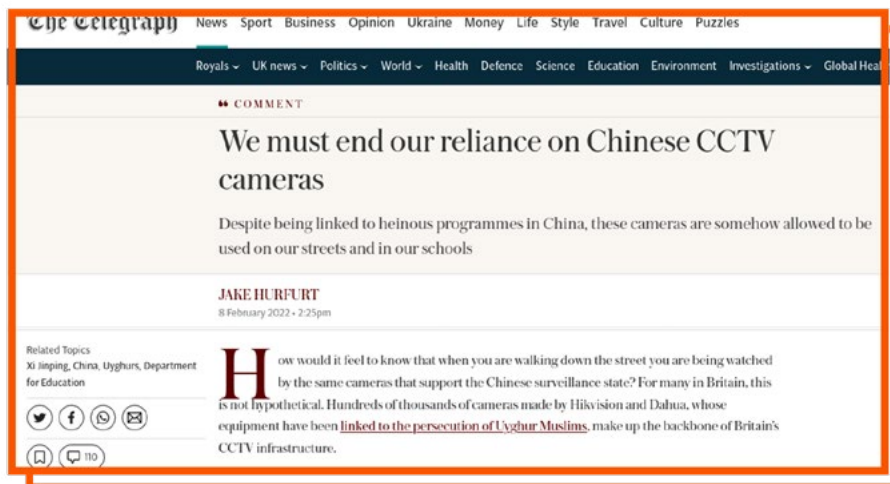
- Interviewed on BBC News about digital strip searches following the ICO’s report
- Interviewed on BBC Radio 4’s Women’s Hour on the privacy issues with police proposals for a ‘women’s safety’ app for on-command CCTV drones
- Wrote 7 opinion pieces for the Telegraph, including on free speech and internet regulation, biometric borders and cashless society – including an opinion piece in the Sunday Telegraph that was published next to a piece by the Chancellor



- Interviewed several times on Times Radio including on facial recognition and ID cards
- Filmed an interview with UnHerd on Chinese surveillance companies in the UK

- Interviewed on GB News, including as a repeat panellist on Dewbs & Co., on various topics including free speech and the Online Safety Bill, Human Rights Act repeal, digital ID, and secured coverage of a victim of aggressive lockdown policing that we assisted
- Interviewed on talkTV several times on the Online Safety Bill, facial recognition and Chinese surveillance companies
- Quoted across mainstream media including on BBC News, the Guardian, the Times, the Telegraph, Mail, Financial Times, Independent, Reuters, Bloomberg and many others on big tech, free speech, the Official Secrets Act, Human Rights Act repeal, protest rights, anti-monarchy arrests, biometrics in schools, facial recognition, CCTV, Hikvision in the UK, body-worn cameras, domestic surveillance, the Government's digital strategy, the Government's data law reform plans, the new Home Secretary and other topics
- Interviewed on Russell Brand's online show about our work
- Interviewed on the Not The Andrew Marr Show (Labour left) on the Online Safety Bill
- Featured in a podcast with Tanya Goodin on live facial recognition

Our Head of Research and Investigations, Jake Hurfurt:



- Wrote an opinion piece on the rise of Chinese CCTV for the Telegraph online
- Wrote an opinion piece for UnHerd on the risks of Hikvision in the UK
- Interviewed on talkTV on facial recognition and the ICO's £7m fine of Clearview
- Interviewed on GB News about Hikvision in the UK
- Quoted in OpenDemocracy on police informant spending

Our Legal and Policy Officer, Madeleine Stone:



- Wrote an opinion piece on CCTV and women's safety for UnHerd
- Interviewed for Channel 4 News, BBC Kent and BBC Wales on Hikvision cameras in the UK
- Interviewed on BBC 5 Live and BBC Berkshire on Amazon Ring
- Interviewed on BBC Look North on 'smart' CCTV
- Interviewed by GB News on our legal complaint about Southern Co-op and facial recognition
- Quoted in the Mail, City AM, Scottish Sun, Gizmodo, The Big Issue and others on various types of facial recognition
- Quoted in CNN, the Mail, Business Insider, Tech Monitor, and others on Hikvision
- Quoted in the Mail on proposals to track Oyster card and rail journeys
- Quoted in the Mail on ANPR surveillance

Our Legal and Policy Officer, Mark Johnson:



- Wrote opinion pieces for UnHerd on Facebook's censorship of the BMJ, protest rights, financial censorship and PayPal, misinfo and the Online Safety Bill
- Wrote an opinion piece for the Spectator on free speech online
- Wrote an opinion piece for the Critic on the Online Safety Bill
- Wrote an opinion piece for Labour Hub on the Online Safety Bill
- Interviewed on BBC Radio Ulster on the Online Safety Bill
- Interviewed by LBC on protest rights
- Interviewed on GB News several times on protest rights, free speech and the Online Safety Bill
- Interviewed on talkTV on protest rights and the Police Bill, and the Online Safety Bill
- Joined Live with Littlewood on the Online Safety Bill
- Quoted in the Guardian, Business Insider, Economist, GalDem, and many other publications on the free speech risks in the Online Safety Bill
- Quoted in the Guardian and South China Morning Post on protest rights and the Public Order Bill

SOCIAL MEDIA

We maintained a strong social media presence, with our Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Telegram channels.

We achieved over 10 million impressions on Twitter, which remains our strongest channel.

In 2022, we invested more resources in growing our YouTube audience and increased our subscriber count by 40%, from 16,702 to 23,284 subscribers. In particular, our YouTube video of Sir Charles Walker MP challenging the anti-protest powers in the Public Order Bill achieved over half a million views (664k).

STAFF



At the end of 2022, we were delighted to recruit our sixth member of the team, Abhinaya Murthy, our new Digital Communications Officer!

Abhinaya is experienced in digital communications, partnerships, and project management.

She has previously worked in the higher education sector and in a range of non-profits focusing on education, children's welfare, and women's rights.

She holds an MSc in Media, Communication and Development with a focus on digital inequalities from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

TRAINING

In 2022, Big Brother Watch staff undertook various training courses, building on our skills.

Our Legal & Policy staff took part in a four day judicial review academy with the Public Law Project.

All staff undertook team media training, and legal observer training.

Other staff courses included training in management, project management and data journalism.

2023



THE YEAR AHEAD IN 2023

In 2023, we need to:

- challenge the expected expansion of facial recognition surveillance, by police and retailers, in the UK
- expose the truth behind the government's secretive 'counter-disinformation' units
- ban surveillance tech made by Chinese state-owned firms from the UK
- defeat anti-protest powers in parliament
- defend free expression online
- protect our privacy and data protection rights from government repeal plans
- create a legacy through the Covid Inquiry or related work on protecting civil liberties in a crisis.

We've shown that, with your support, we can win huge battles for the future of Britain's freedom – even when the odds are stacked against us.

With your backing, we can always win.

Our work defending civil liberties is only made possible by our supporters.

THANK YOU to each and every one person who supported us in 2022 – the victories detailed in this report would not have happened without you.

Thank you for defending freedom.

BigBrotherWatch.org.uk/Join-Us