

Anti-Social Behaviour Annual Report

2024-2025.

Foreword



Welcome to our 2024-2025 Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) Annual Report.

My name is Rae Kane, and I am the Chair of the resident-led Anti-social Behaviour Monitoring Group.

Our Anti-social Behaviour Team is committed to ensuring our neighbourhoods remain a safe place to live. We do this through a combination of strategies to address anti-social behaviour, including prevention, diversion and enforcement.

It really matters to us how we can continue to improve the areas where our residents live. This is why we invest in a specialist team which is dedicated to addressing reports of anti-social behaviour.

This Annual Report gives our residents an overview of the team's performance in tackling anti-social behaviour in Milton Keynes.

1. Year in Summary

Last year, we recommitted to improving services for tenants. By taking on-board the feedback from victims of anti-social behaviour and others we have been able to examine the customer journey, while identifying areas for improvement. We have:

- Improved accessibility by increasing our methods of reporting, ensuring an easier process.
- Implemented a new case-management procedure, where the victim is central to the process.
- Introduced a new webpages dedicated to anti-social behaviour and victims.

We have also:

- Introduced action plans as part of our commitment to victims and being accountable for the promises we make.
- Introduced new response times for hate-related behaviour.
- Embedded our new Victim Satisfaction Survey

2. Our Priorities

Every year, we set our priorities based on an assessment of demand and risk. For the 2024-2025 year, we identified the following five areas where resources would be focussed to prevent anti-social behaviour from escalating. These are:

- Alcohol-related anti-social behaviour
- Drug and gang-related behaviour
- Anti-social Abuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Neighbour disputes, including noise nuisance.

In previous years we identified residential areas across Central Milton Keynes as being a hotspot for **alcohol-related anti-social behaviour**. We have continued to build on our work under Project CMK, which has included using our legal powers to target anti-social offenders, embedding a new local lettings policy and working with licensed premises by having a mutual objective to reduce alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.



In partnership with Thames Valley Police and other partner agencies, including the councils Contextual Safeguarding Team, we have carried out a range of interventions to steer young people away from drug-related and organised criminal activities.

Anti-social Abuse is the combination of serious harassment and threatening behaviour being used by offenders to exert their control over their victims, commonly resulting in financial abuse and other forms of exploitation. Anti-social Abuse has continued to be a significant priority for the team, with education initiatives being delivered to hard-to-reach groups with the aim of raising awareness and empowering communities to seek help and support where abuse has been suspected. Our 'Look out for your neighbour' campaign was again delivered to several sheltered accommodation schemes across Milton Keynes, while the team used a range of legal powers to disrupt a network of offenders, protecting vulnerable people from being targeted.



Domestic Abuse – We have successfully resolved 25 cases of domestic abuse throughout the year, working alongside Thames Valley Police, MK-Act and other statutory agencies and local charities to ensure long-term solutions for those most at risk from serious harm. Using our legal powers, we secured a lengthy ASB Injunction with Power of Arrest against one male following evidence of domestic abuse, threatening behaviour, intimidation, and a range of other behaviours towards local women across Milton Keynes. Since the Order was made there have been no further instances.

Neighbour disputes, We have made good use of our mediation service to resolve disputes, as well as introducing the Dear Neighbour Card – an independent self-resolution measure which can be downloaded from our website, informing the neighbour of the impact of their behaviour.

3. Performance

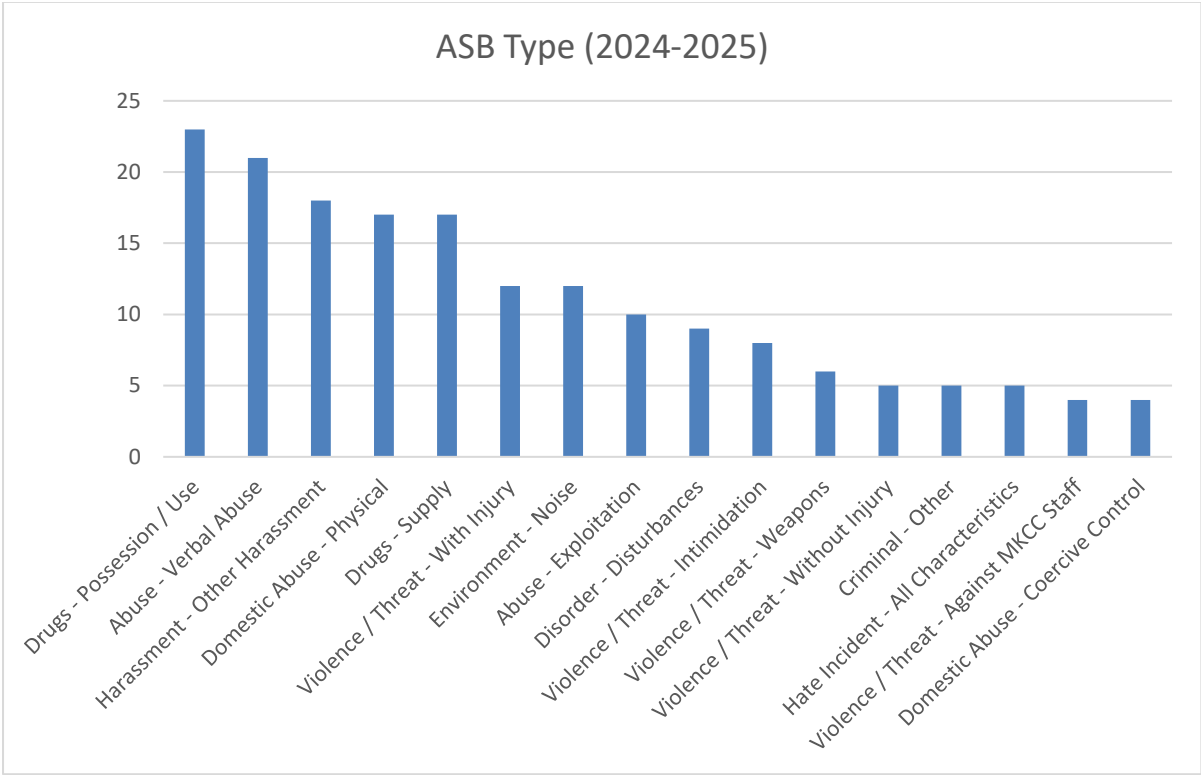
Our aim is to deliver an excellent service to our residents. This is why we monitor the performance of the service through a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and service standards. This is a combination of data retrieved from our housing management system and the Victim Satisfaction Survey. These are:

- Response times
- Maintaining contact with the victim
- Notifying the victim in every case of the Victims Code
- Reaching a successful resolution in every case
- Achieving high levels of victim satisfaction (case handling)
- Achieving high levels of victim satisfaction (case outcome)

Throughout the year, we managed **208** cases of anti-social behaviour, including 25 cases of domestic abuse and five cases of hate. Our most common behaviour types include drug use, verbal abuse, harassment, drug supply and violence.

The below table provides a breakdown of the most common behaviour types the team have managed throughout the year:

Table 1.

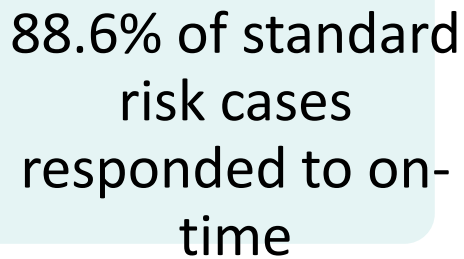


Through our ASB Policy we have made a commitment to responding to initial reports based on risk. We are committed to responding to reports assessed as standard risk within five business days, while reports assessed as high risk will be responded to within one business day.

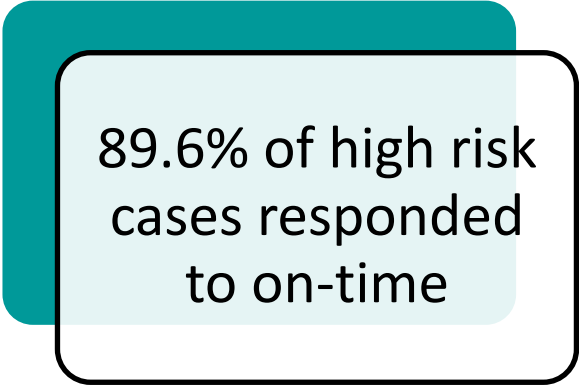
The team aim to respond to every case within the timescales set out above, using the information collected from the matrix risk assessment to establish any risks and vulnerabilities, and to identify what measures should be put in place immediately to prevent further harm.

In early 2024, we amended our ASB Policy to include hate-related incidents as a priority response. This means we will aim to respond to every case which consists of hate within one business day. We continue to respond to certain behaviour types as a priority, such as violence, domestic abuse, threatening behaviour, drug supply and exploitation.

Our response times are as follows:


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88.6% of standard risk cases responded to on-time


An infographic element consisting of a teal-colored rounded rectangle with a white border. Inside, a light blue rounded rectangle contains the text "89.6% of high risk cases responded to on-time".

89.6% of high risk cases responded to on-time

While every attempt is made to reach a successful resolution in every case, there are occasions when we fall short of our own expectations. This might be because we are unable to evidence the anti-social behaviour. Throughout the year, the team were able to successfully resolve the majority, with only two cases closing as being unresolved.

An infographic element consisting of a teal-colored rounded rectangle with a white border. Inside, a light blue rounded rectangle contains the text "We have managed 208 cases in 12 months".

We have managed 208 cases in 12 months

An infographic element consisting of a teal-colored rounded rectangle with a white border. Inside, a light blue rounded rectangle contains the text "96.7% closed cases successfully resolved".

96.7% closed cases successfully resolved

We use the Victim Satisfaction Survey – which is carried out with victims at the end of every case – to obtain their views and feedback, and the level of satisfaction, with the handling and outcome of their case.

77.7% of complainants
satisfied with the
handling of their case

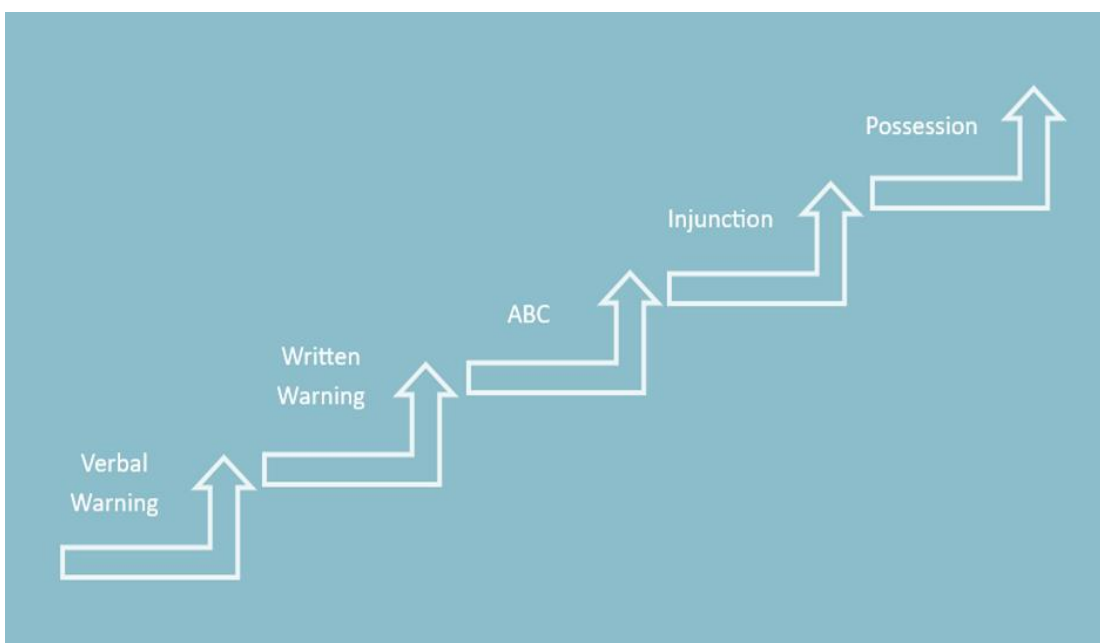
75.5% of complainants
satisfied with the
outcome of their case

Formal complaints in relation to the service and management of cases is low, with very few complaints received in relation to the service being delivered to tackle anti-social behaviour.

4. Interventions

The team follow an intervention model (see table 2) which comprises of informal measures, such as verbal and written warnings, and legal sanctions, such as closures and injunctions. As a last resort, we may consider proceedings to evict tenants. We supplement this through other interventions which aim to address the underlying causes of anti-social behaviour, including referrals to support agencies to tackle drug and alcohol use.

Table 2.



Where the behaviour is persistent and attempts to resolve the issues through informal measures have been unsuccessful, the team may consider our legal powers to bring the anti-social behaviour to a stop. The same approach is taken where the anti-social behaviour continues to pose a high-risk of harm. The team will identify the most appropriate legal power which best fits the behaviours, with the aim of reaching a long-lasting and successful outcome where the risk to victims is eradicated.

Informal interventions, consisting of warnings and implementing support plans, makes up a large bulk of interventions which has resulted in cases being successfully resolved.

We have also applied for, and successfully obtained, a range of court orders. These are as follows:

- Closure Orders (3)
- ASB Injunctions (6)
- Possession of Property (7)

Closure Orders have the consequence of bringing immediate relief to communities by closing down residential properties at short notice. Closure Orders can also be made on a 'partial' basis, which means specified persons – usually the tenant – is the only person allowed to reside there. In one case, a full closure order was granted which brought immediate closure to a residential property in the Bradwell area of Milton Keynes following reports of drug activities, disorder, intimidation and violence from visitors.



ASB Injunctions are used on a more individualistic basis, with the aim of changing behaviours, protecting victims and tackling underlying causes of behaviours through requirements to engage with support services. Throughout the year we obtained six ASB Injunctions against persistent and high-risk offenders of anti-social behaviour. In total, we continue to manage over 20 ASB Injunctions against offenders across Milton Keynes, although most court orders are complied with. In 2024-2025, we initiated breach proceedings on two occasions, one of which resulted in a custodial sentence. We continue to pursue our aims under Operation Intercept, using civil orders to target offenders of anti-social abuse and exploitation.

Possession proceedings are initiated against tenants as a last resort. These proceedings have the consequence of the tenant being evicted from their home as a result of anti-social behaviour. Throughout the year we recovered seven properties due to serious anti-social and criminal behaviour. In one case, a possession order was granted in the Fullers Slade area following reports of weapons being stored at the property, drug-related activities and disorder. In another case, we recovered a property in the Bletchley area following evidence the property was being used to produce drugs.

5. Victims Code

In 2022, we introduced a Victims Code – consisting of six ‘rights’. These rights are made up of commitments and can be found on the council’s website. We expect every complainant to be informed of the Victims Code at the point of case opening, with written communication of the Victims Code being found on every case opening letter and incident diary.

The Victim’s Code is as follows:

Code 1: To be able to understand and to be understood.

Code 2: To have the details of your report recorded without delay.

Code 3: To be provided with information when making your report.

Code 4: To access support services for victims.

Code 5: To be informed about the investigation of your case.

Code 6: To have a review of your case be carried out.

By delivering these promises we hope every victim who accesses our service will feel fully supported from the outset and will feel empowered to seek a review of their case should they feel the handling of the case isn’t up to standard or the case isn’t progressing.

In 2024-2025, we received two requests from complainants to have their case reviewed, resulting in recommendations being made to progress the case.

6. Resident involvement

Our ASB Monitoring Group continues to act as our 'critical friend'. The group, consisting of a tenant-led Chair and several members, have worked on several projects throughout the year, such as our new ASB webpages. Our webpages, which can be found on the council website, includes dedicated pages to making a report, an FAQ section on our tools and powers, and a new Support Hub page which provides guidance on how to access a range of support services.

Our ASB Monitoring Group continues to scrutinise our policies and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose, while being presented with case studies from our case officers, alongside quarterly performance updates. At the end of each year, our Annual ASB Forum takes place and once again members of the ASB Monitoring Group attended and gave an overview of their work throughout the year.

7. Service Improvement Plan

Our aim is to deliver an anti-social behaviour service where the customer is at the heart of every case. We aim to do this through quick response times, regular communication, timely interventions and keeping to our promises. We use the data collected from the Victim Satisfaction Survey to assess the effectiveness of our case handling and overall performance, and use this information, directly from the victim, to shape our services.

We have identified the following areas for improvement:

1. To increase our response times in accordance with our service standards.
2. To keep to the promises we have made through effective Action Planning.
3. To maintain regular and ongoing contact with victims in accordance with our service standards in every case.
4. To promote and keep to the promises we have made in our Victims Code.
5. To enhance our approach to engaging with hard-to-reach groups and communities.

6. To raise the awareness of hate-related behaviours and increase levels of reporting through a new Hate Policy.

In November 2024, we received a final determination by the Housing Ombudsman in relation to an anti-social behaviour case which was first opened in 2021.

The determination can be found here: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/decisions/milton-keynes-city-council-202223793/>

We have considered the findings of the Housing Ombudsman to establish any learning opportunities from this case. We have identified that the concerns raised by the resident largely related to the lack of case-management procedures which were in place in 2021, when the case first opened. Since then, we have implemented a new ASB case-management procedure which provides sufficient guidance to case officers in accordance with best practice. This includes following key principles and the 'six golden stages' of case-management, from case opening to case closure, with mandatory risk assessing of the victim, action plans being agreed, investigations being carried out and where required, interventions being put in place. We have also implemented service standards, including increased response times and a commitment to maintaining contact with the victim. The findings also referred to the complaint process not being complied with, with improvements continuously being made to this process to ensure compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.

