

# MK Together Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2020/21

## **Introduction**

This report outlines the findings of the 2020/21 Community Safety Strategic Assessment.

## **Background**

The Community Safety Strategic Assessment is a statutory duty for the Community Safety Partnership (Safer MK). It aims to inform partners and the public about the scale and scope of antisocial behaviour, crime and disorder along with other community safety issues within Milton Keynes. The findings from the assessment help formulate the priorities set out within the Community Safety Strategy. The strategic assessment has been overseen by the Risk Board.

## **The current priorities are:**

Domestic Abuse  
Serious Violence  
Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)  
Acquisitive Crime  
Modern Day Slavery

Hate crime, female genital mutilation (FGM) and Prevent were other priorities highlighted in the existing Strategy, however it was acknowledged that the work undertaken by partners ensured robust and compliant pathways were in place and monitored by the Affiliate Boards.

## **Key Recommendations:**

- Serious violence should remain a priority and the necessary work will be carried out under the new Serious Violence Strategy. Also monitor violence against women and girls.
- Domestic abuse should remain a priority, and the impact of the work being carried out by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and the new Domestic Violence Co-ordinator will be reviewed by Assurance Board.
- ASB should remain a priority and further work should be completed to understand whether the increased high-risk nature of ASB is a short-term consequence of Covid-19 or an emerging theme that requires focused attention.
- Work on acquisitive crime should continue under business as usual.
- Further analysis should be carried out on Hate Crime due to an increase during 2020 and early 2021.
- Cyber Crime and online radicalisation should be considered as new priorities.
- Further work should be carried on Modern Day Slavery based on the findings of the scoping exercise currently in process.

# Data Analysis – Serious Violence

Violence against the person saw a 4% increase on the previous year:

- 201 offences were recorded by TVP including an offensive weapon, 45% of which were crimes of ‘having a article with a blade or point in a public space’
- TVP data showed 18 young people under the age of 18 with offensive weapon charges, community resolutions and youth conditional charges, which are a formal alternative to attending court. Of these young people 12 are working with the Youth Offending Team, a smaller number than the previous year
- The number of referrals using the child exploitation screening tool to CMET (a meeting which assesses risk of going missing, exploitation and trafficking in children) reduced by 12% . The number of screening tools where the threshold was not met increased by 48%, (these are recorded as ‘no concern’).

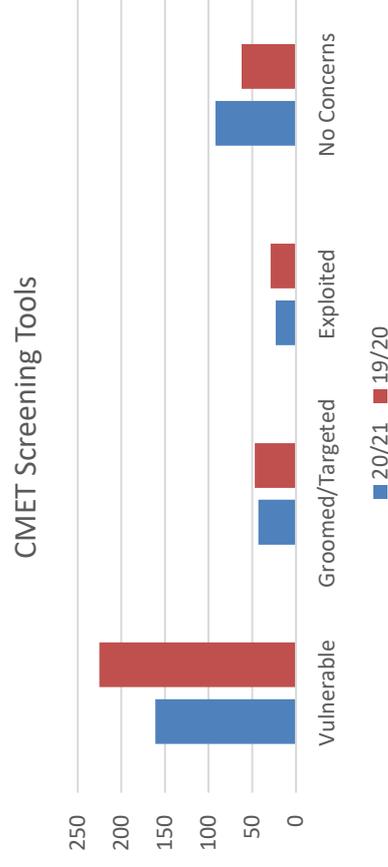
## Impact of Covid-19

Despite the small increase in reports of violence against the person, multiple lockdowns are likely to have influenced the number of reports as limited socialising means there is less opportunity for serious violence. Furthermore, weapon offences classified as possession within a public space are also likely to have significantly reduced due to Covid-19 as people have been confined to their homes. As restrictions are lifted and people begin to socialise again, reports of this nature are likely to increase further. As weapon offences increase, the risk of serious violence increases as well. The decrease in CMET screening tools overall may also be influenced by Covid-19 as there has been less professional face to face contact between professional and children.

## SaferMK Survey

The following table outlines the top four concerns from the two most recent SaferMK surveys. Knife crime goes from being the biggest concern to the fourth concern. 62% of respondents were concerned about knife crime, 63% were concerned about violent crime and 54% concerned about violence in public.

	2020/21	2019/20
1	Envirocrime (67%)	Knife crime (77%)
2	Burglary (66%)	Burglary (77%)
3	Vehicle crime/theft (63%)	Vehicle crime/theft (74%)
4	Knife crime (62%)	Envirocrime (70%)



## Data analysis – Domestic Abuse

Data collected from Thames Valley Police, MK Act, Adult and Children's Social Care suggests that domestic abuse remains a persistent issue.

- TVP had a 4% increase in reports of domestic related incidents against an already high baseline whilst MK Act experienced an increase in demand. Those who were approaching MK Act had often already left the relationship/home rather than leaving in a planned way meaning higher levels of risk and demand for immediate crisis work.
- Common assault and battery was the most common offence type with 29% of domestic related incidents.
- Adult Social Care had 607 safeguarding referrals highlighting a domestic violence concern, a rise from previous years. Whereas Children's Social Care saw a fall in children with domestic violence related 'child in need' plans from 36% to 19%.

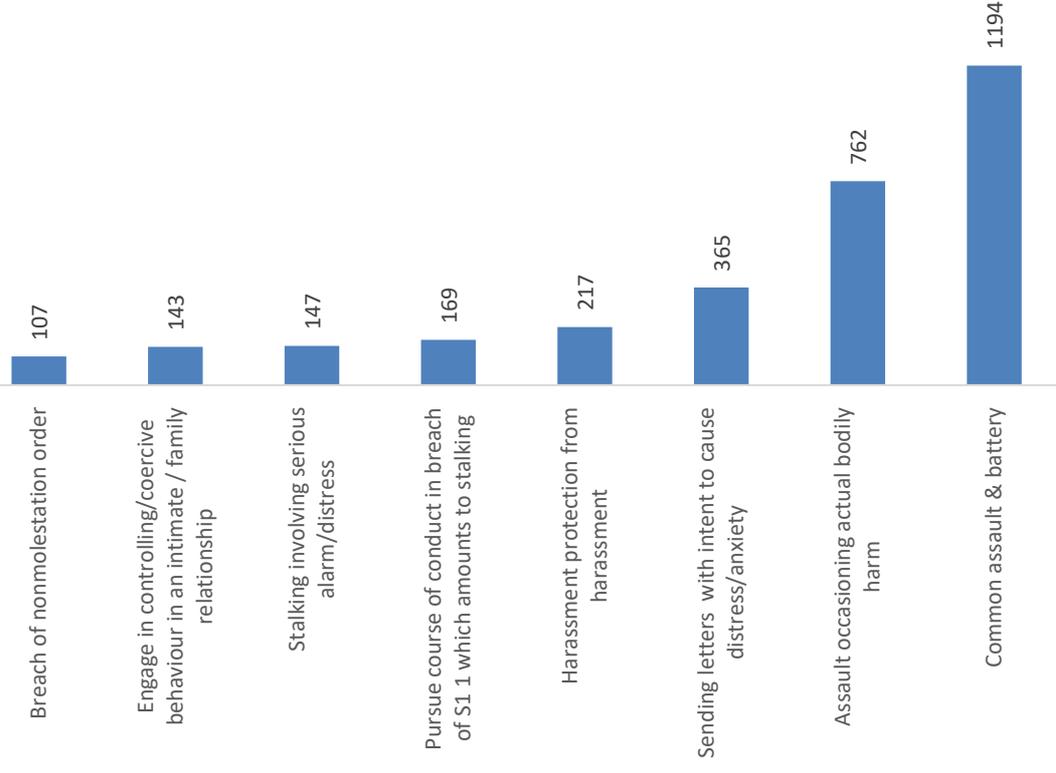
### The impact of Covid-19

Covid-19 may have led to significant underreporting of domestic abuse due to lockdown and isolation in the home, so the rise in domestic abuse cases may be greater than figures reflect. Lockdown may also help explain the decrease of children known to Children's Social Care who have 'child in need' plans where domestic abuse is a factor as school closures meant children were not seen as regularly by professionals who could report safeguarding concerns.

### SaferMK Survey

Data from the most recent SaferMK survey found 14% of respondents stated that they have experienced domestic abuse, a 4% decrease from the previous year. 20% of respondents were concerned about domestic abuse.

### Domestic Abuse Report by Crime Type



# Data Analysis - Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)

A significant proportion of VAWG is related to domestic incidents and offences such as breach of a non-molestation or restraining order also typically relate to domestic abuse situations.

Common assault and battery accounts for 32% of violence against the person offences where the victim was female. The chart to the right outlines a breakdown of 2472 violence against the person offences with female victims. Although this graph shows female victims, it is not exclusively male on female violence. However, the graph below highlights that males are more likely to be both victims of and perpetrators of 'violence with injury' offences.

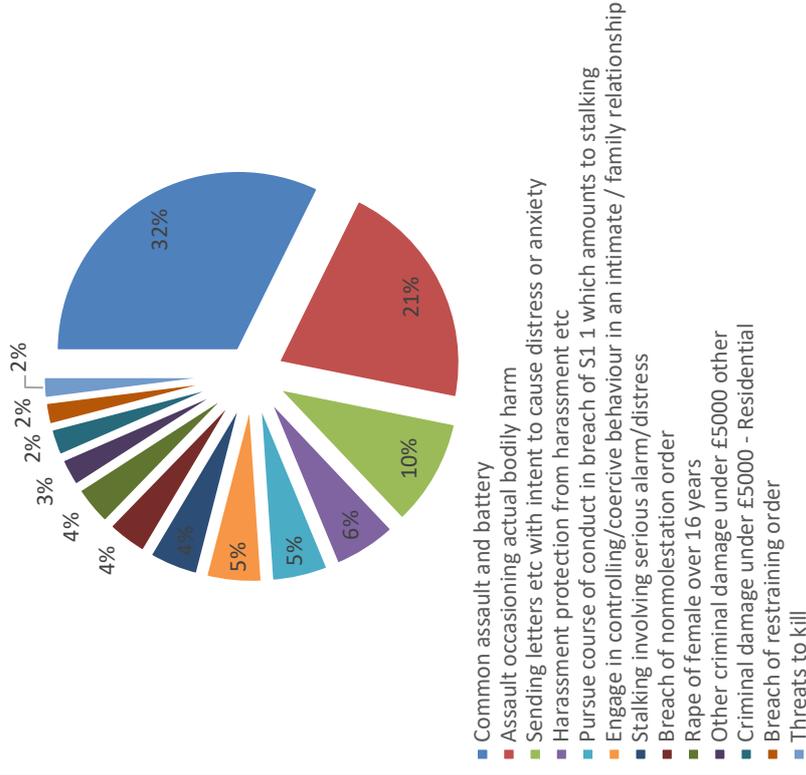
## The impact of Covid-19

Multiple lockdowns and the forced closure of the night time economy may have reduced the number of reports of serious violence against women and girls (other than domestic incidents). Reports of this nature may increase once restrictions are fully lifted and the night-time economy starts up again.

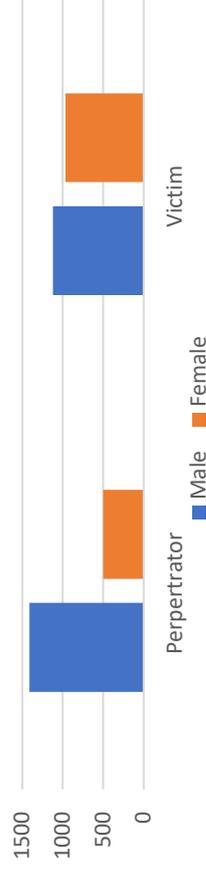
## SaferMK Survey

In the most recent SaferMK Survey, 51% of female respondents felt unsafe walking in their local area at night compared to 29% of males. Female respondents were also more likely to be worried about sexual assault and violence in public than male respondents.

Violence against the person offences with female victims



Victims and perpetrators of violence with injury offences



The murder of Sarah Everard sparked a national outcry, spurring women to share their experiences of feeling unsafe on the streets. The government responded to the clamour for change by publishing its strategy on tackling violence against women and girls in England and Wales. The home secretary promised a national communications campaign to raise awareness and create behaviour change.

## Data Analysis – Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)

Data collected from Thames Valley Police, MKC ASB Team, Community Safety and

Environmental Crime found that ASB is still a persistent issue which is increasing in severity.

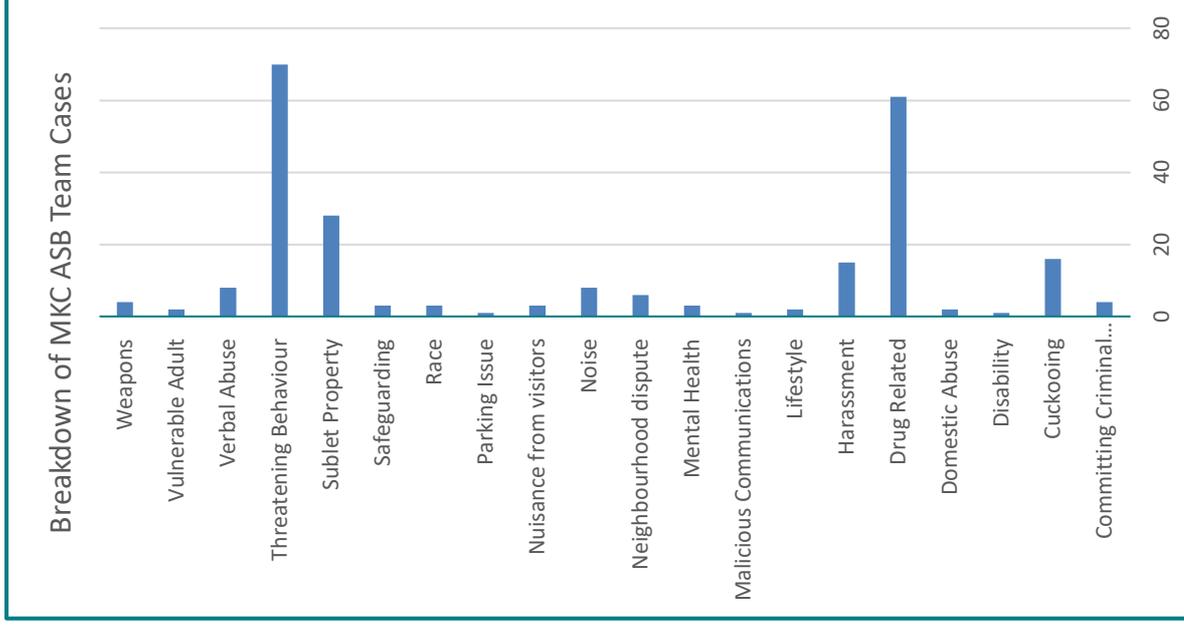
- MKC ASB Team raised 241 cases of high-level ASB. This was a slight decrease compared to the previous year (254) however the nature of ASB is becoming more serious - cuckooing, threatening behaviour and drug related cases made up 60% of all cases raised, a 7% increase from the previous year.
- TVP obtained 11 closure orders on properties and MKC ASB Team obtained 5, both an increase from the previous year.
- MKC use of Community Protection Warnings/Community Protection Notices - a written agreement outlining required changes in behaviour- increased. 10 Community Protection Warnings were issued, 3 being escalated to Community Protection Notices. However, TVP's usage decreased from 31 to 17.
- Central Milton Keynes, Fullers Slade and Netherfield were identified as ASB hotspot areas for TVP and MKC.
- 2 Community Triggers were held, a decrease from the previous year – a process which allows victims of persistent high-risk ASB to have a multi-agency review of their case where they feel they have not had a satisfactory outcome.
- The Environmental Crime Team investigated 1,399 fly tipping offences, 505 dealt with by informal resolution, 30 by Legal Notice, 30 by FPN, 10 case files submitted for prosecution.

### The impact of Covid-19

Introduction of Covid-19 legislation allowed new enforcement powers to deal with persistent breaches to Covid-19 guidance which may help to explain the decrease in use of other ASB powers by TVP but not MKC. As the country comes out of lockdown there may be an increase in reports of ASB as people spend more time in the community and away from their homes.

### SaferMK Survey

In the most recent SaferMK survey, the most commonly experienced crimes were envirocrime (40%), speeding and nuisance vehicles (36%), drug issues (19%) and problem neighbours (19%). 29% of respondents were concerned about problem neighbours, 67% concerned about envirocrime and 43% concerned about drug issues.



## Data Analysis – Acquisitive crime and substance misuse

Data collected from Thames Valley Police, ARC (Addiction Recovery Service), and the Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service demonstrates a connection between offending of acquisitive crime and substance misuse:

- When reviewing crimes of burglary from a dwelling, burglary not from a dwelling, robbery, taking a vehicle without consent and theft from a motor vehicle there are 30 individuals who are suspects for more than one of these crimes types (repeat offenders).
- Out of 236 suspects, 53 had a system warning flag for alcohol or drug usage (user/addict). This is likely to be lower than the actual number as some substance misuse issues will not be recorded, or in some cases the background of the offender is unknown.
- ARC had 71 clients in treatment in contact with the criminal justice, a decrease compared to previous years whilst 56 young people with an offending history have engaged with Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service, an increase to previous years.
- 11 of the 56 young people known to the Drug and Alcohol Service were found by police to be in possession of class B drugs and referred to the Drug Diversion Scheme

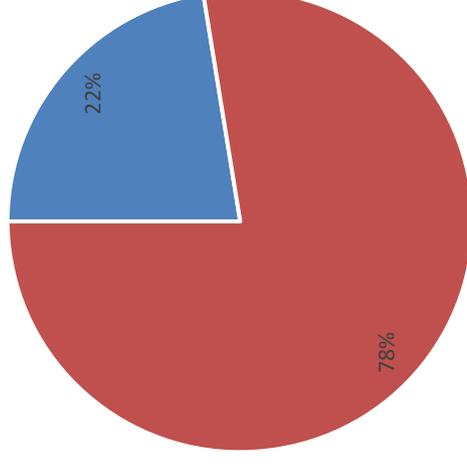
### The impact of Covid-19

Acquisitive crime is likely to have decreased significantly due to multiple lockdowns and closure of business/shops. Offending is likely to increase as lockdown restrictions have eased.

### SaferMK Survey

In the most recent SaferMK survey, 66% of respondents were concerned about burglary of a house or business despite only 8% having personally experienced this.

Percentage of offenders with known drug and alcohol warning flags



■ warning flag for alcohol or drug usage ■ No warning flag

# Data Analysis – Hate Crime

Data collected from Thames Valley Police suggest that hate crime has increased.

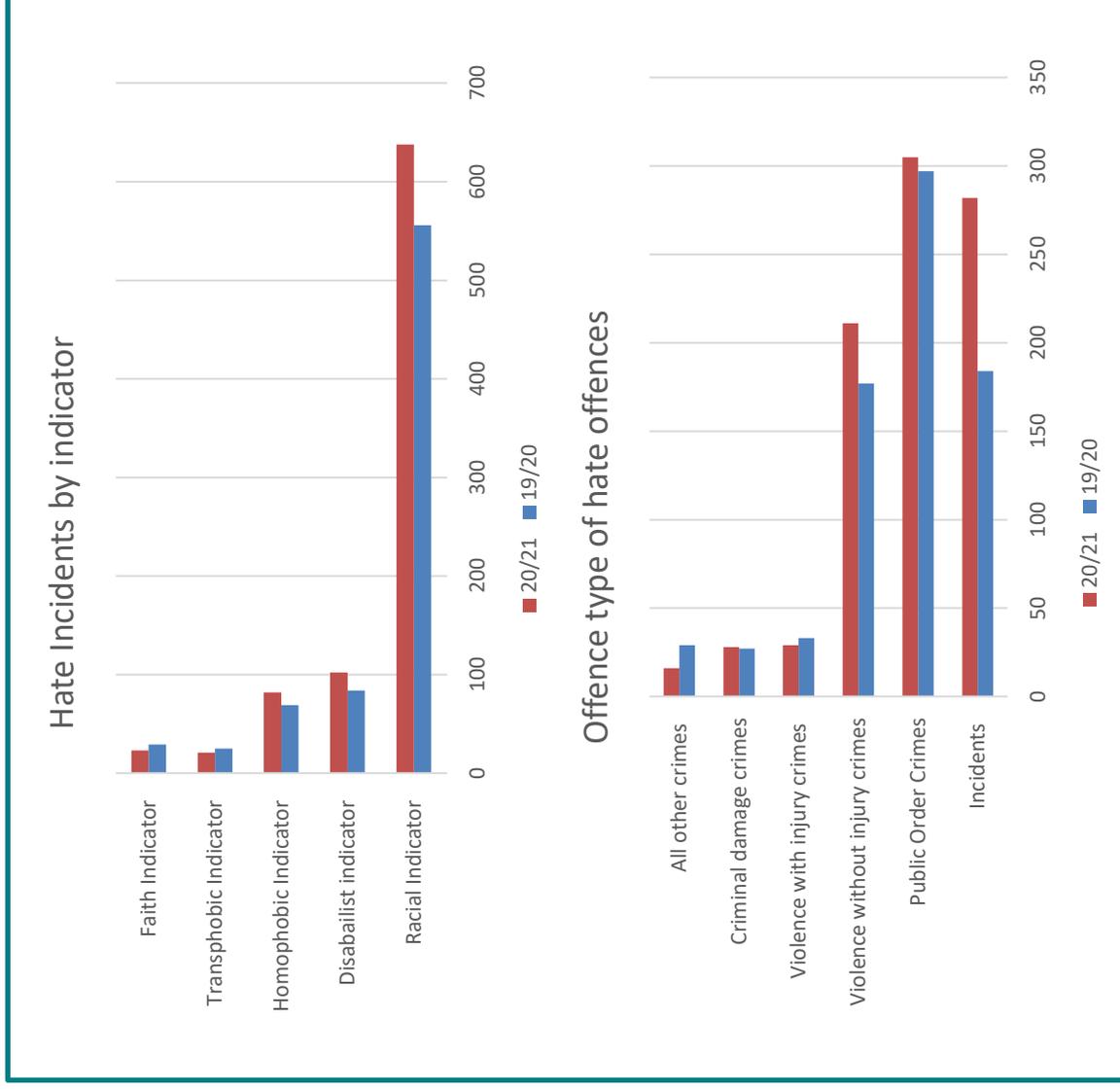
- There has been a 14% increase in the number of hate crimes reported compared to the same period last year in MK with 837 hate crime incidents reported to TVP
- An Increase in hate crimes with a racial indicator, disablist indicator or homophobic indicator
- A decrease in hate crimes with a transphobic indicator and faith indicator
- Increase in incidents, public order crimes, violence without injury crimes, and criminal damage crimes (see graph bottom right)

## The impact of Covid-19

Covid-19 may be partly responsible for the increase in hate crime, for example new variants thought to originate from other countries causing new tensions.

## SaferMK Survey

In the most recent SaferMK survey, 37% of respondents were concerned about hate crime even though only 5% had experienced this personally.



# Data Analysis - Cyber Crime / Online Radicalisation

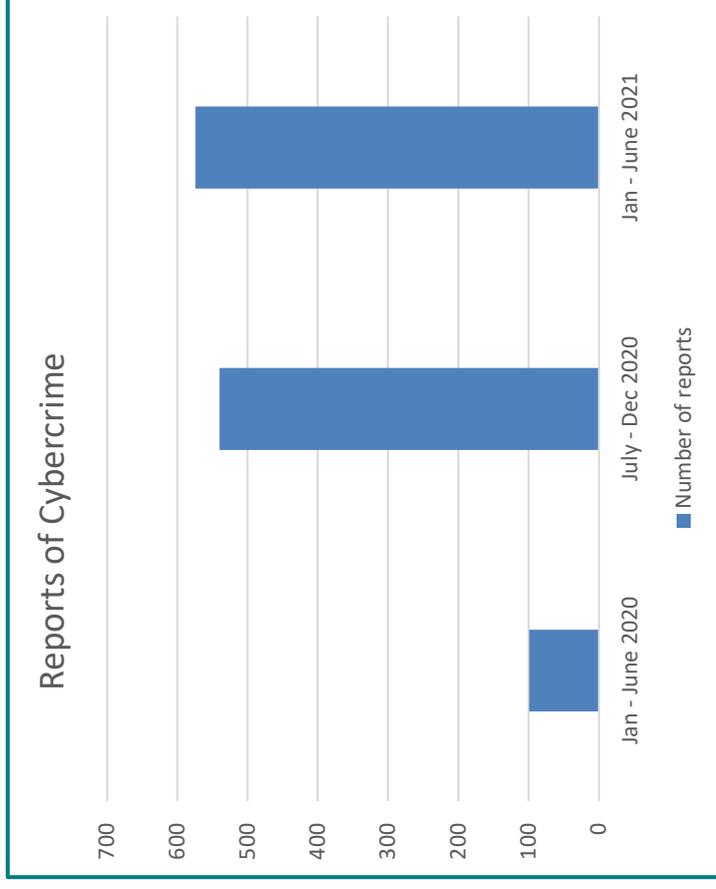
## Cyber Crime

TVP raised Cyber Crime as an emerging theme to be considered as a new priority. Cyber Crime includes the following 5 reported crime codes:

- Hacking of social media and email,
- computer virus/malware/ spyware,
- hacking of personal files,
- hacking for extortion,
- hacking of server.

Hacking of social media and email is consistently the most common crime type followed by computer virus/malware/spyware

There has been a gradual increase in the number of reports received but a sudden rise in the reported loss. This trend is consistent with national data. This significant rise is likely to be, at least partly influenced by multiple lockdowns and the impact of Covid-19 which has escalated the sophistication of cyber crime.



## Online Radicalisation

Nationally the Home Office are advising local areas to be vigilant to the growing threat of online radicalisation particularly of children. Data related to this area is official sensitive and cannot be shared. However, there has been an increase in referrals to the Milton Keynes Channel Panel where online radicalisation is a concern.

# Data Analysis - Modern Day Slavery

Thames Valley Police data indicated a slight decrease in modern day slavery (MDS) referrals using the national referral mechanism (NRM) in the first 6 months of 2021 compared to the previous 6 months across the Thames Valley. At the same time there has been an increase in NRM referrals in MK. *Please note: data related to MDS is considered official sensitive, and therefore actual numbers cannot be shared in this assessment.*

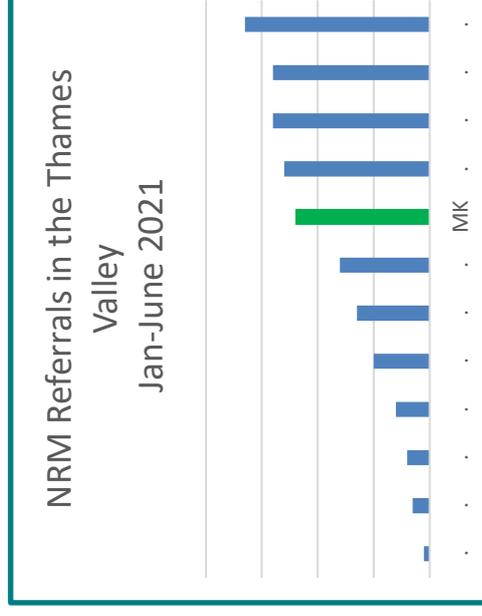
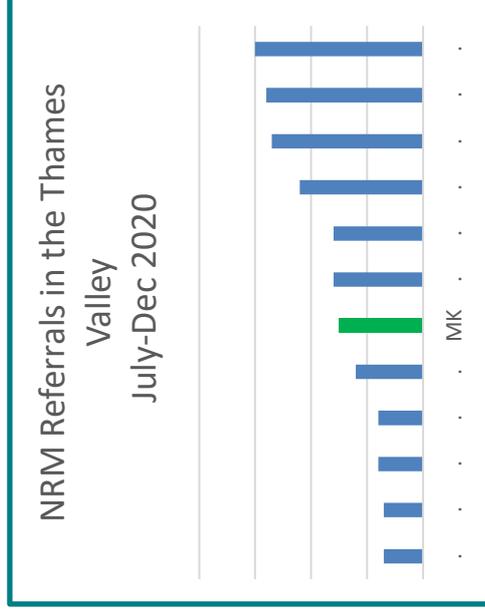
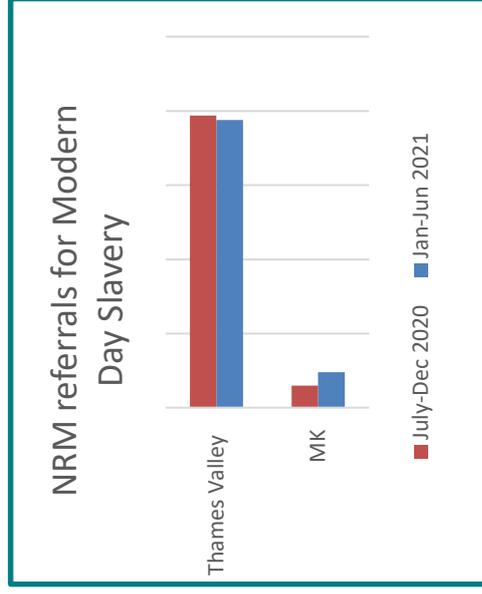
- Across both the Thames Valley and MK, criminal exploitation is consistently the most common type of exploitation. Other forms of exploitation, namely, sexual and forced labour began to increase.
- MK has predominantly male victims which is consistent with regional data, around half of referrals related to people under 18.
- Out of the 12 areas in Thames Valley, MK had the 7<sup>th</sup> highest number of NRM referrals between July-Dec 2020, this went up to 5th highest for the period between Jan-June 2021

## The impact of Covid-19

The number of NRM referrals may have been impacted by the closure of shops and businesses which can be used for MDS. Covid-19 could explain the dominance of criminal exploitation referrals as there was less disruption from the pandemic on for example county drug lines. It could be that other forms of exploitation haven't decreased as much as figures suggest but that criminal exploitation was most easily identified during the pandemic, whereas other types of exploitation occurred behind closed doors in isolation.

## SaferMK Survey

In the most recent SaferMK survey, 70% of respondents said they had a good understanding of what is meant by the term modern day slavery, whilst 16% of respondents were concerned about it.



# Data Analysis - Arson & Rural Crime

## **Arson**

Data from Thames Valley Police shows an increase of 7% in arson offences increasing to 131 from 122 the previous year. The SaferMK survey shows that arson is an issue which a small proportion of the public are concerned about (14% compared to 19% the previous year) and which approximately 1% had personal experience.

It is recommended that further work is completed to understand these concerns and whether there is a problem with under reporting of incidents of arson.

---

## **Rural Crime**

Little data has been available about the scale or nature of crime in rural parts of MK. Some of the behaviours impacting on rural areas are not criminal but they do cause disruption and inconvenience for residents, for example alcohol related anti-social behaviour and water safety have been issues in the summer. It is recommended that further work is done to understand the nature of rural crime in MK.

# Summary of Recommendations - Priorities

## Serious Violence

We know that serious violence saw a small increase despite the impact of Covid-19 demonstrating how significant an issue this is. It is recommended that serious violence remains a priority and the necessary work will be carried out under the new Serious Violence Strategy to further understand the reasons behind this increase in order to address this growing trend. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) has also been highlighted as a national issue and with the re-opening of the night time economy after Covid-19 restrictions it is recommended that VAWG is included as part of the serious violence priority.

## Domestic Abuse

We know that domestic abuse is still of concern and it is likely there is still under reporting which may have been made worse by the effects of the pandemic. This suggests that figures do not fully represent the extent of domestic abuse in MK and that it is a bigger issue than the data suggests. This is why it is recommended that domestic abuse remain a priority and the impact of the work being carried out by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and the new Domestic Violence Co-ordinator will be reviewed by Assurance Board.

## Antisocial Behaviour

We know that ASB is a growing problem with the nature of reports becoming more high-risk. We do not know whether the increased high-risk nature of ASB is a short-term consequence of Covid-19 or an emerging theme that requires focused attention. It is recommended that ASB remain a priority in order to address these growing concerns and better understand the reasons behind the trend.

## Online Radicalisation

We know that there has been an increase in referrals to the Milton Keynes Channel Panel and that nationally, the Home Office are advising local areas to be vigilant to the growing threat of online radicalisation particularly of children. It is recommended that online radicalisation be considered as a new priority.

## Summary of Recommendations – Areas for further work

### Acquisitive Crime

We know that acquisitive crime is likely to have reduced due to limited opportunity during restrictions introduced by the pandemic. A connection between persistent offending and drug and alcohol misuse has also been identified. It is recommended that our work on acquisitive crime continues under business as usual.

### Modern Day Slavery

We know that modern day slavery is still happening within MK as well as in the Thames Valley area and nationally. Work is being carried out to understand the extent of the issue locally and whether the response is sufficient in tackling this issue. It is recommended that further work is considered based on the findings of the scoping exercise.

### Hate Crime

We know that hate crime has increased and remains an issue of concern for members of the public. However, we cannot say for certain the reason behind this increase, and whether this is reaction to significant political events such as Covid-19 or Brexit or a long term emerging trend. This is why it is recommended that hate crime remain a priority whilst further analysis is carried out to understand the context behind this increase.

### Cyber Crime

We know that the number of cyber crime reports has increased and that there has been a rise in the reported financial loss. This trend is consistent with national data and is likely to be, at least partly influenced by multiple lockdowns and the impact of Covid-19 which has escalated the sophistication of cybercrime. The degree to which the partnership can influence this may mean it is an area for further work, rather a priority.

### Arson

We know that there has been a slight increase in arson it is recommended that further work is completed to understand the level of concern and whether there is a problem with under reporting of incidents of arson.

### Rural Crime

We know that rural crime is an area of concern in MK however little is known about the scale and extent of the issue. It is recommended that further work is done to understand the nature of rural crime in MK.

## Summary

Despite interruptions to business as usual caused by the Covid-19 pandemic lots of work has been carried out by Safer MK partners to implement and embed new ways of working to make Milton Keynes a safer place to live, work and take leisure.

This includes:

- Implementation of a new Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Production of a Violence Reduction Strategy
- Changes to the case management meeting structure for missing and exploited children
- Funding of new diversionary projects and education interventions for children and young people
- Implementation of the new Channel Duty Guidance 2020

The recommendation of this strategic assessment are to monitor the impact of these new processes and opportunities and gain a better understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on crime and disorder in Milton Keynes.

The partnership is committed to producing a robust five year community safety strategy based on these recommendations that is representative of the needs of the local population and provides clear direction to partners on work required to prevent crime and reduce victims in Milton Keynes.

## Glossary

ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour  
BD – Burglary Dwelling  
BND – Burglary Non-Dwelling  
CMET – Child Missing Exploited Trafficked  
CPW – Community Protection Warning  
CPN – Community Protection Notice  
EH – Environmental Health  
MDS – Modern Day Slavery  
MKC – Milton Keynes Council  
TFMV – Theft from Motor Vehicle  
TVP – Thames Valley Police  
TWOC – Taking without consent  
VAP – Violence Against the Person  
VAWG – Violence Against Women & Girls  
YOT – Youth Offending Team