

Fly-Tipping Action Plan



September 2021


milton keynes council

Foreword

This plan is the first of its kind, clearly setting out what MK Council will do in the months and years ahead to support and work with residents, businesses, partners, and communities to tackle fly-tipping.

As you will read, we will be strengthening our enforcement work, increasing engagement and education efforts, and ensuring accessible facilities and services are provided for the safe disposal of waste city-wide through the 15 actions set out in this plan.

Sadly, most people recognise that a hard-core minority will inevitably continue to cause harm by fly-tipping and eradicating it is unrealistic, but through the actions in this plan we are determined to reduce it to as low a level as possible and keep it there.

Cllr Lauren Townsend

Responsible Cabinet Member



Introduction

Tackling fly-tipping is a priority and we will not stand by and let it worsen.

Illegal fly-tipping is an increasing issue nationally and locally. For the 2019/20 year, councils in England dealt with just under 1 million (976,000) fly-tipping incidents, an increase of 2% from the 957,000 reported in 2018/19 (Government Statistical Service, 2021).

Here in Milton Keynes, we've received 5,819 fly-tipping reports from the public since March 2020. This is the highest level since 2015.

Fly-tips do vary greatly in scale and nature, but all have a negative impact on our residents and their communities. They create a feeling of disrepair, a perception of a lack of care and blight, as well as creating broader environmental, social, and economic issues, such as providing habitats for rats.

In response, our new action plan sets out a range of measures we are taking. Wherever possible informed by intelligence collected by our team so we targeted those areas where we have the biggest problem or are most likely to be successful.

Our approach requires close partnership working and a joined-up approach within the council (especially our waste, housing, environment, and legal teams) alongside residents, our Town and Parish Councils, community groups and other key partners, like Thames Valley Police.

At the heart of our approach

We will:

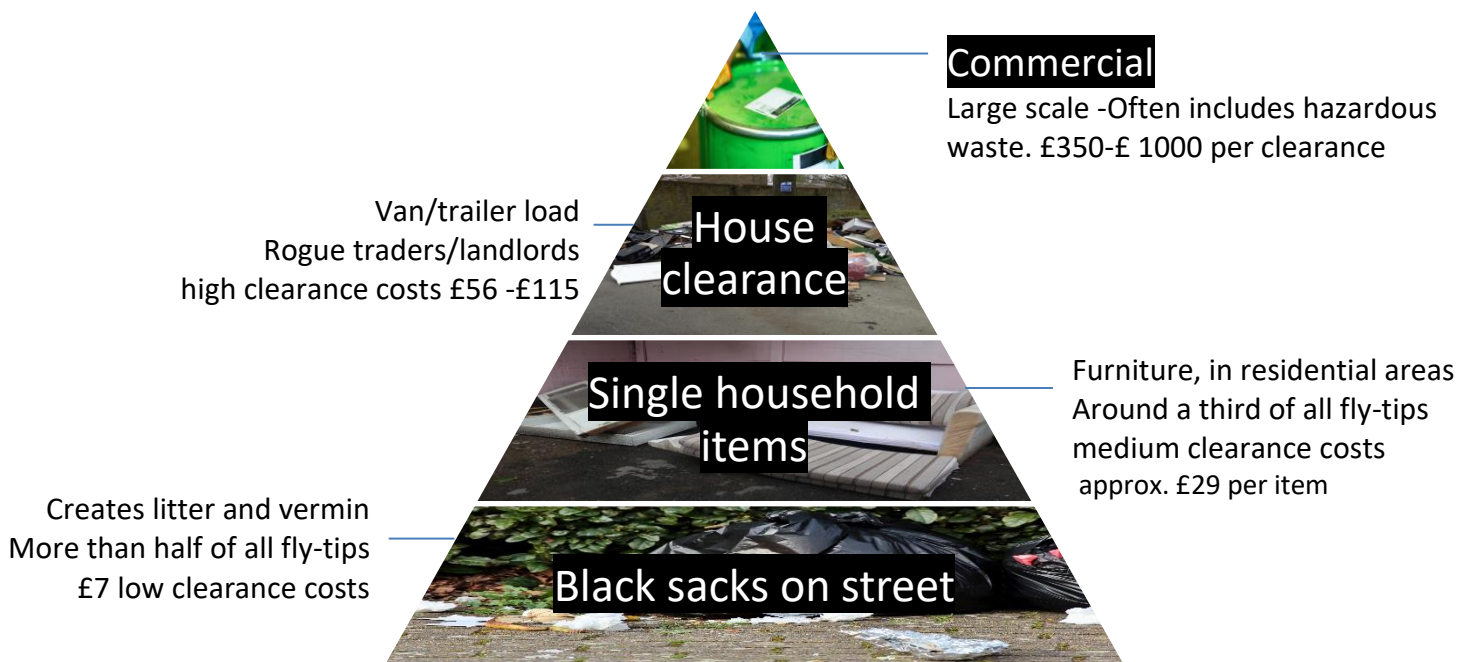
- Aim to reduce fly-tipping, especially in the areas with the biggest problem where we will put more effort
- Find the most successful approaches used elsewhere that can be developed across MK.
- Focus on longer term measures rather than temporary fixes to tackle the root causes of why people fly-tip and have a greater deterrent for longer.
- Do our best to involve residents and partners like our town and parish councils.
- Make the most of data, using it to understand trends and inform future intelligence-driven work.
- Maintain our investment in actions to tackle fly-tipping, and make funding available for specific interventions, like the targeted use of mobile CCTV.

The different types of fly-tipping

Fly-tips are not all the same in terms of size or environmental impact. Some can be relatively small, with a 'black sack' worth of waste making up a larger percentage of incidents than a commercial fly-tip scale.

In tackling fly-tipping we must consider the materials that cause the greatest issue in terms of impact of local amenity and environmental issues.

The below diagram illustrates the different types of fly-tipping we have to deal with:



*Costs are per incident taken from ENV24 - Fly tipping incidents and actions taken in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Where fly-tipping happens most

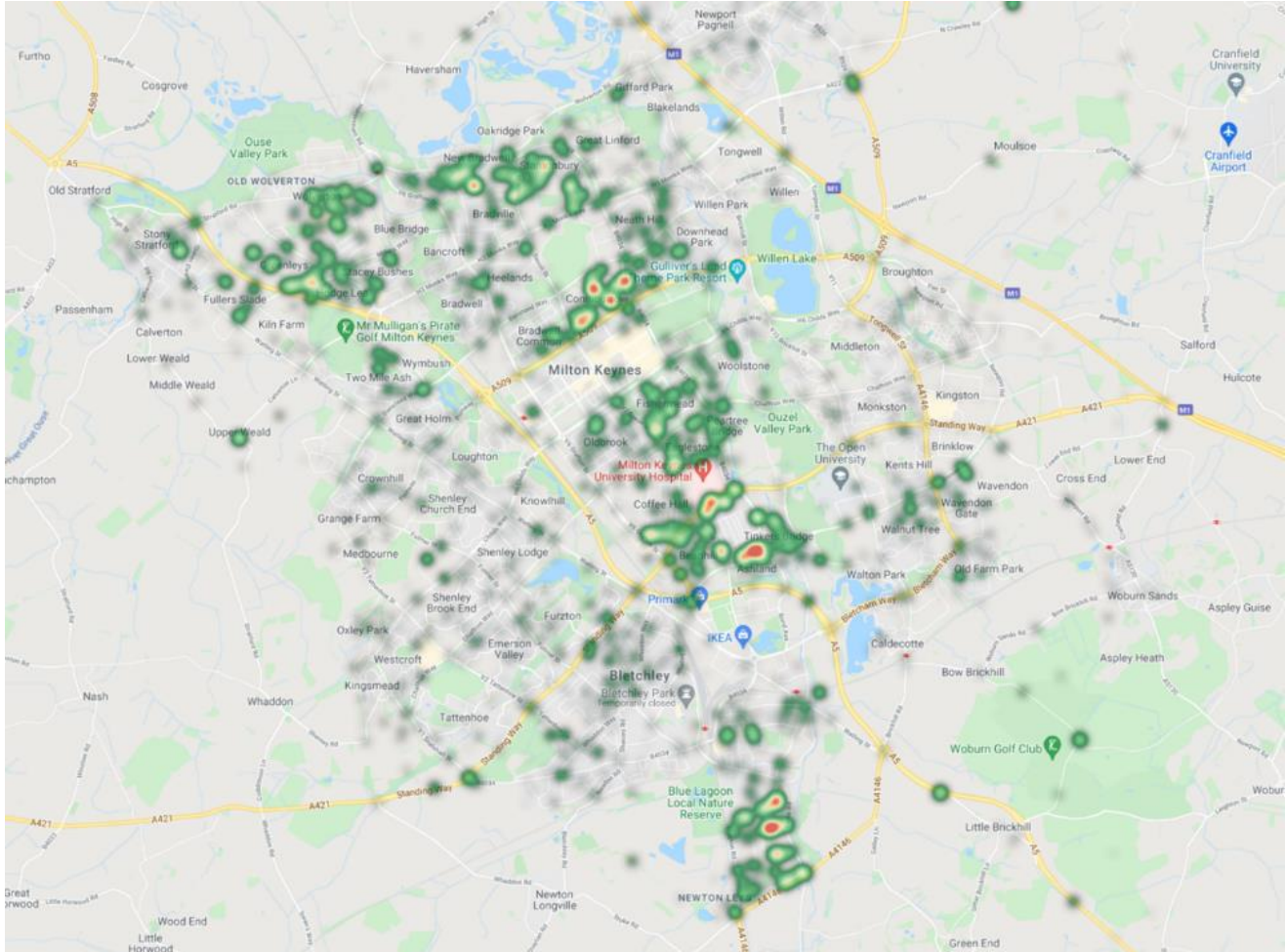
Fly-tipping is mostly reported through our online 'report it' system. Getting an accurate picture of the levels of fly-tipping can be difficult as we often receive multiple reports of the same fly-tip. We are committed to improving this data to get a clearer picture so we can build up a better picture of hot spots and allocate resources effectively.

Data analysis is also important to determine and review which approach works best in which areas; for example road side tipping of large waste volumes is typically on rural roads and laybys, but tipping of single items is more often on estates close to housing. A flexible range of tools will be used in recognition that a 'one size fits all' approach will not work for some issues.

Our current data shows the following places contained within the below heat map as having problems with fly-tipping:

Heat map

Fly-tipping in the urban area of Milton Keynes of all incidents within one year. Areas in yellow and red and areas of concentrated flytipping and are the areas of core focus. Areas of deep green and rural areas will also be considered.



What we're going to do

We will use a full range of enforcement powers

We will use all of our enforcement powers, modern surveillance and evidence gathering, alongside partnership working to prosecute offenders, pushing for maximum penalties on behalf of affected communities.

Our Environmental Crime Unit (ECU) use evidence, witness statements and CCTV footage to pursue prosecutions, compose case files and issue fixed penalty notices. They are a team of six specialists, who as part of our commitment to tackling fly-tipping will be expanding to seven through additional funding. [Action 1]

The team will:

- Prioritise areas worst affected by illegal dumping, creating a tailored action plan for each. [Action 2]
- Prioritise commercial-sized fly-tipping investigations, liaising with contractors to investigate larger waste dumps, investigating landlords not taking responsibility for their tenants and their own housing activities. [Action 3]
- Work with Trading Standards to identify rogue traders and set up specific way for residents to raise concerns. [Action 4]
- Use extra CCTV mobile cameras for both proactive and reactive surveillance. These will be used in areas proven to have suffered from fly tipping in the past and where there is a likelihood that offenders will be caught. [Action 5]
- Use Householder (Duty of Care) Fixed Penalty Notices. [Action 6]
- Work in partnership with Thames Valley Police, offering training on Waste Carrier Registrations and Scrap Metal Dealers. [Action 7]
- Publicly report figures on prosecutions, case files, FPNs, fly-tips, legal notices, and investigations. [Action 8]

In addition, we will continue to highlight to local magistrates' the negative impact fly-tipping is having on communities in order to encourage them to treat fly-tipping as a serious offence and therefore attracting the higher range of sanctions. [Action 9]

Alongside this work we will be deploying new litter wardens in Milton Keynes, with the power to issue on the spot fines.

We will try to engage and educate

To give confidence to our communities that fly-tipping is a priority, we will use the full range of communication channels to let residents know our stance on fly-tipping, how to report it and what we are doing about it.

We will work with our communities, ward councillors, parish and town councils, colleagues, businesses and partners, so that they have the opportunity to understand what we intend to do and the role that they can play in helping to reduce fly-tipping – including businesses having a good understanding of what can often seem like complex waste legislation. [Action 10]

We will continue to share facts and information, including myth busting and the environmental, social and economic impact of fly-tipping. We will also enhance our online material and signpost people to it. [Action 11]

We will maintain and improve legal waste disposal options

There are many reasons given as to why householders and commercial fly tippers dump waste illegally. Milton Keynes Council is committed to ensuring people have easy and legal means to dispose of their unwanted items.

The council recognises that it is important to offer easy ways to dispose of waste outside the regular kerbside collection arrangements.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

We will continue to ensure good access to HWRCs and promote their use. It remains free at the point of use for local residents to use HWRCs to dispose of household items and will continue to be.

Our recycling centres at Bleak Hall, New Bradwell and Newport Pagnell are open from 7am -7pm seven days per week (summer hours). These are well used, and we are looking long term at new facilities as the city grows.

Research indicates that a primary driver for fly-tipping is time concerns such as queuing #. As part of our response to COVID-19, we introduced changes to the way the centres work, with a booking system started to enable us to run the facilities safely, follow government advice on social distancing and reduce queues. Now social distancing has ended, and the system is able to run at a higher capacity we will reassess the advantages and disadvantages of the booking system this year to ensure the best possible access to HWRCs in line with evidence. The outcome of this review will be reported to Cabinet in late 2021. [Action 12]

source: UCL Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science

Bulky waste collection service

Like most councils, we offer a paid-for bulky waste home collection service.

Generally, the service works well, and evidence suggest cost drivers have a lower impact on fly-tipping. However, it is reported locally that the cost and complexity of bulky waste charges, combined with lack of transport to enable HWRC use, may act as a barrier to safe, legal disposal of items in some areas.

We will seek more evidence on this and will commit to re-examine our fees and charges as part of the budget setting process [Action 13]

Giving powers to local areas for Community Clear-outs

Our local communities alongside town and parish councils are well placed to help in our fight against the scourge of fly-tipping.

We will give local communities, town, and parish councils the powers to provide and manage skips for Community Clear-out schemes. We will provide advice and support if they want to organise these events to help to avoid fly-tipping in their area. [Action 14]

While community skips can provide an opportunity for residents to dispose of waste safely and lawfully, their use must be carefully managed. We will therefore set out clear requirements that need to be met to enable such schemes, such as monitoring the skips to avoid them being used for commercial activity.

Community Clear-outs will be community-led initiatives enabled by those that know their area best to provide additional capacity in our aims to reduce fly-tipping, However, it will be an optional supplementary activity that complements the core proposals in this document.

Reducing waste

Milton Keynes Council has world-leading aspirations to become a sustainable, low carbon place. Offering easy ways of dispose of waste needs to be balanced with our efforts to encourage people to re-use, recycle and consume less wherever possible. This is a difficult balance to get right, and alongside this action plan we will continue our work to promote sustainable living.

We will therefore investigate schemes to enable local people to dispose of re-useable household items in a more sustainable way and reduce levels of waste. [Action 15]



recycle for Milton
What goes in your recycling

serco
recycle



milton keynes council

