



**DARLINGTON**

Borough Council

# Adults Scrutiny Committee Agenda

9.30 am, Tuesday, 22 October 2024

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT

**Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.**

1. Introductions/Attendance at Meeting
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 27th August 2024 (Pages 3 - 8)
4. CQC Assurance Framework - Update – Verbal Update from the Assistant Director, Adult Services.
5. Domestic Abuse – Report of the Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation (Pages 9 - 62)
6. Darlington Care Network for Providers – Report of the Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation (Pages 63 - 68)
7. Darlington's Commitment to Carers 2023-28 – Report of the Assistant Director, Commissioning, Performance and Transformation (Pages 69 - 72)
8. Performance Indicators Quarter 1 2024-25 – Report of the Assistant Director, Adult Services (Pages 73 - 84)
9. Climate Change – Report of the Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Economy (Pages 85 - 90)

10. Work Programme 2024/25 – Report of the Assistant Director, Law and Governance  
(Pages 91 - 104)
11. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this Committee are  
of an urgent nature and can be discussed at this meeting.
12. Questions



**Luke Swinhoe**  
**Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**Town Hall**  
**Darlington.**

**Membership**

Councillors Anderson, Crumbie, Donoghue, Layton, Mammolotti, M Nicholson, Renton, Storr,  
Toms and Tostevin.

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on  
this agenda please contact Paul Dalton, Democratic and Elections Officer, Operations Group,  
during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to  
4.15 p.m. Fridays

## ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 27 August 2024

**PRESENT** – Councillors Anderson (Chair), Layton, Mammolotti, M Nicholson, Storr, Toms and Tostevin.

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Crumbie and Donoghue.

**ABSENT** – Councillor Renton.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillor Curry.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Joss Harbron (Assistant Director - Adult Social Care), Barbara Beadle (Head of Service - Adults), Rachel Watt (Service Manager (Safeguarding and ACT)) and Paul Dalton (Democratic and Elections Officer).

### AD7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

### AD8 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 JUNE 2024

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 18 June 2024, be approved as a correct record.

### AD9 CQC ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK - UPDATE

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, provided an update on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance Framework which reminded Members of the new regulatory powers granted to the CQC under the Health and Care Act to assess local authorities, the role of the CQC, and the four themes and nine underlying quality statements contained within the assessment framework.

Members received further information in relation to the Care Act Principles, an anticipated timeline of activity in terms of local assessment, the status of inspections across the North-East as at July 2024, and the work undertaken in terms of Darlington's self-assessment, including an analysis of current strengths and areas of development.

Discussion ensued on the criteria and selection process for the cases to be inspected by the CQC, the additional workload that shifting timescales would create, the learning opportunities from those authorities which had gone through the inspection process, and the work undertaken to improve accessibility and presence on the Council's website.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the update be noted.

### AD10 CARE HOMES IN EXECUTIVE STRATEGY MEASURES / ARRANGEMENTS

The Head of Service – Adults provided an update on the services which have come out of the

Executive Strategy process (ESP) during 2023-24 (which included a large nursing and residential home, a residential care home for individuals with learning disabilities, and a contacted in-reach service supporting an individual living with a learning disability), the services currently within Executive Strategy, and an ESP case study.

Members were informed of a Risk Notification Pilot undertaken to reduce the quantity of inappropriate safeguarding concerns being received by Adult Social Care which did not meet the threshold of safeguarding. It was reported that the pilot initially included four care homes, however Members were advised that this had been increased by one further care home and one domiciliary care agency. The Head of Service – Adults stated that Risk Notifications could be submitted for witnessed and unwitnessed falls, medication errors, peer on peer verbal or physical altercations, and, in the case of the domiciliary care agency, missed or late calls.

Members were advised of the Risk Notifications received during the pilot period, alongside a breakdown of the Risk Notifications per provider, the outcomes of the pilot, and identified next steps.

Members entered into discussion on the Risk Notification Pilot, noting that one provider appeared to have a large number of falls, though it was noted that many of the falls were attributed to one individual, and it was acknowledged that some conditions had a greater propensity for falls and that it was not possible to remove all barriers. It was suggested that the Risk Notification process would need to be introduced across the sector in a staged manner, and it was hoped that the process would provide confidence to report and be a mechanism for improvement, rather than reprimand. Members enquired whether the local authority could assist in bridging any gaps in training with agency staff.

Discussion ensued on whether poor personal hygiene care could generate a Risk Notification. Members received reassurances that all care homes were monitored, not just those selected for the Risk Notification Pilot, and that any concerns would be addressed by the Contracting Team or the Safeguarding Adults Team.

Members sought greater clarification of the guidance in terms of the definition of 'No Harm' in a safeguarding context, and were keen to understand whether there was a framework of acceptable providers and the level of control the Council had in terms of ensuring the quality of safeguarding with our providers.

Discussion returned to the volume of witnessed and unwitnessed falls, and it was noted that it was important to recognise any patterns in relation to multiple falls and the actions attempted to address these. A subsequent discussion took place on the reasons for redacting the identity of the providers.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the presentation be noted.

## **AD11 SAFEGUARDING**

The Service Manager (Safeguarding and ACT) provided a presentation on current safeguarding arrangements, based on the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP), which focused on placing the individual at the centre of the process concentrating on the

outcome that they would like to achieve, and examining the risks and concerns in the context of the individual's well-being.

Members were informed in relation to the duties placed upon the Council by Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, and were advised of the safeguarding triage tool used to gather relevant information. It was explained that the tool provided guidance on specific aspects, such as contacting an individual safely in domestic abuse concerns, patterns of behaviour and repeat concerns, and that practitioners were encouraged to use the tool to aid decision-making and promote MSP.

A number of steps to enable the Council to be preventative in its approach to individual's well-being, safety and overall need were outlined, including a Risk Notification Pilot, continued professional development across Adult Social Care, improved links with contracted services within the Safeguarding Adults Team, and information sharing meetings with partners and agencies.

Members entered into further discussion on the Risk Notification pilot, whether a similar approach had been adopted by other local authorities, and whether the pilot was comparable with work undertaken by other local authorities.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the presentation be noted.

## **AD12 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS END OF YEAR REPORT 2023/24**

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with performance data against Key Performance Indicators for 2023-24.

The submitted report outlined performance information in line with an indicator set and Scrutiny Committee distribution agreed by the Monitoring and Coordination Group on 4 June 2018, and subsequently agreed by Scrutiny Committee Chairs. It was stated that the indicators were aligned with key priorities. Twelve indicators were reported to this Committee, ten on a six monthly basis and two annually.

It was reported that, of the eight of the twelve indicators that were reported at the end of Quarter 4 of 2023/24, one of the indicators showed performance consistent to the same period last year (ASC 019); three of the indicators demonstrated that performance had declined in comparison to the same period last year (ASC 002, ASC 003, and ASC 049) and that these continued to be monitored and managed; one indicator remained the same as this time last year (ASC 050); and that three indicators were not comparable as they were reviewed at a point in time (ASC 208, ASC 209 and ASC 211).

It was reported that the two indicators recorded annually (ASC054 - The proportion of people who use Adult Care services who find it easy to find information about services – and ASC055 - The proportion of people who are carers who find it easy to find information about services) were not included within the report as the results would be released towards the end of 2024, and that these would be included in the Mid-Year Scrutiny Report.

It was noted that due to recent ASCOF/CLD (Client Level Data) changes there were two indicators that were no longer reported on (ASC 045 – Proportion of adults with a learning

disability who live in their own home or with their family - and ASC 046 – Proportion of Adults with learning disabilities in paid employment).

Members entered into discussion on whether there was sufficient signposting to information and support available for those on direct payments who wished to contract in their own services, particularly in the case of elderly carers.

Discussion ensued on the number of younger adults placed in care homes, whether there was more younger adults from out of the Darlington area accessing our care home, the appropriateness of mixing younger adults with complex needs with elderly residents, and whether there was a need for more specific appropriate homes for younger adults requiring care.

Concerns were raised around the non-reporting on ASC 046, and Members were informed that this had been a decision at a national level. Comparisons were drawn with regional figures, and a discussion took place on some of the potential reasons for and the anecdotal evidence around the regional differences.

Clarification was sought in terms of the Direct Payment Policy, which was provided to staff as a practice guidance document, and the potential requirement for a future review of the Performance Indicators provided to the Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED** – That the performance information provided within the submitted report be noted.

### **AD13 ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT POLICY 2024**

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, submitted a report (previously circulated) which provided an overview of the updated Adult Social Care Transport Policy.

The submitted report stated that the Adult Social Care Transport Policy had been redesigned and developed with the Transport Team in relation to changes needed as the last Adult Social Care Transport Policy does not comply with current legislation, including the Care Act 2014 and the national eligibility framework for adults and carers; to meet the requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2022, which states that local authorities must meet and provide for people's needs and the promotion of health, independence and well-being; and a review of transport eligibility needs, which should be underpinned by strength-based practice approaches and promoting independence, including access to Reablement, and enable people to decide their own travel options through provision and support.

The submitted report expanded on the strategic overarching aims of the Policy, highlighted that the Policy met the ambitions of the Council Plan, and outlined the options available to assessors, with the initial option of looking at the potential for independence and use of community resources, and short-term support. The submitted report also explored commissioning and charging arrangements.

Members welcomed the support available for unpaid carers within the revised Policy and were keen to understand any additional costs that might be incurred as a result of the updated Policy.

**RESOLVED** – That the changes to the revised Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024, be noted.

**AD14 WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

The Assistant Director, Law and Governance, submitted a report (previously circulated) which requested that Members gave consideration to the Work Programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during 2024/25, and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the report be noted.

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**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
22 OCTOBER 2024**

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**DOMESTIC ABUSE**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the requirements on the Local Authority under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and an update on how Darlington is supporting victims of Domestic Abuse to adhere to The Act.

**Summary**

2. The Domestic Abuse Act came into force in 2021 which brought in new requirements which Local Authorities must fulfil. The Act created the first statutory definition of domestic abuse to ensure that "domestic abuse is properly understood, considered unacceptable and actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes".
3. The Domestic Abuse Act was implemented to help ensure that victims have the confidence to come forward and report their experience, safe in the knowledge that the justice system and other agencies will do everything they can both to protect and support them and their children and pursue their abuser. This supports a whole family approach.
4. Domestic Abuse is an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence, in the majority of cases by a partner or ex-partner, but also by a family member or carer. In the vast majority of cases, it is experienced by women and is perpetrated by men.
5. Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to the following:
  - (a) Coercive control (a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with the use or threat of physical or sexual violence).
  - (b) Psychological and/or emotional abuse.
  - (c) Physical or sexual abuse.
  - (d) Financial or economic abuse.
  - (e) Harassment and stalking.
  - (f) Online or digital abuse.

6. Since the Domestic Abuse Act came into force the statutory requirements on the Local Authority are:
  - (a) To provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.
  - (b) Establish a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board.
  - (c) Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support for all victims (and their children) who reside in relevant safe accommodation, including those who come from outside of their area.
  - (d) Publish a domestic abuse strategy.
  - (e) Give effect to the strategy through commissioning/decommissioning.
  - (f) Produce an annual return detailing the effectiveness of the strategy.
7. As part of the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024 Darlington have set out the following priorities. The strategy has been jointly produced with Durham County Council.

#### **Appendix 1**

- (a) Priority One: Survivor/Victim Voice will be at the heart of our decision making.
  - (b) Priority Two: Early identification, intervention and prevention of domestic abuse.
  - (c) Priority Three: Effective support for vulnerable groups Priority.
  - (d) Priority Four: Prioritising the needs of children and young people effected by domestic abuse within safe accommodation.
  - (e) Priority Five: Improve the use of data and intelligence in order to better understand and respond to demand and levels of need.
  - (f) Priority Six: Improve the workforce knowledge and skills in responding effectively to domestic abuse.
8. These priorities are reported on at our Partnership Board Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG).
  9. The Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy is currently being refreshed in partnership with Durham County Council.

## Recommendation

10. It is recommended that: -

- (a) Complete review of the Needs Assessment.
- (b) Additional services commissioned by Darlington continue and re-evaluate following completion of the Needs Assessment.
- (c) Scrutiny to note and agree joint working arrangements on Domestic Abuse.
- (d) Report to Scrutiny on an annual basis.

**Christine Shields**  
**Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance And Transformation**

## Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Christine Shields - Extension 5851

Council Plan	This report contributes to the priorities agreed in the Council Plan
Addressing inequalities	There are no implications arising from this report
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report supports the efficient use of resources through shared partnership priorities
Health and Wellbeing	This plan supports the priorities set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy
S17 Crime and Disorder	This plan will support measures to reduce crime and disorder
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no implications for the Budget or Policy Framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report supports measures to reduce the number of Looked After Children

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

11. Before the Domestic Abuse Act, the Local Authority commissioned 2 Domestic Abuse support services, the Women's Refuge (Family Help) and an Outreach Support Service (Harbour).
12. As part of the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act, funding was made available to Local Authorities in the form of the Burdens Fund. In 2023/24 Darlington Borough Council received an allocation of £227,440 from the national Burdens Fund and an allocation of £231,731 was received in 2024/25.
13. A needs assessment was undertaken, and additional services have been commissioned using this funding. The additional services are listed below, and further details of the needs assessment can be found in **Appendix 2**
  - (a) 2 Dispersed properties
  - (b) Domestic Abuse Housing Options officer
  - (c) Counselling for adults
  - (d) Outreach support and therapy for children
  - (e) Additional children's workers based with the children's team for a multi-agency approach.
  - (f) Domestic Abuse Navigator worker
  - (g) Domestic Abuse Navigator emergency crash pad
  - (h) Prevention scheme for perpetrators
  - (i) Sanctuary scheme for accommodation
  - (j) 2 therapy workers for children in The Refuge (part time)
14. In addition to the services funded through the Burdens Fund, the following services are also commissioned:
  - (a) The Refuge - funded by Public Health
  - (b) Harbour outreach services - jointly commissioned by DBC and the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC)
  - (c) Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate (IDVA) service - funded by the PCC

## **Governance Arrangements**

15. Since the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 local governance arrangements have been reviewed to support the implementation of the Act at a local level. These are outlined below:

### **Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LDAP)**

16. The Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LDAP) is a partnership group responsible for supporting Durham County Council (DCC) and Darlington Borough Council (DBC) in meeting their duty under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act.
17. The LDAP is known locally as the County Durham and Darlington Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) (Terms of Reference is provided in **Appendix 3**).

### **Darlington Domestic Abuse Local Working Group**

18. The purpose of the Officer Working Group is to raise awareness across all Council departments ensuring that 'Domestic Abuse is everyone's business' and to ensure that work being undertaken locally is coordinated and reported into DASVEG. (Terms of Reference is provided in **Appendix 4**).

### **DASAN and the new County Durham and Darlington Violence against Women and Girls Provider Forum**

19. A review has been undertaken of the DASAN (Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Network) to further strengthen links with DASVEG, ensuring work could be fed into DASVEG by the Chair if the Group.
20. Following discussion with the local Domestic Abuse providers forum DASAN (Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Network), it was agreed that the DASAN would be disbanded and that Darlington providers would attend the County Durham provider meeting.
21. The first meeting of the County Durham and Darlington Violence against Women and Girls Provider Forum took place in July 2024, where the new Terms of Reference were approved.

### **Appendix 5.**

22. The purpose of the Forum is to:
  - (a) support the continued development of community-based specialist voluntary and community sector organisations in County Durham and Darlington.
  - (b) increase communication and collaboration between practitioners operating in County Durham and Darlington who are part of the system aimed at preventing harm, supporting victims, and pursuing perpetrators of violence against women and girls.

- (c) provide a platform which uses a problem-solving approach encouraging members to share barriers, challenges, and good practise.
- (d) support the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) agenda which include information sharing between operational and strategic professionals and organisations.

23. The next meeting is scheduled to take place towards the end of September 2024.

### **Communications Campaign**

24. Work is beginning to prepare a draft communications campaign plan in partnership with Durham County Council and the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner, which will be presented to DASVEG and the Provider Forum. It is anticipated that the first big campaign will be launched in the winter on the lead up to Christmas.

### **Quality Assurance Arrangements**

25. Services are monitored on a quarterly basis by officers in the DBC Commissioning, Contracts and Brokerage team through contract monitoring meetings. These meetings focus on performance data and qualitative feedback received from service users.

26. Currently the Police and Crime Commissioning team are involved in quarterly monitoring meetings for those services they jointly commission with the Council, but work is currently underway to further strengthen quality monitoring arrangements and to involve them in monitoring the wider group of services provided across Darlington.

County Durham and Darlington

# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy

2021-2024



Better for everyone

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# Glossary of Terms

**DA** – Domestic Abuse

**DAHA** – Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

**DAN** – Domestic Abuse Navigator

**DASVEG** – Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group

**DCSP** - Darlington Community Safety Partnership

**GRT** – Gypsy, Roma, Traveller

**LGBTQ+** - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning

**MARAC** – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

**MATAC** – Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination Protocol

**SDP** – Safe Durham Partnership

**VAWG** – Violence Against Women and Girls

**WHA** – Whole Housing Approach



# Introduction

Domestic abuse is an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence, in most cases by a partner or ex-partner, but also by a family member or carer. It is very common. In most cases, it is experienced by women and is perpetrated by men.

Domestic abuse can affect anyone, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. In the year ending March 2020, it is estimated that 1.6 million females and 757,000 males aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse, with more women killed as a result of domestic abuse than men.<sup>1</sup>

Every case of domestic abuse should be taken seriously and each individual given access to the support they need. All victims should be able to access appropriate support. Whilst both men and women may experience incidents of inter-personal violence and abuse, women are considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of abuse, including sexual violence. They are also more likely to have experienced sustained physical, psychological, financial abuse or emotional abuse, or violence which results in injury or death.<sup>2</sup>

It is estimated that 130,000 children and young people live in households where there is high-risk domestic abuse and around 64% of high and medium -risk victims have on average 2 children. Studies have identified that 25% of children in high-risk domestic abuse households are under 3 years old; on average, high risk abuse has been going on for approx. 2.6 years, meaning these children have lived with abuse for most of their life.<sup>3</sup>

It is nationally recognised that domestic abuse is a significant cause of homelessness across the UK, however the true extent of the issue is still

unknown. Survivors of domestic abuse who become homeless face multiple barriers to gaining a safe secure place to live. Housing is a basic need that must be met before other disadvantages can be addressed and housing providers play a vital role in the response to domestic abuse.<sup>4</sup>

Victims of domestic abuse should have access to Safe Accommodation that is of the highest quality and is provided with the needs of the specific user group at its heart. The County Durham and Darlington Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 – 2024 is a joint area strategy that sets out how both local authorities will meet the needs of victims of domestic abuse; both residents of County Durham and Darlington and those who come from outside the local area with the aim of commissioning a range of appropriate support services.



<sup>1</sup> Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse safe accommodation services, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, 2021

<sup>2</sup> Domestic abuse is a gendered crime, Women's Aid, 2021

<sup>3</sup> Who are the victims of domestic abuse? Safelives 2021

<sup>4</sup> Safe at home: Homelessness and domestic abuse, Safelives, 2018

# The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 including Safe Accommodation Duty

In the spring of 2021, the government introduced the Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>5</sup>; its key aims are to improve the national response to DA by:

- **Protecting and supporting victims, including children and young people.**
- **Transforming the justice system.**
- **Improving performance; and**
- **Promoting awareness.**

The Safe Accommodation Duty under the Act is separate to the local authority housing duties under the Housing Act 1996, the Homeless Act 2002 and the Homeless Reduction Act 2017. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a responsibility on Tier 1 local authorities to introduce the following:

- **Appoint a local domestic abuse partnership board.**
- **Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victims or their children, including those who come from outside the area.**
- **Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the needs assessment.**
- **Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning/de-commissioning decisions).**
- **Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.**

- **Report back to central government.**
- **Require the Secretary of State to produce statutory guidance, having consulted the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, local authorities and such as other persons as considered appropriate.**
- **Require local authorities to have regard to the statutory guidance in exercising their functions.**
- **The Act does not place a requirement on authorities to provide domestic abuse victims with accommodation.**

Safe Accommodation is defined by the Act as:

- **Refuge accommodation:** a refuge offers single gender or single sex accommodation and domestic abuse support which is tied to that accommodation. The address will not be publicly available. Victims, including their children, will have access to a planned programme of therapeutic and practical support from staff. Accommodation may be in shared or self-contained housing, but in both cases the service will enable peer support from other refuge residents.
- **Specialist safe accommodation:** specialist safe accommodation offering single gender or single sex accommodation, alongside dedicated domestic abuse support which is tailored to also support those who share particular protected characteristic(s) and / or who share one or more vulnerabilities requiring additional support. Accommodation may be in shared or self-contained housing, and the address will not be publicly available.

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5. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

# The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 including Safe Accommodation Duty

continued

- **Dispersed accommodation:** Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse), self-contained accommodation with a similar level of specialist domestic abuse support as provided within a refuge but which may be more suitable for victims who are unable to stay in a refuge with communal spaces, and/or where peer support from other residents may not be appropriate, due to complex support needs, or where older teenage sons cannot be accommodated in a women only refuge, for example. Where two or more units share any part of the accommodation, including shared hallways or access routes, provision should be single gender or single sex. Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse), self-contained 'semi-independent' accommodation which is not within a refuge but with support for victims who may not require the intensive support offered through refuge, but are still at risk of abuse from their perpetrator/s. Where two or more units share any part of the accommodation, including shared hallways or access routes, provision should be single gender or single sex.
- **Sanctuary schemes:** properties with local authority or private registered providers of social housing installed Sanctuary Schemes which provide enhanced physical security measures to a home or the perimeter of the home. A Sanctuary Scheme is a survivor centred initiative which aims to make it possible for victims of domestic abuse to remain in their own homes, where it is safe for them to do so, where it is their choice, and where the perpetrator does not live in the accommodation. This is done by providing additional security – 'installing a sanctuary' – to the victims' property or perimeter.

- **Move-on or second stage accommodation:** accommodation temporarily provided to victims, including their children, who are moving on from other forms of relevant accommodation and/or who no longer need the intensive level of support provided in a refuge, but would still benefit from a lower level of domestic abuse specific support for a period before they move to fully independent and settled accommodation. Where second stage accommodation is in shared housing it should be single gender or single sex. There is no expectation that every victim will require this. Many victims are ready to move straight to a settled new home from refuge. However, second stage accommodation (sometimes known as 'move-on') may be helpful in some cases.

The already well-established County Durham and Darlington's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) will act as **the Local Domestic Abuse Partnership** and will provide the oversight and governance structure for the delivery of the duty and the forthcoming 'whole system approach' strategy to domestic abuse and violence against women and girls to be published in 2022; this will also include how DASVEG will effectively tackle perpetrators of abuse.

This joint area strategy is based upon the findings of the local area needs assessment, used to inform future priorities and identify key ambitions that will be monitored and evaluated over the next 3 years.

The future whole system approach strategy will be developed in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021.

# The County Durham Vision 2035

The County Durham Vision 2035 is a document developed with partners to provide a shared understanding of what everyone wants our county to look like in 15 years time.

The County Durham Vision 2035 was written together with partner organisations and the public and sets out what we would want the county to look like in 15 years time. It provides strategic direction and enables us to work together more closely, removing organisational boundaries and co-delivering services for the benefit of our residents.

This vision is structured around three ambitions which are:

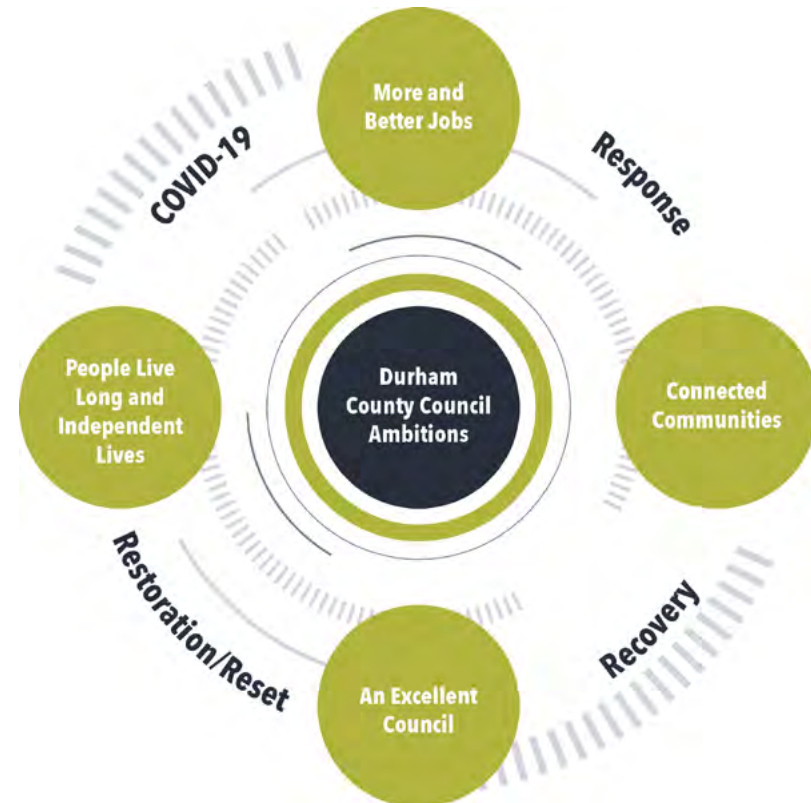
- **More and better jobs**
- **People live long and independent lives**
- **Connected communities**

A new partnership structure framework was agreed by the County Durham Partnership (the overarching partnership in County Durham) in September 2020 which ensures the County Durham partnership structure aids delivery of the County Durham Vision 2035. The vision informs all our strategies and plans, focusing our resources into the things that matter/areas of priority it identifies.

The Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 – 2024 directly contributes to the delivery of a number of objectives linked to the ambitions of the County Durham Vision including:

- **All children and young people will have a safe childhood**
- **Victims of crime will have access to the right level of support, with services available to address their needs**
- **Communities will come together to accept and support each other**

Equality and inclusion are at the heart of our Durham 2035 Vision and the Council's core values. We understand the impact of inequality, prejudice and discrimination affecting the diverse communities which we serve and are committed to tackling this. As an employer, service provider, partner and community leader we will ensure that all communities have opportunities to access our services, be involved in decision making and be part of our workforce. Our equality objectives are embedded in the Council Plan and help us to achieve our vision and comply with our legal duties. We believe that everyone in County Durham deserves excellent public services which take account of their needs and circumstances.



# Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy "One Darlington Perfectly Placed" 2008 - 2026 revised in 2014

Darlington Partnership brings together all those who are committed to achieving the best for Darlington and its people. Membership includes the Council, NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue Service, business leaders, community and voluntary sector representatives and people from the wider community. 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed' is the overall vision for Darlington's future agreed by the Partnership members. The vision is that "We will improve quality of life for all and reduce inequality by ensuring we have: 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. The Strategy;

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**Outlines our 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 a lack of income, where they live, or by any other potential disadvantage.**



# Safe Durham Partnership (SDP)

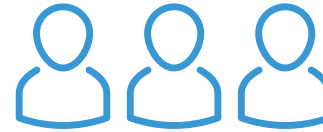
The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a statutory duty on local authorities to form a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment and to reduce re-offending. In County Durham, the CSP is the Safe Durham Partnership.



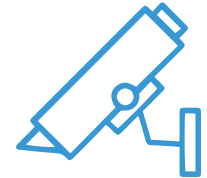
**A future free from harm due to drug and alcohol misuse**



**Support for victims to cope, recover and engage in the justice system**



**To work with communities most affected by long-term empty properties**



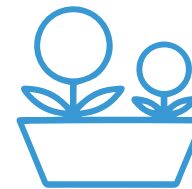
**Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour**



**Address the underlying causes of crime and community tensions**



**Actively take steps to encourage community cohesion**



**Provide a range of activities and opportunities to divert people away from crime and anti-social behaviour**



**Approach to selective licensing of private landlords**

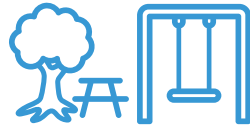
# Darlington Community Safety Partnership (DCSP)

The Darlington Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-2026 vision is to provide a place where people treat each other fairly and with respect, and they are safe from harm or the effects of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.

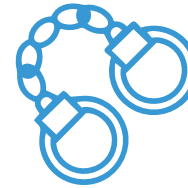
To achieve our vision for Darlington we have identified four key priorities:



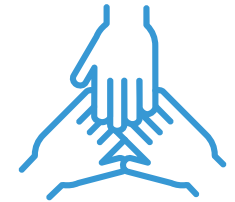
**Protecting and supporting people**



**Promoting safer places**



**Tackling violent crime, including domestic abuse**



**Building strong and cohesive communities**





# Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG)

DASVEG, a subgroup of the SDP and DCSP, work together to achieve their shared vision for domestic abuse and sexual violence.



**Our vision for domestic abuse is that all agencies work together to seek to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse in County Durham and continue to provide and further develop a co-ordinated community response that provides high quality preventative, support and protection services and effectively deals with perpetrators.**

**Our vision for sexual violence is that it will not be tolerated and that perpetrators will be brought to account for their actions. Victims of sexual violence will be supported, treated with dignity and respect and made to feel safe within their community whilst seeing their offenders brought to justice.**

This vision sets out Durham and Darlington's approach to developing a co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse which keeps the voice of the victim/survivor at its heart.



# Local Domestic Abuse Data

Domestic abuse is a cross-cutting issue that effects all socio-economic, geographical and cultural groups. It is a crime that is largely perpetuated in private, with few witnesses and as a consequence is under-reported and under-recorded.

## Durham Constabulary

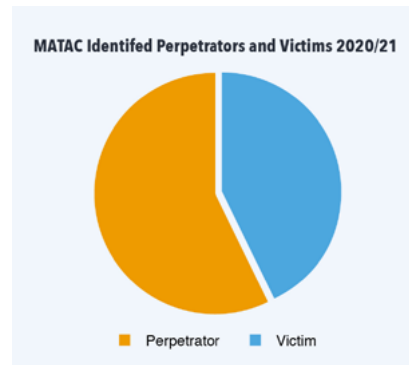
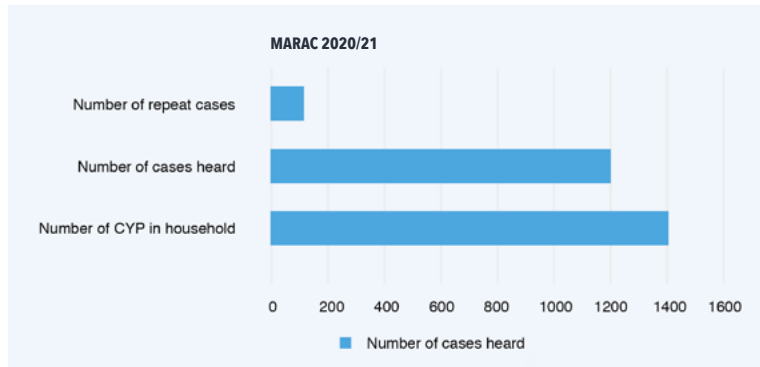
Durham Constabulary continue to respond to high numbers of domestic abuse incidents each year and are predicted to see an expected increase in demand from domestic abuse with a projected **16.8% increase** from **18,093 incidents** reported at the end of 2019/20, to **21,134 incidents** reported at the end of 2024/25.

For the period April 2020 - end February 2021, the main aggravating factors were: **alcohol in 43.1% of incidents** (increase of 3.7% to same period 2019/20); **mental health in 17.2% of incidents** (decrease of 0.6% to same period 2019/20); and **drugs in 4.6% of incidents** (increase of 1.3% to same period 2019/20).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> County Durham JSNA Factsheet, Domestic Abuse, 2021

# MARAC<sup>7</sup> and MATAAC<sup>8</sup> County Durham and Darlington 2020/21

Domestic abuse is a cross cutting issue that effects all socio-economic, geographical and cultural groups. It is a crime that is largely perpetuated in private, with few witnesses and as a consequence is under reported and under recorded.



## Countywide Domestic Abuse Outreach Specialist Service

- ↑ Demand for specialist outreach domestic abuse services continues to rise
- ★ The services top 3 referrers remain consistent and include
  - Durham Constabulary
  - Self-referrals
  - Children and Young People’s Services
- ↑ Referrals for perpetrator support have increased by 35% since 2019/20

<sup>7</sup> Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference: MARAC is a multi-agency meeting is where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases

<sup>8</sup> Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination Protocol: MATAAC is a Police led bespoke set of interventions to target and disrupt perpetrators

# Children and Young People Identified as Victims in their own right

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises that children and young people who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse and are related to the person being abused or the perpetrator is also regarded as a victim of abuse. Guidance acknowledges that support should be offered to victims of domestic abuse, including children within all domestic abuse safe accommodation services.

Needs Assessment data highlights the growing need for improved capacity within services commissioned to support children and young people affected by domestic abuse across County Durham and Darlington.



## Children and Young People

- **Domestic abuse is consistently in the top 3 reasons for referral into Children's Social Care**
- **In 2020/2021 a total of 3915 Operation Encompass<sup>9</sup> notifications were sent directly to education settings across County Durham**
- **There are increasing numbers of families who are experiencing child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse**

<sup>9</sup> Operation Encompass is a system that enables schools to receive alerts about Police reported domestic abuse incidents where a child/ren or young person is present

# Rural Considerations

Rural settlements across the county are diverse and differ in their scale. Larger settlements generally offer more service provision as they incorporate more houses, jobs, existing infrastructure, better public transport provision and community facilities. These settlements can provide a critical service centre role for a wider surrounding area, typical to the function of a traditional market town. It is important to also recognise that some smaller settlements also have an important role to play as localised service centres for their immediate surrounding area, particularly if they are relatively remote from one of these larger settlements.

In the context of domestic abuse victims, experience additional challenges and inequalities, this includes:

- Abuse lasts on average 25% longer in rural communities
- The more rural the setting, the higher the risk of harm
- Rurality and isolation are deliberately used as weapons by perpetrators
- Support services are often less available, less visible and less effective<sup>10</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Captive and controlled; Domestic abuse in rural areas, National Rural Crime Network 2019

# Support for victims with complex needs and vulnerable groups

Additional support for victims with relevant protected characteristics and/or complex needs is a priority. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, but some groups are identified as being at most risk from domestic abuse, these include:

- **Women**
- **Black minority ethnic groups**
- **People with disabilities**
- **LGBTQ+**
- **Children and young people**
- **GRT**
- **Older people<sup>11</sup>**

In addition, there are a range of characteristics that also increase the likelihood and risk levels, they include:

- **Gender**
- **Low income**
- **Age**
- **Pregnancy**
- **Separation**
- **Previous criminality of the perpetrator**
- **Drug and alcohol misuse**
- **Mental health issues<sup>12</sup>**

**Local needs assessment identified that information relating to the identification of victims with protected characteristics and/or additional vulnerabilities is currently not routinely collected or where information is collected it is not consistent across all agencies; this will be a key focus for development moving forward.**

<sup>11</sup>. County Durham and Darlington Domestic Abuse Health Needs Assessment 2020

<sup>12</sup>. Who are the victims of domestic abuse? Safelives 2021

# Housing and Safe Accommodation

The Whole Housing Approach (WHA) is a framework for addressing the housing and safety needs of victim/survivors in a local area. It brings together under one umbrella all the main housing tenure types alongside the housing options and support initiatives needed to help people experiencing domestic abuse to either maintain or access safe and stable housing<sup>13</sup>.

Utilising a WHA across County Durham and Darlington will create opportunities for early intervention, increase tenancy sustainment options so that people experiencing domestic abuse can remain in their homes and reduce the numbers of people who are made homeless.

Victims who need to escape from their abuser can seek refuge and safe accommodation provision at any time. It does not matter whether the victim is married to or living with an abuser, or whether they have children.

Victims can choose (subject to space and availability) whether they travel a long way away from their hometown or remain in the same area. To ensure that support is appropriately personalised, all services, including refuges, must assess the risk factors faced by individuals, take account of their needs and what provision might best meet those needs. It can be necessary for women to be accommodated away from the local area but may alternatively be able to find support closer to home if it is safe to do so.

Refuges don't generally accept local women as this might not be safe. Any refuge accepting a woman would have to be a "safe" distance away from any areas where her abuser has connections.

This strategy recognises that housing provision is a key element of support and that some victims may require support in other forms of temporary accommodation either as an alternative to refuge provision or in order to move on from refuge; this could be inside the boundaries of County Durham and Darlington or within other local authority areas in order to put a safe distance

between themselves and their abuser. These alternatives should be self-contained and/or semi-independent units able to support families with older teenage sons, male victims and/or those with complex needs<sup>14</sup>.

This strategy seeks to ensure that victims of domestic abuse:

- **Have appropriate priority under the local authority allocation scheme**
- **Those who have fled refuge to another area are not disadvantaged by any residency or local connection requirements<sup>15</sup>**



<sup>13</sup>. Whole Housing Approach, The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance, 2021

<sup>14</sup>. Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services statutory guidance, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities 2021

<sup>15</sup>. Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse statutory guidance, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2018

# Building on good practice, local context

There are a wide range of existing provisions in place for victims of domestic abuse across County Durham and Darlington, including:

- **Five women's refuges**
- **Domestic Abuse Navigator Service: for victims with complex needs**
- **Dispersed properties including some move on accommodation**
- **County Durham's Remain Safe Scheme: target hardening**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ensures that this provision is appropriately needs assessed and that wrap around support is made available to victims, including children and young people, who access this provision.



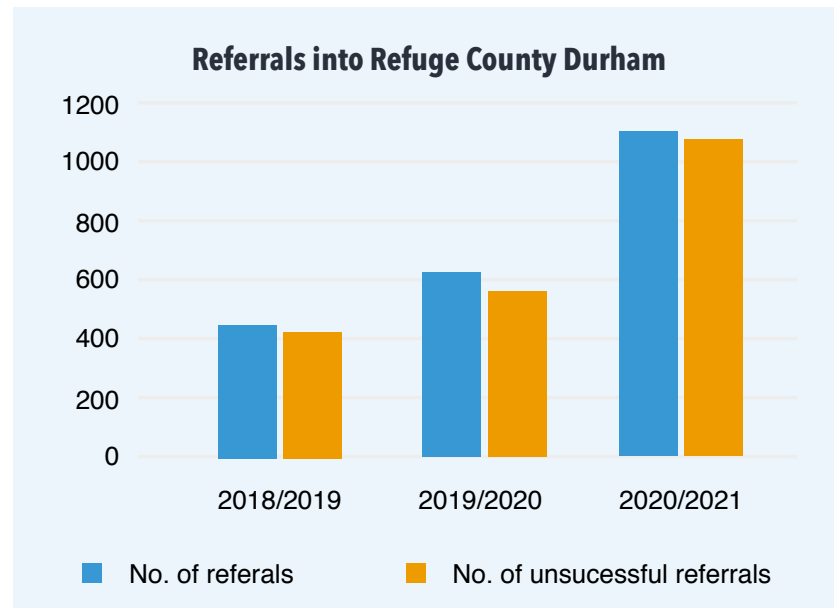


# Housing and Safe Accommodation Data

High quality data and intelligence plays a key role in ensuring an effective co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse is in place. Local needs assessment work has identified a range of key issues that have informed the development of this strategy.

- There has been an increase of approx. 55% of domestic abuse victims presenting as homeless between 2018/19 and 2020/21
- The majority of all out of area homeless referrals come from neighbouring local authorities; this is an increasing trend

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## Refuge

- Demand for refuge provision increases each year
- All victims presenting at refuge are women

## Homeless Data

- Most homeless presentations are accommodated in temporary accommodation (not refuge)

## Remain Safe (County Durham only)

- Victims and multi-agency partners all value the contribution of Remain Safe in ensuring victims can stay in their own home
- Despite an increase in demand across the system referrals into Remain Safe have decreased over the last 3 years

## Gender Breakdown Safe Accommodation (not refuge)







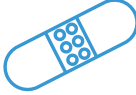



**94% of victims that accessed safe accommodation were female**



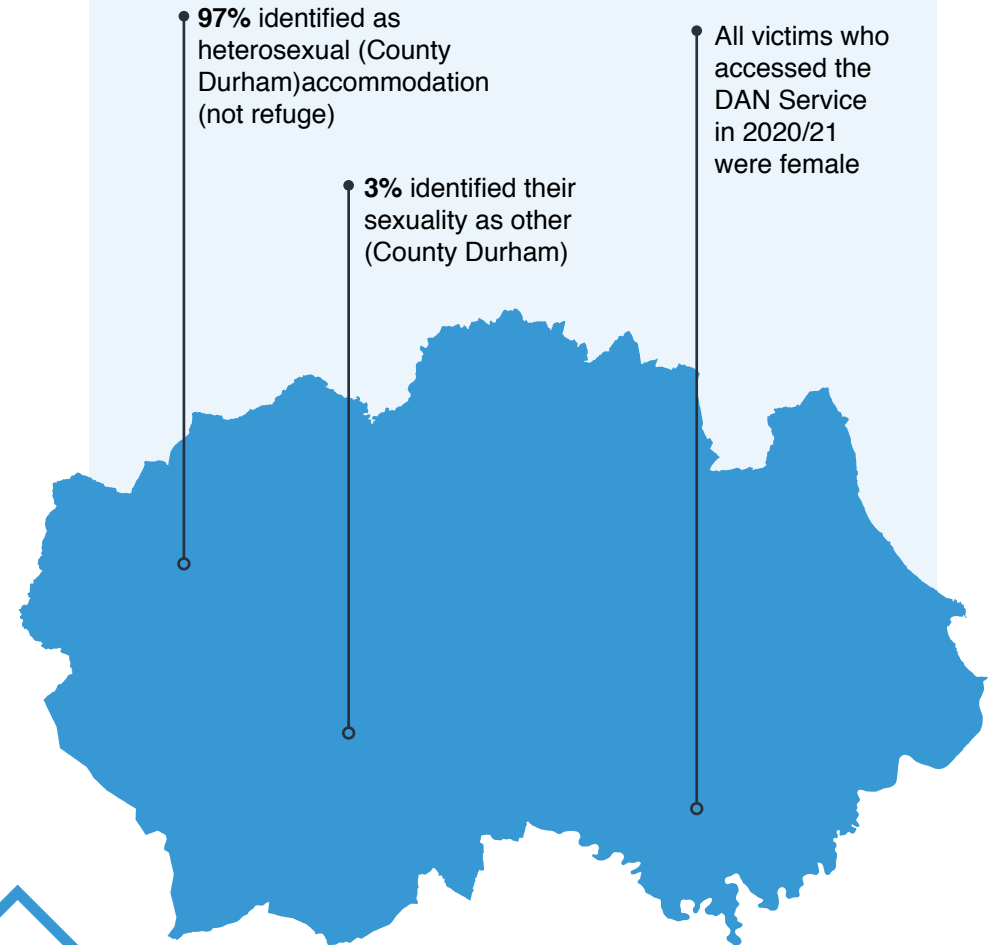
**4% of victims that accessed safe accommodation were male**

# Housing and Safe Accommodation Data continued

## DAN Service Risk Factors County Durham

 <b>Alcohol</b> <b>32</b>	 <b>Mental Health</b> <b>63</b>	 <b>Substance Misuse</b> <b>35</b>
 <b>Financial</b> <b>41</b>	 <b>Self-harm</b> <b>32</b>	 <b>Risk of Suicide</b> <b>39</b>
 <b>Historical Sexual Abuse</b> <b>32</b>	 <b>Estranged from family/friends</b> <b>47</b>	

## DAN Service County Durham and Darlington



# Survivor voice – expert by experience, utilising County Durham’s approach to wellbeing

After living through domestic abuse many survivors wish to speak out, tell others about their experiences and use their expertise to create change. This strategy aims to put survivor voice at the heart of everything we do and channel that experience to shape future service design.

Our approach has people and places at its heart. Working with communities, building on the assets of those communities, supporting the positive development of the neighbourhoods that people live in and fostering the resilience and empowerment of these communities through the support offered to everyone, and importantly to those who are most vulnerable.

Our approach highlights the importance of supporting systems – encouraging alignment of activities across agencies and sectors and ensuring that services are commissioned and delivered in a way that is collaborative and supportive. For those who require more formal interventions or treatment, our approach supports person centred interventions that are empowering rather than stigmatising. Through commissioners and providers of services across the sectors the model helps to provide a framework against which we can address the needs of people, communities and neighbourhoods whilst working towards a cultural change. This means ensuring all services self-assess against the model using the structured framework that helps to reflect on current practice and will inform future decisions about how local work and activities can support the wellbeing of people living in communities. Over time it is aimed that the model will be integrated into commissioning decisions, supporting providers to deliver services that place improving wellbeing at the centre of service delivery. Finally, and most importantly, all our actions need to be informed by local conversations with people and communities – using and building on their knowledge and learning from their own experiences of knowing what they need, what is right and what works for them. In doing this, we will also ensure that the model is dynamic, adapting, changing and that it is shaped and developed over time by County Durham residents.



**We know what it’s like to live in fear, we can offer support to others, we have been through it ourselves, we are the only ones that truly know what it’s like.**



Survivor interview Durham August 2021

We will utilise County Durham’s Approach to Wellbeing, designed to promote whole system change and to invoke a culture where the wellbeing of the County’s residents is considered in every decision that is made whether this be regarding decisions about people or places or the systems designed to support them.

Our approach has six guiding principles which are all underpinned by a strong evidence base. These principles affirm the key role that communities can play in supporting their own residents and the significant improvements in health and wellbeing outcomes that can result from involving communities more in decisions that affect them.

# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - Key Priorities

Domestic Abuse is a complex, multi-faceted system that requires each core component to work in partnership to improve the lives of victims/survivors of abuse. The ambitions set out in the Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024 will not take place in isolation but as part of a co-ordinated approach to supporting vulnerable people and families; very few victims of abuse will only experience the safe accommodation offer of support. These wider system ambitions and outcomes will form the Whole System Approach to Domestic Abuse Overarching Strategy due for publication in early 2022.

The following six priority area objectives have been developed based upon the findings of local needs assessment and in line with key national and local policy drivers:

- 1** Priority One: Survivor/Victim Voice will be at the heart of our decision making
- 2** Priority Two: Early identification, intervention and prevention of domestic abuse
- 3** Priority Three: Effective support for vulnerable groups
- 4** Priority Four: Prioritising the needs of children and young people effected by domestic abuse within safe accommodation
- 5** Priority Five: Improve the use of data and intelligence in order to better understand and respond to demand and levels of need
- 6** Priority Six: Improve the workforce knowledge and skills in responding effectively to domestic abuse

It is acknowledged that for the first year of this strategy a primary focus will be the requirement to develop and implement a comprehensive performance framework which will include a range of multi-agency indicators and measurements. Once implemented, this framework will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy and how they will contribute to the achievement of the broader system outcomes set out in the future Whole System Approach to Domestic Abuse Strategy due for publication in 2022.



# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - Key Priorities

## Priority One

1



### Survivor/Victim Voice will be at the heart of our decision making

Victim participation can be one of the major contributors in the development of effective, credible and influential systemwide development and improvement. Victim participation offers several potential benefits to system processes and procedures as well as to victims and survivors themselves. Participation can promote individual healing and rehabilitation by providing victims with a sense of agency, empowerment and closure. Survivors are experts in the field due to their lived experience and are critical to system growth, they truly understand where improvements are needed and can advise how improvements can be made.

Victim/Survivor peer on peer support is an important resource within a whole system approach, whether it takes the form of independent peer-run programmes, self-help and mutual support groups, or services delivered by peers working within the domestic abuse system. Through the establishment of collaborative relationships with peer support providers, domestic abuse advocates can increase their own understanding of domestic abuse and develop their skills for supporting other survivors who are experiencing or have experienced abuse, while also sharing their knowledge about trauma and domestic abuse.

### DASVEG - 3 Year Focus

- **Develop mechanisms to capture the lived experience of survivors across all agencies**
- **Ensure that survivor representation is central within all relevant strategic governance arrangements and is used to inform service provision and interventions**
- **Opportunities to co-produce appropriate service provision with victims/survivors of domestic abuse are explored and implemented**

 **We know what it's like to live in fear, we can offer support to others, we have been through it ourselves, we are the only ones that truly know what it's like.**   
Durham Survivor 2021

# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - Key Priorities

## Priority Two

2

### Early Identification, Intervention and Prevention of Domestic Abuse


Taking a prevention and early intervention approach to domestic abuse, including the provision of safe accommodation, reduces risk and harm, and can prevent homicide in the most serious of cases. Without support, survivors can often struggle to access the services and support they need.

Nationally, Domestic Abuse is a leading cause of homelessness for women. Abuse is not always disclosed by survivors at the point of access to homeless support. Domestic Abuse can lead to loss of accommodation due to complaints of anti-social behaviour, rent arrears and property damage associated with the abuse. Preventing homelessness and loss of tenure achieves better outcomes for survivors and children and saves public money. Effective intervention at the earliest possible stage reduces the risk of losing accommodation and protects security of tenure. National data shows that 85% of survivors sought help five times in the year before they got the help they needed. It is vital that local services, especially housing providers, identify Domestic Abuse and intervene at the earliest possible stage.

Sanctuary Scheme is a victim centred initiative which aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain safely in their own homes through the installation of improved home security measures such as extra locks, improved lighting, police alarms.

### DASVEG - 3 Year Focus

- Support housing providers to adopt a whole housing approach in order to effectively identify and respond to those effected by domestic abuse at the earliest opportunity
- Ensure victims of domestic abuse are supported to remain in their own homes if this is their preferred choice and it is safe to do so
- Increase system wide awareness of safe accommodation support available to victims and survivors

 You need to better promote what support is available, I'd have left earlier, if I'd known how much support was out there.

Durham Survivor 2021



# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - Key Priorities

## Priority Three

3

### Effective Support for Vulnerable Groups

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse however some groups are at more risk than others, these include women, those from black minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ and children and young people. In addition, the County Durham and Darlington needs assessment identified that members of the GRT community and older people can also be at greater risk locally. Consideration must also be given to a range of complicating factors including drug and alcohol misuse and mental health issues that contribute to difficulties in accessing local provision. It is also acknowledged that although the majority of victims are female, men and boys can be victims too and that there are currently limited opportunities for male victims to access safe accommodation support.

Working together with neighbouring authorities enables pooling of resources and a proportionate approach to meeting needs of diverse survivors, this approach also has the potential to provide funding opportunities for the 'by and for' sector, often at a disadvantage when tendering.

“ There's not really information out there to help older women, it's seen as a young'uns issue. ”

Durham Survivor 2021

### DASVEG - 3 Year Focus

- Provision of support for victims and survivors with complex needs
- Whole system awareness raising regarding support available for vulnerable groups and hidden victims
- Provision of systemwide, wrap around support that sufficiently meets the needs of vulnerable groups and those with protected characteristics
- Provision of a range of safe accommodation options for victims of Domestic Abuse, including those with protected characteristics and vulnerable groups
- Explore opportunities to work more collaboratively across the region in order to maximise resources and opportunities to support victims of domestic abuse effectively

# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - Key Priorities

## Priority Four

4

### Prioritising the needs of children and young people effected by domestic abuse within safe accommodation

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a statutory duty on the local authority relating to the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children, as victims in their own right, residing in refuges and other safe accommodation options.

Local data and intelligence have identified the high numbers of children and young people effected by domestic abuse with further work required to understand the impact. Development of high quality, trauma informed approaches to supporting children and young people recover and break the cycle of abuse must be a priority across all agencies.

### DASVEG - 3 Year Focus

- Children and Young People have access to appropriate wrap around support within all Safe Accommodation
- Children and young people have access to trauma informed support when required and at the earliest opportunity

“ People need to listen to us - they don't realise how much it impacts on us. As siblings, we've all been through it, so in different ways we support one another and Mum. ”

Darlington Young Person 2021





# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - Key Priorities

## Priority Five

5

### Improve the use of data and intelligence to better understand and respond to demand and levels of need

A key element of an effective co-ordinated community response is the ability to collate and interpret local data and intelligence. To ensure a robust understanding of demand and outcomes, all service elements and providers should record consistently so that meaningful comparisons can be made. Local domestic abuse partnerships must be able to map and monitor their systems in order to inform service planning and/or commissioning intentions. It is only with high quality data that demonstrates demand and levels of needs can the appropriate commissioning decisions be made.

Across County Durham and Darlington multi-agency arrangements are immature and will require significant focus moving forward.

### DASVEG - 3 Year Focus

- **Develop multi-agency mechanisms that allow information to be shared across the partnership to better understand and respond to the needs of victims of domestic abuse**
- **Develop a performance framework that effectively monitors progress of County Durham and Darlington's co-ordinated community response**
- **Development and implementation of a Joint Commissioning Plan**



# Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - Key Priorities

## Priority Six

6

### Improve the workforce knowledge and skills in responding effectively to domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 highlights the need for whole system, multi-agency approach to workforce development and the move away from single agency training. Workforce development within a multi-agency context provides an opportunity for partnership links and inter-agency coordination. Domestic abuse should be a workforce development priority for all services and be fully embedded in all workforce development planning. It requires the development of a whole new framework which includes practice standards, effective evaluation and CPD accreditation. The new statutory definition provides an opportunity to increase the awareness of the dynamics of domestic abuse and how it manifests. There needs to be an understanding across all partners and services of this statutory definition to ensure it is embedded in frontline practice. Workforce development needs to be responsive to any guidance that comes from the Government regarding changes which affect Safe Accommodation providers. Workforce development plays a critical role in supporting the development of best practice, providing opportunities for those engaging in the process to upskill and build their knowledge base, which in turn better equips them to support appropriately and effectively, service users. Improving staff knowledge in relation to domestic abuse within safe accommodation and beyond alongside the development of mechanisms for active communication and the sharing of information across the system must be a priority in Durham and Darlington.

### DASVEG - 3 Year Focus

- The development, implementation and evaluation of an accredited, multi-agency training programme that supports the workforce to respond to domestic abuse at all levels
- Awareness raising of all safe accommodation options across County Durham and Darlington, this includes pathways and how to access support collaboratively across the region in order to maximise resources and opportunities to support victims of domestic abuse effectively

“ Train staff to stop blaming us, the victim, understand and support us, don't blame us. ”

Durham Survivor 2021

**MAKING DARLINGTON SAFER**  
Safer People, Safer Places



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## Plan on a page

The domestic abuse data analysis sub-group met to consider all qualitative and quantitative data collected as part of the domestic abuse needs assessment which will inform the local domestic abuse strategy.

Consideration was given to what services are currently available in Darlington, what the authority's new obligations are under the Domestic Abuse Act and where the gaps are.

Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a duty on local authorities to provide accommodation based support for victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.

Local authorities will need to ensure all victims of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation when they need it.

Support within safe accommodation is to be available to local and out of area victims and their children.

Safe accommodation will include:

- Refuge accommodation
- Specialist safe accommodation – protected characteristics and complex needs
- Dispersed accommodation
- Sanctuary schemes
- Move on and/or second stage accommodation
- Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation

Domestic abuse support will include:

- Advocacy support – development of personal safety plans, liaison with other services (for example, GPs and social workers, welfare benefit providers);
- Domestic abuse-prevention advice – support to assist victims to recognise the signs of abusive relationships, to help them remain safe (including online) and to prevent re-victimisation;
- Specialist support for victims with protected characteristics and / or complex needs, for example, interpreters, faith services, mental health advice and support, drug and alcohol advice and support, and immigration advice;
- Children’s support – including play therapy and child advocacy;
- Housing-related support – providing housing-related advice and support, for example, securing a permanent home and advice on how to live safely and independently; and
- Counselling and therapy for both adults and children.

**Evaluand (what is being evaluated):** Quantitative and qualitative data collected via the MHCLG data collection template – data sources included police, children’s services, adults’ services, MARAC, Family Help Refuge, Harbour Services outreach support, Halo Refuge and Housing Options. Voice of the victim/survivor and their children qualitative data received from Harbour Services. Voice of the victim/survivor data collected as part of the Tees Valley collaborative virtual survey; community consultation data compiled by RRR Consultancy, Harbour Services and Darlington’s IDVA.

**Evaluation dates:** 29 September – 20 October 2021

**Evaluation panel:** Sharon Cable, Dr. Samantha Level, Ken Ross, Beth Rennard, Alan Rust-Ryan, Kate Rust-Ryan, Amanda Hugill, Sharon Carr, Peter Stirling and Bronwyn Lilley.

Darlington Borough Council’s Domestic Abuse priorities

Priority	Current provision	Gaps	Actions
Additional support for children including psychological support for children who have witnessed abuse.	Currently 10 hours per week of Harbour support  Harbour recently secured Ministry of Justice funding for a Young	There are long waiting times for children to access group and 1:1 support sessions	Increase children’s support provision through Harbour

Priority	Current provision	Gaps	Actions
	<p>Person's IDVA who works across Durham and Darlington so that is a service targeted at young victims of domestic abuse aged 12-18</p> <p>4 Kids Project</p>		<p>Link with education providers regarding curriculum and multi-agency working</p> <p>Additional Harbour posts (detailed under additional needs for adults)</p>
<p>Provision of a Sanctuary Scheme</p>	<p>There is no current provision within Darlington</p>	<p>There is no current provision within Darlington</p>	<p>Implement a Sanctuary Scheme in Darlington</p> <p>Ensure Harbour hours are sufficient to cover sanctuary scheme properties</p>
<p>Additional support for adult victims/survivors</p>	<p>There is currently 90 hours per week of Harbour support available to all community members</p>	<p>There are long waiting times for support such as counselling</p>	<p>Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Link Worker</p> <p>Specialist support within the Housing Options Team</p> <p>Lead practitioner based at Harbour</p> <p>Continuation of recovery programme</p>
<p>Local accommodation and support for victims/survivors with complex needs and/or protected characteristics</p>	<p>Domestic Abuse Complex Needs Service including four dispersed properties available through Harbour</p>	<p>Current provision meeting needs however future requirements as the Act is embedded across all agencies is unknown</p>	<p>Continuation of the current Complex Needs Service beyond current contract expiry</p> <p>Introduction of two additional dispersed properties through DBC Housing</p>

Priority	Current provision	Gaps	Actions
Gather the voice of victims/survivors and their children	There is no provision in place	There is no means of gathering the voice of victims/survivors and their children	Victim/survivor forums Virtual surveys  Open link between the community and the Council's Commissioning Team via email  Link with education and children's social care teams who work directly with victims and their children  Recruitment of a Voice of the Victim Champion Officer (based at PCC)  Multi-agency partnerships
Perpetrator programme	1 day Barnardo's awareness raising programme  27 week Harbour programme	Does not focus on the whole family  Current provision expires 31 March 2022 with no committed future funding  Feedback regarding the 27 week programme is difficult to maintain	Commit funding to perpetrator programme from 1 April 2022.  Dedicated Lead Practitioner to work with the whole family  Consider format of current programme provision including accessibility



Priority	Current provision	Gaps	Actions
		engagement with perpetrators due to its length	
Data collection and reporting capabilities	Data is collected by agencies in a variety of formats	Lack of consistent and robust data collection	Implement consistent and efficient methods of data collection and analysis  Improved internal data collection mechanisms  Improved use of existing CDP Soft database  Participation in regional performance management network
Understanding of domestic abuse, including non-violent forms of abuse, to be embedded into all relevant agencies and within the community.	Domestic abuse is included within DBC Safeguarding Training		Staff briefing regarding new responsibilities under the Act; how to recognise signs of domestic abuse; how to respond; and where to access support  CAPVA training and awareness raising  Bespoke DBC Safeguarding Domestic Abuse training  Awareness raising campaign

Priority	Current provision	Gaps	Actions
			Multi-agency partnerships
For all victims/survivors to have affordable access to accommodation and support regardless of their benefit entitlement or working status	Everyone has access to accommodation however those without recourse to public funding have to pay for example their mortgage/private rental as well as the cost of safe accommodation.	Affordable accommodation for victims who are not eligible for financial support	The two additional dispersed accommodation properties will mitigate the additional costs that would be incurred.

# Recommended Terms of Reference for Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Boards

Revised in May 2024

## Purpose and Role

The Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LDAP) is a partnership group responsible for supporting Durham County Council (DCC) and Darlington Borough Council (DBC) in meeting their duty under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act.

*The LDAP will be known locally as the County Durham and Darlington Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG)*

DASVEG will take a whole system approach to support, advise and work in partnership with DCC and DBC to ensure victims of domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support within safe accommodation and wider domestic abuse services.

DASVEG will provide the governance structure for work across the system aimed at reducing and tackling sexual violence.

To improve outcomes for victims of domestic abuse, including their children, through a strategic approach to identifying and addressing gaps in support within safe accommodation services and the wider system

DASVEG will ensure that the system has a clear focus on perpetrators and tackling repeat perpetrators through a range of multi-agency, problem solving interventions and approaches.

## Frequency

The Board will meet on a bi monthly basis; this will be reviewed every 12 months.

## Membership

The Board is made up of several responsible bodies and agencies that by law, must be represented.

***Members of the Board should be of a level that are able to make decisions regarding service/system delivery, budget allocation and commissioning intentions.***

<b>Name/Role</b>	<b>Deputy/Role</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Jane Sunter, Strategic Manager (Chair)	Lucy Wilkins, PH Advanced Practitioner	Public Health	DCC
Lorraine Hughes, Director of Public Health	Abbie Kelly, PH Portfolio Lead	Public Health	DBC
Pauline Newby, Strategic Commissioning Manager	Owain Green Commissioning Policy and Planning Officer	ICB Integrated Commissioning Team	DCC
Christine Shields Assistant Director	Peter Sterling, Strategic Commissioning Manager	Commissioning	DBC
Andrea Petty, Chief of Staff	Jeanne Trotter	Office of Police and Crime Commissioner	OPCC
Tanya Graham, Deputy Head of Durham and Darlington Probation Service	Karen Blackburn, Head of Durham and Darlington Probation Service	Durham and Darlington Probation	Probation
Nicola Lawrence, Detective Superintendent	Lee Blakelock, Detective Chief Inspector	Safeguarding	Durham Constabulary
Jac Tyler, Strategic Manager	Jo Levie, Operations Manager	Children's Social Care	DCC
Karen Davison, Strategic Manager	Claire Johnson, Operations Manager	Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children	DCC
Kirsty Wilkinson, Early Years Development Advisor		Education	DCC
Alison Lavender, Head of Service Children's Services	Nicola Brownhill Service Manager, First Response Services	CYPS	DBC
Calvin Kipling - Virtual School Head	Dianne Gage – Inclusion lead	Education	DBC
Joss Harbron – Assistant Director, Adult Social Care	Barbara Beadle – Head of Service	Adults	DBC
Amanda Hugill, Darlington	Marian Garland,	Safeguarding	DBC

Name/Role	Deputy/Role	Team	Organisation
Safeguarding Partnership Business Manager	Darlington Safeguarding Boards Development Officer/LADO		

The Board will be chaired by Jane Sunter  
**Vice Chair of the Board will be TBC**

Members are responsible for ensuring they report back and feed into the Board on behalf of their represented group/body. Steps should be taken to ensure:

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The Board will take a whole system approach to:

- Provide advice and data to support *DCC, DBC and its partners* to undertake a robust local needs assessment to identify and understand the needs of domestic abuse victims within their area (including those that present from out of area).
- Provide expert advice and data to support the development of a local strategy, agreeing the appropriate steps needed to meet the needs identified.
- Support *DCC, DBC and its partners* to effectively engage with domestic abuse victims and expert services in understanding the range and complexity of needs.
- Support DCC, DBC and its partners to support to effectively identify, engage challenge, and tackle perpetrators of domestic abuse
- Provide oversight and governance to a range of victim focused problem solving interventions tackling complex domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Support *DCC, DBC and its partners* to make commissioning and decommissioning decisions (where appropriate). This can include when and how commissioning is undertaken to ensure the best and most appropriate services are made available for victims.
- [Members will] support in ensuring join up across other related areas such as housing, health, early years and childhood support, social services and police and crime services [not limited to]

- Advise and support in dealing with issues raised and identified from engagement through formal and informal routes.
- Escalate issues to the relevant representative / body

## Agendas

Members will be able to put forward suggested agenda items for consideration. The secretariat will circulate final agendas a minimum of 5 working days ahead of meetings.

DASVEG agendas will be structured to ensure that where necessary agenda items will be restricted to commissioning organisations only.

Standing agenda items will include:

- The voice and lived experience of victim/survivors including children as victims in their own right.
- Performance
- Subgroup feedback via the chair of each group:
  - Prioritising Prevention
  - Supporting Victims, this will include accommodation-based support.
  - Tackling Those who Cause Harm

## Absence

Where members are unable to attend a meeting, they are responsible for informing the Board ahead of the meeting and, as far as possible, should ensure a representative is present on behalf of the organisation / body.

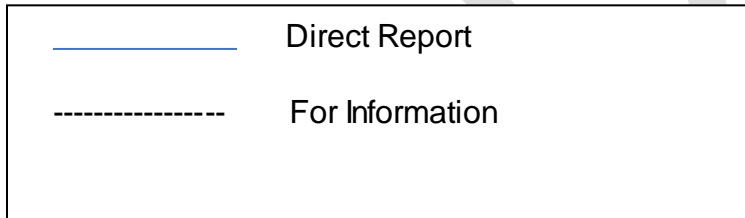
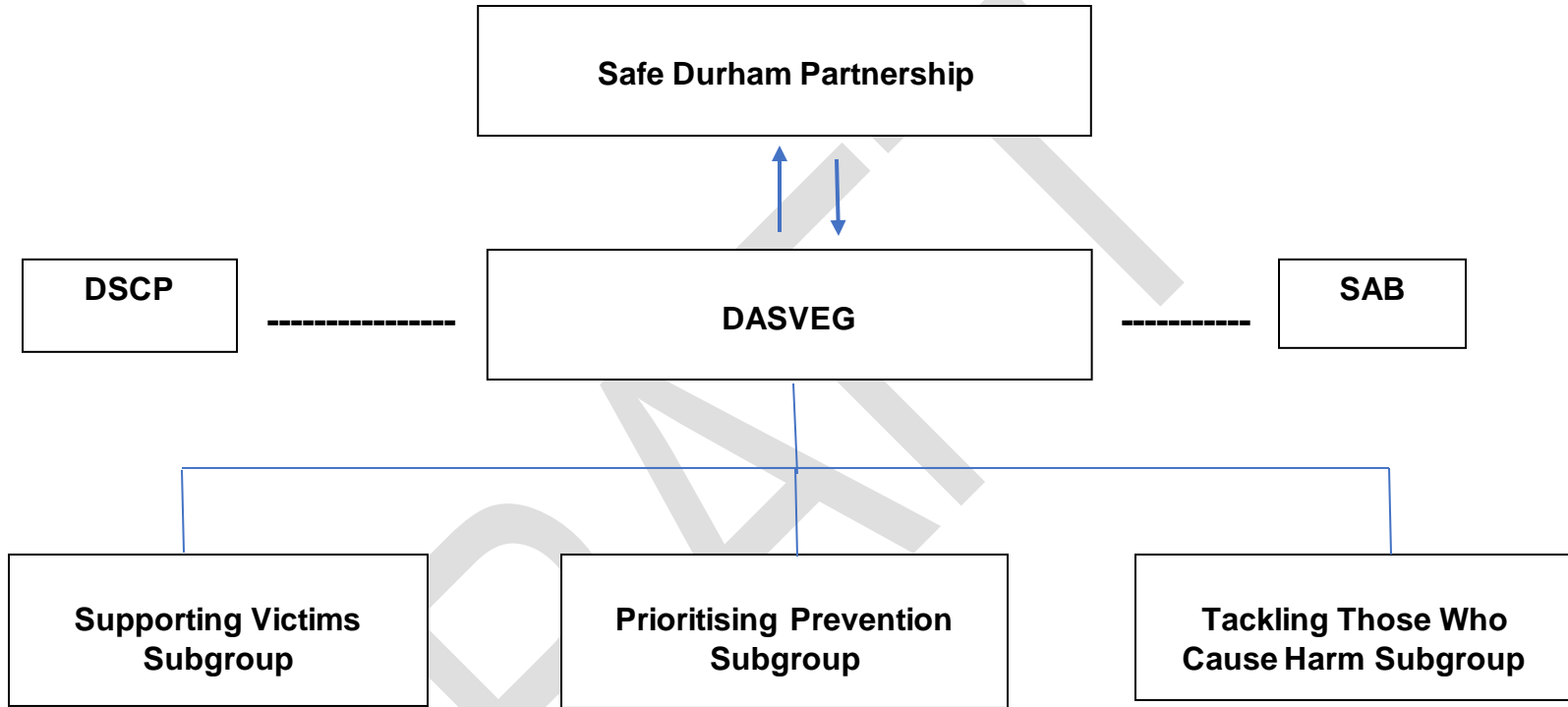
## Reporting and Governance

The chair / Board will report back to the *Safe Durham Partnership and Darlington Community Safety Partnership*.

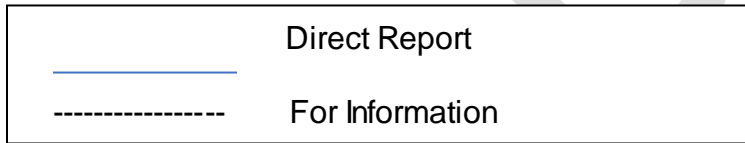
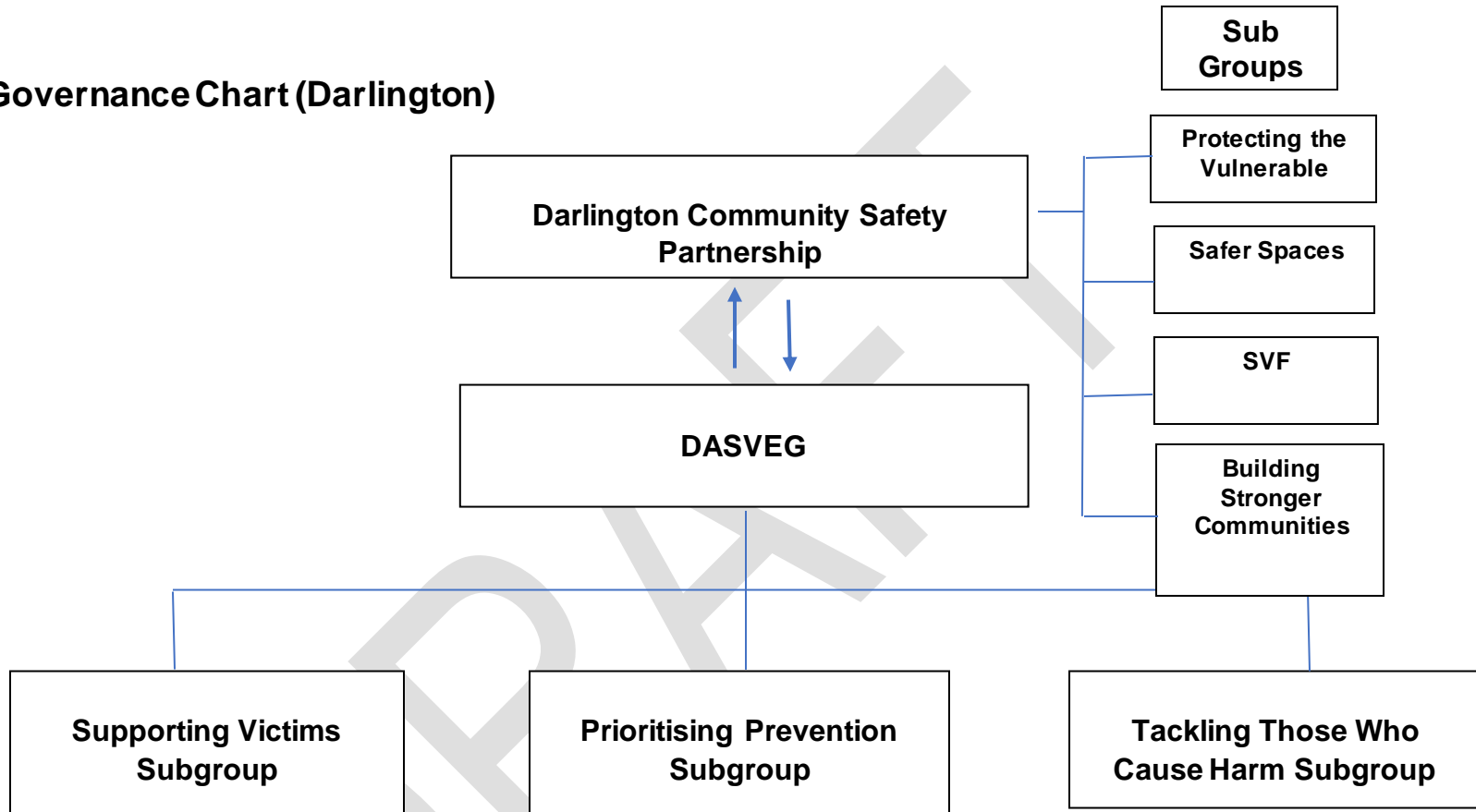
*In addition, regular reports will be provided to members of the Durham Safeguarding Children's Board, the Durham Safeguarding Adults Board and the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Board.*

The Board will support DCC and DBC in reporting back to MHCLG on delivering the duty in line with statutory guidance and the standardised reporting form.

### DASVEG Governance Chart (County Durham)



### DASVEG Governance Chart (Darlington)







**Darlington Domestic Abuse Local Working Group  
Terms of Reference**

**1. PURPOSE**

To develop robust actions for achieving compliance with local authority duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. To ensure that Darlington's requirements are effectively incorporated into the broader Darlington and Durham Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (DASVEG).

Part 4 of the Act places a duty on local authorities to provide accommodation-based support for victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.

Local authorities will need to ensure all victims of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation when they need it.

Support within safe accommodation is to be available to local and out of area victims and their children.

Provision cannot include safe accommodation already in place under duties imposed under alternative legislation.

1. To identify domestic abuse services available in Darlington
2. To identify gaps in service provision in line with the authority's responsibilities under the Act
3. To identify potential solutions, both internal to and external from the authority, in order to adhere to service requirements
4. To identify internal training provisions available to support the authority's duties
5. To identify training gaps and potential solutions from both internal and external sources
6. To ensure appropriate referral processes are in place to utilise provisions currently available as well as future provisions commissioned in response to the authority's new duties under the Act

## 2. MEMBERSHIP

**Lorraine Hughes** - Director of Public Health

**Christine Shields** - Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation

**Darren Ellis** - Head of Community Safety

**Michael Banks** - Voice of the Victim Champion, Police Crime Commissioning

**Sharon Cable** - Commissioning Officer, Working Aged Adults

**Kimberley Icton** - Commissioning Officer Childrens

**Abbie Kelly** - Public Health Portfolio Lead

**Janette McMain** - Housing Manager, Options and Lifeline

**Martin Webster** - Workforce Development Manager

**Sarah Lochrane** - Performance Coordinator

**Priority One:** Survivor/Victim Voice will be at the heart of our decision making - **Michael Banks**, voice of the victim champion, PCC)

**Priority Two:** Early identification, intervention and prevention of domestic abuse - **Janette McMain/Sarah Williams**

**Priority Three:** Effective support for vulnerable groups – **Abbie Kelly and Sharon Cable**

**Priority Four:** Prioritising the needs of children and young people effected by domestic abuse within safe accommodation – **Kimberley Icton**

**Priority Five:** Improve the use of data and intelligence in order to better understand and respond to demand and levels of need – **Sarah Lochrane**

**Priority Six:** Improve the workforce knowledge and skills in responding effectively to domestic abuse – **Martin Webster**

2.2 Delegation to an appropriate member of staff should be made when a member is unable to attend.

2.3 Internal or external persons may be invited to attend the meetings at the request of the Chairperson on behalf of the group to provide advice and assistance where necessary.

## 3. CHAIRPERSON and / or VICE CHAIR

The Chairperson is elected during which period the Darlington and Durham DASVEG is performing as a statutory partnership under the Act. Their responsibilities include:

1. Scheduling and agenda meetings and notifying members
2. Inviting specialists to attend meetings when required by the Group;
3. Guiding the meeting according to the agenda and time available;
4. Applying equality, farness and diversity of all members
5. Ensuring all discussion items end with a decision, action or definite outcome;
6. Review and approve the draft minutes before distribution

7. Act as a lead representative and link person for Darlington at the Darlington and Durham DASVEG;
8. Attend Darlington and Durham DASVEG meetings and represent the views of the Group;
9. Feedback from Darlington and Durham DASVEG to the task and finish group; and
10. Represent the views of the Group to all appropriate internal and external stakeholders.

Coordination support for the group will be provided by Sharon Cable, Commissioning Officer, Working Aged Adults

#### **4. MINUTE TAKER**

A volunteer for minute taking is required at the beginning of each meeting.

The role of the minute taker is to:

1. take action notes during the meeting;
2. distribute minutes as a link within the meeting chat facility at the end of the meeting

#### **5. DURATION OF MEETINGS**

5.1 Meetings shall be held bimonthly for up to 1 hour. Additional meetings may be arranged as required to facilitate completion of all tasks required under the Act within timescales.

5.2 Attendance or delegated attendance is required at all meetings to ensure effective key decision making and information sharing.

#### **6. LEVEL OF INFORMATION PROTECTION**

6.1 The information and discussion topics provided by the group may be deemed at times to be sensitive.

6.2 All members are to take full responsibility for the management of the minutes and any information being circulated from the group.

#### **7. AMENDMENTS**

The terms of reference shall be reviewed annually from the date of approval. They may be altered to meet the current needs of all group members or any amendment in statutory guidance.

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# **County Durham and Darlington**

## **Violence Against Women and Girls Provider Forum**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **I. Our Vision**

- a. A Stronger System which seeks to prevent and tackle violence against women and girls in County Durham and Darlington.
  
- b. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) covers a range of unacceptable and deeply distressing crimes, including rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic abuse, 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'honour' killings), 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting', as well as many others. These crimes disproportionately affect women and girls. However, men and boys can also be victims of violence and abuse and the approaches set out in this document will benefit all victims and survivors of these crime types.

#### **II. Purpose**

- a. To support the continued development of community-based, 'by and for' and specialist voluntary and community sector organisations in County Durham and Darlington.
  
- b. Increase communication and collaboration between practitioners operating in County Durham and Darlington who are part of the system preventing harm, supporting victims, and pursuing perpetrators of violence against women and girls.
  
- c. Provide a platform which uses a problem-solving approach encouraging members to share barriers, challenges, and good practise.
  
- d. To support the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group agenda which include information sharing between operational and strategic professionals and organisations.

#### **III. Shared Values**

- a. **To be agreed by Forum**

#### **IV. Membership & Expectations**

- a. Member organisations are non-statutory services providing a service which works to preventing harm, support victims and/or perpetrators of violence against women and girls.

- b. Members must be delivering a service in County Durham and/or Darlington.
- c. Member professionals are responsible for taking an active role in feeding learnings back to their organisation and service users.
- d. Members are responsible for suggesting learning and development opportunities to include on the agenda. This can include presenting their work or suggesting an external speaker.

**V. Administration**

- a. The meeting will be quarterly with dates and agenda arranged in advance.
- b. The meeting will be facilitated by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, Darlington Public Health and Durham Public Health.

**VI. Agenda**

- a. The content of the agenda will be led by the needs of the members and purpose of the Group.
- b. The standard agenda format will be:
  - i. Welcome and Introduction
  - ii. Update from DASVEG
  - iii. Learning and Development Presentation
  - iv. Networking
  - v. Learning and Development Workshop
  - vi. AOB

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
22 OCTOBER 2024**

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**DARLINGTON CARE NETWORK FOR PROVIDERS**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To review and consider the provider engagement arrangements that are in place for Adult Social Care Providers.

**Summary**

2. The Council's duties and responsibilities for Adult Social Care are set out in key legislation such as the Care Act (2014), the Mental Health Act (1983) and the Mental Capacity Act (2005). Commissioned services support and meet a wide range of adults needs such as frailty, learning disabilities or autism, mental illness and substance misuse. The Care Act (2014) places a legal duty on the Council to shape the care market and ensure that there is sufficient care provision to meet the care needs of the people in Darlington. The Care Act (2014) obliges the Council to "promote diversity and quality of provision of services". These objectives can only be met through active engagement with care providers which promotes effective communication, consultation and co-production.
3. Darlington Council has a successful track record of effectively engaging, consulting and communicating with its independent and voluntary sectors. There are a number of key forums, programme areas and information sharing approaches that the Council utilises to ensure that effective communication and engagement continues. The key objective of these engagement arrangements is to build and sustain positive and productive relationships. This in turn ensures that the council and its partners are sighted on the whole system issues and challenges and how they affect vulnerable people in its care.

**Recommendation**

4. It is recommended that Members consider the effectiveness of consultation and engagement arrangements with Adult Social Care providers.

**Christine Shields**  
**Assistant Director-Performance, Transformation and Commissioning**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Sukhdev Dosanjh - Head of Commissioning and Contracts - Extension: 07384 459139

Council Plan	This work contributes to the priorities agreed in the Council Plan
Addressing inequalities	There are no implications arising from this report
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report supports the efficient use of resources through shared partnership priorities
Health and Wellbeing	This work supports the priorities set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications for S17 Crime and Disorder
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	All groups
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no implications for the Budget or Policy Framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

#### Care Provider Engagement Arrangements

5. Engagement with Darlington’s providers is made up of three key approaches:
  - The need to effectively communicate with care providers to share (and receive) information and advice, and raise awareness of health and social care issues (national and local)
  - The requirement to consult on proposed council strategic plans
  - The need to co-produce commissioned services with care providers
  
6. The table set out below provides examples of how the council has worked with care providers in these care provider engagement strands:



<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Communication	<p>Care Provider Partnership Forums – Older Persons and Working Age Adults Residential Care Providers Forum; Home care and Support care provider Forum,</p> <p>VCSE (Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise) Forum Sector.</p> <p>Bilateral meetings with Darlington’s two main home care providers (East and West) of the Borough.</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Contract Monitoring meetings.</p> <p>Darlington Carers Support</p>
Consultation	<p>The Market Position and Commissioning Strategy (2024-2027)</p> <p>The revision and updating of the Older Person’s Care Home quality assessment standards (2024)</p> <p>Market Engagement events to review Home Care and Support Services; Older Person’s Residential Care Homes, Working Age Adults Residential Care Homes, Supported Living arrangements and Shared Lives arrangements.</p> <p>The Council consulted with its home care providers with regard the allocation of Market Sustainability and Improvement Funds to support paying for travel costs (homecare), fee rates (residential care and homecare) and recruitment/retention incentives (all providers).</p> <p>The Council commissioned a survey with Healthwatch – “Adults Social Care Lived Experience” which sought views of people using adults social care with regards to people’s assessment and support planning process.</p>
Co- Production	<p>The joint development of specifications with the Working Age Adults residential care, homecare, supported living and Older Persons residential care providers .</p> <p>A joint exercise (with Darlington Healthwatch) to determine the future shape of Day Service.</p> <p>The development of the Carers Strategy - Darlington’s Commitment to Carers 2023-2028</p>

## **The benefits of effective consultation and engagement arrangements**

7. The examples highlighted in the table above have ensured that care providers are active participants in supporting the Council in delivering its Care Act (2014) legal duties and obligations in shaping the care market. The development of constructive enduring relationships with the independent care sector ensures there is sufficiency of care provision to meet the care needs of the people in Darlington. It is also important to note that the positive working relationship with independent care providers and the VCSE (Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise) successfully supported the council during the difficult and challenging period of the Covid 19 emergency pandemic.
8. The positive engagement and consultation arrangements with Care Providers have been essential in:
  - The development of the Market Position Statement and Commissioning Strategy (2024-2027) as it sets out the key issues and challenges facing adult social care. Care providers are provided with analysis and data regarding demand and supply issues. This in turn can help care providers develop their businesses and invest with confidence in Darlington.
  - Establishing well attended provider forums for consistent messaging on key national and local issues such as workforce recruitment and retention, safeguarding and clinical matters (such as diabetes treatments); and sharing good practice in the delivery of services.
  - The transformation of day services through co-production will help to reshape and remodel services so that they more effectively deliver better outcomes for service users. This is because service users own experiences will shape the new outcome-based service specification.
  - Darlington's Carers Strategy Steering Group has been actively involved in the development of the Carers Strategy Darlington's commitment to carers 2023- 2028 and also raises awareness with key partners with regard to policy developments. For example, the Carer's Leave Act 2023 came into force on 6 April 2024 which provides that all carers in employment are entitled to a new statutory right to take five days of unpaid leave each year to fulfil their caring responsibilities.
  - Darlington Borough Council's Provider Forums including Home Care and Support Forum; Supported Living and Extra Care Forum. For example, the Older Persons and Working Age Adults Residential Provider Forum is a long standing multi – agency partnership body. Membership consists of representatives from the Council's Commissioning Team, Public Health, CDDFT (County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust), Darlington's Primary Care Network, Darlington's Healthwatch and NECS (North East Commissioning Support).

## **Key Areas for Development**

9. Looking forward, the Council recognises the need to further strength its work on coproduction with key partners (Independent sector providers and NHS) and service users,

families and carers. It is important that that future services are developed which blend service users experiences and their aspirations within commissioned statutory services.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

10. This report provides a summary of a range of consultation and engagement activities in Adult Social Care Services.

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**ADULT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
22 OCTOBER 2024**

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**DARLINGTON'S COMMITMENT TO CARERS 2023-28**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide information regarding Darlington's Carers' Strategy (Darlington's Commitment to Carers 2023-28) and progress in implementing it.

**Summary**

2. Darlington's Commitment to Carers was launched on 17 April 2024 at a well-attended launch event, during which presentations were given by Darlington Carers Support, Family Action Darlington Young Carers and Darlington Borough Council outlining Darlington's Commitment to Carers and the support available to all groups of carers in Darlington. Attendees were also asked to identify actions they would take as their own Commitment to Carers, including participation in the social media campaign.
3. Good progress has already been made in implementing the actions identified.

**Recommendation**

4. It is recommended that Members note the content of the report and consider how they can support the delivery of the actions identified in Darlington's Commitment to Carers.

**Christine Shields**  
**Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance And Transformation**

**Background Papers**

- (i) People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- (ii) Darlington's Commitment to Carers 2023 – 28 Darlington's Commitment to Carers 2023-28

Lisa Holdsworth: Extension 5861

Council Plan	This report contributes to the priorities agreed in the Council Plan
Addressing inequalities	Caring affects all groups of people in Darlington.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Efficient and effective use of resources	Research published by Carers UK in 2023 indicates that unpaid carers in Darlington provide support to the value of £329 million.
Health and Wellbeing	Carers can experience poor health as a result of their caring responsibilities. Identifying and supporting carers contributes to supporting their health and wellbeing and the health and wellbeing of the people for whom they care.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Carers are the group primarily affected.
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no implications arising from this report.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. Darlington’s Commitment to Carers identifies actions under 4 key objectives, which are designed to raise awareness of carers in Darlington and to ensure that they are recognised and supported for their invaluable contribution to the wellbeing of the people they care for and their contribution to society a whole.
  - (a) **Recognising and supporting Carers in the wider community and society** – identifying carers; providing information for carers; engaging and involving carers; identifying and working with harder-to-reach groups of carers; social and community support for carers.
  - (b) **Services and Systems that work for Carers** - working with Health; assessing carers’ needs and identifying ways to meet them; training to provide care and support; psychological and emotional support for carers; support during changes to the caring role; support for carers during end-of-life care and after the person dies; safeguarding carers and the people they care for.
  - (c) **Employment and Financial Wellbeing** - helping carers to stay in, enter or return to work, education, training and volunteering; working with employers; benefits and grant support.
  - (d) **Supporting Young Carers** - raising awareness of young carers within the community, schools and other agencies; supporting the transition from young carer to adult carer.

6. Darlington's Commitment to Carers was launched on 17 April 2024 at a well-attended launch event, during which presentations were given by Darlington Carers Support, Family Action Darlington Young Carers and Darlington Borough Council outlining Darlington's Commitment to Carers and the support available to all groups of carers in Darlington. Attendees were also asked to identify actions they would take as their own Commitment to Carers, including participation in the social media campaign.
7. Progress has already been made in relation to the actions identified including:
  - (a) Continued increase in the number of carers registered with Darlington Carers Support, with a total of 3,089 carers on the register as at 19 September 2024. 26.33% of the carers registered were male and 70.48% were of working age.
  - (b) The development of a 'Commitment to Carers logo' for use by all partners.
  - (c) The commencement of a social media campaign to raise the profile of carers in Darlington. This is being coordinated by the Digital Inclusion worker at County Durham Carers Support and has been recognized as Great Practice by the ADASS Supporting Carers Hub. Darlington's Commitment to Carers Social Media Campaign | ADASS – Supporting Carers Hub.
  - (d) Development and implementation of a plan to identify and work with harder-to-reach groups of carers. There has already been a focused campaign on male carers resulting in a 24% increase in male carers registering with Darlington Carers Support. Further campaigns have focused on refugee carers (during refugee week) when there were 968 interactions on social media and LGBTQ+ carers during Pride in August when there were 1033 interactions.
  - (e) Partnership working has been developed with CDDFT, including the employment of a Hospital Discharge Worker by Darlington Carers Support. 61 referrals have been received since the service started on 1 January 2024, 48 of whom were not previously known to Darlington Carers Support. Joint work has also taken place with CDDFT HR in relation to CDDFT employees who are also carers. In addition, there is a Durham County Carers Support Carers and Employment page Durham County Carers Support – Training Site ([dccarers.org](http://dccarers.org))
  - (f) A new Young Carers Service (Young Carers Darlington) provided by Family Action commenced on 1 April 2024, which strengthens the support available to Young Carers up to the age of 25. The service is co-located with Darlington Carers Support, which supports the strengthening of work around transitions and with Young Adult Carers. Progress has already been made in establishing the new service in Darlington, including developing links with schools in order to raise awareness of young carers and their needs and the production of a leaflet jointly with Darlington Carers Support regarding the support available to Young Adult Carers.
  - (g) A new Parent Carers Support Worker has recently been employed by Darlington Carers Support and the Carers' Strategy Steering Group (CSSG) has renewed links with the Parent Carer Forum. A piece of work on transition planning is due to start soon.

- (h) Work is taking place with Mobilise Support for unpaid carers in Darlington ([mobiliseonline.co.uk](http://mobiliseonline.co.uk)) which is a digital platform to identify and support carers. This has been commissioned regionally through Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) monies from central government to look at innovative ways of providing support. From contract implementation on 1 April 2024, a total of 282 carers were engaged by Mobilise and 182 supported. 74% of the carers using the service were of working age and 35% were men. 81% had not accessed support before.
- (i) A survey is being developed to identify what support carers need to enable them to take a break.
- (j) Four factsheets are currently being developed setting out how carers can access financial support; training available for carers; opportunities available to enable carers to take a break from their caring role and details of local and national energy efficiency schemes.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

8. Darlington's Commitment to Carers was co-produced by members of the Carers' Strategy Steering Group (CSSG) and family carers in Darlington and takes into account feedback received throughout the development process. The CSSG will continue to oversee progress in relation to the Action Plan and to seek feedback from carers and other partners.



**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**22 OCTOBER 2024**

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**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 2024-25**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members with performance data against key performance indicators for 2024-25

**Summary**

2. This report provides performance information in line with an indicator set and scrutiny committee distribution agreed by Monitoring and Coordination Group on 4 June 2018, and subsequently by scrutiny committee chairs.
3. The indicators included in this report are aligned with key priorities and the majority are used to monitor the Corporate Plan. Other indicators may be referenced when appropriate in narrative provided by the relevant assistant directors, when providing the committee with performance updates.
4. Twelve indicators are reported to the committee, ten on a six-monthly basis and two annually.
5. Performance of 8 of the 12 indicators reported at the end of Quarter 1 of 2024/25:
  - (a) One indicator is showing performance has improved in comparison to the same period last year:

ASC 002	(ASCOF 2A-2) Older people aged 65+ admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care per 100,000 of the 65+ population.
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- (b) Four indicators performance are comparable with the same time last year.

ASC 049	(ASCOF 1C (1a)) Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support
ASC 050	(ASCOF 1C (1b)) Proportion of carers using social care who receive self-directed support
ASC 003	(ASCOF 2A-1) Adults aged 18 - 64 admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care homes, per 100,000 population.

ASC019	Percentage of people who have no ongoing care needs following completion of provision of a reablement package.
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(c) three indicators are not comparable and are reviewed as a point in time.

ASC 208	Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) started - year to date
ASC 209	Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) started – per month
ASC 211	Number of strategy meetings undertaken i.e. concerns progressed to strategy per month

(d) The two indicators that are recorded annually are ASC054 (The proportion of people who use Adult Care services who find it easy to find information about services) and ASC055 (The proportion of people who are carers who find it easy to find information about services). 2023-24 results will be released towards the end of 2024, therefore should be available to include in the 2024-25 mid-year scrutiny report.

ASC 054	The proportion of people who use Adult Care services who find it easy to find information about services
ASC 055	The proportion of people who are carers who find it easy to find information about services

(e) Due to recent ASCOF /CLD (Client Level Data) changes there are two indicators that are no longer being reported on. The new indicators which are to be replaced are currently under development, and therefore we are unable to provide figures at this moment in time.

ASC 045	Proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family
ASC 046	Proportion of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment

6. More information relating to some of the indicators referenced in this report can be found in **Appendix 1**.
7. This Scrutiny Committee performance report is compiled by Sharon Raine. All queries regarding the format of this report should be addressed to [Sharon.raine@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.raine@darlington.gov.uk)

### Recommendation

8. It is recommended that that performance information provided in this report is reviewed and noted, and relevant queries raised with appropriate assistant directors.

**Joss Harbron**  
**Assistant Director of Adult Services**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Author: Extension

Council Plan	This report contributes to the Council Plan by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes with regards to Adult Social Care.
Addressing inequalities	This involves members in the scrutiny of the level to which Adult Social Care contributes to ensuring that opportunities are accessible to everyone, with a focus on ensuring a good job, home and/or social connections for all.
Tackling Climate Change	This report does not identify any issued relating to climate change.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report allows for the scrutiny of performance which is integral to optimising outcomes and ensuring efficient use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Councils Crime and Disorder responsibilities.
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards.
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

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**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

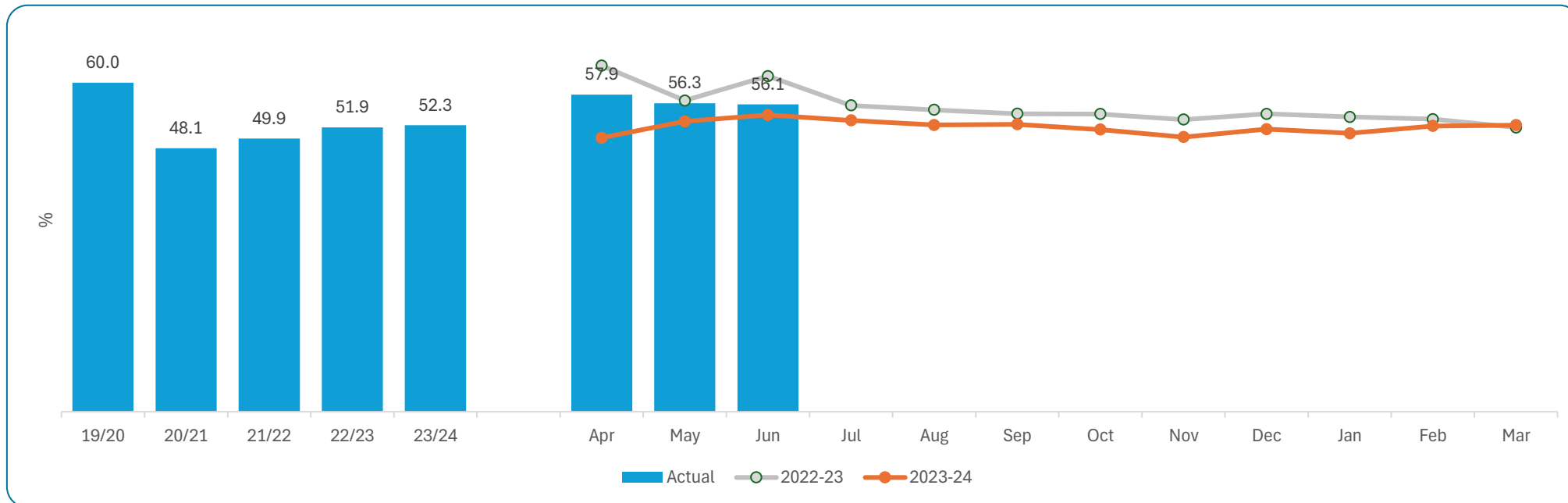
# Adult's Social Care Performance & Practice Report

**Quarter 1 (April - June 2024)**

**Scrutiny**

Independence	
<b>Definition</b>	Numerator: Of those in the denominator, those who have had a completed reablement review with outcomes of 'No services provided or identified', 'Long Term Support Ended', Universal Services/Signposted. Denominator: The total number of clients completing a reablement package during the period
<b>PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS</b>	<p>Performance for this indicator continues to remain consistent.</p> <p>At the end of Quarter 1 it was reported that 34.5% of client needs had decreased, 6.8% needs had increased and 2.7% stayed the same. The remaining 56.1% are those who no longer had ongoing care needs.</p> <p>The number of clients being referred to RIACT as part of a hospital discharge remains consistently high, with an average of 84 hospital discharges being received per month during Quarter 1 of 2024-25. Although not all these referrals progress to receive a service it does demonstrate the increase the service area is currently experiencing.</p>

ASC 019: % of people who have no ongoing care needs following completion of provision of a reablement package at the end of the month.



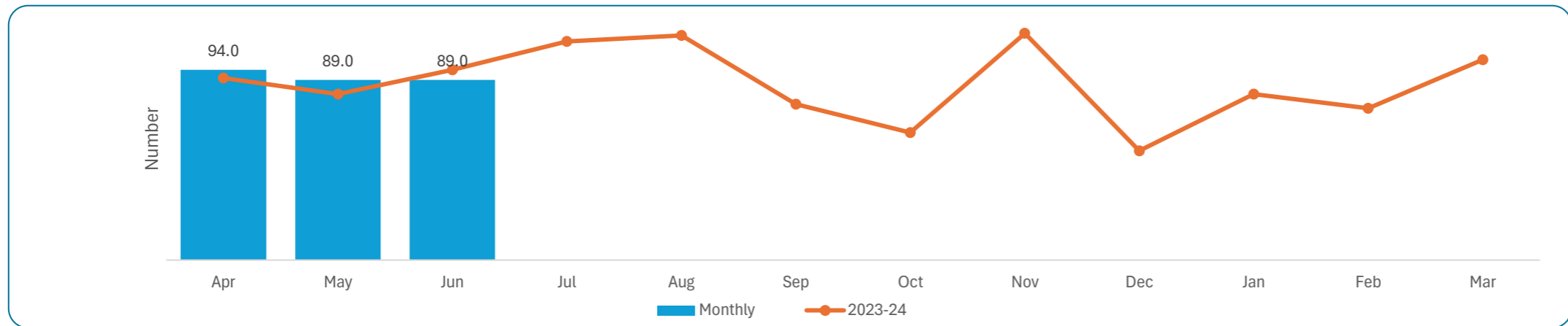
## Safety

**Definition** Number of safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) started - per month

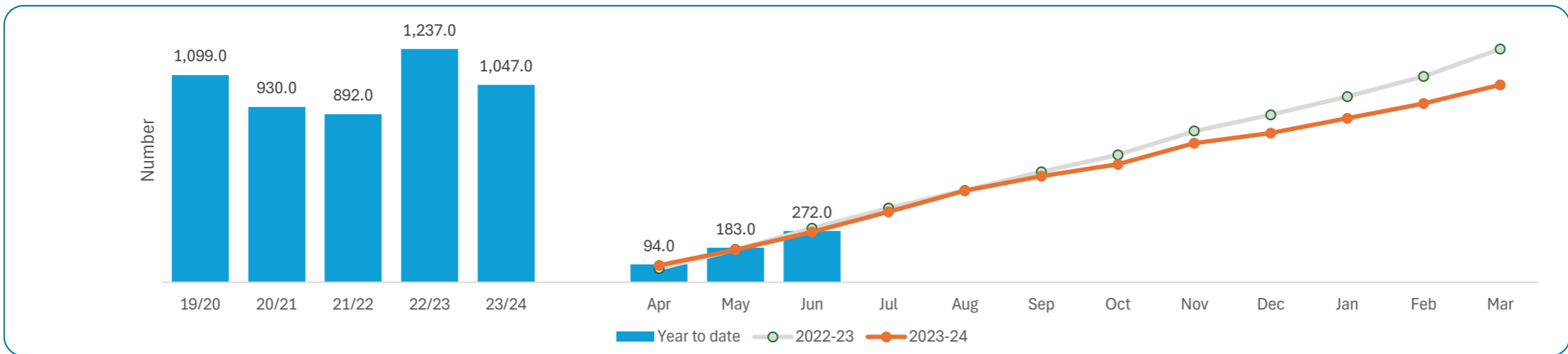
**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** There have been 272 safeguarding enquiries started since April. The breakdown by team receiving safeguarding concerns (initial enquires):

- Safeguarding - 135 (49.6%)
- Adult Mental Health - 36 (13.2%)
- OAIT - 35 (12.9%)
- ACT - 31 (11.3%)
- Adult Learning Disability - 25 (9.1%)
- RIACT - 10 (3.7%)

ASC 209: Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) Started - Per Month



ASC 208: Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) Started - Year to Date

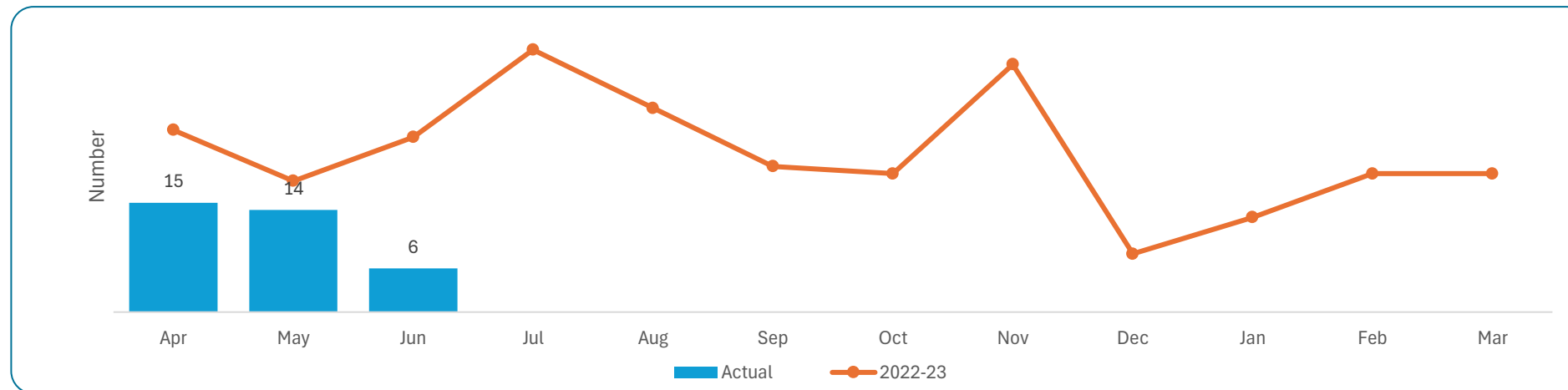


## Safety

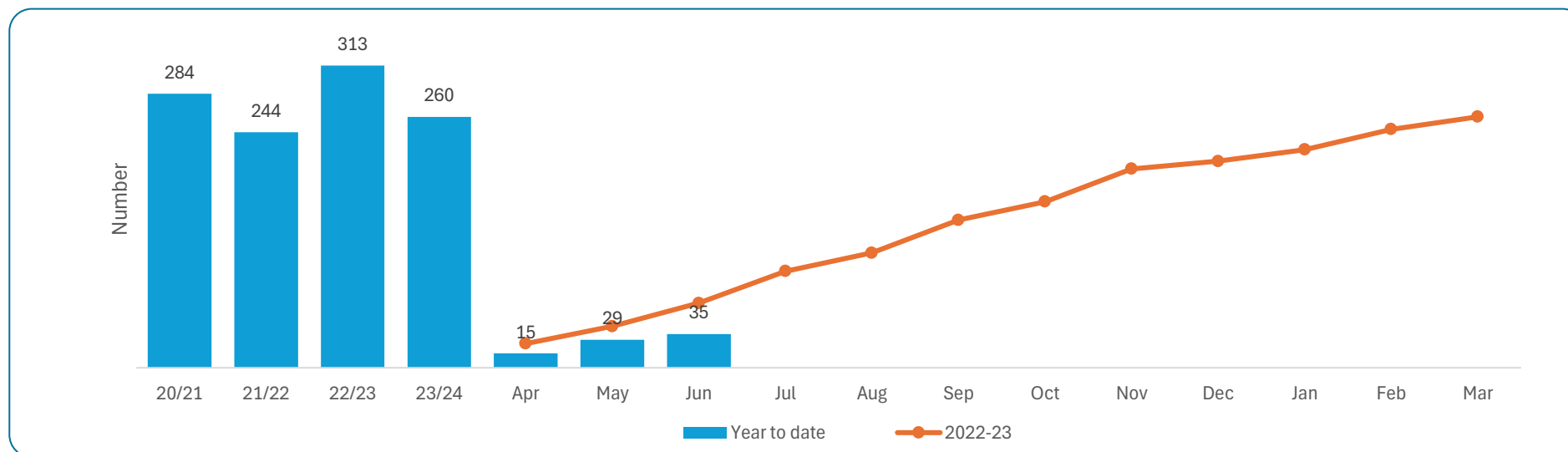
**Definition** Number of strategy meetings undertaken i.e. concerns progressed to strategy per month

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** Of the 272 enquiries started during Q1 2024-25, 35 have progressed to a strategy meeting which represents a 12.8% conversion rate, this is a fall from the same period last year where the conversion rate was 25.1%.

ASC 211: Monthly number of strategy meetings



ASC 211a: Year to date number of strategy meetings undertaken



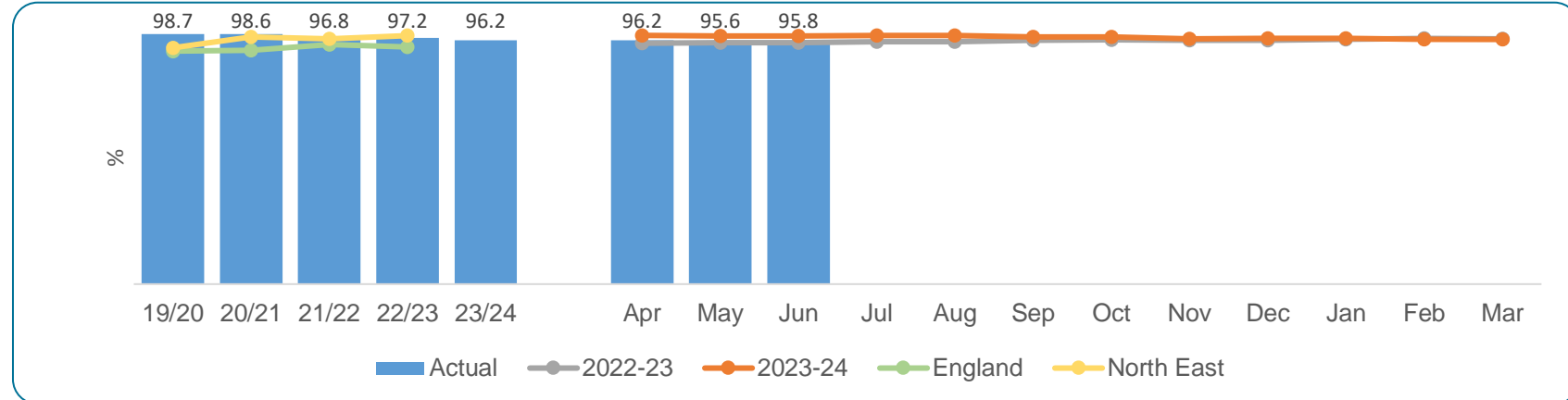


## Empowerment

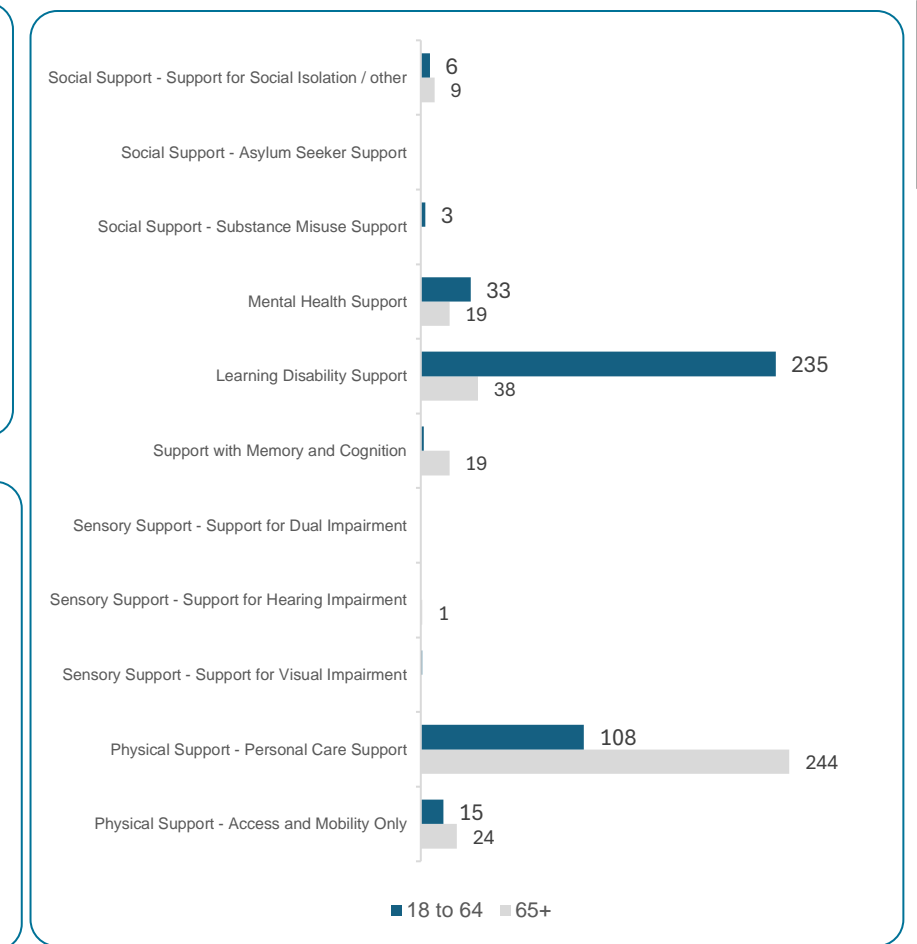
**Definition**  
 Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support.  
 Numerator - the number of users receiving either a) Direct Payments, b) Part Direct Payments or c) CASSR managed Personal Budget at the year end.  
 Denominator - Clients (aged 18 or over) accessing long term community support at the year end.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**  
 The proportion of people using social care who receive self directed support is currently 95.8%, this equates to 736 individuals currently receiving self directed support.

ASC 049: Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support

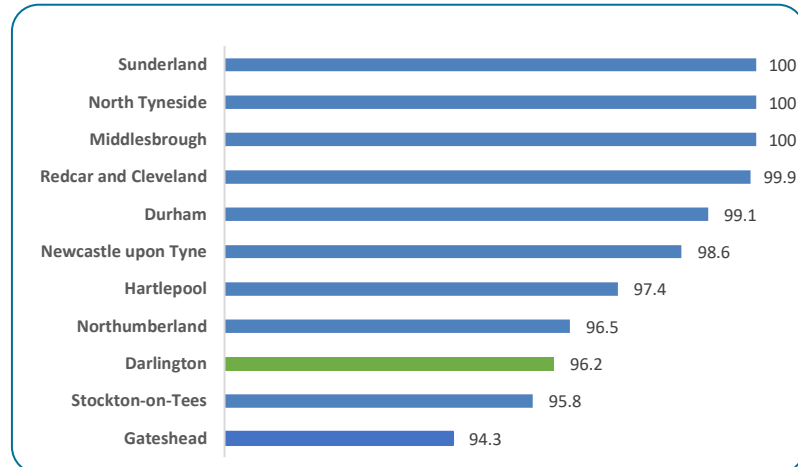


Primary Support Reason

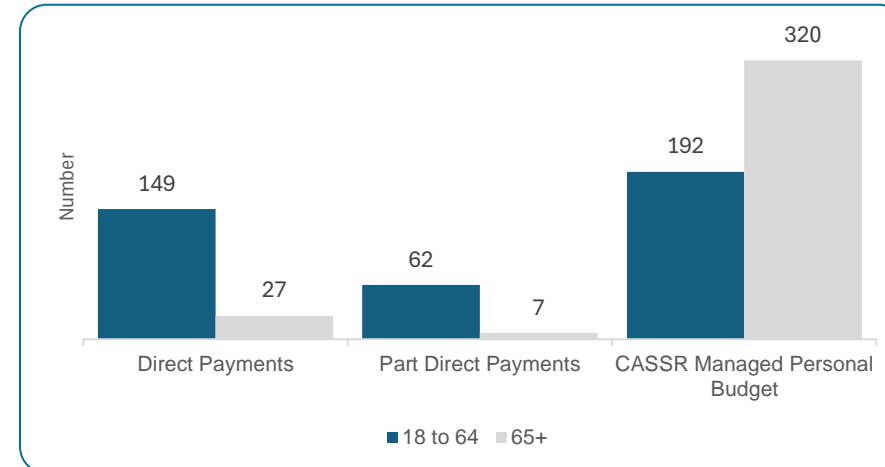


Darlington was ranked **9th** regionally for this indicator in 2023-24 - PROVISIONAL DATA

2023-24 regional results - PROVISIONAL DATA



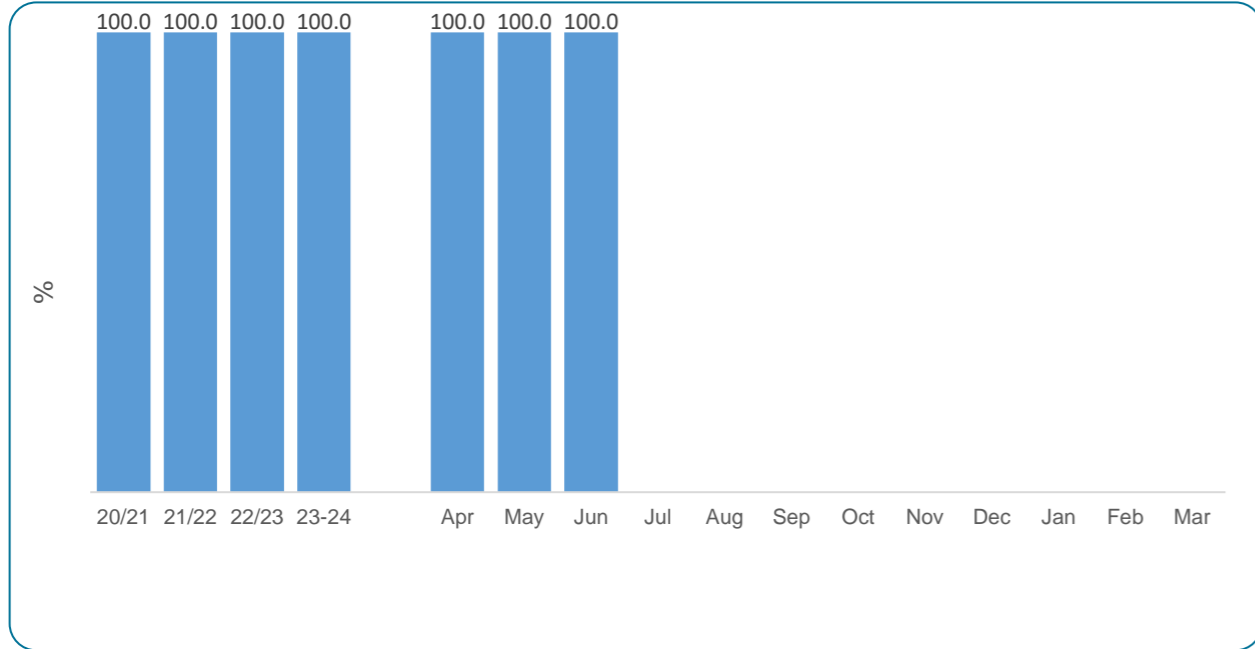
Breakdown of self-direct support



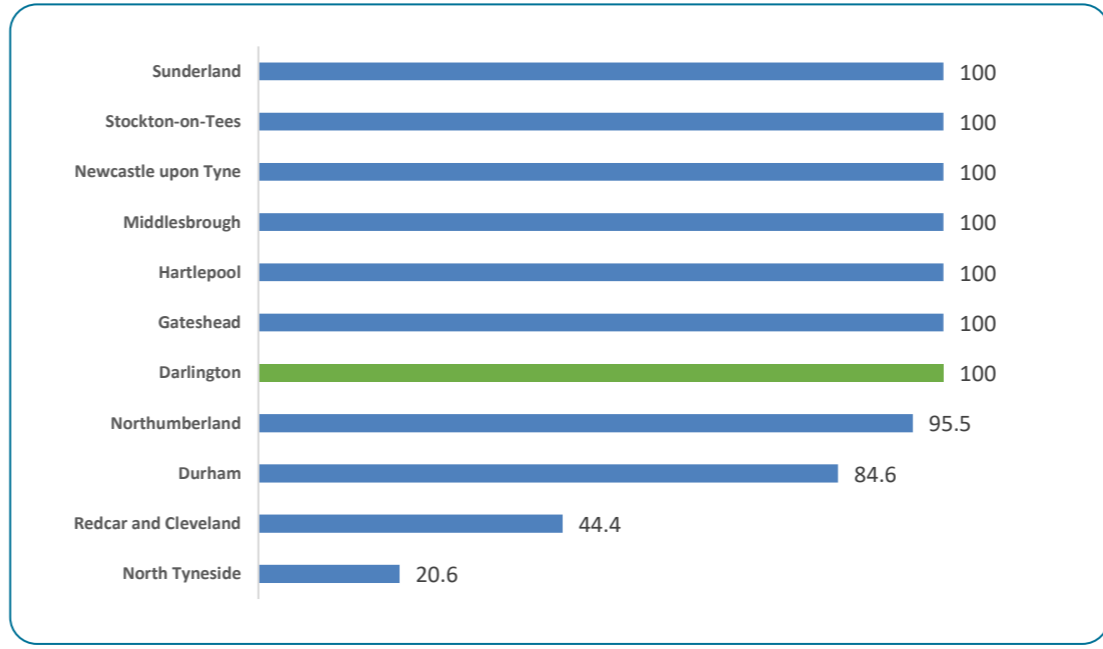
## Empowerment

<b>Definition</b>	Proportion of carers using social care who receive self direct support
	Numerator: The number of users receiving either a) Direct Payments, b) Part Direct Payments or c) CASSR managed Personal Budget at the year end
	Denominator: Carers (caring for someone aged 18 or over) receiving carer-specific services at the year end

ASC 050: Proportion of carers using social care who receive self-directed support



2023-24 regional results - PROVISIONAL DATA



Darlington was ranked **1st (jointly)** regionally for this indicator in 2023-24 - PROVISIONAL DATA

## Independence

**Definition** Avoiding permanent placements in residential and nursing care homes is a good indicator of maximising independence and delaying dependency. However, it is acknowledged that for some people drawing on care admission to residential or nursing care homes can represent an improvement in their situation. This indicator also captures efficiency. Residential and nursing care are often the most expensive forms of interventions. Relying on interventions that maximise independence - where appropriate - would represent a cost saving.

Data source: Client level data, Office of National Statistics

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

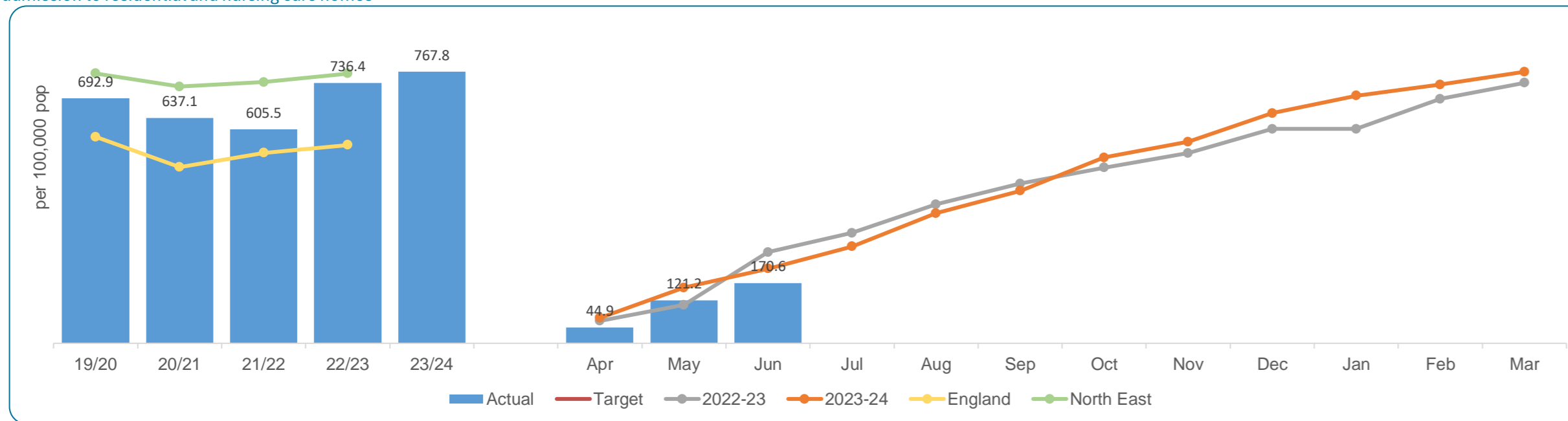
During Quarter 1 of 2024-25 the total number of individuals who moved into permanent residential or nursing care is 38. This is a decrease from 47 in 2023-24 and 41 in 2022-23.

The average length of stay for those individuals currently in permanent care aged 65+ is 32 months.

The average age of individuals moving to permanent residential, or nursing care is 86, which is an increase from the previous 2 years where the figure was 84.

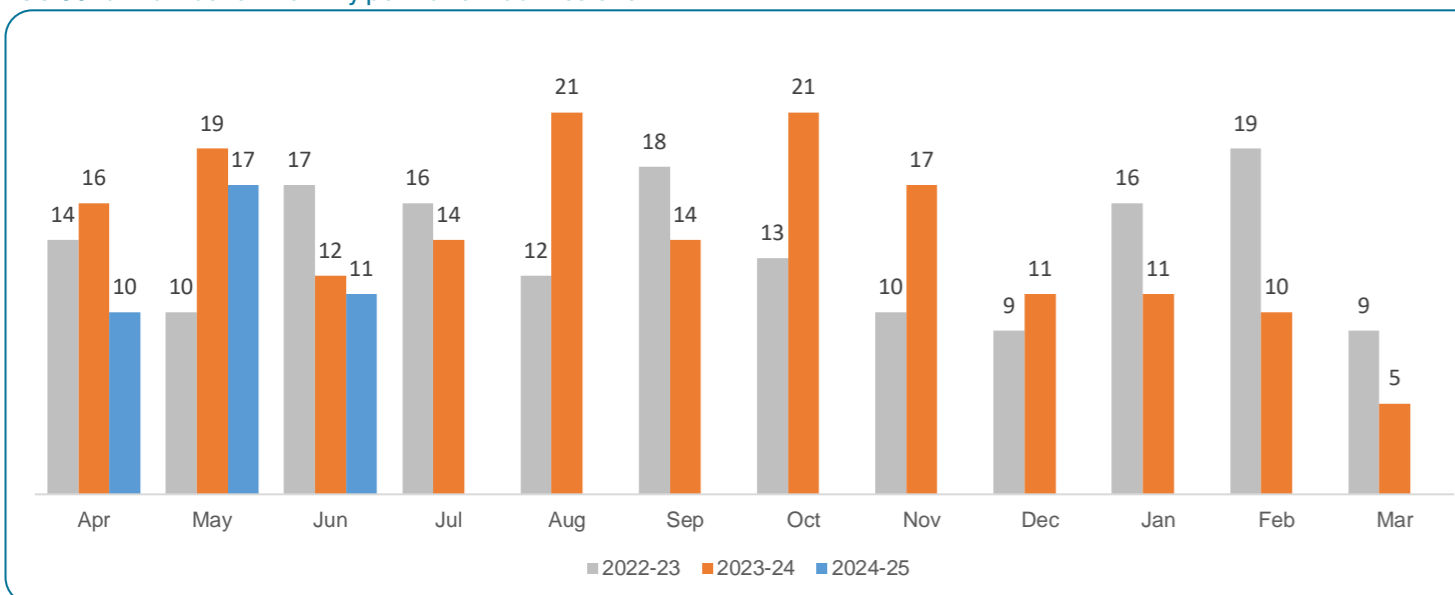
Since April, 34 (89%) individuals moved into permanent residential or nursing care straight from an SBS. The current average length of stay in a SBS before moving to permanent care is 15 weeks, this is an improvement on the average figure of 19 weeks for 2023-24 and 20 weeks for 2022-23.

ASC 002 (ASCOF 2C): The number of adults aged 65 and over whose long-term support needs are met by admission to residential and nursing care homes

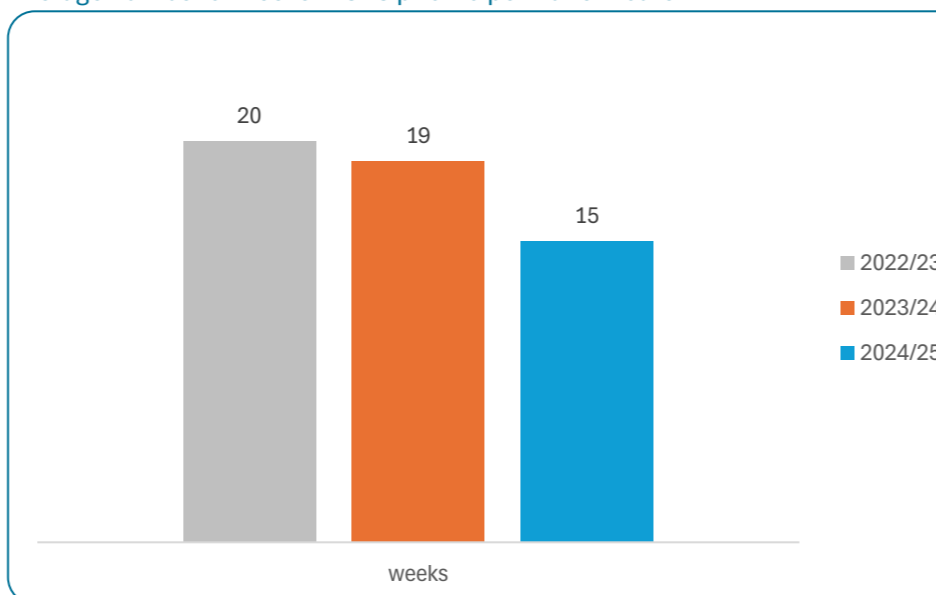


Darlington was ranked **7th** regionally for this indicator in 2023-24 PROVISIONAL DATA

ASC 002a: Number of monthly permanent admissions



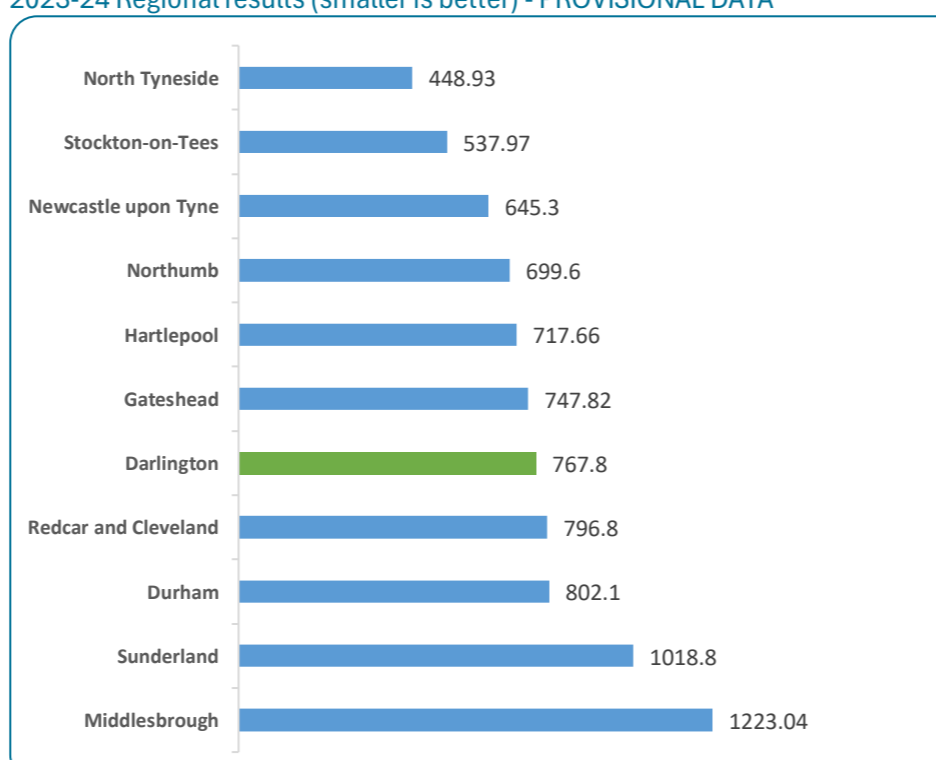
Average number of weeks in SBS prior to permanent care - YTD



Regional Performance (smaller is better) - 2023-24 Regional results - PROVISIONAL DATA

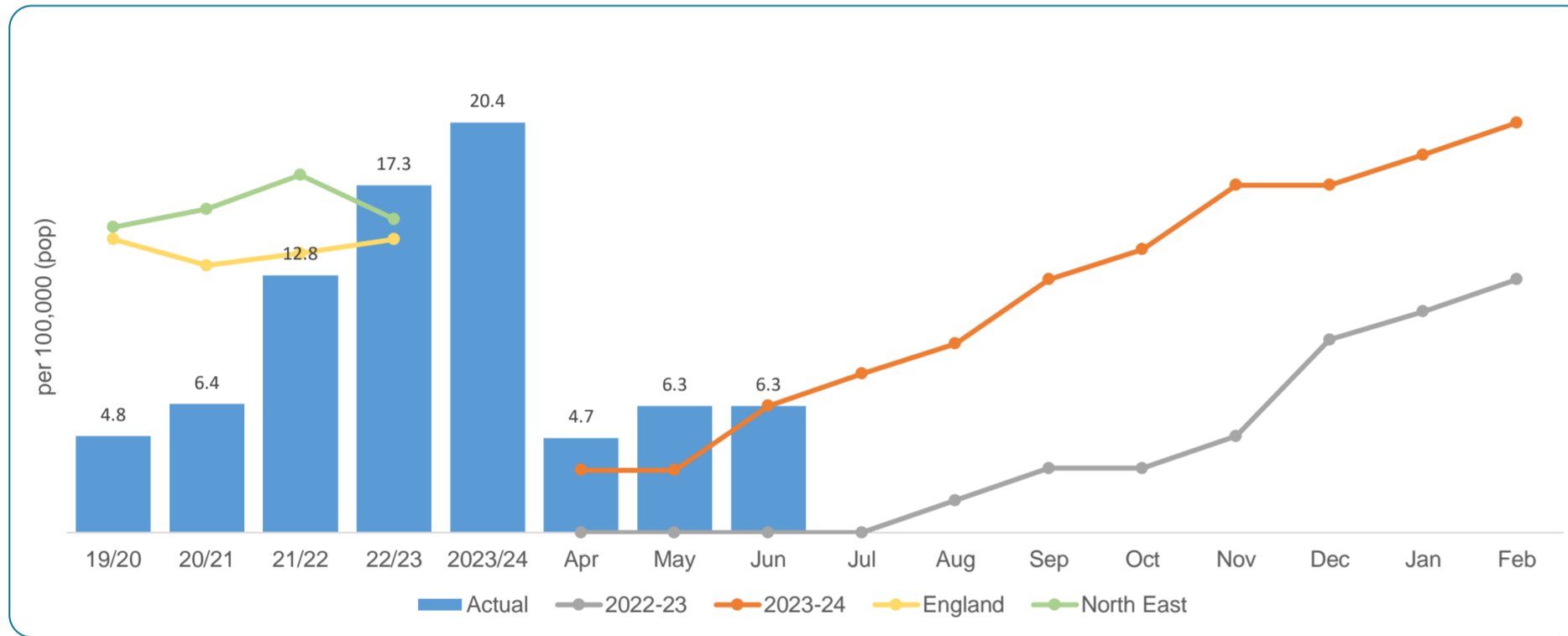


2023-24 Regional results (smaller is better) - PROVISIONAL DATA



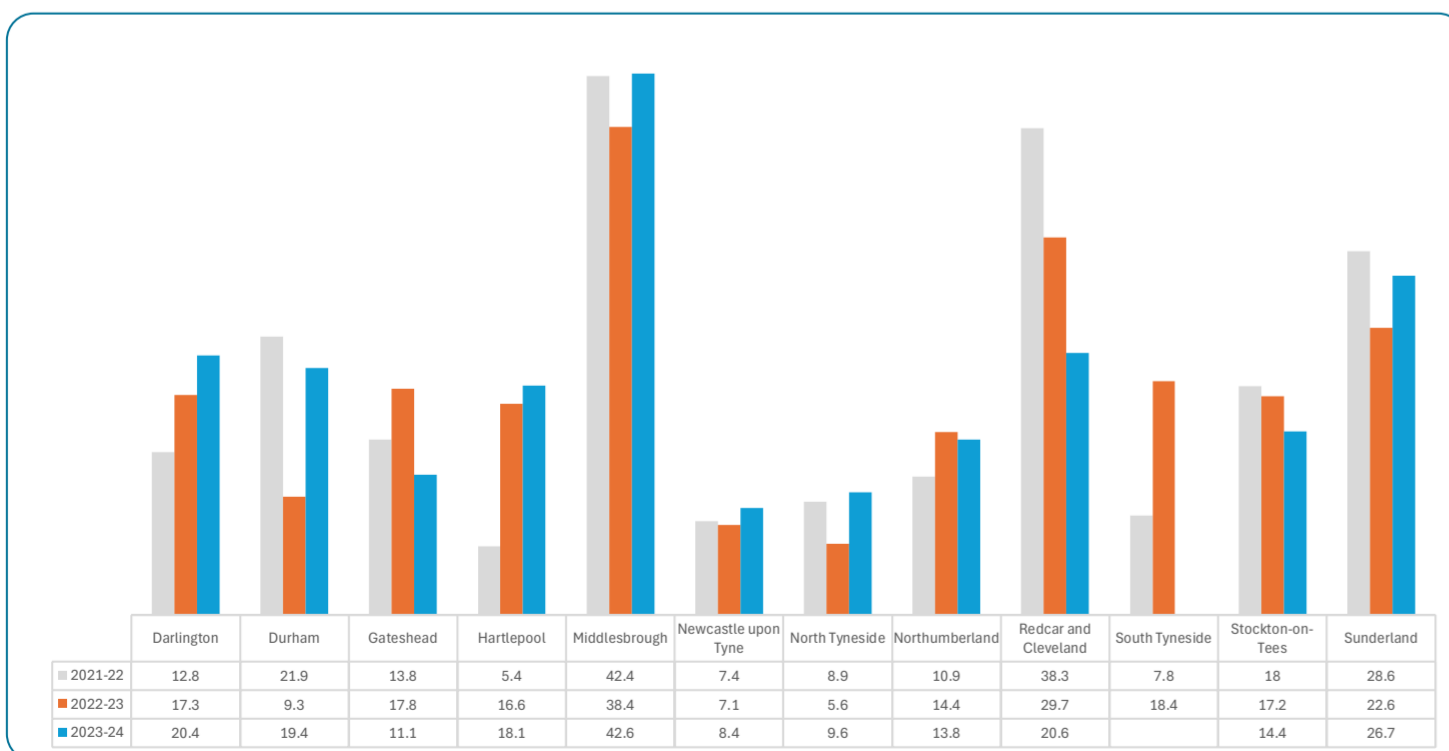
Independence	
<b>Definition</b>	<p>Avoiding permanent placements in residential and nursing care homes is a good indicator of maximising independence and delaying dependency. However, it is acknowledged that for some people drawing on care admission to residential or nursing care homes can represent an improvement in their situation.</p> <p>This indicator also captures efficiency. Residential and nursing care are often the most expensive forms of interventions. Relying on interventions that maximise independence - where appropriate - would represent a cost saving.</p> <p>Data source: Client level data, Office of National Statistics</p>
<b>PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS</b>	<p>There have been 4 18-64-year-olds who have entered permanent care since April 2024, this has resulted in the current performance figure of 6.3.</p> <p>Since 2019-20 the proportion of 18-64-year-olds entering permanent care has increased year on year.</p> <p>The average length of stay for those individuals currently in permanent care aged between 18-64 years old is 52 months.</p> <p>Information gathered from the ADASS Spring Survey 2023 shows that more people are being impacted by social care providers closing or handing back contracts to councils. In the past 6 months 66% of councils that responded, reported that providers in their area had closed, ceased trading, or handed back council contracts.</p> <p>Currently the average age of 18-64-year-olds in permanent residential or nursing care is 47. This is compared to the average age being 55 during the same period last year.</p>

ASC 003 (ASCOF 2B):Adults aged 18-64 admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care

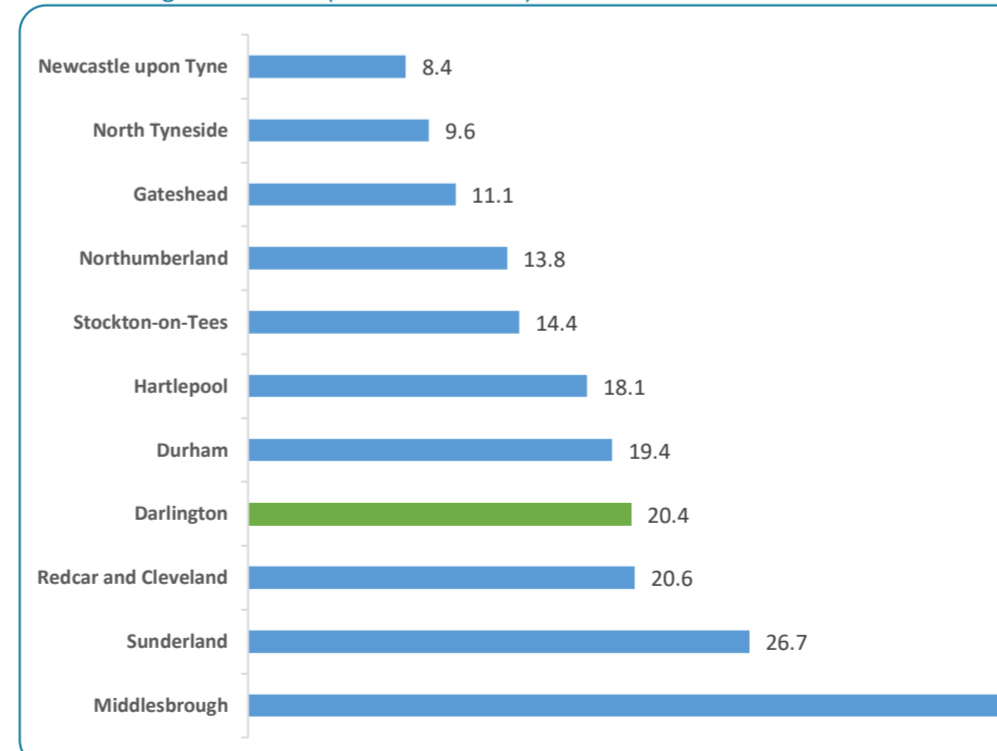


Darlington was ranked **8th** regionally for this indicator in 2023-24 - PROVISIONAL DATA

Regional Performance (smaller is better) - 2023-24 Regional results - PROVISIONAL DATA



2023-24 Regional results (smaller is better) - PROVISIONAL DATA



**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
22 OCTOBER 2024**

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**CLIMATE CHANGE**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To give consideration to the revised briefing note for Scrutiny Committees drafted by the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer, in relation to the Council's commitment to tackling climate change.

**Summary**

2. Following the Local Government elections in 2023, the Climate Emergency Declaration was re-affirmed, and the Council's carbon neutral target was brought forward to 2040. Further aims to increase engagement with residents and businesses were included with the intention of reducing wider borough emissions. A further commitment to monitor the Council's supply chain emissions was also added.
3. A new Climate Change Officer was recruited and joined the Council in January 2024. His focus is internal, working with teams to develop new carbon reduction projects and guiding existing actions in the climate change action plan to fruition.
4. A revised briefing note, which is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report, has been drafted by the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer, and reminds Members that tackling climate change is a shared responsibility. It is deeply connected to other policy issues and local action is necessary for sustainable solutions. The Council needs to be clear how any proposal / project, or how aspects of our work, impacts on our carbon emissions and how it affects our resilience. It is also important that the decisions that the Council makes does not prevent other people from reducing their own emissions or improving their own resilience.
5. It is noted that Scrutiny has a critical role to play in these cross-cutting issues. Climate change as a stand-alone issue sits within the remit of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, however everything the Council does either has an impact on, or is impacted by, climate change so it is important that all Scrutiny Committees ensure that everything that comes before them has considered this. The Council Plan now includes climate change as a key principle underpinning everything the Council does.

## Recommendations

6. It is recommended that
  - a) Members note the advice and guidance provided by Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer in the revised briefing note.
  - b) That the questions outlined in the revised briefing note appear as an appendix to our Agenda, and form part of any submitted Quad of Aims, to ensure that these questions remain in the forefront of Members' mind when scrutinising reports.
  - c) All internal reports coming to this Committee have a small section at the end of each report entitled 'Climate Considerations', with a brief note about any considerations which have been given, where appropriate (This can come with the qualification that the staff within the department are not qualified in climate action).

**Councillor McEwan**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Economy**

## Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Author: Paul Dalton

Council Plan	The Council Plan includes climate change as a key principle underpinning everything the Council does, and the report requests that this Scrutiny Committee give consideration to how it wishes to move forward in supporting this key principle, within the remit of this Committee.
Addressing inequalities	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address.
Tackling Climate Change	The report requests that this Scrutiny Committee give consideration to how it wishes to move forward in supporting the Council Plan's key principle of tackling climate change, within the remit of this Committee.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report has no impact on the Council's Efficiency Programme.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder.
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision

Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers
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## **Briefing for scrutiny committees**

Climate change can affect anyone, but some people have the potential to be more affected than others. How badly a person or group will be affected will depend not just on their exposure to the event, but on their social vulnerability – that is, how well they are able to cope with and respond to events like floods and heatwaves. People and communities experiencing multiple causes of vulnerability are the most extremely socially vulnerable.

Tackling climate change is a shared responsibility. It is deeply connected to other policy issues and local action is necessary for sustainable solutions. We need to be clear how any proposal/project impacts on our carbon emissions and how it affects our resilience. It is also important that the decisions we make do not prevent other people from reducing their own emissions or improving their own resilience.

Scrutiny has a critical role to play in these cross-cutting issues. Climate change as a stand-alone issue sits in the purview of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, but everything we do either has an impact on, or is impacted by, climate change so it is important for all scrutiny committees to also ensure that everything that comes in front of them has considered it.

The Council Plan now includes climate change as a key principle underpinning everything we do. The guidance notes for cabinet and decision papers have also been updated so the “carbon impact” box should never say no impact. Clearly, proposals or projects will differ, depending on what is being discussed, and not all of the questions below will apply to everything that comes to a scrutiny committee, but they should help to tease out how the officers have come to that decision.

### **Questions for scrutiny committee members to ask**

1. Will the proposal/project result in an increase in carbon emissions?
  - How have you ensured that energy is not wasted or lost through poor insulation, heating the wrong areas or inefficient lighting?
  - Will there be an increase in business travel or commuting?
  - How easy will it be for people to travel by public transport, bicycle or walking?
  - Is there a need for travel at all?
  - Will there be an increase in waste disposal?
2. How will you reduce emissions?
  - How can you reduce energy use?
  - How can you reduce use of natural resources?
  - How can you ensure suppliers are working in a sustainable way?
  - How can you reduce waste?
  - How can you improve energy efficiency?
3. Will the proposal have any impacts on biodiversity (positive or negative)?
  - Will there be a net reduction in trees?
  - Are there opportunities for planting?
  - Are there other habitats or wildlife considerations?

4. Does the proposal incorporate/promote the development of renewable energy?
  - How can you increase the use of renewable energy in your project?
5. How can you minimise emissions from transport?
  - How can your project enable and encourage active travel?
  - How can you reduce the need for travel at all?
6. How will you make the proposal/project resilient to the impacts of climate change, such as more frequent severe weather, floods and heatwaves?
  - How can your project be designed to be resilient to these occurrences?
  - How can you ensure the building does not overheat in summer?
  - How will your service travel during these events?
  - How can communities using your service be protected?

#### Supplementary questions

- Does any procurement consider the impact on the environment?
- How does the project/proposal support the climate change strategy, tree and woodland strategy and sustainable communities strategy?
- How does the project/proposal support local businesses and employers to be sustainable?
- How can the project/proposal help develop local skills?

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
22 OCTOBER 2024**

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**WORK PROGRAMME 2024-2025**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2024/25 Municipal Year and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included.

**Summary**

2. Members are requested to consider the attached draft work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the remainder of the Municipal Year, which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and recommendations previously agreed by this Scrutiny Committee.
3. Once the work programme has been approved by this Scrutiny Committee, any additional areas of work which Members wish to add to the agreed work programme will require the completion of a quad of aims in accordance with the previously approved procedure (**Appendix 2**).

**Recommendations**

4. It is recommended that Members note the current status of the Work Programme and consider any additional areas of work they would like to include.
5. Members' views are requested.

**Luke Swinhoe**  
**Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Author: Paul Dalton

Council Plan	The report contributes to the Council Plan in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the Plan. The Work Programme contains items which enable Members to scrutinise those areas that contribute the priority of Living Well – a healthier and better quality of life for longer, supporting those who need it most, and Communities - working together for safer, healthier and more engaged communities.
Addressing inequalities	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report has no impact on the Council’s Efficiency Programme.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder.
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
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Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

6. The format of the proposed work programme has been reviewed to enable Members of this Scrutiny Committee to provide a rigorous and informed challenge to the areas for discussion.
7. The Council Plan was adopted on 18 July 2024, and outlines Darlington Borough Council's long-term ambitions for Darlington and priorities for action over the next three years. It gives strategic direction to the Council and Council services, defining priorities, identifying key actions, and shaping delivery.
8. The Council Plan identifies six priorities, one of which is 'Living Well', which states that more years in good health leads to more fulfilling lives, and a better standard of living, however the Plan highlights that are inequalities in Darlington across all stages of life which are influenced by broader social factors including education, employment, housing and income. Seven key deliverables are identified as part of this priority.
9. The Council believes that all residents should have the opportunity to live longer, healthier lives, and wants to support residents of every age to live well. The Council has committed to improving our contact with carers and working to create a network of support for better health and wellbeing outcomes. The Council will support those who need it most and signpost for access to other provision and support, where appropriate.

### Forward Plan and Additional Items

10. Once the Work Programme has been agreed by this Scrutiny Committee, any Member seeking to add a new item to the work programme will need to complete a Quad of Aims.
11. A copy of the index of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 3** for information.

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**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Link to PMF (metrics)</b>	<b>Scrutiny's Role / Notes</b>
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Joss Harbron		
Commitment to Carers	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Lisa Holdsworth / Alison Donoghue ( <a href="mailto:alison.donoghue@darlingtoncarers.org">alison.donoghue@darlingtoncarers.org</a> ) (Carers Support)		
Domestic Abuse	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Lorraine Hughes / Christine Shields		To receive an overview to understand what actions the Council are taking in relation to their responsibilities under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and coercive control.  <i>(Deferred at the request of Officers whilst a Policy is drafted. Policy will be brought to Scrutiny at a future date for consultation. Permission granted by Chair).</i>
Darlington Care Network for Providers	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Christine Shields / Sukhdev Dosanjh		Request from the Chair (Councillor Anderson)
<b>Performance Indicators Quarter 1 2024/2025 (including budgetary information)</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024</b>	<b>Joss Harbron / Sharon Raine</b>		<b>To monitor Key Performance Indicators.</b>  <b>To receive monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary.</b>

<b>Climate Change</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024</b>	<b>Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Economy / Margaret Enstone</b>		<b>To establish this Committee's response to the Climate Change programme.</b>
<b>Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b>	<b>Brett Nielsen</b>		<b>Annual Scrutiny Consultation on the Medium Term Financial Plan.</b>
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Joss Harbron		
Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic – Update on Task and Finish Group Recommendations	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Joss Harbron		An update on the actions recommended by the Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Group.
Transitional Services	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	<i>Tony Murphy / Jo Littler and Barbara Beadle / Kevin Kelly? TBC</i>		Potentially joint with CYP Scrutiny Committee
Hospital Discharges - Update	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Barbara Beadle / Sarah Appleby, with CDDFT and TEVV		
Autism Strategy and Action Plan Update	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Jamie Tood and Dominic Gardener, TEVV and Martin Short and John Stamp, ICB and DBC (via Joss Harbron as rep.)		



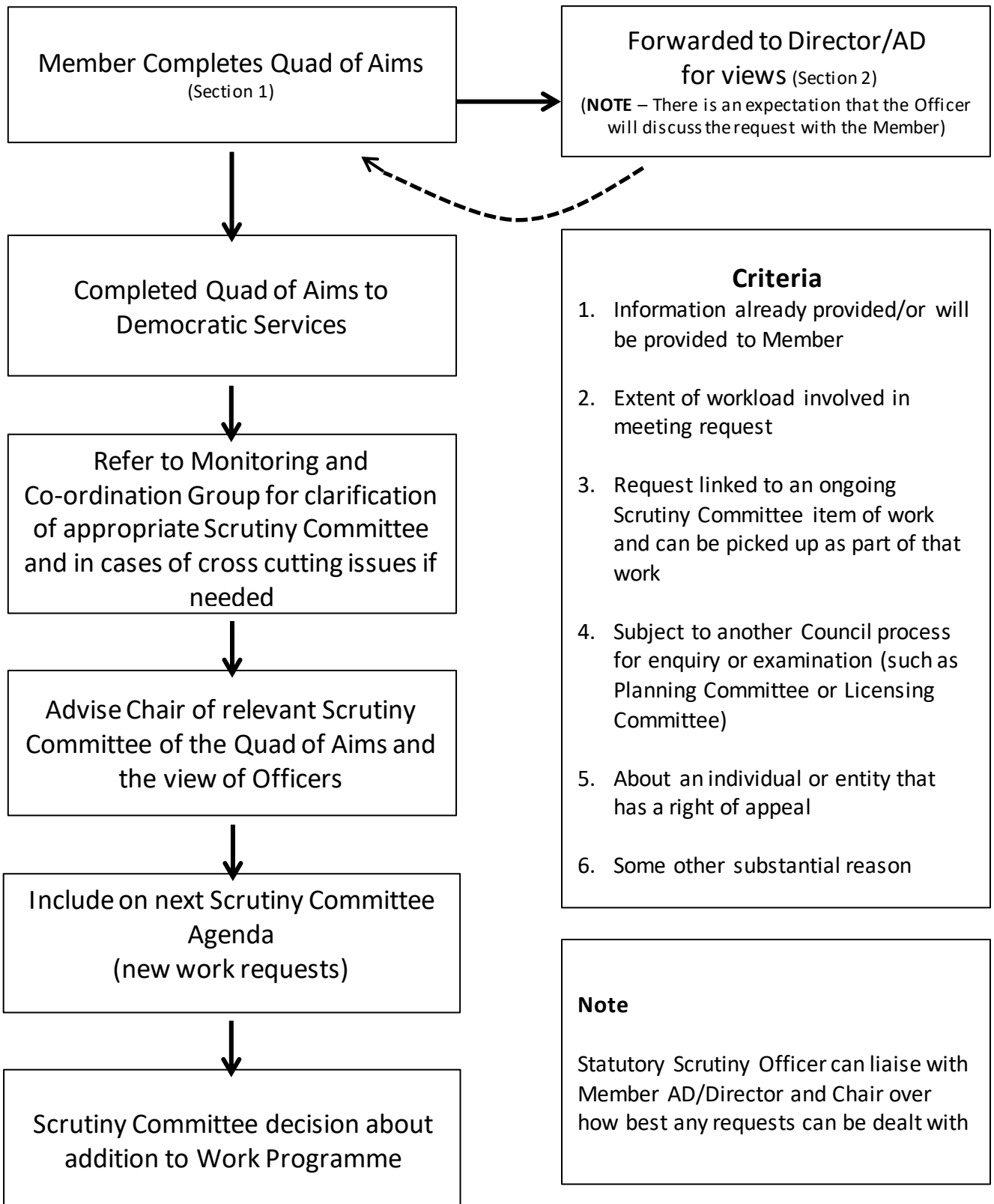
Performance Indicators Quarter 2 2024/2025 (including budgetary information)	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Joss Harbron / Sharon Raine / Wendy Excell	ASC 002 ASC 003 ASC 019 ASC 045 ASC 046 ASC 049 ASC 050 ASC 208 ASC 209 ASC 211	To monitor Key Performance Indicators.  To receive six-monthly monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary.
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Joss Harbron		
Care Homes in Executive Strategy Measures / Arrangements	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Rachel Watt / Joss Harbron / Barbara Beadle		Recommendation from the ‘Nursing Care Homes in Special Measures Task and Finish Group’ – six monthly report to this Committee.
Hoarding and Self-Neglect	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Amanda Hugill / Marion Garland		

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership - Annual Report	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Ann Baxter / Amanda Hugill	ASC 028 ASC 029 ASC 059 ASC 061 ASC 062 ASC 199 ASC 200 ASC 201 ASC 202 ASC 203 ASC 204 ASC 205 ASC 206 ASC 207 ASC 209 ASC 210 ASC 213 ASC 214	To consider the Annual Report on the work of the Board and to receive reassurance that adult safeguarding is being addressed and an effective approach is in place.  To be advised of the key issues for the Board and funding.
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	Joss Harbron		
Overview by Commissioning Services on Shared Lives	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	Christine Shields		Requested by Councillor Toms.
Mapping of Provisions within the Borough including Commissioned Services	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	Christine Shields		Requested by Chair (Councillor Anderson)
Reclaiming Our Communities	To be confirmed			Request from Councillor Toms. To be discussed by Chair outside of the meeting.

**Task and Finish Review Group(s)**

- **‘Loneliness and Connected Communities’ Task and Finish Review Group** – To recommence in 2024/25.

### PROCESS FOR ADDING AN ITEM TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WORK PROGRAMME



## QUAD OF AIMS (MEMBERS' REQUEST FOR ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED BY SCRUTINY)

### SECTION 1 TO BE COMPLETED BY MEMBERS

**NOTE** – This document should only be completed if there is a clearly defined and significant outcome from any potential further work. This document should **not** be completed as a request for or understanding of information.

REASON FOR REQUEST?	RESOURCE (WHAT OFFICER SUPPORT WOULD YOU REQUIRE?)
PROCESS (HOW CAN SCRUTINY ACHIEVE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOME?)	HOW WILL THE OUTCOME MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Signed Councillor .....

Date .....

**SECTION 2 TO BE COMPLETED BY DIRECTORS/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS  
(NOTE – There is an expectation that Officers will discuss the request with the Member)**

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1. (a) Is the information available elsewhere? Yes ..... No .....	Criteria
If yes, please indicate where the information can be found (attach if possible and return with this document to Democratic Services) .....	1. Information already provided/or will be provided to Member
(b) Have you already provided the information to the Member or will you shortly be doing so? .....	2. Extent of workload involved in meeting request
2. If the request is included in the Scrutiny Committee work programme what are the likely workload implications for you/your staff? .....	3. Request linked to an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and can be picked up as part of that work
3. Can the request be included in an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and picked up as part of that? .....	4. Subject to another Council process for enquiry or examination (such as Planning Committee or Licensing Committee)
4. Is there another Council process for enquiry or examination about the matter currently underway? .....	5. About an individual or entity that has a right of appeal
5. Has the individual or entity some other right of appeal? .....	6. Some other substantial reason
6. Is there any substantial reason (other than the above) why you feel it should not be included on the work programme? .....	

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**Signed .....**   **Position .....**   **Date .....**

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
FORWARD PLAN**

**APPENDIX 3**



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

**FORWARD PLAN  
FOR THE PERIOD: 2 OCTOBER 2024 - 28 FEBRUARY 2025**

Title	Decision Maker and Date
Offset Strategy	Cabinet 8 Oct 2024
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2025/29	Cabinet 8 Oct 2024
Schedule of Transactions	Cabinet 8 Oct 2024
Annual Procurement Plan Update	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Children and Young People's Plan	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Council Tax Support - Scheme Approval 2025/26	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Environment Act 2021 - Waste Management Arrangements	Council 28 Nov 2024
	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Household Support Fund 2025	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Housing Services Tenant Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2024/29	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Skerningham Masterplan Consideration	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2024/27	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Council Plan Performance Reporting Update	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Housing Revenue Account - Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/27 to 2028/29	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Land at Coniscliffe Road, Darlington	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Land at Faverdale - Burtree Garden Village - Proposed Infrastructure Development Agreement (IDA)	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Mid Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2024/25	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Proposed Middleton St George Conservation Area - Consultation	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Strategic Asset Plan	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Maintained Schools Capital Programme - Summer 2025	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Woodland Road Waiting Restrictions	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Capital Strategy	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Customer Services Strategy 2025/30	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Digital Darlington Strategy 2025-30	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Housing Revenue Account - Medium Term Financial Plan	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
FORWARD PLAN**

2025/27 to 2028/29	
Review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	Council 27 Mar 2025 Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025/30	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Schools Admissions 2025/26	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024	Cabinet
Annual Statement of Accounts 2022/23	Cabinet