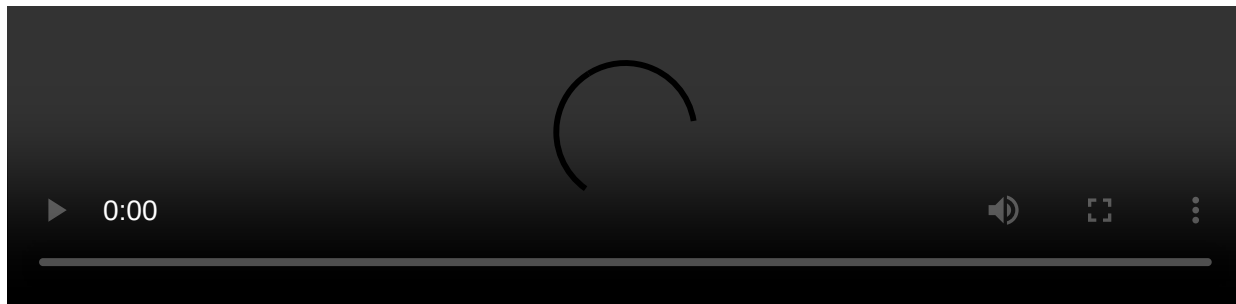


We were wrong to film journalists covering protest, say Kent police

- Climate camp surveillance mistaken, force accepts
- Met asked to clarify its evidence in separate case

Paul Lewis

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■ Footage shot by police shows how their officers monitored campaigners and the media at last August's climate camp demonstration in Kent guardian.co.uk/Jason N. Parkinson

Kent police accepted last night they should not have placed journalists under surveillance after a Guardian investigation revealed members of the press were monitored and followed at last year's climate camp demonstration.

Secret footage shot by two police surveillance officers during the protest, obtained by the Guardian and broadcast online over the weekend, confirmed officers have been monitoring journalists at protests. Senior officers had previously denied journalists had become the target of surveillance units.

The footage showed that while officers had been asked to monitor protesters against the [Kingsnorth](#) coal-fired power station, they showed particular interest in journalists.

An ITV news crew, a Sky News cameraman and several photographers were among members of the press placed under surveillance as they left the camp in August. Later in the day journalists were followed by another surveillance unit to a McDonald's restaurant where police filmed them.

Allyn Thomas, Kent's assistant chief constable who oversaw the operation, said the force "fully accept the right to protest as part of our democracy", but the force had received information that protesters intended to shut down the power station.

"As part of our operation overt filming of protesters was carried out as a means of identifying anyone who subsequently attempted to break into the