



Protecting and strengthening communities and places

Rochdale

Middleton

Heywood

Pennines

Strategic Threat Assessment 2025 Easy-Read Summary

Produced by Community Safety & Resilience Service
Public Health & Communities Directorate
Rochdale Borough Council
July 2025

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2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an easy-read summary of the most important points from the Rochdale Strategic Threat Assessment 2025.

3. BACKGROUND

A **strategic assessment** is like a safety check for our borough. It looks at all the things that might make people feel unsafe - like crime, anti-social behaviour, or other problems in the community.

By law, **Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)** must look at **crime, anti-social behaviour, and drug or alcohol problems** in their area. They do this by writing a report called a **Strategic Assessment**. This helps them decide what the **biggest problems** are and what they should **focus on** to keep people safe.

Using data and feedback from residents and partners, we establish:

- What problems are happening now.
- What might happen in the future.
- Which problems are the most serious.

We looked at crime and disorder in Rochdale from 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2024 to help us write this report, unless we say something different.

This report tells you what we found in our assessment. It also explains what we think is most important to work on. You can see the proposed priorities at the end of the report.

4. CRIME AND DISORDER IN ROCHDALE

Main reasons why crime happens in our area

Using information about crimes and what people in our community tell us, we know there are six key reasons why crimes happen in our area:

Poverty	More crime happens in poorer areas, especially in town centres and places where people face many challenges. Statistics show that poverty is linked to most types of crime.
Profit	Some crimes happen because people are trying to meet their needs. For example, food and electrical items are often stolen from shops and sold for money.
Character	Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have a profound impact on a person's character and increases the likelihood of engaging in crime later in life. For example, engaging in violence or other forms of abuse.
Substance Misuse	Substance misuse is a common reason for crime, especially violence and domestic abuse. These substances can make it harder for people to think clearly or control their actions.
Opportunity	Burglars use tricks to break into homes. One common method is snapping locks. Homes that are not properly locked are easier for burglars to enter, giving opportunity for crime.
Effectiveness of Criminal Justice System	Like many crimes, dealing with domestic abuse is complicated. Victims may be scared to help with police investigations because they fear being hurt again. Civil orders can help protect victims and support offenders to change their behaviour.

How crime is changing in Rochdale

- In Rochdale, the number of crimes has gone down over the last 3 years.
- In 2023–24, there were 14% fewer crimes than in 2021–22.
- Every 3 months, people in Greater Manchester fill out a survey called the Policing and Community Safety Survey. It asks how safe people feel and how well the police are doing. In Rochdale, 88 out of 100 people say they feel safe and part of their community. But people in Heywood and Castleton feel less safe compared to other areas in the borough.
- Crime is more common in places where people have more problems, especially poverty.

The crimes that happen the most and cause the most harm

- Rochdale has more of these crimes per 1000 people than other areas in Greater Manchester:
 - Domestic abuse
 - Violence
 - Sexual offences
 - Hate crime
 - Crimes linked to alcohol or drugs
 - Anti-social behaviour
- Some crimes cause more harm than others. We measure harm from crime using the Cambridge Crime Harm Index. The most harmful crimes are:
 - Violence
 - Sexual offences
 - Burglaries

Different kinds of crime and how they affect our area

Retail Crime

- Retail Crime (Shoplifting) is going up in some areas. Big supermarkets are often targeted. People mostly steal food, alcohol, and electronics. This is often because of poverty or need.
- Stealing fuel from petrol stations is a problem, especially for big supermarkets. This type of theft happens more often when fuel prices go up. People also steal number plates from cars. Sometimes the stolen plates are used to steal fuel to evade getting caught.

Acquisitive Crime

- Acquisitive Crime is stealing something that doesn't belong to you. This includes: Burglary (breaking into homes), robbery, and vehicle crime (stealing from cars).
- In Rochdale, these crimes went down by 16% in 2023–24 compared to 2021–22. Burglaries dropped by 18%.

- Burglary affects all areas of the borough, but some areas of Heywood and Middleton report the most burglaries.
- Places near train stations and town centres are more at risk for car crime. Common things stolen from cars: tools, number plates and money or bank cards.

Hate Crime

- A hate crime is when someone is hurt or targeted because of who they are, like their race or disability.
- In Rochdale there are 12 hate crimes per 1,000 people. Most hate crime is about race or religion, but transgender people often suffer the most harm.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is when someone acts in a way that causes harassment, alarm, or distress to others who are not part of their household.
- In Rochdale, anti-social behaviour reported to the police has gone up from 2021–22 to 2023–24. This might be because more people feel confident to tell us about it.
- Anti-social behaviour happens in different places across the borough, but it is most common in the borough town centres.
- Using police and council reports of anti-social behaviour, we know the main issues affecting the borough are:
 - Youths causing annoyance
 - Dangerous driving and off-road bikes
 - Begging
 - Neighbour disputes
- Anti-social behaviour and crime often happen in the same places. For example, drug dealing, and anti-social behaviour often go together. In some areas, like Freehold, the police and partners are using a plan called “clear, hold, build” to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. This is called ‘Operation Affect’.
- Poverty and alcohol are common reasons why anti-social behaviour happens.
- Off-road bikes are a chronic problem in rural places across the borough like Rooley Moor, but residential estates also experienced this problem too.
- Compared to other districts in Greater Manchester, Rochdale has a high number of road-related incidents. Dangerous driving is common on major A roads and in town centres.
- The council uses powers from the law to help stop anti-social behaviour and we are using these powers more often than before. This includes:
 - Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to stop street drinking and off-road bikes.
 - Fines and warnings for people who break the rules.

Violence in Our Communities

- Rochdale town centre has the most violent crime in the borough, especially at night. This is partly because of the night-time economy.
- In Rochdale, women and girls are more likely than men to be hurt by violence. This includes:
 - Sexual violence
 - Violence at home (domestic abuse)
 - Honour-based abuse (when someone is hurt because their family thinks they brought shame)
- There are 10 sexual crimes for every 1,000 people in Rochdale. This is the same as the average in Greater Manchester.
- About 1 in 6 sexual crimes are linked to domestic abuse, and this number is going up every year. This may mean more people feel safe to report it.
- Around 1 in 3 violent crimes are committed by young people under 24. Young people are more likely to be involved in serious crimes involving more severe cases of violence.

Knife Crime

- Knife crime means using or carrying a knife to hurt or scare someone. The Home Office tells us how to count knife crime. This includes when someone uses a knife or sharp object to hurt someone or to scare them while doing another crime.
- Rochdale has less knife crime than many other areas in Greater Manchester.
- Knife crime happens more often in town centres and some residential areas across our borough, particularly where poverty is high.
- Most people who commit knife crime are adults, but young people under 17 are more likely to:
 - Be caught carrying a knife.
 - Go to hospital after being assaulted.
- In 2022, local children told a Youth Justice led project that they carry knives for protection or image.

Domestic Abuse

- Rochdale has the third highest rate of domestic abuse in Greater Manchester. But the number of cases went down by 15% from 2021 to 2024.
- Areas with the most domestic abuse are generally, where poverty is high.
- Domestic abuse is more likely when there is:
 - Poverty
 - Drug or alcohol problems
 - Adverse experiences in childhood (ACEs)

- About 1 in 3 victims are hurt more than once. We call these people 'repeat victims'.
- Most victims are women, but around 1 in 5 are men, and this number is growing.
- Most abuse happens in romantic relationships, especially between people who used to be together. This is because stalking and harassment often happen after a breakup.
- Domestic abuse happens more often in opposite-sex relationships because there are more of them. But it is more common in same-sex relationships when we look at the number of cases compared to how many same-sex couples there are.
- Some people, especially in minority communities, don't report abuse. This makes it harder for services to identify abuse and help them.
- Since 2011, Rochdale has a high number of deaths from domestic abuse. But this number is going down. We learn from each case to help stop it from happening again. This is called a 'Domestic Abuse Related Death Review'.
- In 2024, Rochdale improved its domestic abuse support services, increasing our provision across the borough. These services help victims find safety and help people who harm others to change.

Reoffending

- Reoffending means someone commits another crime after being caught before. The Ministry of Justice has a way to count how often people commit crimes again. But it doesn't show the full picture, because some people commit crimes again and don't get caught.
- In Rochdale, 1 in 3 people who commit a crime do it again.
- Reoffending is going up in the borough, especially since the covid19 pandemic. This happens most often:
 - After committing a first crime that is drug related.
 - Among people aged 21–24 and 40–44.
- Juveniles (young people) reoffend the most, but they are also improving the most. Whilst more young people reoffend, they are committing less crimes compared to adult reoffenders.
- Some people who commit crimes again have difficult lives. They might have problems with drugs or alcohol, low education, or a hard time at home. We help these people through support programmes to give them a better chance to change.

Substance Misuse

- Alcohol and drugs are big reasons for:
 - Violence
 - Domestic abuse
 - Anti-social behaviour

- Every year, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shares a report about how many people have died because of drug use or poisoning. The drug-related deaths rate is higher in Rochdale compared to Greater Manchester, North West and the whole of England.
- Some people in the borough are using the postal system to bring in illegal drugs like cannabis or prescription medication. This is dangerous and illegal.

Serious and Organised Crime

- Organised crime includes:
 - Drug trafficking
 - Money laundering
 - Crime in prisons
 - Firearms
- Drug trafficking means making, moving, or selling illegal drugs. Money laundering means hiding where illegal money comes from.
- Criminals often exploit others to help them, including:
 - Children (Child Criminal Exploitation or CCE)
 - Vulnerable adults (Cuckooing – taking over someone’s home for crime)
- Operation Challenger is a team that fights organised crime. They are a partnership consisting of police and wider partners to protect people and stop organised crime.

5. PROPOSED PRIORITIES

We’ve used the findings from the **strategic assessment** to help us choose some important priorities, grouped into themes:

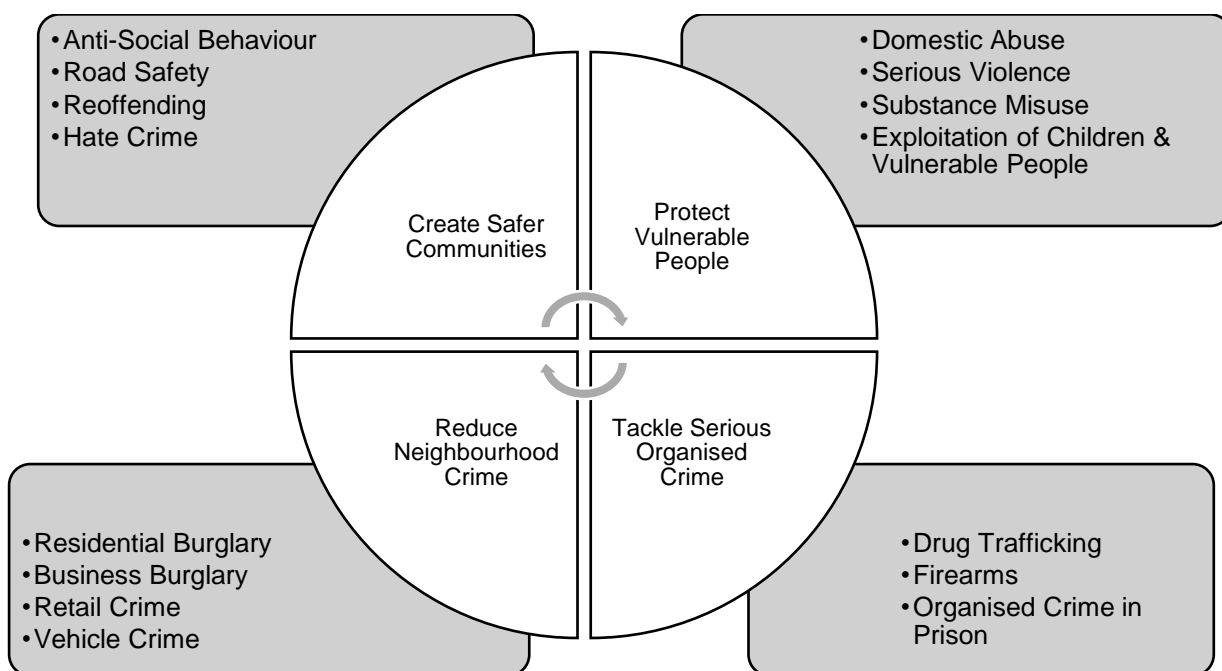
- Create Safer Communities.
- Protect Vulnerable People.
- Reduce Neighbourhood Crime.
- Tackle Serious Organised Crime.

Some of these priorities are things we must do because the law says so, as outlined below:

- The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 states we must do what we can to prevent the misuse of drugs, alcohol, and other substances. It also requires authorities to take steps to prevent reoffending.
- The Serious Violence Duty in the UK, introduced under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, places a legal requirement on certain public bodies to work in partnership to prevent and reduce serious violence.
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a requirement on public bodies to work together to identify and respond to domestic abuse and provide support within safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and their children.

Below are the **main things** we plan to focus on in Rochdale from **2026 to 2029**, structured around the themes above.

Figure 1. Proposed Priorities and associated themes.



We would like to hear what you think about these priorities. You can tell us by filling in our survey.

Thank you for taking part.