

DARLINGTON LIBRARY SERVICE

ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL NEED

December 2016

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Darlington is a market town in the north east of England, with a population of 105,500 (2011 Census). It has excellent infrastructure links with the A1 road and East Coast mainline service.
- 1.2 In 1997 the town became a unitary authority. Although the town has some affluent areas, there are pockets of deprivation and the IMD 2015 analysis ranks Darlington as the 97th most deprived authority out of 326. For employment, the town is ranked 54th most deprived out of 326 local authority areas. Long term health problems and disability are higher than the national average, 19.63% as compared to 17.64% nationally. The proportion of people diagnosed with a mental health condition is 1% of the population, compared to 0.88% nationally. In 2015, 2,852 children in the Borough were in receipt of free school meals. 66.2% of children achieved 5+ GCSEs A*-C grades. The library service is one of the smallest in England with only one central library, one branch library and one mobile library service.
- 1.3 In order to inform the future development of Darlington's Library Services and to achieve cost efficiencies, it is necessary to give consideration to the needs of those who live, work and study in the area. Using a combination of surveys, historical data and comparative statistics, the aim is to build a picture as to the requirements for Library and Information Services in Darlington, how those needs are currently being met, and looking at ways to improve usage, cost, performance and delivery to reflect changing requirements.
- 1.4 The assessment reviews provision and assesses performance against comparable English Unitary Authorities.
- 1.5 The aim is to understand the needs of the community, identify those areas where service performance is good, areas for improvement and future provision for a sustainable service while having to reduce resources to all services across the Council.
- 1.6 The analysis of local need for a library service is based on:
 - The demographic profiles of those who live, work or study in the Borough
 - The patterns of use at local libraries for active and regular users
 - Accessibility by public transport
 - Equality impact assessments

Statistics

All statistics used come from the following sources:

CIPFA - CIPFA Statistics Comparative Profile Darlington Borough Council Public Libraries 2014-15

CIPFA Statistics Comparative Profile for Darlington Borough Council Public Libraries 2015-16 is not yet available. Figures quoted are from the full Cipfa report for 2015-16, with comparator statistics drawn from the 16 comparator authorities used in the 2014-15 profile.

CIPFA – Information Services Public Libraries. Full Report 2015-16

<http://www.cipfastats.net>

IMD 2015 Analysis

Department of Culture, Media & Sport. Open Consultation. Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries 2016-2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-2021/>

Darlington Library Services Survey Feb-Apr 2016

Darlington Library Consultation Oct-Nov 2016

Deprivation Statistics from Darlington Borough Council's Policy Unit (Natasha Telfer & Neil Bowerbank)

Public Transport information (Sue Dobson, Locomotion)

Crown Street Library Monthly Statistics Report

Cockerton Library Monthly Statistics Report

Mobile Library Monthly Statistics Report

Library Community Engagement Monthly Statistics Report

2. The National View

2.1 Since 2010, 478 libraries have closed (CIPFA statistics). CIPFA data for 2015/16 reveals the total number of libraries in Britain fell by 1.7% in 12 months to 3,850. Total expenditure on libraries has fallen by £25m in the past twelve months and the number of library visits is down by 5.5% to 250m for 2015/16. The number of paid library staff has decreased and there has been a corresponding increase in the number of volunteers, either assisting in libraries supported by the local authority or running community libraries. However, despite a decrease in visitor numbers and book issues, libraries remain popular.

2.2 In England a third of the population visits a library' (Sieghart Report 2014).

2.3 The Government commissioned 'Sieghart Report into public libraries' recommended the setting up of a Libraries Task Force to enable libraries in England to exploit their potential and be recognised as a vital resource for all. The priorities for the Libraries Taskforce are as follows:

- Making the case for investment in libraries (advocacy)
- Raising public awareness of what libraries have to offer
- Identifying and showcasing good practice and supporting innovation.
- Supporting workforce development
- Supporting development of the digital offer in libraries
- Monitoring and reporting on progress.

The report from the Task Force 'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-21' was published 1st December 2016 and sets out a template for future developments nationally.



2.4 The Museums Libraries and Archives Council's [What do the public want from libraries](#) report from 2010 showed a series of reasons why people use libraries. These were:

- a love of reading
- the opportunity for discovering new things
- study
- education
- learning
- social contact
- spending time alone
- finding out something specific

2.5 The Needs Assessment will examine the way Darlington Library Service supports the above criteria and the future direction of the Service.

3. Borough of Darlington Background

One Darlington Perfectly Placed

- 3.1 'One Darlington Perfectly Placed' is Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2016.
- 3.2 'One Darlington' outlines the approach to people and specifically the need to make sure that people do not miss out on the opportunities arising from living and working in Darlington on account of lack of income, where they live or by any other potential disadvantage.
- 3.3 'Perfectly Placed' describes our approach to shaping and improving Darlington as a place by helping to guide investment decisions, spacial planning and care for the environment, strength in the economy and make sure that Darlington has the right homes, jobs, facilities and transport to enable it to thrive.
- 3.4 The strategy has eight outcomes:
- Children with the best start in life
 - More businesses and more jobs
 - A safe and caring community
 - More people caring for our environment
 - More people active and involved
 - Enough support for people when needed
 - More people healthy and independent
 - A place designed to thrive
- 3.5 Darlington Library Service contributes to all of these outcomes in varying degrees.

Population

- 3.6 The residential population of Darlington was recorded as 105,564 in the 2011 Census, an increase of 7.9% on the 2001 Census figure of 97,838. The Census showed that there were 54,081 females and 51,483 males, a 51.2% to 48.8% split.
- 3.7 Figure 1 shows the age of structure of Darlington in 2011. Darlington has a lower proportion of working-age residents relative to the national average, and higher than average populations of children and older people. The 22,928 children (0-17 years) recorded in the 2001 Census equated to 21.7% of the borough population, compared to 21.4% nationally. The 64,197 working-age residents (18-64 years) accounted for 60.8% of the borough population, compared to 62.3% nationally and, finally, the 18,439 older people (65-90 plus years) represented 17.4% of Darlington residents, relative to the national average of 16.4%.

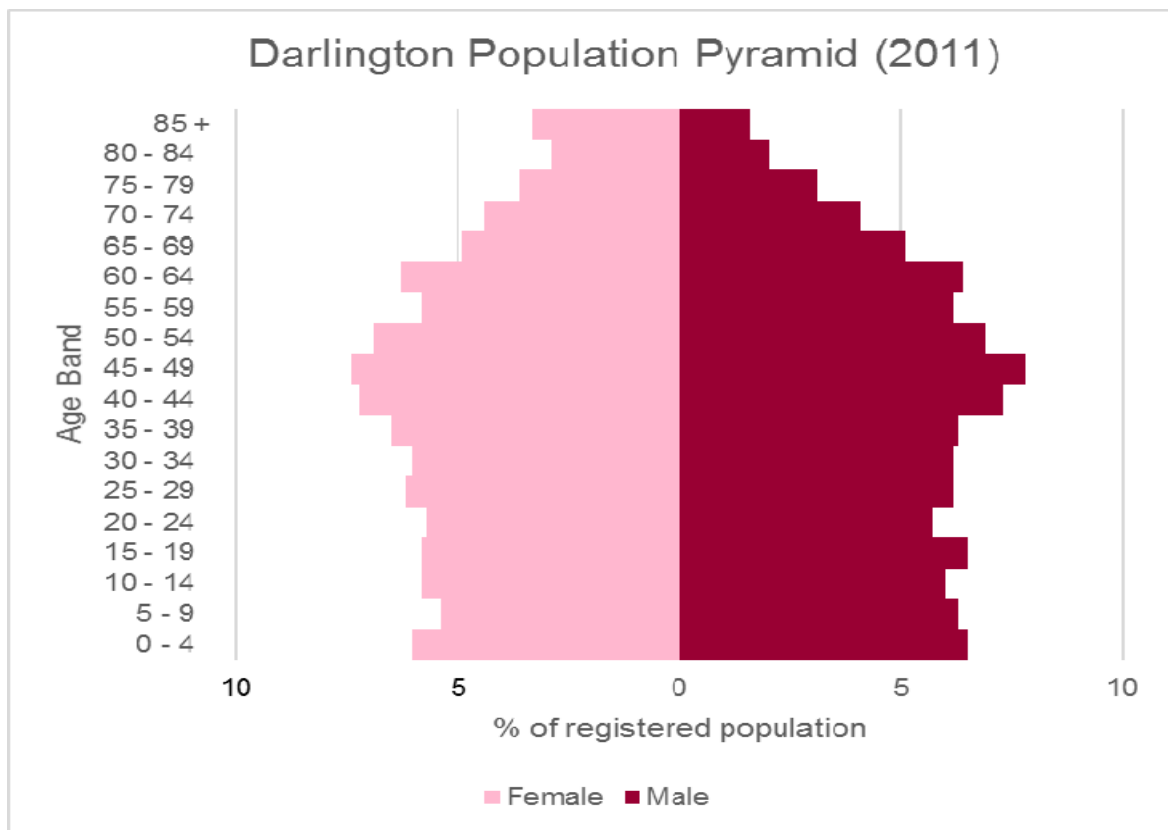


Figure 1 – The population of Darlington by age and gender from 2011 Census

Index of Multiple Deprivation

3.8 In 2015, Darlington was ranked as the 97th most deprived local authority area out of 326 in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The degree of deprivation varies geographically across the Borough with the more deprived areas found in the centre north area of the town, as well as pockets in the Red Hall, Skerne Park and Cockerton West areas, as seen in Figure 2.

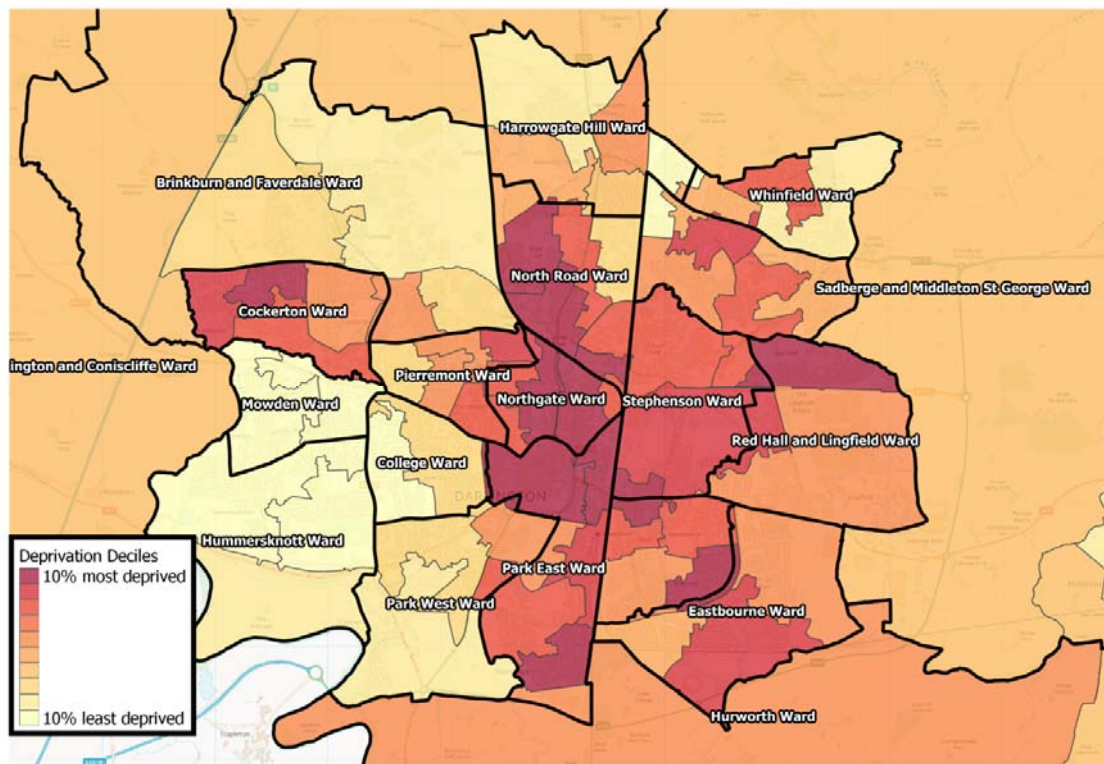


Figure 2 – Map of the overall IMD scores across Darlington by LSOA shaded from most deprived to least deprived

- 3.9 The IMD is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in England are ranked from 1 to 32,844, where 1 is the most deprived area in the country. Darlington is divided into 65 LSOAs which are designed to represent a similar population size of approximately 1,500 residents. Of these, 10 ranked within the most deprived 10% in the country, and 16 within the top 20% most deprived. Conversely, 6 LSOAs ranked in the least deprived 10% nationally and 13 in the top 20% least deprived.
- 3.10 The overall IMD score was calculated from 7 different domains: Income, Employment, Health and Disability, Education, Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment and Crime.
- 3.11 Figure 3 shows that the Health Deprivation and Disability domain had the highest levels of deprivation, with 20% of Darlington's LSOAs in the most deprived 10% nationally and 34% in the most deprived 20%. There were no LSOAs in Darlington in the least deprived 20% on the Health domain. There is also a high level of deprivation on the Employment domain, where Darlington is ranked 54th most deprived out of 326 local authority areas and 32% of LSOAs are in the most deprived 20%. On the Income and Education, Skills and Training domains, Darlington also has a disproportionately large number of LSOAs in the most deprived 20% nationally.

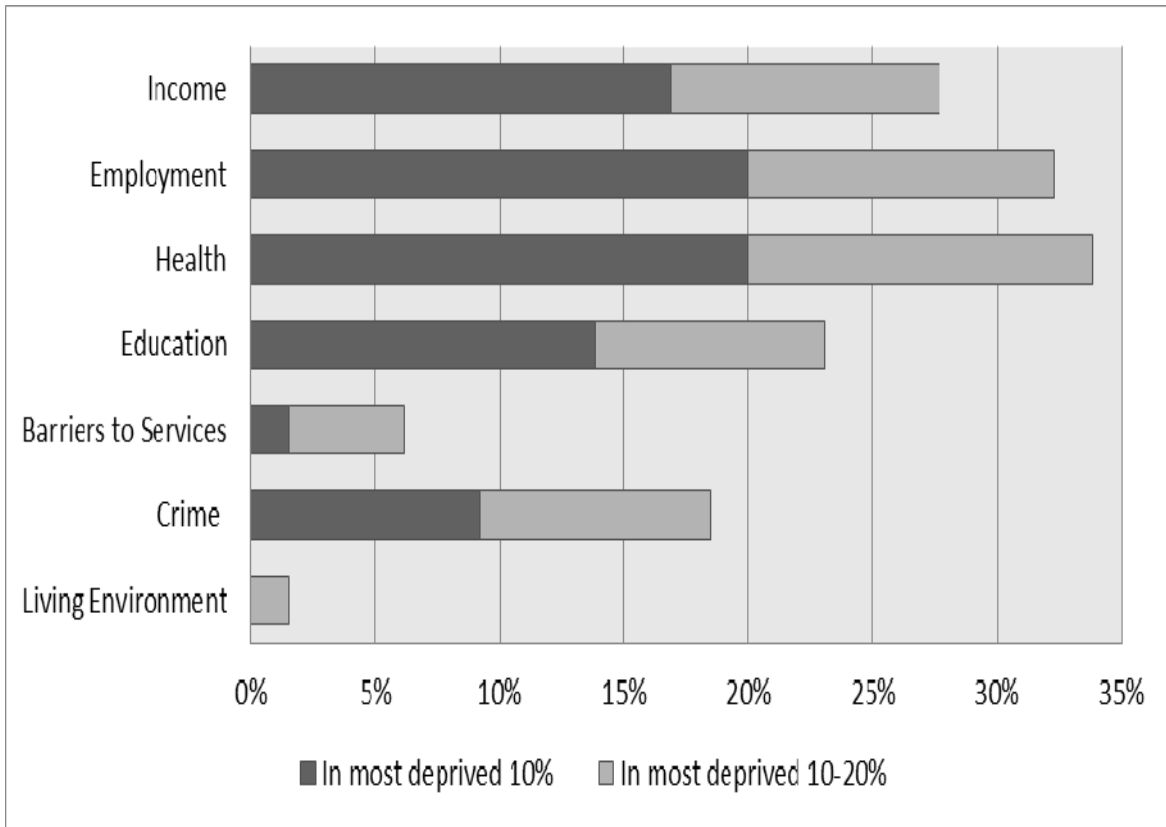


Figure 3 – The proportion of Darlington LSOAs in the top 10% and 20% most deprived nationally for the 7 IMD domains

Ethnicity and country of birth

3.12 The White British population of Darlington has fallen in relative terms, by 2.9%, but increased numerically from 94,549 (96.6% of total population) in 2001 to 98,898 in 2011 (93.7% of total population) due to an increase in the overall population of 7.9%. The greatest gain was seen in the rise of the Other White population, which grew from 0.8% of the population in 2001 to 1.9% in 10 years. The Asian/ Asian British ethnic group make up the highest proportion of the non-white British population in Darlington representing 2.0% of the total population. In the ward of Northgate, 12% of people described themselves as Asian/Asian British in the 2011 Census. For geographical distribution of BME residents see figure 6.



Figure 4 – Percentage of population by ethnic group in 2001 and 2011 excluding White British

3.13 Figure 5 highlights how Darlington has a higher proportion of White British residents than average for the country, but is broadly in line with the North East for this measure.

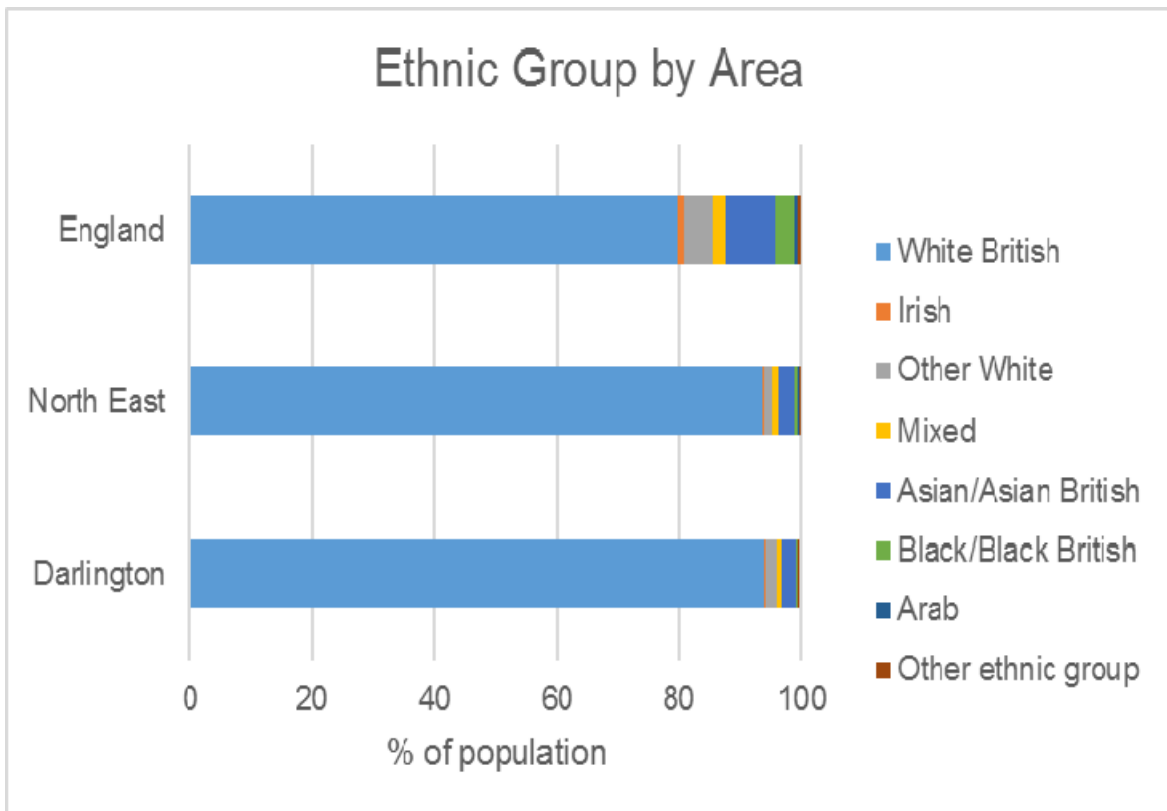


Figure 5 – Different ethnic group percentages across areas. Data from 2011 Census.

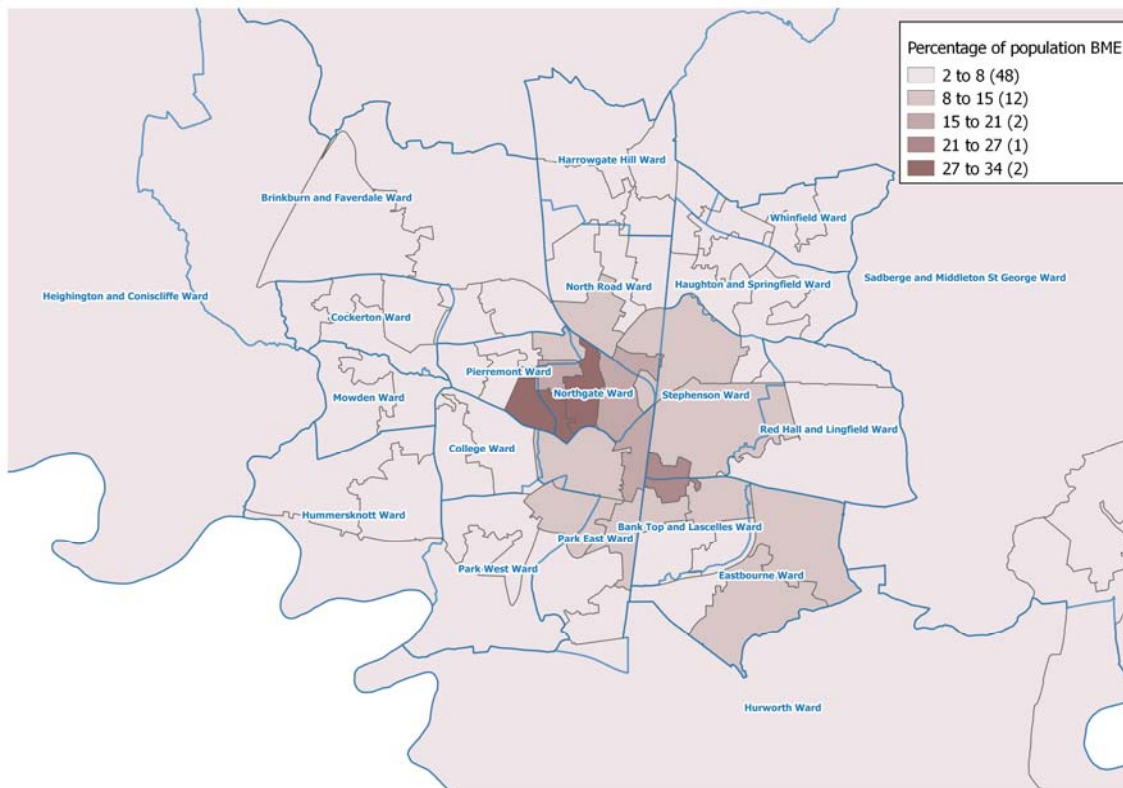


Figure 6 – The geographical distribution of BME (Black or minority ethnic) Darlington residents using data from the 2011 Census. BME was defined as the non-White British population.

3.14 In the 2011 Census, 94.7% of the Darlington population were born in the UK. The proportion of people born in the rest of Europe and other continents are outlined in Figure 7. The most common was Europe, with 3,884 people. Within this number the most common country of birth was Poland, with 887 people recorded in the 2011 Census. Darlington has a higher proportion of passports held by people from the EU than other North East local authority areas but is below the average for England overall which can be seen in Figure 8. The next largest proportion of the Darlington population born outside the UK after Europe was Middle East and Asia. Almost two-thirds (65.5%) of people born outside the UK arrived between the ages of 0-24, with the largest proportion arriving between 0-15.

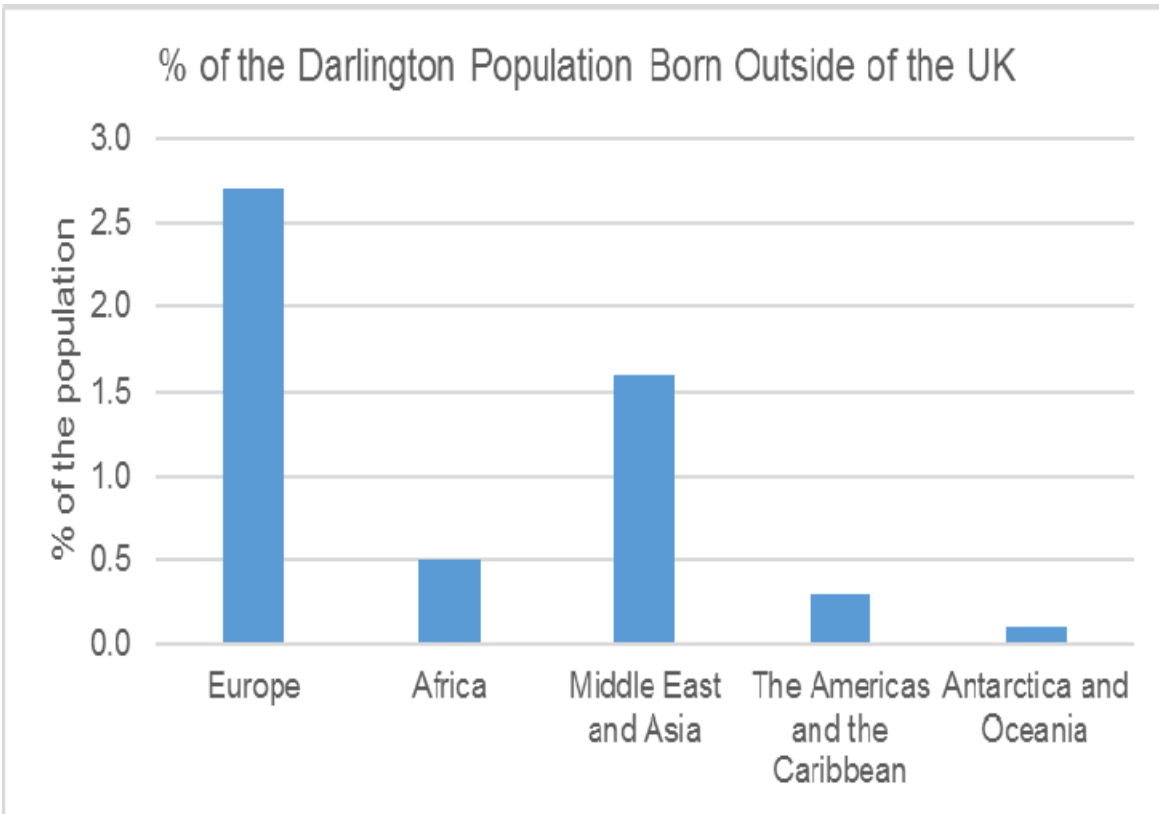


Figure 7 – The proportion of the Darlington population that born outside of the UK

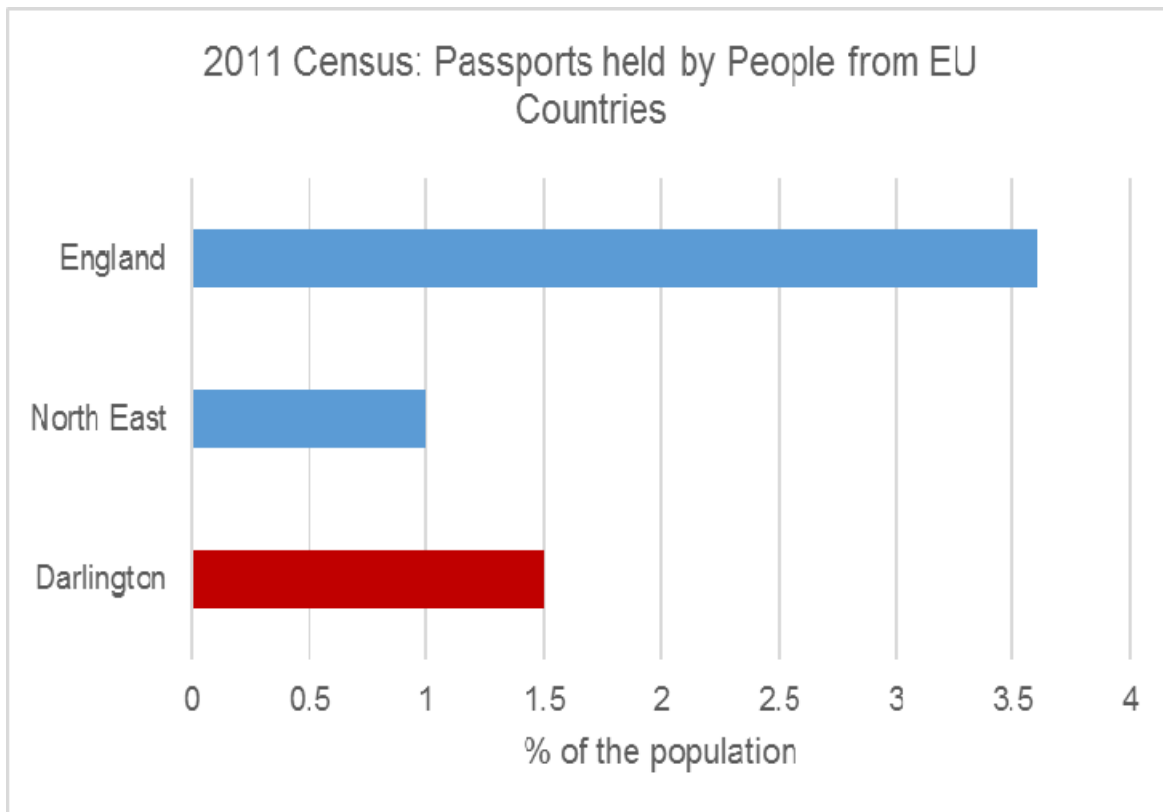


Figure 8 – The percentage of the population which hold EU passports across the North East and England overall.

Education

- 3.15 In 2016 at the Early Years Foundation Stage 67% of Darlington pupils were achieving at the expected level across all Early Learning Goals.. This was 0.3% below the National performance of 67.3%.This placed Darlington 88th out of 151 authorities.
- 3.16 In 2015/16 Darlington's performance at GCE A level and Level 3 results of all state-funded students aged 16 to 19 was lower than average for the whole of England but was higher than average for the state-funded sector. Compared to the other 150 Local Authorities who reported this information, Darlington ranked 53rd in the "Average Point Score per Entry".
- 3.17 The 2011 Census recorded 24.8% of the Darlington population having no qualifications; a smaller proportion than the 32% recorded in 2001. Darlington has one of the lowest percentages of the population with no qualifications in comparison to other North East authorities but is above the national figure of 22.5% (see figure 9). The national proportion of people with degree level qualifications is 27.4% whereas Darlington's percentage is below this at 23.7%.

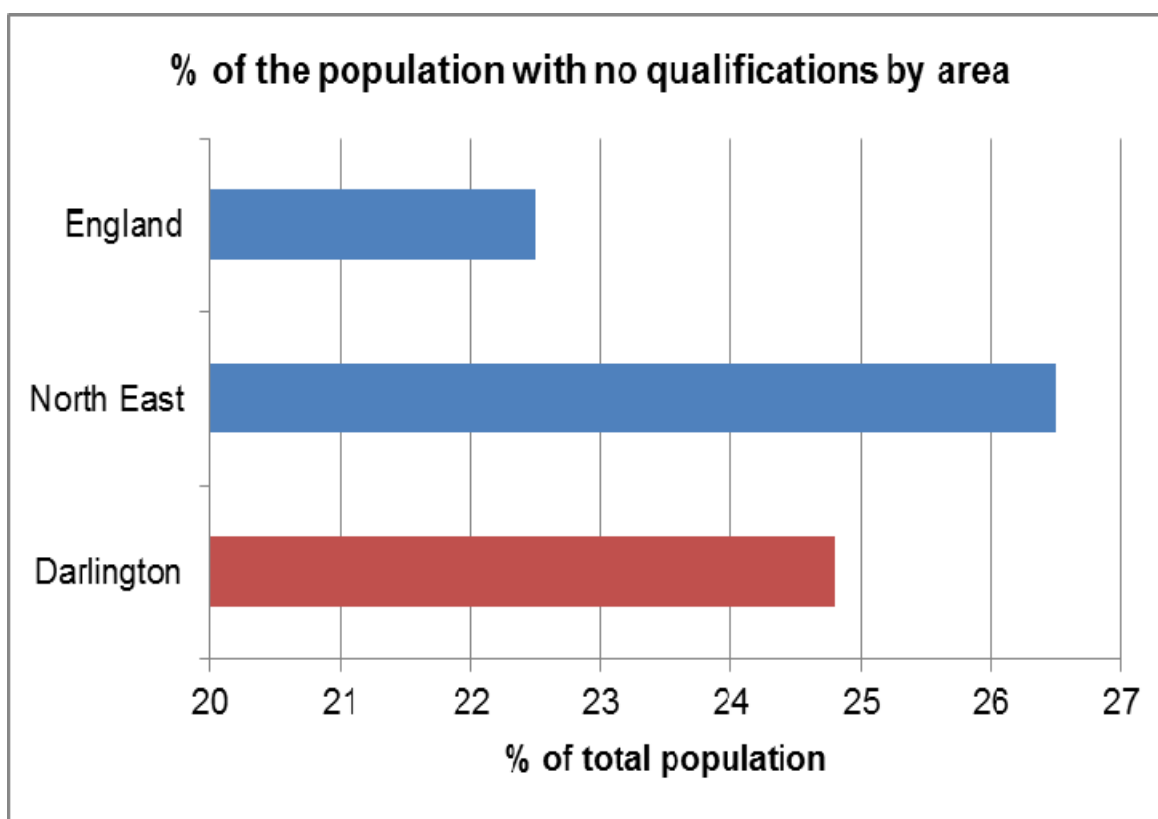


Figure 9 – The proportion of over 16 population with no qualifications for the North East and England overall.

- 3.18 The performance of pupils at school varies geographically across the borough. Figure 10 shows where higher proportions of primary school aged children are deemed low school performers, defined as not achieving Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Mathematics at Level 2. .

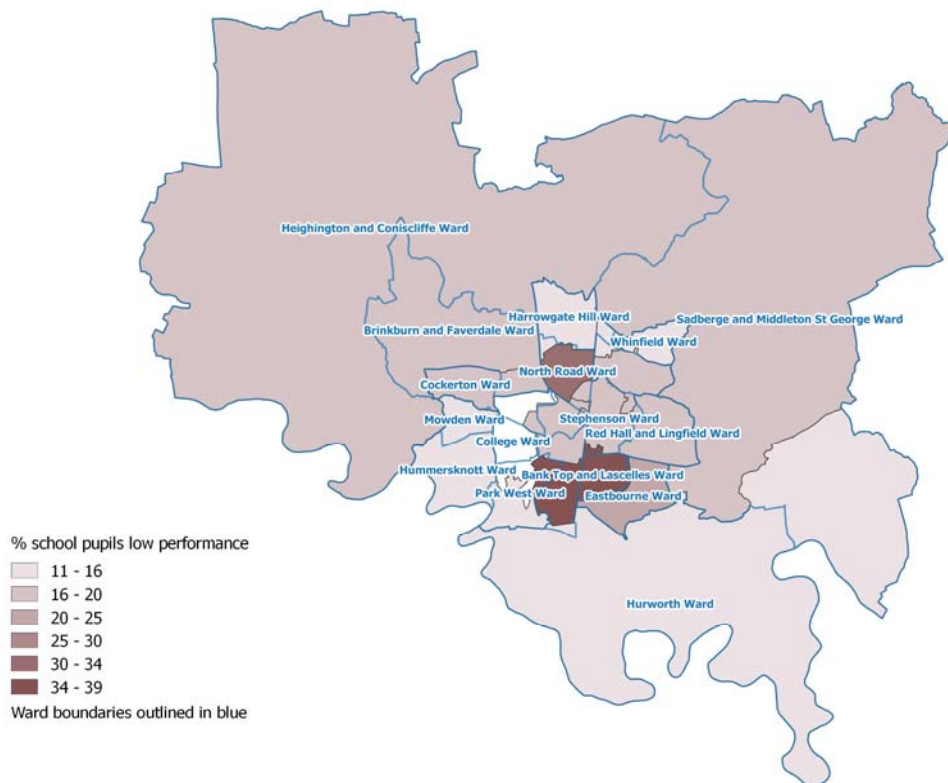


Figure 10 – Map to show the geographical distribution of the percentage of primary school pupils not achieving Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.

Health

- 3.19 The life expectancy of Darlington residents is below to the national average life expectancy of 79.5 for males (at 78.2 in Darlington) and 83.2 for females (82.2). Overall in terms of health, 5.9% of the Darlington population described themselves as having bad or very bad health in the 2011 Census with the highest percentages in Cockerton (9.7%), Bank Top and Lascelles (8.6%), Red Hall and Lingfield (8.3%) and Park East (7.8%). This compares to around 5.4% nationally.
- 3.20 In the 2011 Census, people were also asked whether their daily activities were limited by a long term health problem or disability and to what degree they were limited (a little or a lot). Darlington had 10.3% of its population respond with “day-to-day activities limited a little” and 9.3% of its population respond with “day-to-day activities limited a lot”. This totalled 19.6% of the population feeling they are limited in some way on a daily basis by illness or disability. In comparison to other areas (see figure 11), Darlington has one of the lower total percentages regionally but is above the national figure of 17.6%. In total, just over 9,800 people reported that their daily activities are limited a lot by a long-term condition or disability; which is equivalent to 10.3% of the population. The geographical distribution of the proportions of the population whose daily activities are limited a lot can be seen in figure 12.

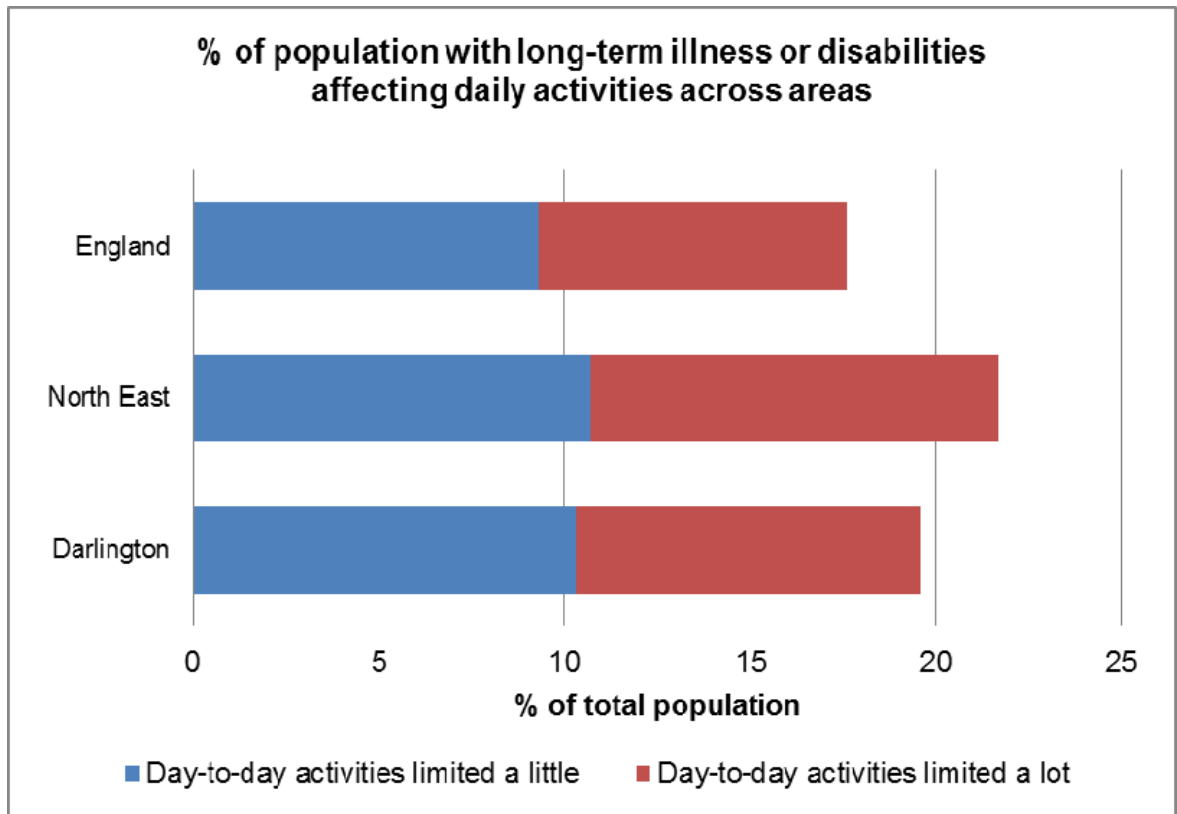


Figure 11 – The percentage of the total population with long-term illness or disability affecting daily activities.

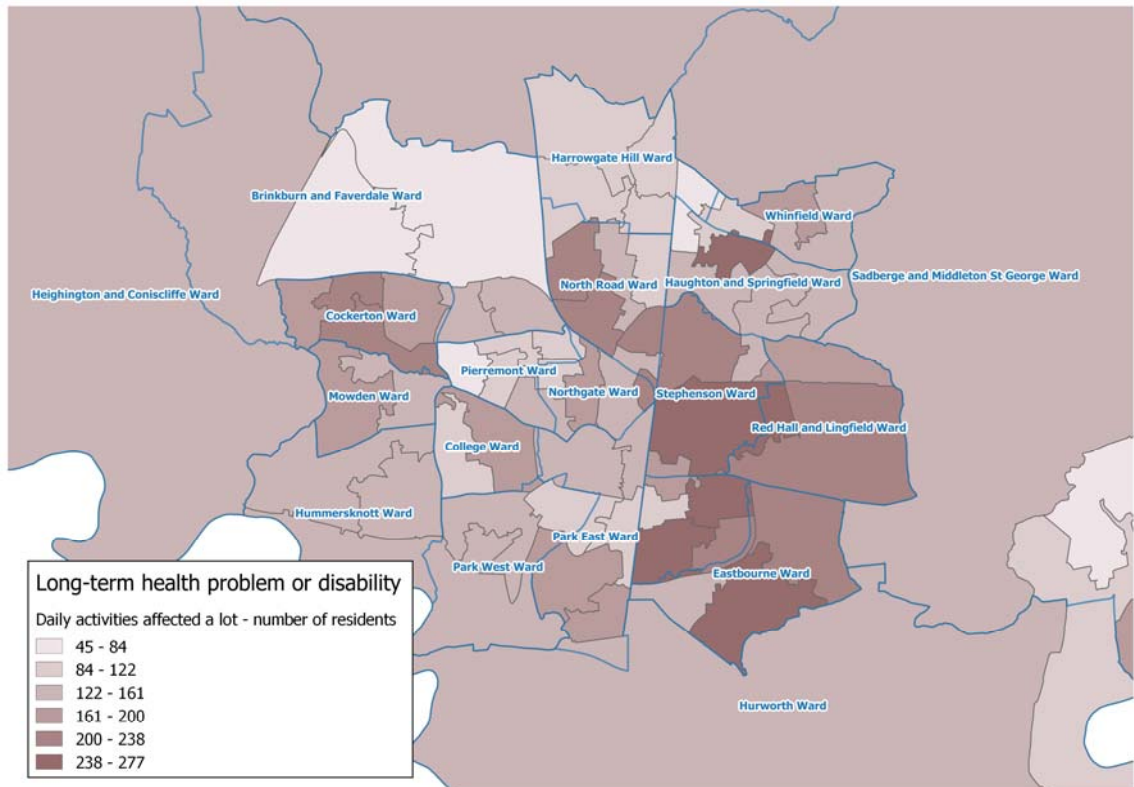


Figure 12 – The geographical distribution of the number of residents whose daily activities are limited a lot by their long-term condition or disability.

Transport

3.21 According to the 2011 Census, the way in which the majority of employed 16-74 year old Darlington residents travel to work is by car (70.1%). Next most popular is by foot (13.5%), and then followed by bus (7.0%), bicycle (2.4%), train (1.8%) and then other (0.6%). Across Darlington 28.0% of households have no car available and the remaining 72.0% have 1 or more cars in each household. The geographical distribution of household car availability is shown in Figure 13.

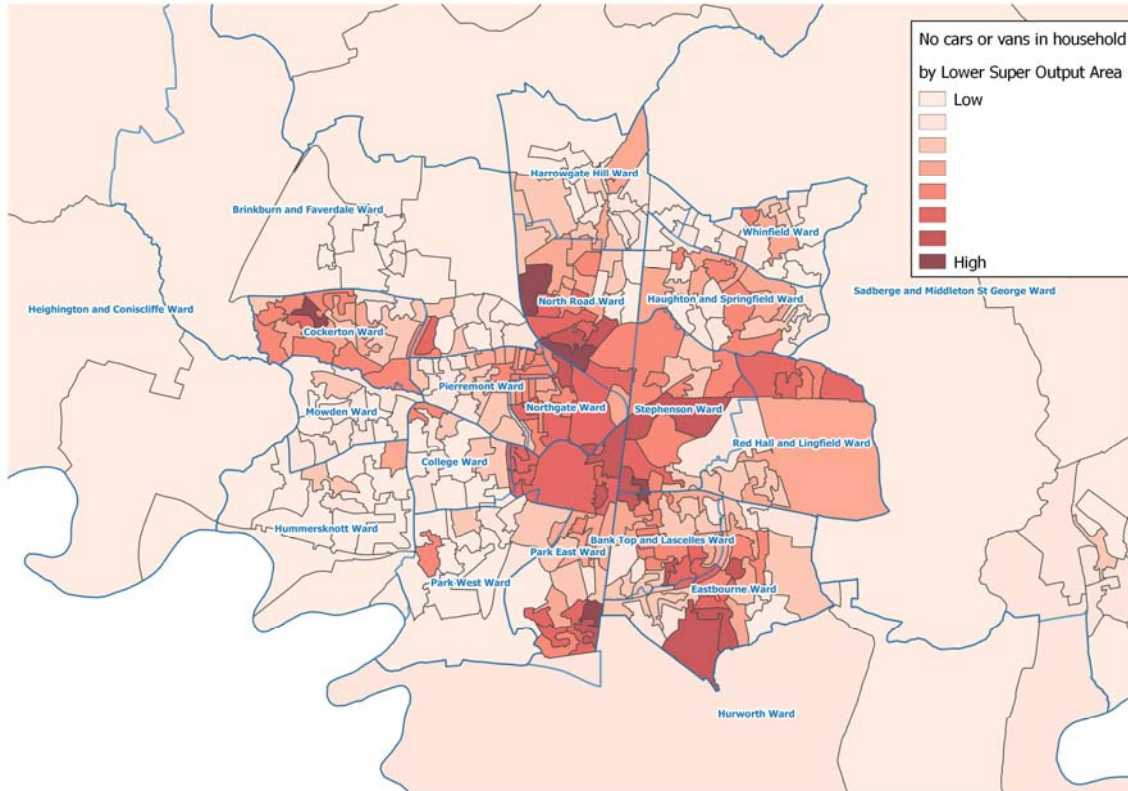


Figure 13 – The proportion of households with no access to cars. Using 2011 Census data.

4. General information

- 4.1 Darlington Library Service operates from two buildings; Crown Street and Cockerton, and also a Mobile Library. All three comply with Equality legislation. The libraries are safe neutral spaces, which can be used by the whole community.
- 4.2 The service offers 100 combined weekly opening hours, with Cockerton Library open until 7.00pm, two nights a week. Disabled parking is available at both libraries, comprising of on-street disabled bays near to Crown Street and a free car park adjacent to Cockerton.
- 4.3 All statistics quoted throughout the document are derived from the 2015-16 Chartered Institute of Public Finance Annual Return made by Library Authorities. These are the latest comparator figures available from the English Unitary Authorities.

4.4 Key statistics for Darlington Library Service 2015-16

- 374,211 books, CD's, DVD's and Audio Books were issued in 2015-16
- Crown Street Library accounts for 61% of the total issues, Cockerton Library accounts for 22%, the Mobile Library 13% and the Housebound and Residential services, 4%.
- Library membership in Darlington currently stands at around 52,000, of whom 12,710 borrowed an item in the last year. This equates to 11.9 % of the total population of Darlington.
- There were 245,875 visits to Darlington Libraries in the last year.
- The Library Service dealt with 59,882 queries from the public in 2015/16.
- In addition, the Centre for Local Studies sees over 7,500 visitors a year, looking for information about local and family history, and deals with around 10,000 enquiries each year.
- The total number of items available to lend (including Books, DVD's, CD's and Audio) is 67,959.
- On average, each book is borrowed 6 times a year – much higher than the national average of 3.3.
- 46 public access computers are available at Crown Street and 10 at Cockerton.
- Public access computers are used for approximately 55,000 sessions each year, for everything ranging from job applications to social networking. (A session is defined as each time the user logs on and for however long they are accessing the computer in that session).
- Total Service Revenue Expenditure per 1,000 population is £11,523– only one comparable authority has a lower figure.

- Total Revenue Staffing expenditure per 1,000 population is £5,118 – the lowest among comparable Authorities.

5. Service Delivery Points

5.1 Crown Street Library

- 5.1.1 Crown Street Library opened in 1885 as a result of a bequest from Edward Pease, a prominent townsman, industrialist and Quaker. The library occupies a central position in the town centre and is accommodated in a grade 2 listed building. Public areas are divided between adult lending, junior lending, a reference library, the computer library offering public access computers and the Centre for Local Studies. The public level houses over 52,175 stock items for loan including large print, spoken word and audio collections and an extensive Reference & Local History collection.
- 5.1.2 The total public space allocated to library services within the Crown Street building is 931m². The breakdown of floor space is Centre for Local Studies 131m², Children's Library 146m², Adults Lending 262 m², Reference Library 156m², Art Gallery 93m², ICT area 143m².
- 5.1.3 A basement area contains a large book store with additional specialist storage for archive materials. Crown Street Library is the 'headquarters' of the service. All support functions operate from this building, including stock services, the mobile library service, the housebound service and the events team.
- 5.1.4 Crown Street houses 46 computers available for public use and weekly computer courses are offered to enhance employment opportunities. Free Wi-Fi is available.
- 5.1.6 The Library has a close working relationship with local schools, hosting class visits and specialist sessions. There are weekly family activities for pre-school children.
- 5.1.7 The Library has a meeting room for use by reading groups and for the Learning & Skills Team to deliver courses. At other times the room is available for hire – the current charge is £15.00 per hour with discounts for charitable groups.
- 5.1.8 The Service frequently supports other Council activities and charities with use of space to promote events and public consultation issues.
- 5.1.9 Listed below are some of the events regularly occurring in Crown Street Library:
- Weekly Baby Rhyme Time Sessions
 - Weekly Saturday story time and craft activity
 - Weekly Knit and natter group
 - Monthly reading groups including one for those with a visual impairment
 - Weekly Learning & Skills courses including ICT courses.
 - Monthly Hearing Care clinic
 - Monthly Dementia Hub for information and advice
 - Regular holiday activities for children
 - Regular author visits
 - Regular exhibitions and displays in Centre for Local Studies
 - Regular exhibitions and displays in the Crown Street Art Gallery

5.1.10 This branch opens for 49 hours per week:

Monday	9:00am–6:00pm
Tuesday	9:00am–6:00pm
Wednesday	9:00am–5:00pm
Thursday	10:00am–6:00pm
Friday	9:00am–5:00pm
Saturday	9:00am–4:00pm

5.2 Cockerton Library

5.2.1 Cockerton Library was built in 1970. It is a single storey building comprising the main library, small office and staff area (2,170 square feet of floor space and 254 square feet of office space).

5.2.2 The Library works closely with local schools and community groups - Cockerton, Mount Pleasant and Holy Family Primary schools for example, visit regularly. The library is closed on Wednesday afternoons, which allows for community events and adult learning courses. The shelving is sufficient to display 11,200 items including a collection of large print, audio books and music CD's. There are 10 computers and a printer available for public use. Free Wi-Fi is available.

5.2.3 Events held at Cockerton Library include:

- Monthly Councillor Ward Surgeries
- Weekly Baby Rhyme Time Sessions
- Reading Group
- Free holiday activities for children

5.2.4 The Library is easy to access with bus stops immediately outside the building and a free car park at the rear. All access is level with automatic doors making entrance and exit easy for wheelchairs, buggies and mobility scooters.

5.2.5. Cockerton Library is open for 28 hours per week at the following opening times:

Monday	9:00am-2:00pm
Tuesday	2:00pm-7:00pm
Wednesday	9:00am-1:00pm
Thursday	2:00pm-7:00pm
Friday	9:00am-2:00pm
Saturday	9:00am-1:00pm

5.3 Mobile Library

5.3.1 Until September 2016 The Mobile Library visited 90 sites within the Borough working to a 3-week timetable. Visits include residential homes, sheltered accommodation, nurseries and schools as well as stops for general use. The library carried approximately 3,000 items of stock and was open for an average of 23 hours per week over the 3-week timetable.

5.3.2 The service has been suspended pending a Council decision on future Library provision.

5.4 Online Services

5.4.1 The library website is <http://www2.darlington.gov.uk> where library members can renew their books, reserve items to collect in branch and browse the online catalogue. Library opening times and mobile library routes are displayed here.

- 5.4.2 Customers are now able to borrow e-books by downloading titles to their own devices from the online library catalogue. The service is relatively new, but shows an increasing popularity.
- 5.4.3 The library has a Twitter account and two Facebook pages, one exclusively for Baby Rhyme Time information. Social Media is increasingly important for the promotion of events and activities in the library.

5.5 Home Library Service

- 5.5.1 The Home Library Service provides materials for those who are unable to use a library due to illness, disability or frailty. The service can be permanent or temporary, for example where someone may be recuperating from an illness or accident. Customers will have access to the same range of materials as those found in the central library which will be delivered direct to the individual's home. Visits are made on a three weekly basis and at a regular time by our staff who carry identification. This service is free of charge. There are no specific criteria in relation to eligibility. Requests to receive the service can be made by individuals themselves, friends or carers. The Housebound service currently has 66 active borrowers.

5.6 Residential Services

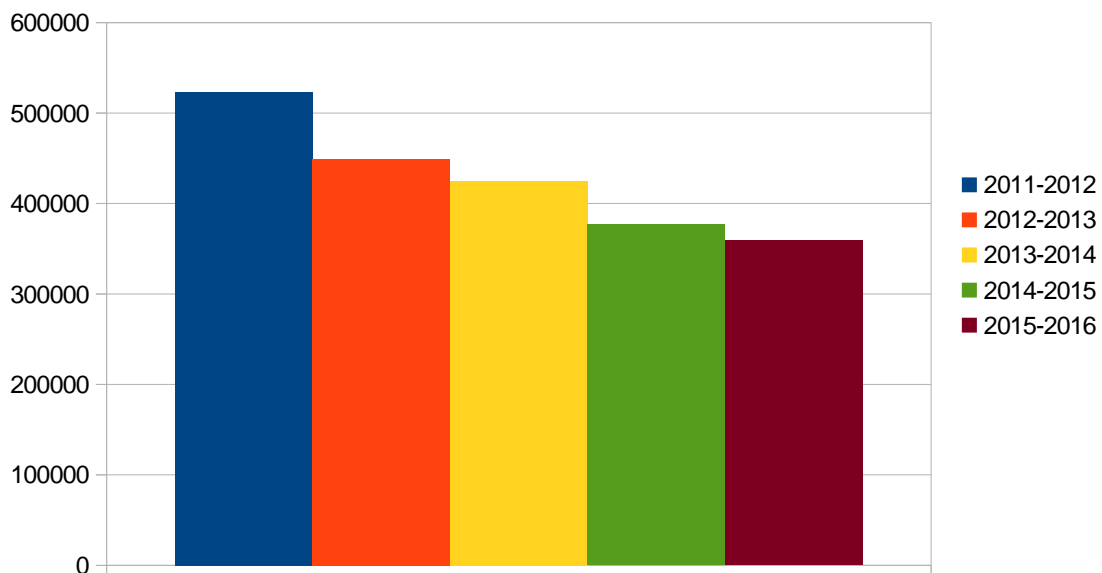
5.6.1 The service offers a regularly changing collection of books to residential care establishments for use by their residents. These collections vary in size and scope, dependant on the number of residents in the home and their reading interests. The collections are chosen and packed by library staff, delivered by the library attendants and changed on a twelve weekly basis.

5.6.2 There are no comparator statistics for this service, but it delivers a collection to nine residential care homes.

5.7 Performance of Service Delivery Points

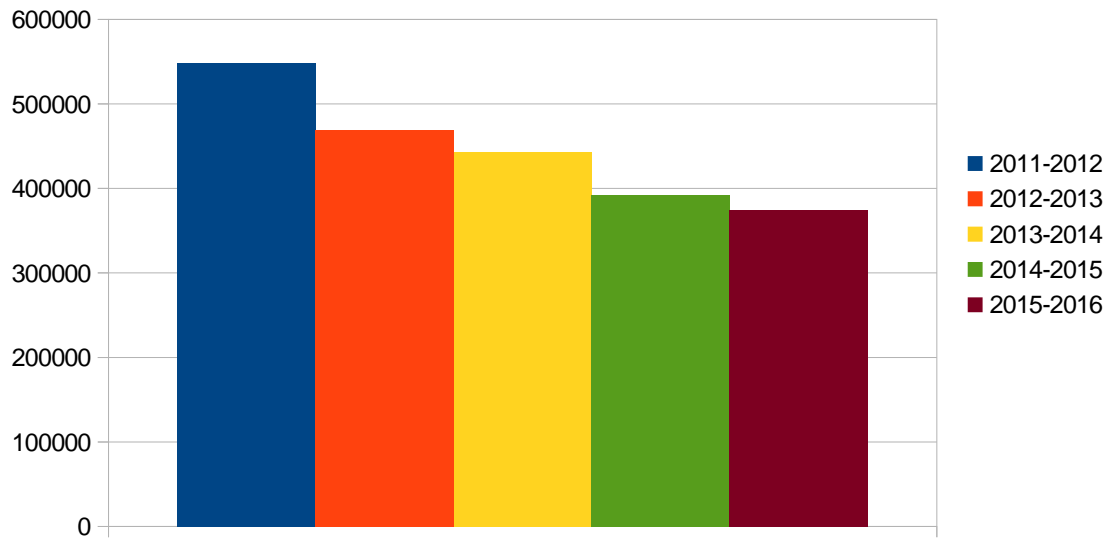
5.7.1 There has been a steady decline in traditional book loans nationally. In Darlington, the total number of loans has significantly declined over the last five years from over 520,000 items to just under 360,000.

Darlington Library Service - Total Book Issues



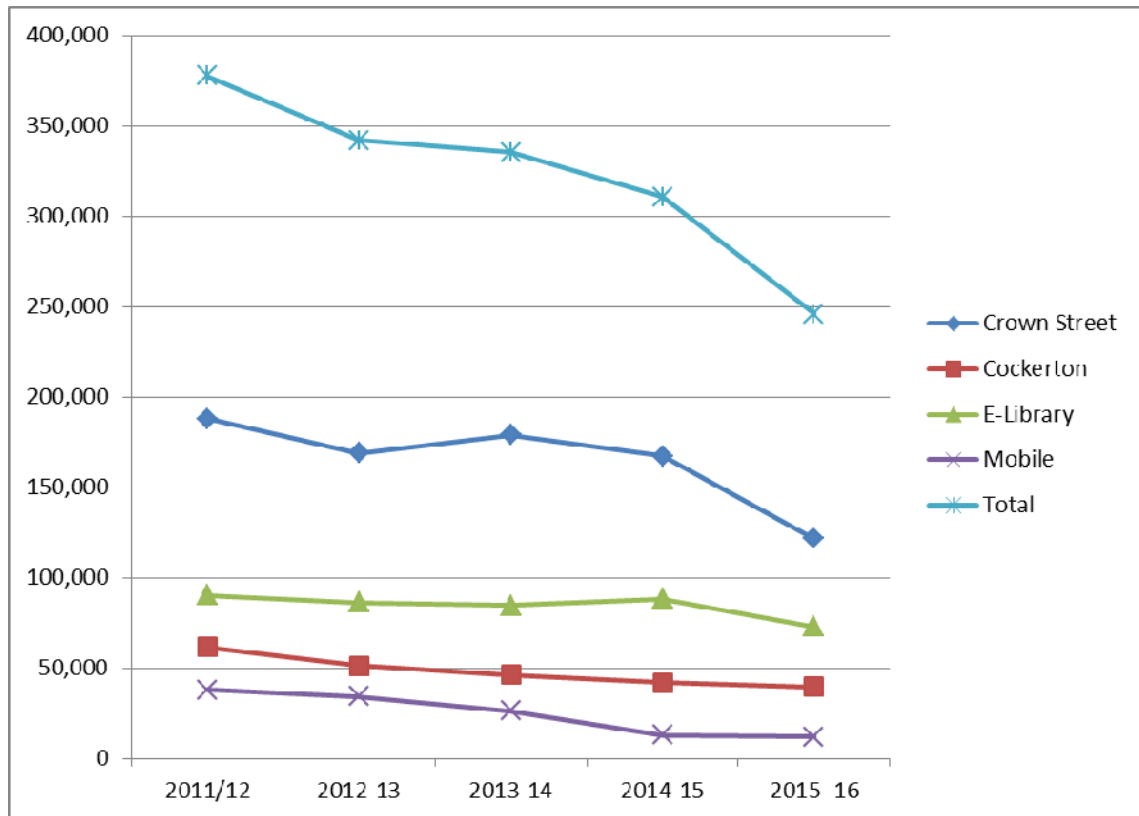
Trend Data – Total Books Issued	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Darlington	523,684	448,875	424,726	376,583	359,231
Average of all English Unitary Authorities	1,050,098	989,097	924,671	833,145	704,843

Darlington Library Service - Total Items Issued



Trend Data – Total <u>Items Issued</u> (Books & Audio Visual/CDs, DVDs)	2011- 2012	2012- 2013	2013- 2014	2014- 2015	2015- 2016
Darlington	548,090	468,673	443,202	392,184	374,211
Average of <u>all</u> English Unitary Authorities	1,050,098	989,097	924,671	833,145	621,655

5.7.2 The number of physical visits to the Library 2012-2016



	Crown Street	Cockerton	E-Library	Mobile	Total
2011/12	188,025	61,500	90,100	37,900	377,525
2012-13	168,775	51,300	86,275	34,350	341,995
2013-14	178,850	46,350	84,525	26,100	335,188
2014-15	167,250	42,050	88,239	12,936	310,475
2015 -16	121,450	39,600	72,925	11,900	245,875

5.7.3 Virtual Visits 2015/16

The number of visits to the website was 35,848 (Figures are not available for previous years). The website provides the opportunity for library members to renew their books, browse the online catalogue, reserve books, write a book review, check on library opening times, find information about events happening in the library, use the online resources such as Britannica Online and borrow e-books and e-magazines.

5.7.4 Comparisons with 15 comparable English Unitary Authorities All English Unitary Authorities and All English Local Authorities

Service Area	Darlington Rank out of...		
	CIPFA's 15 Comparator English Unitary Authorities	All English Unitary Authorities	All English Local Authorities
Number of Libraries per 1,000 population	14 th out of 14	46 th out of 48	127 th out of 135
Number of Active Borrowers per 1,000 population	7 th out of 13	29 th out of 46	75 th out of 131
Total Revenue Expenditure per 1,000 population.	12 th lowest of 13	31 st out of 45	88 th out of 128
Employee costs per 1,000 population	14 th lowest of 14	42 nd out of 47	112 th out of 133
Premises costs per 1,000 population	12 th lowest of 14	25 th out of 47	80 th out of 130
Transport costs per 1,000 population	8 th out of 14	20 th out of 46	51 st out of 129
Total Materials cost per 1,000 population (book budget)	5 th out of 13	16 th out of 45	51 st out of 129
Computing costs per 1,000 population	8 th out of 12	23 rd out of 40	79 th out of 121
Average cost per book purchased	3 rd out of 14	5 th out of 43	17 th out of 123
Total Book Issues per 1,000 population	2 nd out of 14	24 th out of 48	55 th out of 134
Physical Visits for Library Purposes per 1,000 population	14 th out of 14	46 th out of 48	125 th out of 134
Website visits per 1,000 population	8 th out of 12	36 th out of 40	111 st out of 123
Volunteer hours worked	14 th out of 14	46 th out of 46	127 th out of 127

5.7.5 Interpretation

- Darlington has the smallest population of the 15 local authorities in its comparator group.
- The number of Active Borrowers per 1,000 population is a key indicator of how well the library service engages with the public.
- In respect of the number of Active Borrowers, Darlington is in the middle of its comparator group of Unitary Authorities and also All English Local Authorities, which demonstrates that the service engages well with the population compared to a significant number of other authorities.
(An active borrower is defined as having borrowed one item or more in the course of the preceding year).
- Total Revenue Expenditure per 1,000 population is a key cost indicator. Darlington is at the lower end of its comparator group and Unitary Authorities, and in the bottom third for All English Local Authorities, therefore demonstrating that Darlington is providing a low cost service.
(The Total Revenue Expenditure per 1,000 population demonstrates the cost to the Authority of providing a comprehensive library service to its residents when measured against similar Local Authorities).

- Total Book Issues per 1,000 population measures a core library activity, providing an indicator for both workload and the demand placed on the library book stock and the demand placed on the library books available for loan. The comparator group shows Darlington Library Service performs well, it is second highest for Unitary Authorities with performance in the middle, and All English Local Authorities in the top third.
- For Physical Visits to the library per 1,000 population, the library service performs poorly; bottom of the comparator group and close to the bottom for both Unitary Authorities and All English Local Authorities.
- Whilst the library performs reasonably well with regard to active borrowers, overall physical visits to the library service are poor. With regard to cost indicators, generally the library is at the lower end of the comparators showing that the library service in Darlington is low cost service.

5.8 Access to Services

5.8.1 Using public transport 95% of the population can access Crown Street Library within 30 minutes, 82% of the population within 20 minutes and 13% of the population within 10 minutes.

5.8.2 Using public transport 93% of the population can access Cockerton Library within 30 minutes, 53% of the population within 20 minutes and 17% of the population within 10 minutes.

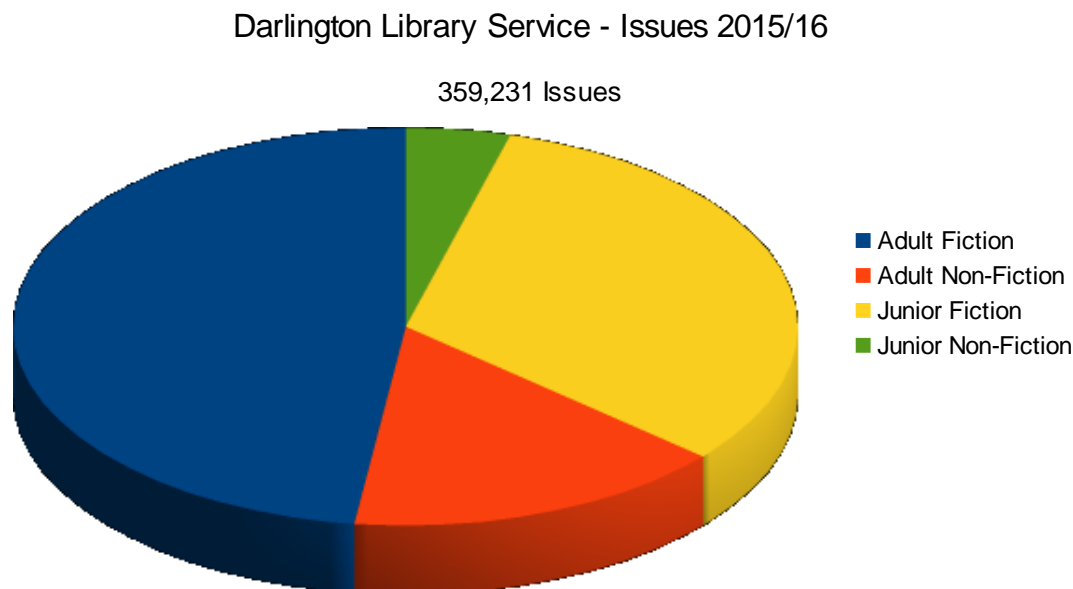
6. Service Specific Information

6.1 Lending Services

6.1.1 Books

6.1.2 There were 359,231 Issues in 2015/16, of which:

- 47.9% was adult fiction 171,747
- 15.8% was adult non-fiction 56,833
- 32% was junior fiction 115,006
- 4.3% was junior non-fiction 15,645



6.1.3 61% of the total stock issued was at Crown Street, 22% at Cockerton, 13% from the Mobile Library and 4% to housebound and residential services customers.

6.1.4 There is no charge to borrow printed books owned by Darlington Library, assuming that they are returned or renewed within the 3-week loan period.

6.1.5 The service achieves high issues for the number of branches and floor space that it has. There is a regional contract in place for book purchase, ensuring the very best value for the money spent.

Performance

6.1.6 Cost per visitor is £4.93. The average in comparable authorities is £3.80. This is the revenue expenditure divided by the visitor number.

6.1.7 Issues per book is 6 issues per item per year. The average for comparable authorities is 3.3. This shows how hard the stock is working.

6.1.7 Number of Issues per 1000 population is 3,573; this is above average within the 16 comparable authorities.

6.1.9 Total number of books available for loan is 62,491. The average is 194,000.

6.2.1 Spoken Word materials

Performance

6.2.2 The Council offers a range spoken word material for adults and children.

- Adult Spoken Word Issues in 2015/16 were 9,660. Darlington is ranked 11th out of 14 comparable authorities.
- Children's Spoken Word Issues in 2015/16 were 2,105. Darlington is ranked 5th out of 13 comparable authorities.

6.3.1 Audio materials

CDs

6.3.2 CD issues are a declining market due to changes in the way in which people access and use music. Very little is currently spent on the collection (114 CDs were purchased in 2014/15) but there is a reserve stock which staff can retrieve material from for borrowers.

6.3.3 The aim is to gain as much income from the current collection as possible before demand for the format ends. Increasing charges is unlikely to increase income, the current high issue being a result of the current two-for-one offer. The intention is to continue offering the collection, but to invest less in it.

Performance

6.3.4 The library has slightly below average performance for 'Audio Issues per 1000 population', when compared against the other 15 unitary authorities, with 323. The average is 384.

Trend Data				
2016	2016	2015	2014	2013
CD issue	2857	2862	4678	5022
Stock	2292	2513	2393	2580

DVDs

6.3.5 The original DVD service was started as a market test and the assessment was that apart from children's DVD's there was little interest. The bulk of the issues achieved are of children's materials and most current popular materials have a very high cost if they are licensed for loan.

Performance

6.3.6 The CIPFA statistics do not measure performance between Library Services concerning issues for DVDs. As a result the statistics outlined below are for Darlington only.

Trend Data				
2016	2016	2015	2014	2013
DVD issue	235	340	484	642
Stock	433	445	463	453

Language Courses

6.3.7 The Language Course service has a stock of approximately 170 language courses for loan, of varying length and complexity, from simple holiday French to 3 month Japanese courses.

Performance

6.3.8 The CIPFA statistics do not measure performance between Library Services concerning issues for Language Course materials. As a result the statistics outlined below are for Darlington only.

Trend Data 2016	2016	2015	2014
Language issue	143	129	167
Stock	136	146	142

6.4.1 Reservations

6.4.2 Library members have the opportunity to reserve specific items which are not currently on the shelf and there is a charge of 50p (25p for senior citizens and children) for this service. The library management system generates a letter or email to the user once the item is available.

6.4.3 Where a book cannot be supplied from Council stock it will be borrowed from another library. Where it is not available from another public library it will be borrowed from academic and specialist libraries or from the British Library Lending Division. Charges to Darlington Library for these items vary depending on where they are sourced. The current British Library charge is £13.15 and some non-public libraries will also charge that amount. The cost to the borrower is £5.00. The Service is a net lender of books to other libraries, which means that the inter-library lending service costs less than it would without a very good reserve collection, particularly of non-fiction.

6.4.4 All libraries in the North East Region contribute to a regional van service and this is used to transport items around the region and to and from the British Library.

Performance

6.4.5 The Reservations service supplies 56% of reserved books within 7 days, 70% within 15 days and 83% within 30 days. This is the 15th lowest of 16 authorities.

6.4.6 The total number of requests processed in 2015/16 was 11,889.

6.4.7. Reservations per 1000 population were 99. The average is 170. This is the 14th lowest out of 16 authorities.

7. Information Services

7.1 Responding to customer's information needs is a central remit of any library service. Information is sought by the public at all service points and the staff support those needs whatever the requirement using books, reference materials, internet, etc.

7.2 59,882 enquiries were handled by the service in 2015/16 ranging from, for example, tourist information enquiries, start times of local events, telephone number enquiries, signposting to other local services, dictionary/word definition advice, etc.

7.3 Reference Library

7.3.1 Approximately 400 people a week are using the reference library– for reading newspapers, a quiet place to study and using reference materials. The busiest times are between 11:00am and 1:00pm with an average of 11 people per hour using the facility. A free, quiet study space is highly valued by many people.

7.4 Centre for Local Studies

7.4.1 The Centre for Local Studies maintains a large collection of information about local history and family history. The collection includes books, maps, posters and flyers, leaflets, tape recordings, oil paintings and watercolours, as well as over 40,000 photographs and slides.

7.4.2 The stock is an irreplaceable local asset, and as such is used, not just by the general public, but also by the local authority and by national organisations such as the BBC for research and the supply of information.

7.4.3 The service also provides and supports users to access a large range of specialist digitised materials via stand-alone PC's and the Internet.

7.4.4 The Centre receives requests for image and other reproductions – operating a sliding scale of charges, dependant on the end use, with higher charges for national and international publications, compared to local and personal use.

7.4.5 Some of the collection does not have a digital catalogue, but this is being addressed, and a collection of digitised photographs being built; accessible from the library website ()

Performance

7.5 The CIPFA statistics do not measure performance between Library Services concerning Local Studies. As a result the statistics outlined below are for Darlington only.

7.6 In the year to 31st March 2016 the service recorded 10,012 enquiries, 11% of which were received by e-mail, post or phone. In the same period over 7,500 visitors were recorded, and while the majority are local people, some travel to Darlington from all over the world for information on their family and the local area. The Centre runs events, designs displays, hosts class visits to support the National Curriculum demand for local historical knowledge, as well as visits by adult groups.

7.7 Genealogical Research Information

- 7.7.1 Users of the Centre for Local Studies mostly complete their own research – with varying degrees of help from staff to access the required information.
- 7.7.2 The charged genealogical research service is provided by an expert who is contracted to us for those hours spent on research and the service is charged to users at that rate plus on-costs; the current charges being £30.00 per hour.

7.8 Reference Services

- 7.8.1 In addition to the information service offered by the Reference library, and the large range of hard copy reference resources, magazines and leaflets, this part of the service also supports users with the following:

Photocopying

Photocopying is charged at 15p per black and white A4 page and 55p per colour page.

Fax Service

A fax service, operated by staff, is offered at the reference desk and has high demand. This is a popular service due to lack of other providers in the centre of town. The charge is £1.45 per page to a UK fax number. Faxes can also be received at a cost of 0.50p per page.

Scan and e-mail service

The library operates a 'scan and email' service at a charge of £1.00 for the first sheet and 0.50p for subsequent sheets. However, we encourage the public to use the available scanners themselves and staff are always prepared to give a demonstration.

7.9 Public Computer and Internet Access

- 7.9.1 The library service has a total of 56 PCs for public use, across the service. All library members are entitled to half an hour free computer use. Those in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance have one hour free. Members and non-members may pay for additional time at a charge of £1.00 per half hour. A self-service system is in place for users to log on to computers themselves but library staff do offer approximately 15 minutes of support to customers as required. If customers require significant levels of support staff will signpost them to the IT courses which are run in the e-library and at other locations in the town.
- 7.9.2 The busiest area of computer use is at Crown Street, which houses 46 public access computers. Ten of the computers are in an area that can be partitioned for adult learning courses.

Performance

- 7.10 The number of Electronic Workstations per 1000 population is 5. The average across comparable unitary authorities is 6.
- 7.11 The public access computers across the service were used for just under 55,000 sessions in 2015/16.

Trend Data 2016	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
I.T. Sessions	54971	62120	67455	63490	73445

- 7.12 Darlington is 16th lowest of 16 authorities for the number of public computer sessions available.

8. Community Engagement

8.1 Adults

8.1.1 In order to promote the Library and engage with the community, the service offers a range of activities including: reading groups, author visits, local history talks, arts and crafts, exhibitions, displays, weekly knitting group and a gentle keep fit class aimed at those just starting exercise.

8.1.2 The Learning and Skills team offers a range of courses delivered in the Library ranging from functional skills and computer literacy to languages and arts.

8.1.3 Performance

- 6 adult reading groups (meeting monthly) facilitated by library staff.
- 18 external reading groups supported by loan of library materials.
- 1 reading group for those with a visual impairment.
- Numerous events throughout the year including author visits, live music, displays and exhibitions.
- 549 people attended the keep fit class during 2015/16.

8.2 Children and Young People

8.2.1 The service offers a comprehensive range of books and magazines for young people aged 0-17 from baby books to teenage fiction, supported by regular events.

8.2.2 Children are eligible to join the library from birth.

8.2.3 Pre-school children become members of the Bookstart Bear Club, collecting stickers and certificates.

8.2.4 The popular Bookstart Baby Rhyme time sessions are held weekly at both Crown Street and Cockerton Libraries. For children aged 0-4.

8.2.5 School groups are able to visit the library as part of their literacy programme. The library produces themed work packs to link to topics being taught, e.g. Victorian Britain, The Great Fire of London, etc.

8.2.6 The service offers specific visits to groups such as Brownies and Scouts as well as Saturday morning story and craft sessions. A range of activities are offered during school holidays including the national Summer Reading Challenge for primary school children.

8.2.7 Multi-sensory storytelling for children with additional needs.

8.2.8 The service offers a visit to every Reception school class in Darlington, which includes a book pack for every child and advice regarding everyday reading for parents/carers.

8.2.9 The Library takes part in the annual Northern Children's Book Festival when children's authors are taken into schools throughout the Borough for book readings, creative writing and workshops.

8.2.10 Performance

- 74 % of the 4 to 12 year olds in Darlington are members of the library, with many visiting the libraries on class visits.
- 2,277 Bookstart packs were delivered in 2015/16
- 10,625 young people attended events in 2015/16.
- 561 children aged 4-11 years took part in the annual National Summer Reading Challenge.
- 8 Baby Rhyme Time sessions are held each week across both Crown Street and Cockerton.
- 106 babies and toddlers attended a Baby Rhyme Time session each week.

9. Service Users

9.1 To capture library use across the Borough consistently, two data sets have been produced:

9.1.1 Registered Users - people who have joined the library and received a library card (just under half the Borough's population are registered to use the library service).

9.1.2 Active Borrowers – people who have borrowed one or more items in the last twelve months (this is in a rolling year).

9.2 Gender

Latest data available (2014/15).

<u>GENDER</u>			Male	Female	Not stated	TOTAL	Gender Variation
DARLINGTON POPULATION		Numbers	51,355	54,259		105,564	
		%	48.6	51.4		100	2.8
REGISTERED USERS	Total Registered Borrowers	Numbers	23,398	29,040	523	52,961	
		%	44.62	55.38		100	10.76
	Total Registered Borrowers Used within last year	Numbers	5,549	7,284	303	13,136	
		%	43.01	56.99		100	13.98

The table above indicates that males are slightly under-represented as library members compared to the proportion of the total population.

9.3 Age

The age range of members is not in line with the population, see table below:

<u>AGE</u>		0-15	16 - Ret	Ret+	Total
DARLINGTON POPULATION	Numbers	20,057	63,338	22,169	105,564
	%	19%	60%	21%	100%
ACTIVE USERS	Numbers	4,409	5,266	3,461	13,136
	%	33%	40%	27%	100%
LIBRARY SURVEY	Numbers	149	1,415	1,205	2,769
	%	5.4%	51.1%	43.5%	100%

Note: The library survey results show 16 year olds in the 0-15 category not 16-Ret.

9.3.1 Darlington Library Service Survey Feb-Apr 2016

Between 15 February 2016 and 3 April 2016, the Authority completed a detailed consultation exercise which resulted in over 3,265 responses to a survey. The survey focused on identifying who used the service, which services were most valued and how people felt about the budget proposals affecting the library in the Council's MTFP.

Residents completing the survey:

- Members over the age of retirement are notably over-represented as a proportion of the total population.
- 0-15 aged members are significantly under-represented as a proportion of the total population.
- 496 respondents skipped the question on age.

9.3.2 Active Users:

Both retired+ and 0-15 are over represented as a proportion of the total population and 16-retirement are significantly under represented.

9.4 Ethnicity

9.4.1 The library service has had difficulty collecting ethnicity data and the overwhelming majority of new members do not answer ethnicity questions as part of the membership form. As a result of this, 96.9% of registered users do not have their ethnicity stated or their stated ethnicity does not fit within the prescribed headings.

9.4.2 We do not collect this data now – latest figures available (2014) are below.

ETHNICITY		Non White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese /Other	White	Not Stated / Other	TOTAL	
DARLINGTON POPULATION	Numbers	2,123	618	940	225	738	96,811		105,400	
	%	3.8%	0.6%	0.9%	0.2%	0.7%	95.8%		100%	
	Group %	4.2%					95.8%		100%	
REGISTERED USERS	Numbers	-	4	24	2	1	596	19,987	20,614	
	%	0.0%	0.6%	3.8%	0.3%	0.2%	95.1%		100%	
	Group %	4.9%					95.1%		100%	
CIPFA STATS	DARLINGTON	Numbers	2108				98,292		100,400	
		%	2.1%				97.9%		0%	
	COMPARATIVE	AVERAGE	Unitary Auth: England	6.3%				93.7%		100%
			Similar Size Population	10.9%				89.1%		100%
Neighbouring Unitary Authorities			2.9%				97.2%		100%	
LIBRARY SURVEY	Numbers		15	21	11	11	2,602	89	2,749	
	%		0.6%	0.8%	0.4%	0.4%	97.8%		100%	
	Group %		2.2%			97.8%			100%	

9.4.3 Of the data available the following can be observed:

- The proportion of membership for each known ethnicity is broadly in line with the wider population ethnicity mix.

9.5 Disability

9.5.1 There is little information held on disability, with the Library Management System not collecting this data, it is therefore not possible to show how many registered library users have a disability. The information collected from the library survey compared to the population shows a similar level of people with a disability. The results from the survey are shown below:

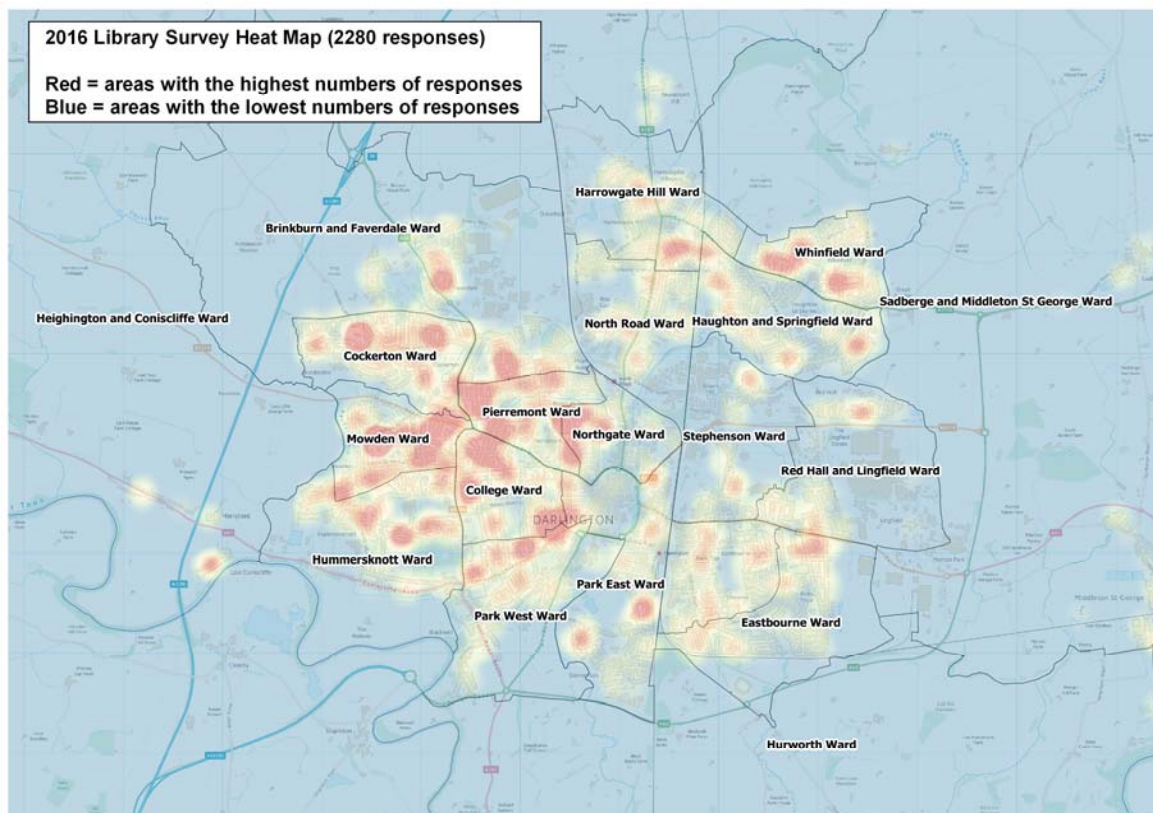
	Disabled?		Difference	Survey Info	No of Respondents
	Yes	No			
Library Survey	19.4%	80.6%	-61.2%	Answered	2614
Population	19.6%	80.4 %	-61.3%	Not Answered	651
Difference	+0.2 %	-0.2 %	-	TOTAL	3229

9.5.2 This indicates the disability profile of library users within the survey broadly reflect the disabled population of Darlington.

9.6 Ward and Deprivation

Survey Returns (Feb-Apr 2016) from around the Borough

Ward Name	Local Authority ranking of deprivation (1 is most deprived)	Number of Survey Returns	% Returns based on known postcodes
Bank Top & Lascelles	4	98	4.3%
Brinkburn and Faverdale	30	126	5.5%
Cockerton	7	194	8.5%
College	65	150	6.6%
Eastbourne	11	95	4.2%
Harrowgate Hill	31	98	4.3%
Haughton & Springfield	25	105	4.6%
Heighington & Coniscliffe	46	129	5.7%
Hummersknott	61	156	6.8%
Hurworth	37	77	3.4%
Mowden	62	180	7.9%
North Road	10	87	3.8%
Northgate	1	75	3.3%
Park East	15	130	5.7%
Park West	29	131	5.7%
Pierremont	34	158	6.9%
Red Hall & Lingfield	3	65	2.9%
Sadberge & Middleton St George	43	86	3.8%
Stephenson	16	40	1.8%
Whinfield	23	100	4.4%
100%		2,280	69.8%
Blank		598	
Error		387	
Total		3,265	



10. Library Consultations

10.1 Darlington Library Service Survey (Feb-Apr 2016)

10.1.2 Between 15 February 2016 and 3 April 2016, the Authority completed a detailed consultation exercise which resulted in over 3,265 responses to a survey. The survey focused on identifying who used the service, what services were used and how people felt about the budget proposals affecting the library in the Council's MTFP.

10.1.3 Outlined below is an analysis of the survey results:

Characteristics of Respondents

- Responded to by a larger proportion of the female population.
- Proportion of older and younger people responding to the survey does not match Darlington's population averages nor active library users, with over 50% of respondents aged over 55, and only 6.5% of respondents aged under 25.
- High response rate from wards around Cockerton Library.
- The proportion of disabled people that responded to the survey is in line with the proportion of the town's residents with a disability or long term illness.

Proportion Using Darlington's Library Service

- The majority (95.5%) of respondents use Darlington's Library Service.
- Older people use the library service more than younger people, especially 11-16 year olds, with only 1.1% of this age group saying they use the library service.

Libraries Used

- Crown Street is the most popular used library, with 87.5% respondents using this library, Cockerton is second with 39%, with the Mobile Library service used by 11% of respondents and the online service by 13%.
- Crown Street is the most popular library across all year groups, but usage does decline as the population gets older, with usage of the Mobile Library increasing in the older age groups.
- Wards including Cockerton, Pierremont, and Mowden near to Cockerton Library are the highest users of this Library.
- On average, rural wards have the highest usage of the Mobile Library.
- Usage of Crown Street Library is lower in wards that are rural or are close to Cockerton Library.

Frequency of Library Usage

- 86% of those people surveyed use a library at least once a month, with 43% using a library at least once a week.
- There is a lower frequency of usage in the younger population, especially 11-16 year olds.
- People living in rural wards tend to use the library less frequently.

Library Services Used

- The most popular service (88.5%) is borrowing books, followed by finding information using hard copy reference resources (46.5%), visiting the Art Gallery (33%), computer and internet facilities (25%), and borrowing music CDs and DVDs (13.5%).
- Borrowing books, finding information using hard copy reference resources, and local and family history services are more popular with older residents than younger ones. Younger people use computer and internet and study facilities more than the older population.

Most Valuable Library Services

- Respondents rated borrowing books (89%) as their most valuable service, followed by finding information using hard copy reference resources (41%), Centre for Local Studies (28%), children's' sessions and events (22%), internet facilities (20%), computer and internet facilities (20%), Art Gallery (19.5%), reading newspapers/magazines (16.5%), music CDs and DVDs

(10%).

Reasons for Non-Usage

- The most popular reasons for non-usage are buying own books (36%) and using online resources (36%), lack of time (23%).
- The younger population, from 11-20 year olds, are less likely to use the library.

Encouraging Usage

- 105 people out of 3,265 replied to this question. Of these 105 respondents, 61 stated that nothing would encourage them to use the library and 44 said that they could be encouraged to use the library.
- Again the majority of users responding to this question with either yes or no (meaning they don't currently use the library service) were younger residents.

Preferred Library opening times

- Most respondents would like the library to be open 10am to 7pm during the week, and 10am to 5pm on Saturdays.
- Older residents were less keen on late opening hours and libraries being open on a Sunday.

Library Proposals

As part of the consultation on the Council's MTFP budget proposals, this year's survey included questions relating to potential alternative arrangements for the Library Service including:

- The relocation of the Central Library to the Dolphin Centre
- The closure of the Cockerton Branch Library
- The withdrawal of the Mobile Library Service

Of the 3,258 respondents:

- 91% disagreed with the proposal to re-locate the Central Library
- 77% disagreed with the closure of Cockerton Library
- 69% disagreed with the withdrawal of the Mobile Library Service
- However the proposals do include an extension of Library opening hours (63 hours per week including Sundays) and an extension to the Housebound Library Service for those with Health and/or Mobility problems.

Note: Additional information relating to the survey can be found at Appendix B.

10.2 Library Service Consultation on Central Library Proposals 2016

10.2.1 As well as undertaking the Library Service Survey and a public consultation exercise between February and May 2016, a further period of consultation was undertaken between 3 October 2016 and 11 November 2016 in respect of the ongoing proposed changes to the Library Service. The consultation exercise resulted in over 3,649 responses to a survey from 369 individuals. The survey focused on specific proposals for the new, relocated central library and was divided into 25 different service areas, with respondents asked to give their views and outline any likely impacts and/or suggestions.

10.2.2 Outlined below is an analysis of the survey results:

Characteristics of Respondents

- Responded to by a larger proportion of the female population.
- Proportion of older and younger people responding to the survey does not match Darlington's population averages, with over 45% of respondents aged over 60, and only 3% of respondents aged under 25.

- Fairly even response from across the borough, with slight hot spots in the Northgate and College areas.
- The proportions of disabled people and/or from a minority ethnic background that responded to the survey were slightly higher than the corresponding proportions of the town's residents with these characteristics.

Proportion Using Darlington's Library Service

- The majority (93.4%) of respondents reported being users of Darlington's Library Service.
- All under 25s and over 75s reported being library users, with the proportion reporting this for other age ranges ranging between 89.5% (45-59) and 99.2% (60-75).

Libraries Used

- Crown Street was reported as being the most popular library branch across all age groups, with 93.6% respondents using this library, Cockerton is second with 31.8%, with the now-ceased Mobile Library service used by 3.6% of respondents and the housebound/residential services used by 0.6%.
- Reported Cockerton library users were most likely to be from nearby Cockerton and Hummersknott wards.
- Reported Mobile Library users were based in the West end of the town and more rural areas.
- Reported users of Crown Street Library are fairly evenly dispersed across the borough.

Library Services Used

- The most popular services reported were:
 1. Borrowing Books (Adults') (82%)
 2. Visiting the art gallery at Crown Street (51%)
 3. Using the Centre for Local Studies (41%)
 4. Using computers (36%)
 5. Doing homework/coursework/research (28%)
 6. Borrowing Books (Children's) (27%)
 7. Using IT Services (photocopying etc.) (24%)
 8. Reading papers (23%)
 9. Meeting people (22%)
 10. Reservations / requests (21%)
 11. Attending courses / groups (15%)
 12. Borrowing other (Audio books etc.) (14%)
 13. Getting advice about Council services (12%)
 14. Free Wi-Fi (9%)
 15. Meeting Room Hire (5%)
 16. School events (3%)
 17. Housebound and Residential Services (2%)

Encouraging Usage

- Of the 2,891 feedback forms where respondents had indicated whether a proposal would affect how likely they were to use the library service, the proposals where people reported they would be more likely to use the library service as a result were Working with Schools, Catering facilities, Toilet facilities, and Quick Picks. The proposals for which people were most likely to report they would subsequently be less likely to use the library service were Vision, Design, Layout and Floor Space, Art Gallery and Centre for Local Studies.
- Younger respondents were much more likely to report that a proposal would make them more likely to use the library service

Preferred Library Opening Times

- Just over half of respondents (187) indicated their preferred opening hours, with the most popular time each day between 10am-5pm and weekdays the most popular day, followed by Saturdays and then Sundays.
- Older residents were less keen on late opening hours and libraries being open on a Sunday.

Library Proposals

- For all service areas, except opening hours, individuals were asked whether the proposal would:
 - Make them more or less likely to use the library service in the future
 - Have a positive or negative impact on them
- For two thirds of the 24 service areas, the most common responses to these two questions were “Would make no difference” and “No impact” and, for the remaining 8 service areas, the most popular answers were: “Less likely” and “Negative impact”.
- Most respondents reported that the proposals:
 - Would make them either more likely to use the library or make no difference
 - Would have an either a positive or no impact on them.
- 403 written impacts were received from 171 respondents (46% of total and 0.2% of the population). 69 of these were positive and 334 negative.
- Of the negative written impacts, 77% of these were deemed significant enough by respondents to make them less likely to use the library service in the future.

10.3 Focus Group Feedback

10.3.1 In addition to the survey undertaken as part of the Library Service Consultation on Central Library Proposals Library between 3 October 2016 and 11 November 2016, a total of 17 focus groups were held involving 206 participants.

- Of these, for all 25 proposals:
 - 8 focus groups (47%) reported a mix of positive and negative impacts
 - 5 focus groups (29%) reported wholly positive impacts
 - 3 focus groups (18%) reported wholly negative impacts
 - 1 focus group (6%) reported no impacts, either negative or positive
- 73 likely impacts from the proposals were recorded from these sessions, of which:
 - 47 (64%) were positive
 - 26 (36%) were negative

10.4 Equality Impact Assessments

10.4.1 Following on from the library survey and the two periods of public consultation, Equality Impact Assessments have been produced and updated in respect of the proposed changes to the Library Service as a whole.

10.4.2 Three separate Equality Impact Assessments have been produced in respect of the Relocation of the Central Library from Crown Street to the Dolphin Centre, the Closure of the Mobile Library Service and the Closure of Cockerton Branch Library. The analysis from these Equality Impact Assessments will be used to inform the outcome of this needs assessment.

11. Summary

11.1 Meeting the needs of the general population

11.1.1 High performing

- Library membership currently stands at around 52,000 people, with 12,710 (11.9%) of the total population of Darlington borrowing books in the last year.
- The service issues 359,231 books every year, deals with 575 enquiries for every 1,000 population and sees some 245,875 people each year across all three service points.
- Total revenue expenditure per 1,000 population is one of the lowest in the group of comparable authorities.
- The service generally performs at the higher end for issuing books but maintains an efficient service with below average costs per employee per 1,000 population.
- The Centre for Local Studies sees over 7,500 visitors a year, looking for information about local and family history, and handles around 10,000 enquiries each year.
- Inter-library lending; the service is a net supplier of loans to other authorities meaning the cost of DBC's own inter-library loan service is reduced.

11.1.2 Low performing

- Having only the three service points gives Darlington the highest population per library of any authority in the country, and the lowest opening hours, with the average number of service points across all unitary authorities being 12.
- The service is the worst performing service for 'Floor Space per 1000 population' with 12sqm. The average is 21sqm.
- The service has the highest figure for 'Population per service point' with 35,133. The average is 21,530.
- The service supplies 56% of reserved books within 7 days, 70% within 15 days and 83% within 30 days which puts it at the lower end of performance for unitary authorities.

11.2 Meeting the needs of specific groups

11.2.1 Older People

- The library offers a welcoming, safe, neutral place.
- Large selection of books including large print and audiobooks.
- Free hire of audiobooks for those with visual impairment or who are unable to physically hold a book.
- Newspapers and Magazines to read.
- Information leaflets, bus timetables, photocopier and Fax service.
- Easy access by lift.
- Accessible toilet facilities.
- Reading groups, author visits, knit & natter group, easy keep fit class.
- Help with computers and internet.
- Monthly Dementia Hub for information and advice.

- A Local Studies Centre for help with genealogy.
- Home Library Service for those who cannot make the journey to the library for health or mobility reasons.
- Older people have traditionally been regular users of the library service. Present figures indicate that 3,100 older people are Active Borrowers (having borrowed one or more item in the past year).

11.2.2 Children and Young People

- 74 % of the 4 to 12 year olds in Darlington are members of the library, with many visiting the library on class visits.
- The library offers safe, welcoming and neutral space.
- Activities to encourage reading and cultural enjoyment (e.g. Baby Rhyme Time, Summer Reading Challenge, book groups and holiday events).
- Concessions include no overdue fines for late return of children's books borrowed on a junior card.
- Free Baby Rhyme Time sessions.
- Free holiday activities.
- Sets of junior books to support reading groups in schools.

11.2.3 Unemployed Adults

To assist with job searching, unemployed adults have access to functional skills courses at Crown Street Library and additional free time on the public-access computers. Staff are trained to provide support in using Government on-line services.

11.2.4 Health & Disability

The library stocks a range of books on health matters including the the Reading Well 'Books on Prescription Scheme'. This is a list of books dealing with low mood, anxiety and depression, recommended by healthcare staff. A collection of braille picture books for children is available, as well as large print and audio resources.

Multi sensory book bags are available to borrow.

The Book Start scheme has resources for children with additional needs. Packs are available for visual impairment, hearing impairment and sensory impairment.

A monthly Dementia Hub meets in the library to provide help and advice, staffed by a member of the Darlington Dementia Action Alliance. The library has a good stock of books and information about memory loss and dementia, and staff are trained as Dementia Friends.

Hearing Care Clinic hold hearing aid clinics in the library once a month.

There is a weekly gentle exercise keep fit class for people who haven't taken part in exercise classes before.

For the visually impaired, the Library holds a large stock of audio books that are free to borrow and a monthly reading group is hosted at Crown Street.

The proportion of service customers with disabilities broadly reflects the number of people with disabilities in Darlington as a whole.

11.2.5 Race/Ethnic Minorities

The Library Service has limited information concerning the number of people from BME groups who use the service.

The library provides a range of books in foreign languages.

As part of the Book Start initiative, dual language reading materials are available for children identified by partner agencies.

The library stocks a wide range of dual language picture books (text in English plus additional language). Languages stocked include Polish, Czech, Chinese, Russian, Urdu, Bengali and Arabic.

11.2.6 Deprivation

Deprivation covers a broad range of issues and refers to unmet needs caused by a lack of resources of all kinds. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) listed in Appendix D attempts to measure the concept of multiple deprivation across seven distinct domains. Darlington is in the 30% most deprived local authority areas in England, it is ranked 97th out of 326 on the IMD 2015. There are pockets of severe deprivation, with the neighbourhoods in the centre of town, around North Road, Redhall, West Cockerton, Eastbourne and Skerne Park displaying the highest levels of deprivation in the town.

Cockerton Library is located within one of these areas.

The library provides a warm, free space to study. Free access to books and newspapers and to online government services.

Schoolchildren from Mount Pleasant school visit regularly and there are free holiday activities provided to encourage use of the library. Free weekly Baby Rhyme Time Sessions are held and the Library Bookstart Co-ordinator ensures that all young children receive free book packs from the earliest age. She works with targeted groups to foster the reading habit in order to improve life chances.

Libraries play a key role in supporting learning for individuals of all ages. Encouraging a love of reading from an early age is proven to lead to improved life chances and academic achievement.

11.3 Value for Money

11.3.1 High performing

- Library membership currently stands at around 52,000 people, with 12,710 (12%) of the total population of Darlington borrowing books in the last year.
- The service issues over 345,000 books every year, deals with 575 enquiries for every 1,000 population and sees some 245,000 people each year across all three service points.

- The public access computers, across the service, are used for over 54,000 sessions each year, for everything from job applications to social networking.
- The Centre for Local Studies sees over 7,500 visitors a year, looking for information about local and family history, and deals with around 10,000 enquiries each year.
- The service ranks highest out of 16 authorities for 'Issues per book with 6 issues per item per year. The average is 3.3.
- The average cost of book purchase, total revenue expenditure per 1,000 population, one of the lowest.
- Darlington is 11th lowest out of 16 comparable authorities for staffing levels. The average cost per employee is the lowest out of 16, although the proportion of the budget that they take is high, reflecting a low overall budget compared to other authorities.

11.3.2 Low performing

- Having only the three service points gives Darlington the highest population per library of any authority in the country, and the lowest opening hours, with the average number of service points across all unitary authorities being 12.
- The service is the worst performing service for 'Floor Space per 1000 population' with 12sqm. The average is 21sqm.
- The service has the highest figure for 'Population per service point' with 35,133. The average is 21,530.
- The service supplies 56% of reserved books within 7 days, 70% within 15 days and 83% within 30 days which puts it at the lower end of performance by all English Unitary Authorities.

12. Conclusions

Key information (2015-16)

- 12.1 The library service in Darlington continues to be valued and well used. There are 52,000 members and 11.9% (12,710 people) of the Darlington population borrowed books in the last year.
- 12.2 There were 245,875 visits and 59,882 queries from the public to Darlington Libraries in the last year. In total 374,211 books, CD's, DVD's and Audio Books were issued.
- 12.3 Crown Street Library accounts for 61% of the total issues, Cockerton Library accounts for 22%, the Mobile Library 13% and the Housebound and Residential services, 4%.
- 12.4 There Centre for Local Studies (based at Crown Street Library) has 7,500 visitors a year seeking information about local and family history and deals with some 10,000 queries a year.

Declining Use

- 12.5 Although the Darlington library service continues to be well used, the overall library use in Darlington accords with the national picture of declining levels of activity. This has much to do with the transformation of ways of accessing information and reading material in the digital age.
- 12.6 In a 5 year period from 2011/12 to 2015/16 the total number of items issued by the Darlington Library Service fell from 548,090 to 374,211 (a fall of 31.7%). In the same period the number of physical visits to the Libraries in Darlington fell from 377,525 to 245,876 (a fall of 34.9%).
- 12.7 The decline in usage has been happening notwithstanding the fact that the population of Darlington has been increasing (the 2011 census recording an increase of 7.9% since 2001).

Declining Public Funding

- 12.8 The national picture indicates a time of change and challenge for the library service. This is partly because of the demand reduction but has much to do with financial constraints on local authorities and the reduced budgets that are available for all funded services.
- 12.9 The Council has been faced by a very challenging financial position and has had to make difficult choices over the services that it is able to fund and over the level of funding for core statutory services.

Service delivery points

- 12.10 The Council has traditionally delivered the library service via three main service delivery points, a central library (Crown Street), a branch library (Cockerton) and by operating a mobile library service.
- 12.11 Unlike some Councils Darlington has a low number of service points and therefore a high population per library service point. There is however good transport connectivity within the Borough. Using public transport 95% of the population can access Crown Street Library within 30 minutes, 82% of the population within 20 minutes. Using public transport 93% of

the population can access Cockerton Library within 30 minutes, 53% of the population within 20 minutes.

- 12.12 The issue over physical service points is somewhat diminishing in significance as the level of virtual library access/online service grows in popularity. In 2015 -16 the number of virtual visits to the library website was 35,848. The online service is relatively new and enables customers to borrow e-books by downloading titles to their own devices from the online library catalogue. Customers can browse the online catalogue, renew their hard copy books and reserve items to collect in branch. Social media is also of increasing importance for the promotion of events and activities in the library. The library has a Twitter account and two Facebook pages, one exclusively for Baby Rhyme Time information.

Service Provision

- 12.13 The current level of service provision has been viewed by the majority of service users as meeting their needs, at least as far as can be judged from the responses received from the consultation exercises that have been conducted about proposals for changes to library provision. From the Library Consultation Survey completed by 3,265 residents (3% of the population), a significant majority support the existing service and would not wish to see any changes.
- 12.14 The central library service is well regarded and it is clear that a significant number of users want the service to continue at Crown Street, with heritage considerations playing an important part in the views expressed. The consultation about the library service also highlighted strong local support for maintaining the Cockerton Branch library.

Central Library Service

- 12.15 The proposed move of the Central Library Service from the historic and purpose built Crown Street Library remains controversial. However it is considered that the needs for a central library service can be met by the provision of the service at the Dolphin Centre.
- 12.16 Both buildings are in the town centre, the Dolphin Centre is approximately ¼ of a mile away from Crown Street. Both are located near bus stops, neither have on site parking but both are near to off street parking and both have on street blue badge parking nearby. The Dolphin Centre is nearer to the main taxi rank. At whichever location the central library service is located in, the town centre can be accessed by approximately 95% of the population within 30 minutes using public transport.
- 12.17 Responding to consultation views, a separate entrance to the Dolphin Centre library via Bull Wynd is now proposed (as well as access being available from the main Dolphin Centre Entrance). There is a lift available at Bull Wynd entrance (as well as from the main Dolphin Centre entrance).
- 12.18 Opening hours – the move to the Dolphin Centre will allow the central library service to take advantage of the longer opening hours that this facility allows for. The first floor Dolphin Centre library will move to 7 day opening, with the library opening on Sunday and also on two nights a week until 7 pm (the overall opening hours increasing to 57 hours compared to 49 hours per week at Crown Street). The Centre for Local Studies will have reduced opening hours, opening 30 hours a week compared to 49 hours at Crown Street.
- 12.19 Quick Picks – there will be a new service of quick picks at the Dolphin Centre. This will be on the ground floor and comprise a self-service area where users will be able to pick up popular books using self-check out facilities. Book returns will also be able to be made

here. In addition there will be quick pick 10 computers will be available. The quick picks service will be available for the entire weekly opening hours of the Dolphin Centre, 7 days and 103 hours per week.

- 12.20 ICT - the provision of public access computers provides an important service. The availability of access to computers will significantly increase with the move of the library from Crown Street to the Dolphin Centre. There are currently 46 computers available at Crown Street. At the Dolphin Centre 50 computers will be in the first floor library (including an additional 4 computers in the Children's Library). These will be available during the proposed longer library opening hours at the Dolphin Centre (both increased daily opening hours and also Sunday opening). In addition 10 computers will be available for express ICT usage and the library catalogue in the quick picks area available for the more extended Dolphin Centre opening hours (in total 103 hours per week). The additional IT provision will enable the library to increase the number of public use computer sessions available.
- 12.21 Staffing – there will be a reduction of library staffing at the Dolphin Centre. The library will be reduced from up to 6 staff on duty to up to 4 staff and the Centre for Local Studies will reduce from 2 people to 1 person. The move to a self-service checkout model, with 3 self-service machines, will however help in freeing up available staff to focus more on assisting users with core library queries. The presence of the Dolphin Centre staff will also mean that some of the non-library functions previously undertaken by library staff will instead be carried out by Dolphin Centre staff.
- 12.22 Space reductions - There will be some reductions in overall space. The total space allocated to the library service at the Dolphin Centre is 748m², this compares with 838 m² (excluding the Art Gallery space) at Crown Street. The Centre for Local Studies will be 91m² at the Dolphin Centre compared to 131m² at Crown Street. However it must be borne in mind that outside of the library space the Dolphin Centre also offers break out spaces and meeting rooms which people can use.
- 12.23 Improved facilities - the new Library will benefit from some improved facilities. Better toilet facilities, baby changing facilities, changing facilities for adults with complex needs, access to a comprehensive range of food and drinks from the café and social/breakout facilities. The new library first floor entrance will be near to the soft play area and a café area. There will also be a range of sports facilities and classes too.
- 12.24 Books on offer – because of the slightly reduced shelving there will be some reduction of books and material on view, but the rotation policy (i.e. books from storage) will address this. The retention of Cockerton will also help in enabling books to be visible to potential readers.
- 12.25 Overall while there are differences between the two venues for the central library service, the offering is broadly comparable. At the Dolphin Centre the service is centrally located and provides good access for people with disabilities with much improved facilities. The venue will also offer opportunities to access a café and other facilities at the Dolphin Centre. The opening hours will be much improved for the general library service, which will mitigate the slight space reductions. While there is some staffing reduction, the use of technology with increased ICT facilities and self-service check outs will help the staff to focus on providing the core library service assisting those users who require it. The Centre for Local Studies will be open less hours and operate from a smaller area. In mitigating against this, regular used items will be available on instant access but with an appointment system for other items.

- 12.26 While there are users who are unhappy at the proposed move, there are benefits from the co-location of services at the Dolphin Centre. A refreshed modern service is likely to be attractive to a new range of service users and may help with the declining numbers. The Dolphin Centre is a key town centre building which is well used by a demographically diverse audience for sporting, recreational and social reasons. Providing a Library Service from this venue offers opportunities to broaden the reach of the library service to new users as well as providing for the needs of existing users.
- 12.27 It is considered that the proposed model for the Dolphin Centre meets the needs for a central library service.

Cockerton Library

- 12.28 Cockerton Branch Library was originally proposed for closure. In the period 2011/12 to 2015/16 the number of physical visits to Cockerton Branch Library fell from 61,500 to 39,600 (a fall of 35.6%), which will be partly attributed to reduced opening hours.
- 12.29 The consultation about the library service also highlighted strong local support for maintaining the library. The library is well used with over 80,000 book issues in 2015.
- 12.30 The library is situated in a ward which has a higher level of deprivation than most others (the 4th most deprived in the town).
- 12.31 There are proposals the library to remain open as a community run library using local volunteers and supported by the library service. Keeping the library open is considered to be an important part of Darlington library provision.

Mobile Library Service

- 12.32 The Mobile Library Service (which has been suspended since 1 October 2016) visited 90 locations across the Borough on a three-week cycle. On average 110 adults made use of the mobile library per week and 154 children when it visited their school or nursery.
- 12.33 Use of the mobile library has fallen more than any other area of the library service with a reduction of 68% in the past five years. There are potential financial implications for the replacement of the mobile library vehicle which would need to be addressed should the service continue.
- 12.34 The withdrawal of this service will have negative impacts on service users particularly in outlying and rural areas. However there will be measures in place to mitigate some of the impacts as set out below.
- 12.35 Home Library Service – the Home Library Service (formerly called the Housebound Library Service) provides books and audio books to those who are unable to use a library due to illness, disability or frailty. The service can be permanent or temporary, for example where someone is recovering from an illness. Customers have access to the same range of materials as those found in the central library which will be delivered direct to the individual's home. Visits are made on a three-weekly basis and at a regular time by library staff who carry identification. The service is free of charge and requests to receive it can be made by individuals themselves, relatives, friends or carers. If the Mobile Library Service is permanently withdrawn, the Home Library Service is able to expand where appropriate. The service will be actively promoted both within the libraries and with partners, e.g. Age UK, Darlington Dementia Action Alliance, etc. Additional routes can be added to the

schedule as required.

- 12.36 Residential Care Homes – the library delivers a collection of books to nine residential care homes. The stock is changed on a three- monthly basis. In 2015/16, 7,958 items were issued to the nine care homes. There are plans to develop the service. This will include liaising more closely with the Activities Leads within each home, increasing the regularity of stock exchanges and promoting the service to other residential care providers. The service will also be extended to include sheltered accommodation.
- 12.37 Children - a regular deposit collection of books (the 'Book Ahead' scheme) will be provided to all nurseries and playgroups which previously accessed the mobile library service. All schools on the former mobile library routes will be offered a regular outreach visit by the Library and Bookstart Literacy Co-Ordinator.

Conclusion

- 12.38 Support for the current service provision has to be balanced against falling library use, the resources available and potential opportunities that moving to a differently delivered library service might offer.
- 12.39 In this context, it is considered that, the Council will be able to meet the overall need for library provision within the Borough, by providing a Central Library located at the Dolphin Centre, a community run library at Cockerton (with volunteers and Council support), alongside a new outreach service to serve the needs of the wider Darlington community.