



Verges, lines & kerbs

Mini guide

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What is a verge?

A roadside verge is the strip of land between the road kerb and another boundary. This may be a wall, fence or a building. Verges can be all grass, asphalt or include trees and hedges. They are a useful buffer between the road traffic and the areas nearby. They also provide an overspill space for vehicles to pass other road users e.g. cyclists or pedestrians.

Most verges on the highways are Council-owned which also means we are responsible for their maintenance and enforcement. Some may be privately-owned and are unadopted such as new developments or in rural areas. You can find out what areas are Council-owned using the MyMK Mapping tool on our homepage: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk



Grass verge on a rural road



Granite kerb in CMK with double yellow lines

Verge parking and protection

In urban areas where parking is limited, verge parking can be a big problem. Vehicles parking repeatedly on a soft, grass verge will damage the ground, which may contain several underground utility cables and pipes, and it can become very muddy and unsightly. It may also cause kerbs to become dislodged.

Vehicles that are parked on a verge close to a bend, narrow road or near a junction can also hinder visibility for drivers and causes an obstruction for pedestrians. A driver can be prosecuted if their vehicle is persistently causing an obstruction, damaging a verge or is parked dangerously.

It is also an offence to place obstacles, such as concrete blocks or rocks, on the verge which is public highway. Some residents may do this to prevent parking but it is still an obstruction of the highway. Pedestrians or cyclists may injure themselves on these items especially when visibility is poor or if they are covered by snow or grass.

If items like this are reported to us, we will ask the owner to remove them. If they fail to do this we will take enforcement action to have them removed.

We have installed verge protection in some areas to prevent vehicles being parked on there. This includes measures like ascot fencing or grasscrete. However we cannot install these measures at every site due to the installation and maintenance costs. Parish-funded schemes for verge protection can usually be done following a suitability assessment by a highways officer to look at the area and any existing issues. The work will have to be approved and managed by the Highways team.



Rocks placed on a verge by a local resident to prevent parking



Grasscrete is an option to protect a grass verge from vehicles

Verge parking and the law

Under the Highways Act 1980, it is an offence for a vehicle to be parked on a grass verge if it is causing an obstruction. Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV)s, which is any vehicle weighing over 7.5 tonnes may not park on a grass verge. You can view the full Highways Act 1980 at www.legislation.gov.uk

You may not place items on the verge such as posts, stones or concrete blocks. This can be reported to us for enforcement action on 01908 252353.

For more details about parking and when to contact the Council or the Police please see our Mini Guide to Parking Enforcement (Highways).

We've been working with the Environmental Crime Unit (ECU) team to protect vulnerable sites by adding bunds to verges. These are mounds of earth which prevent vehicles accessing the wide verge spaces. The bunds are created using soil removed from sites such as the V4 underpass which are then topped with wildflower seeds.

Illegal encampments may be reported to our ECU on 01908 253200 or email scu.enforcement@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Biodiversity and rural verges

Grass verges are a haven for wildflowers like the bee orchid (pictured) and insects so our Landscaping team schedule mowing around the expected growing patterns of the grass. The mowing is done on a cyclical program between March and late October. By changing the frequency and timing of cutting rural grass verges more flowers are able to grow which encourages more insects including pollinators like bees to thrive.



The bee orchid growing in a verge



A bund protecting the verge from illegal encampments

Kerbs

Kerbs are a stone edging to a footway or raised path. In most areas of MK these are made of concrete except in CMK where granite blocks are used as this is part of the design guide for the area.

Any damaged, displaced or missing kerbs may be reported to us through the Report It section on the website or call 01908 252353.

Dropped Kerbs

For vehicles

A dropped kerb allows access across the public footway from the road to a driveway. If you want to apply for a dropped kerb or vehicle crossing, a specially constructed section of pavement or verge for vehicular access to a property, there are certain conditions that must be met first and the full cost must be covered by the applicant. All the details are on our website in the Licences and Permits section of the Highways and Transport Hub. You may not add a dropped kerb or vehicle crossing without getting permission from MK City Council first.

For pedestrians

A dropped kerb also allows pedestrians such as wheelchair users or those with a pushchair, to access the road or footway more easily from a footway or road.

Each year we carry out small schemes covered by our Accessibility Fund (£25k) to add dropped kerbs to help those with accessibility issues. We also use this fund to carry out other works to aid accessibility like removing obstacles or adding handrails.

More details about this fund and the schemes funded by it are on our Highways section at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways



Dropped kerb for pedestrians with tactile paving



Granite kerbs at Station Square, CMK

Road markings

Road markings help to control traffic, show where there are parking regulations and help to keep all road users safe including pedestrians and cyclists as well as drivers.

As the Highways Authority for Milton Keynes, we maintain, install and remove road markings. Markings on well used roads will need to be refreshed when they become faded. We have a programme in place to do this for white and yellow lines which can be viewed on the Highways section on our website.

You can report faded road markings on the Report It section of the website. Please note that our budget and resources for lining works are very limited so any works are listed in order of priority.

Applying road markings

We use specialist paint for road markings called thermoplastic paint that contains small glass beads to make it reflective. The mixture is heated to a high temperature before being applied to the road. Colour pigments can be added for different types of lining including yellow lines or double red lines.

Access Protection Markings (APMs)

Access Protection Markings (APM's) are white 'H' shaped lines painted onto the road, in front of an access to a property that highlight dropped kerbs to other road users and are particularly useful where visibility is limited. They can help to deter obstructive parking however these markings are advisory and are not enforceable.

You can apply for APMs on our website but check the criteria thoroughly before you apply as we will only consider adding Access Protection Markings where the access is not obvious to drivers e.g. a concealed entrance. There must also be a proven problem of continuous obstruction. There is a charge for installing APMs which also includes the cost of the application process. Any future maintenance costs will be in addition to the original fee.



Applying white paint for a Zebra crossing



Red and yellow lines painted on road

Contact details

How to report problems with road markings, verges or kerbs

Please note: our resources are limited so we prioritise all work reported to us based on safety.

If you do need to report an issue to us, please provide the location including the street name and postcode and a description of the problem. Photos are great too if you can provide them.

Phone

01908 252353

Monday to Friday 9am to 5:15pm.

Email

customerservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Online

Use the Report It section on www.milton-keynes.gov.uk

Emergencies

For an out of hours emergency on the highway such as an obstruction on the road, contact the out of hours team on 01908 226699.

Any life threatening emergency should be reported to the Police immediately on 999.