



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

Adults Scrutiny Committee Agenda

9.30 am Tuesday, 26 August 2025

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 10 June 2026
(Pages 3 - 6)
4. CQC Assurance Framework Update – Report of the Assistant Director, Adult Social Care.
(Pages 7 - 12)
5. Assessment of Services Commissioned from Out of Area – Report of the Assistant Director-Performance, Transformation and Commissioning.
(Pages 13 - 16)
6. Performance Indicators End of Year 2024/2025 – Report of the Assistant Director of Adult Services.
(Pages 17 - 30)
7. Work Programme 2024/25 – Report of the Assistant Director, Law and Governance
(Pages 31 - 46)
8. 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.
9. Questions

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'A. Wennington', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Amy Wennington
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Friday 15th August 2025.

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

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

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact James McAllister, Democratic Officer, Resources and Governance 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, 10 June 2025

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

APOLOGIES – Councillors Donoghue and Renton.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Curry.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – James McAllister (Democratic Officer).

AD47 INTRODUCTIONS/ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

AD48 TO CONSIDER THE DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS OF THIS COMMITTEE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/2026

The provisional dates set for this Committee were approved for the new Municipal year.

AD49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

AD50 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 1ST APRIL 2025

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 1 April 2025 be approved as a correct record.

AD51 SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXECUTIVE STRATEGY PROCESS

The Head of Adults introduced a report outlining the Council's safeguarding responsibilities and the executive strategy process. A presentation was prepared in advance for the meeting which touched upon both areas, focusing upon the protection of vulnerable adults.

In terms of Safeguarding, The Head of Adults reinforced that Council operates under the statutory framework of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership (DSP henceforth), and that the Council has a responsibility to ensure that all commissioned agencies work in line with such framework and in line with the Care Act 2014.

With regards to the Executive Strategy Process, this was described as a multi-agency framework designed to address serious safeguarding concerns, including organisational abuse and complex cases. It ensures that safeguarding responses are coordinated, person-centred, and legally compliant.

The presentation detailed how the service area carries out a self-audit, identifying both areas of strength and areas of development and subsequently acting on areas that require more attention. Expectations and an improvement plan are outlined after also speaking to staff,

residents and family members to garner a more holistic view. The focus here being to ensure the safety of the current cohort of residents.

The Head of Adults made reference to the Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABS henceforth) which is required to be established by every Local Authority. The role of a SAB is to develop safeguarding strategies, conduct Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs henceforth), and promote inter-agency cooperation. With regards to SARs, such reviews must be conducted when an adult or is seriously harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, and there is concern about how agencies worked together. Here in the discussion, reference was made to a 'safeguarding triage', with both officers emphasising how human rights are at the centre of this practice.

The Head of Adults and Safeguarding Service Manager then alluded to care homes that are both still within and have passed through the executive strategy process, outlining reasoning for adoption into the strategy and satisfaction that certain establishments can exit the strategy.

Further reference was made to the service area's prevention duty, notably undertaking a risk notification pilot which has prevented 330 safeguarding incidents per annum thus far. Additionally, both officers touched upon the CPD delivered to staff, which they ensured was evidence-based training.

Brief reference was made to the recent CQC inspection carried out within the service area which returned a positive result, and Members shared very positive sentiments towards this and the staff within the service area.

In terms of areas of malpractice, there were multiple mentioning's of medication being distributed incorrectly, and this was picked up on and questioned by Members present at the meeting. Specific questions were posed regarding whether the multiple cases of this had similar causes, which the officers responded to saying that high levels of staff turnover and thus subsequent lack of training and sufficient management had resulted in an 'as and when' protocol being adopted in some cases which proved to be an issue. The officers addressed the efforts being made to combat this issue going forward.

Members also commended officers regarding the service area's constant engagement and dialogue with both providers and patients, connections built with staff, people and families, all of which having been recognised by the CQC inspection.

Members made reference to the positive feedback on the Risk Notification Pilot, asking a question regarding the level of inquiry's received, the conversion rate, and how the Council compares to neighbouring authorities. Officers responded with promising figures, especially considering the size of the team.

Finally, Members referred to the previously mentioned practice of monitoring closed cases and questioned whether this was over-management and perhaps not the best use of resources. Officers responded by reassuring the committee that this is a very successful practice as it allows the team to identify areas of success and ensure that this is continued going forward.

Recommended- That Members note the contents of the report and the subsequent presentation.

RESOLVED – Members noted the report and the subsequent presentation.

AD52 WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

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 2025/26, and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.

Following the Annual Briefing of this Scrutiny Committee, a draft Work Programme had been prepared, and Members agreed that the provisional items and timeframes be approved.

Members requested that an items on the subject of Learning Disabilities and Adult Day Services be incorporated into the Work Programme for 2025/26, which officers in attendance agreed to facilitate.

The Chair reminded the Members that items pertinent to this committee which appear on the Forward Plan can be incorporated into the Work Programme without the use of a Quad of Aims.

The Chair also discussed the potentiality of Cross-Committee Scrutiny meetings to discuss items which fall under multiple service areas. This was well received and updates on such were agreed to be followed up.

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**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
26 AUGUST 2025**

CQC ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK – UPDATE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update and inform Scrutiny on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance framework and inspection activity.

Summary

2. The inspection, carried out by CQC in January 2025, is part of a new national framework designed to assess local authorities and ensure that people are receiving high-quality care and support.
3. We had to provide a Local Authority Information Return (LAIR), Self-Assessment several cases for tracking, feedback from partners, carers, people who use services and in January 2025 an on-site inspection.
4. The final report was published on 30 May 2025 with an outcome of GOOD, with an overall rating of 73%.
5. This is a significant achievement for the Local Authority (LA) and testament to the hard work, commitment and dedication of the adult service teams and wider colleagues who have worked tirelessly to achieve this outcome.
6. The score of 73% has placed the LA as one of the highest rated adult services in the country. This is an amazing success for a small LA.
7. James Bullion, CQC's chief inspector of adult social care and integrated care, said: "At this assessment of Darlington Borough Council's adult social care services, we found a positive culture between staff and leaders, which was reflected in their commitment to continuous learning to help improve services and meet the needs of the local population. People's feedback was mainly positive about their care and support, and people felt they had more control over their daily lives. It was positive to hear that carers in Darlington were more satisfied with social services (52.38%) than the national average (36.83%). The authority was working well with partners around hospital discharge. For example, after someone was discharged from hospital, a social worker worked with partners to organise equipment to support them at home. This was installed the same day which meant the person could retain their independence. We heard about examples of direct payments being used to support people for a range of needs, including when their first language wasn't English. The local authority offered care and support from a personal assistant who spoke their first language, which was arranged and funded through a direct payment. However, the

assessment team found that more work was needed around the local authority engaging with people in the local community and seldom heard groups, so they have more involvement in developing strategies, to help improve services for people living across Darlington. However, plans were in place to develop engagement with relevant groups. Overall, Darlington Borough Council should be really pleased with the many positive findings in our report and are already building on this with further improvement plans. We look forward to returning to see how they have built on areas of good practice and how their plans mature.”

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that: -
- (a) Members note the content of the report.
 - (b) Assistant Director to provide updates to members on areas of improvement within the Adult Services transformation plan service reports in subsequent scrutiny committees.

Joss Harbron
Assistant Director of Adult Social Care

Background Papers

- (i) [CQC rates Darlington Borough Council’s adult social care provision as good - Care Quality Commission](#)

Joss Harbron Extension: 5278

Council Plan	The report and the activity to support the preparation for regulation and inspection is aligned to the Council Plan priorities.
Addressing inequalities	This programme has no specific impact on protected groups however all inequalities are considered. In relation to the findings of the report, the service has clear plans to address inequalities further and embed it’s “Stronger Together” strategy within the local community.
Tackling Climate Change	This report has considered climate impact and change. All consideration was undertaken with sustainability in mind and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources where possible. The feedback and evidence for CQC assurance framework has been developed electronically and shared via emails, Teams or in the main through virtual events. Adult Services have appointed practitioners to lead on climate change within the service and develop literature and information to share with people who access services.
Efficient and effective use of resources	Key aims with Adult Services is to deliver efficient, effective and person-centred care which supports a strength-based approach

	aligned to the requirements of the Care Act and includes effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	The strategy outlined in this report will continue the Council's drive to deliver services and support that enhance people's life chances and opportunities to thrive.
S17 Crime and Disorder	N/A
Wards Affected	All Darlington Wards.
Groups Affected	All adults with social care needs in Darlington.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not impact on the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This report is an update.
Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The proposed projects have no specific impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

Main Report

9. The CQC assessed us against nine different quality statements .
 - (a) Assessing needs;
 - (b) Supporting people to lead healthier lives;
 - (c) Equity in experience and outcomes;
 - (d) Care provision, integration and continuity;
 - (e) Partnerships and communities;
 - (f) Safe pathways, systems and transitions;
 - (g) Safeguarding;
 - (h) Governance, management and sustainability;
 - (i) Learning, improvement and innovation.
10. We received Good in eight of the nine quality statements, with a Requires Improvement for Equity in Experience and Outcomes.
11. The report recognised the strengths of Darlington's approach, which focuses on independence, choice, dignity and community support.
12. The inspectors highlighted several key areas of good practice:
 - (a) Darlington provided a good level of Adult Social Care (ASC) service and support.
 - (b) There was a consistent strength-based assessment programme with flexible approaches from staff as well as supportive management around support planning.
 - (c) Carers were identified they received a good level of support and national data was positive. Risk prioritisation was evident across all assessments.
 - (d) There were no delays to hospital discharge.
 - (e) Data around reablement and outcomes following discharge were better than average.

- (f) The 'Making Every Contact Count' approach, had an effective impact on support in the community.
 - (g) Clear plans to further embed public health approaches in its ASC work to address health inequalities.
 - (h) There was good partnership working in the discharge of the better care fund and work had been done to address gaps in the care market.
 - (i) There was also a good quality assurance support service from the Local Authority (LA) and additional funding had been provided to support the home care market.
 - (j) Collaborative working with partners was evident, particularly in relation to hospital discharge and the interface they had with social work teams.
 - (k) Section 75 agreements worked well with co-location and multidisciplinary team working embedded.
 - (l) Academic work undertaken with the university was brought back by social workers into practice.
 - (m) We commission the voluntary community and social enterprise sector to provide services to support people in the community and there were market engagement sessions which fostered a positive relationship with providers.
 - (n) There was mostly positive feedback about transitions to adult services.
 - (o) Safeguarding arrangements were effective and proportionate to the size of the LA and involved shared arrangements with the children's safeguarding board.
 - (p) There was a good performance on deprivation of liberties assessments and good oversight of decision making of the S42 threshold, via a dip sampling method.
 - (q) CQC found open and transparent relationships with senior leaders and staff felt they had the ability to challenge and influence policies and practice.
 - (r) Leaders had an impact on staff retention, and we heard reports of a positive workplace culture. A key feature of the work of leaders in recent years, had been to embed practice and validation forums. These effectively supported staff learning.
 - (s) The LA demonstrated a commitment to continuous learning related to cultural needs and commissioned external training.
13. While there were some areas where improvements can still be made - such as increasing access to accessible information, reducing waiting times for certain assessments, ensuring co-production and equality are at the heart of service improvements - the CQC praised the Council for recognising these issues and already taking action.
14. The CQC also noted how well Darlington works in partnership with the NHS, voluntary and community organisations, and local care providers. The Council's approach to prevention,

including early support and practical help at home, was praised for keeping people independent for longer.

Subsequent Actions

Increasing access to accessible information.

15. Adult Services are working with Disability Action Darlington to seek feedback on the Darlington Borough Council (DBC) Adult Services web pages, specific procedures and practice guidance. Together they are sourcing and developing easy read and accessible information.

Reducing waiting times for certain assessments.

16. Adult Services have an established reporting system to review waiting times for all assessments. This is monitored on a regular basis by the leadership team.
17. The key indicators are:
 - (a) Care Act Assessment open 28 days.
 - (b) Carers Assessment over 28 days.
 - (c) Occupational Therapy Assessment over 60 days.
 - (d) Overdue reviews (i.e. over 12 months).

Ensuring co-production and equality are at the heart of service improvements.

18. Adult Services have worked in partnership with Partners in Health and Care Improvement to undertake a self-assessment of the teams understanding of diversity within practice. The feedback has enabled the development of an equality, diversity and inclusion action plan to be led by the Head of Practice and Quality and shared with the teams.
19. The teams are also working closely with Public Health on the exploration of Neighbourhood Health and inclusion of “harder to reach groups” such as Gypsy Roma Traveller etc.

Conclusion.

As reflected in the summary report Adult Services will continue to drive learning and developments within practice and service delivery. The Assistant Director will provide updates at subsequent Scrutiny meetings.

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**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
26 AUGUST 2025**

ADULT SOCIAL CARE – OUT OF AREA PLACEMENTS

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of current Out of Area (OOA) placements in residential, nursing or respite care (Short Break Stays) and Day Opportunities and the reasons these placements have been made.

Summary

2. ADASS (Association for Directors of Adult Social Services) defines the term “Out of Area” as relates to an *“individual’s care and support needs being delivered in a local authority area that is different from the local authority with the statutory responsibility for the provision of that care and support”*. Currently, there are 64 individuals placed outside Darlington Borough including residential, nursing or respite care. 44% of the out of area placements are placed within 0-20 miles of Darlington Borough’s boundary and a further 40% between 0-50 miles of the boundary. There are a range of reasons for adult services securing placements out of area which include the transfer of responsibility to Darlington following an “Ordinary Residence” determination, individuals and families exercising their right of choice to be near support networks, Ministry of Justice decision, historic placements when Darlington was part of Durham County Council’s jurisdiction and placement breakdown and there is no available local providers due to the specialist/challenging care needs.
3. In addition, there are 22 individuals who access day services out of borough (although they permanently reside in Darlington) at a cost of £402,814.03 for the 24/25 financial year. The reasons for these placements are the complexity of the individual’s needs including those transitioning from children to adult’s services.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that Members: -
 - (a) Consider Darlington Borough Council’s current Out of Area placement arrangements.
 - (b) Note the key areas for development.

Christine Shields
Assistant Director-Performance, Transformation and Commissioning

Background Papers

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

Sukhdev Dosanjh:5651

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	Key aims with Adult Services is to deliver efficient, effective and person-centred care which supports a strength-based approach aligned to the requirements of the Care Act and includes effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	This work supports the priorities set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All wards.
Groups Affected	All groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not impact on 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.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Profile of the Out of Area Placements

- On 27 May 2025, there were 64 individuals placed outside Darlington Borough in either Residential, Nursing or Respite care (Short Break Stays). This is comprised of 38 individuals in residential care, 21 individuals in nursing care: five individuals in respite care. There are currently nine placements outside of the north-east, with Plymouth being the furthest away.
- Of the remaining 55, 17 have been placed within the Tees Valley and 39 elsewhere in the Northeast of England. The longest out of area placement has been 25 years (2003). The average age of those in out of area placements is 64 years old. The youngest being 20 and the oldest being 98.

Expenditure

- The cost of OOA residential, nursing and respite care placements are approximately £3.5M and represent 13% of the total spend on residential care placements by the Council.

Rationale for Placements

8. There are a range of reasons which has led to out of area placements to be made. These include: Ordinary Residence (Section 117 Mental Health Act, 1983) transfer of responsibility to Darlington, individuals and families exercise of choice to be near support networks, Ministry of Justice decision, historic placements when Darlington was part of Durham County Council's jurisdiction and placement breakdown and there are no available local providers due to the specialist/challenging care needs.

Notification of placements

9. The Association of Directors for Adult Services (ADASS) has developed a protocol for "Out of Area" placements particularly emphasising the need for quality assurance and safeguarding oversight. The Council, in accordance with this protocol, notifies all host authorities when individuals are placed in their area.

Key areas for Development

10. A programme of work will be undertaken to review all out of area placements to ensure that as many services as possible are provided within the Borough. Of particular importance are Day Opportunities where a programme of work is underway to determine the inter-relationship between the role the Council's in-house services and that of commissioned day service provision. An options appraisal will be developed to help determine the future model of day services including any out of area day service provision.
11. Development opportunities are also underway across SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Education providers, Skills for Life, health, Commissioning and Adult Social Services to develop a local personalised learning college in Darlington for September 2026. Proposals are in their infancy and will require approval. In developing a provision locally, it is hoped that opportunities for next steps can be explored to align with education endings to transition to community-based support within people's own communities to reduce the need for expensive out of area day provision when Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) end.

Outcome of Consultation

12. The Older Person Residential Framework Agreement was agreed in April 2024 following a consultation exercise with local care providers. The Council also commissioned Health watch Darlington to seek the views of people receiving Day Opportunities.

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ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
26 AUGUST 2025

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS END OF YEAR 2024-25

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, eight on a quarterly basis and two annually.
- 5. Performance of 10 of the 12 indicators reported at the end of year of 2024/25:
 - (a) One indicator is showing performance has improved in comparison to the same period last year:

ASC055	The proportion of people who are carers who find it easy to find information about services.
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- (b) Two indicators performance are comparable with the same time last year.

ASC 050	(ASCOF 1C (1b)) Proportion of carers using social care who receive self-directed support.
ASC019	Percentage of people who have no ongoing care needs following completion of provision of a reablement package.

(c) Four indicator's performance is lower than the same time last year

ASC 049	(ASCOF 1C (1a)) Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support.
ASC002	(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.
ASC003	(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.
ASC054	The proportion of people who use Adult Care services who find it easy to find information about services.

(d) 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.

(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**.

Recommendation

7. 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.

Joss Harbron: 5278

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

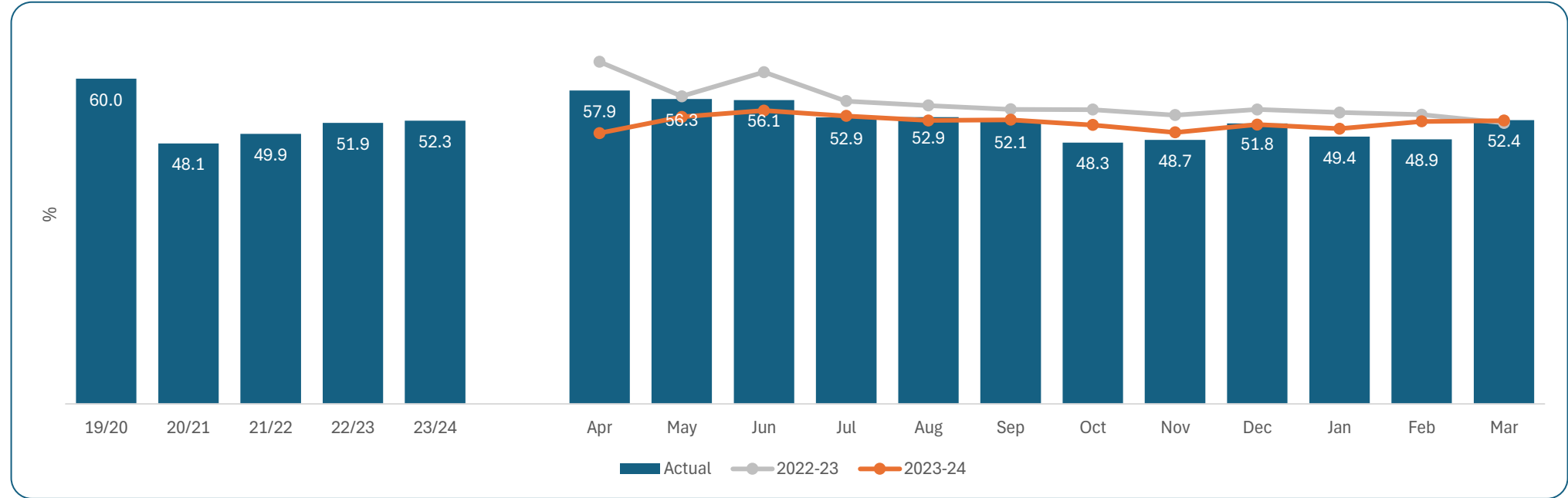
Adult's Social Care Performance & Practice Report

End of Year (April 2024 - March 2025)

Scrutiny

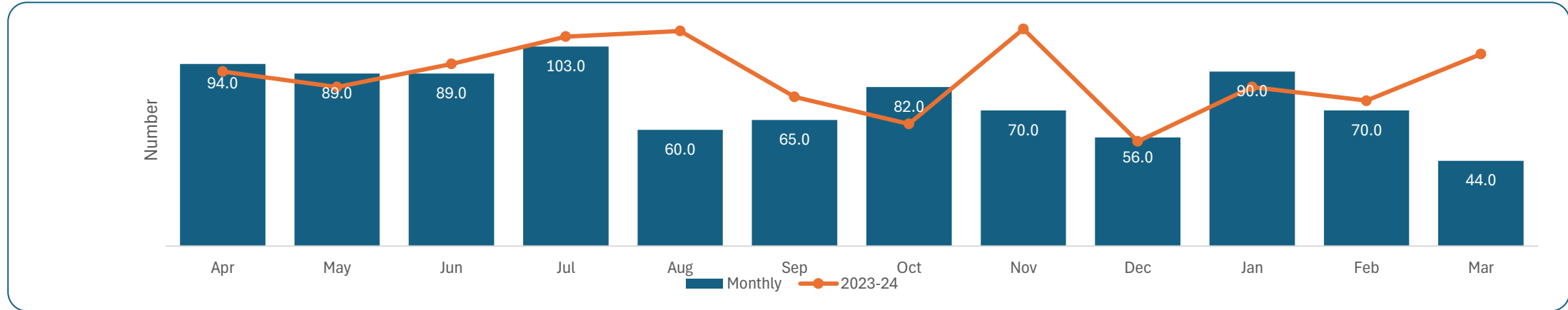
Independence	
Definition	<p>Numerator: Of those in the denominator, those who have had a completed reablement review with outcomes of 'No services provided or identified', 'Long Term Support Ended', Universal Services/Signposted.</p> <p>Denominator: The total number of clients completing a reablement package during the period</p>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>Performance for this indicator continues to remain consistent.</p> <p>At the end of 2024-25 it was reported that 32.9% of client needs had decreased, 11.8% needs had increased and 2.9% stayed the same. The remaining 52.4% 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 115 hospital discharges being received per month during 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.

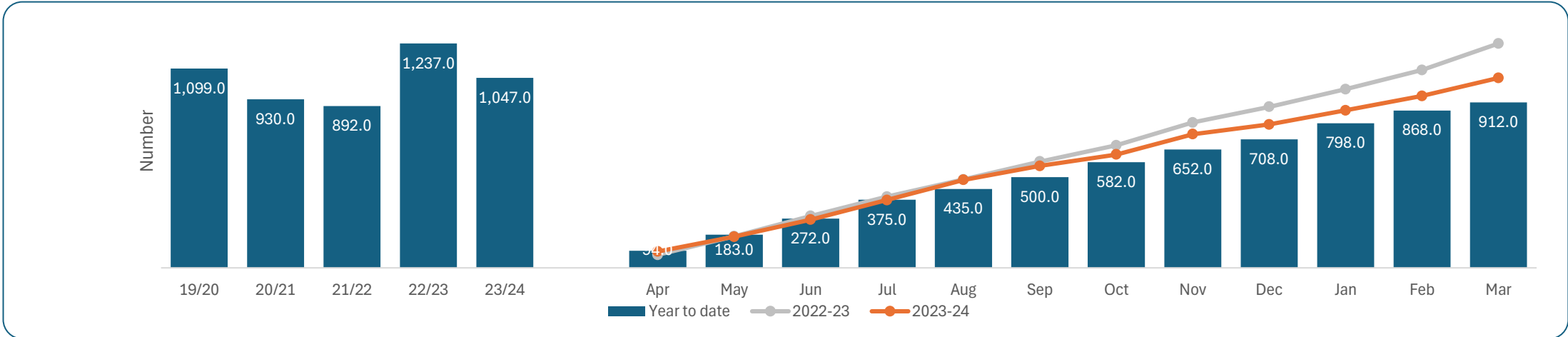


Safety	
Definition	Number of safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) started - per month
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>There have been 708 safeguarding enquiries started since April. The breakdown by starting a safeguarding concern (initial enquiries):</p> <p>Safeguarding - 451 (49%)</p> <p>Adult Learning Disability - 127 (14%)</p> <p>Adult Mental Health - 112 (12%)</p> <p>OAIT - 87 (10%)</p> <p>ACT - 82 (9%)</p> <p>RIACT - 53 (6%)</p>

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

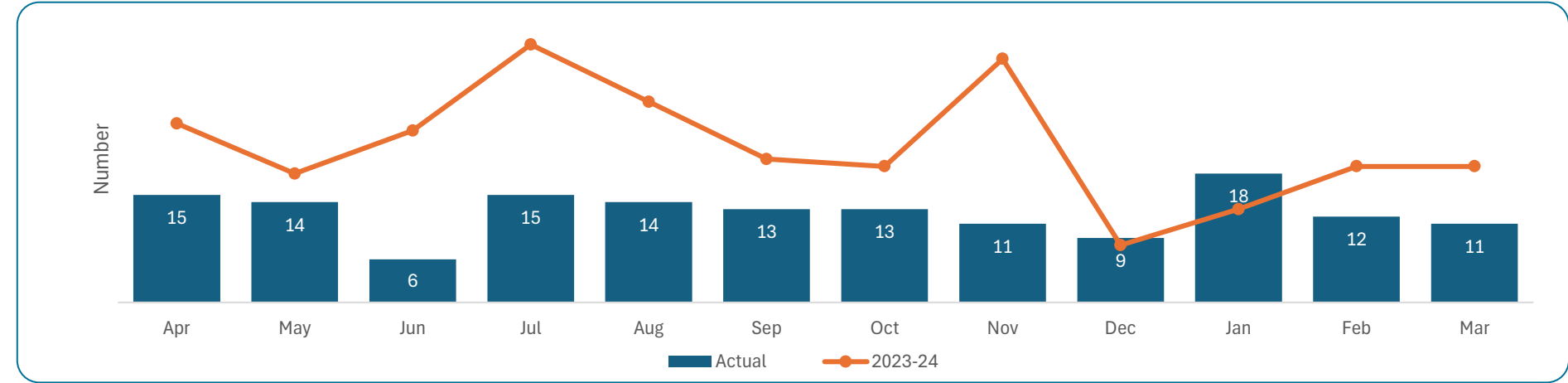


ASC 208: Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) Started - Year to Date

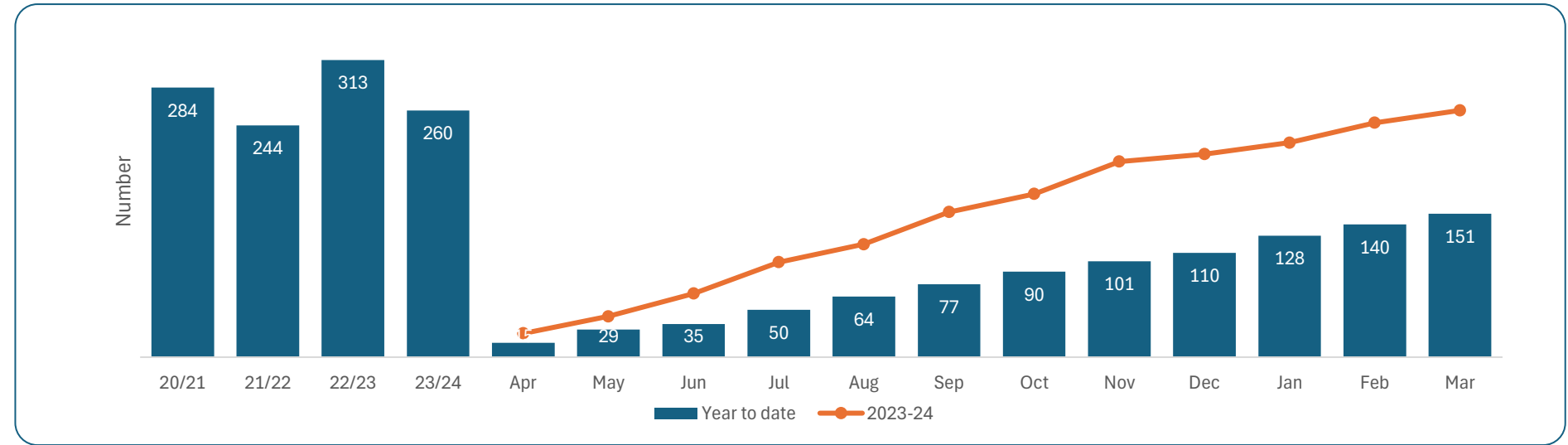


Safety	
Definition	Number of strategy meetings undertaken i.e. concerns progressed to strategy per month
PERFORMAN CE ANALYSIS	Of the 912 enquiries started since April 2024-25, 151 have progressed to a strategy meeting which represents a 16.5% conversion rate, this is a fall from the same period last year where the conversion rate was 21%.

ASC 211: Monthly number of strategy meetings

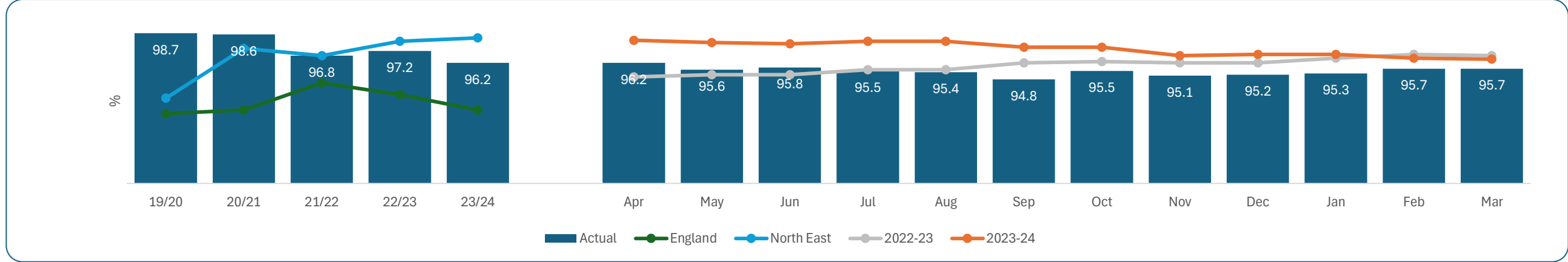


ASC 211a: Year to date number of strategy meetings undertaken



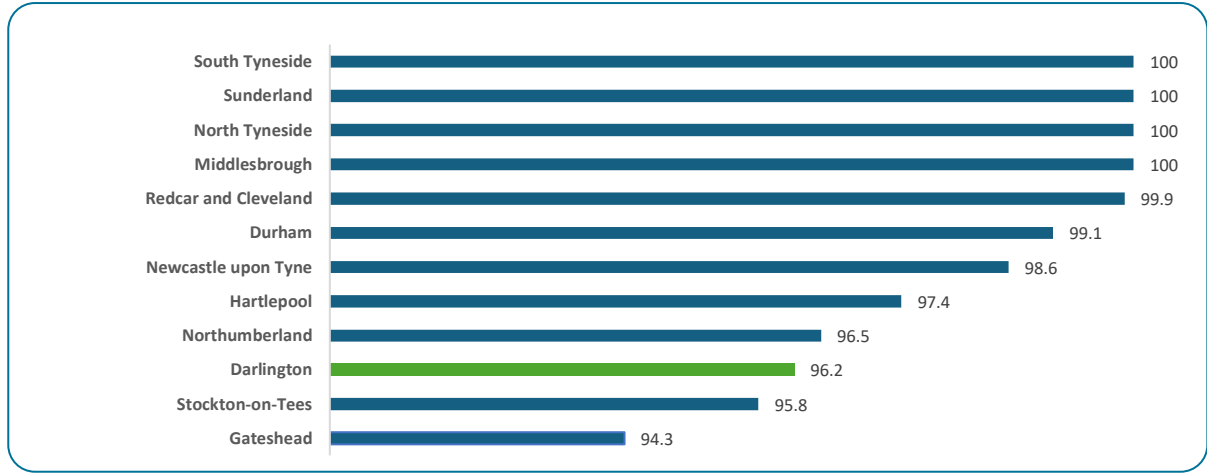
Empowerment	
Definition	Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support. Numerator - the number of users receiving either a) Direct Payments, b) Part Direct Payments or c) CASSR managed Personal Budget at the year end. Denominator - Clients (aged 18 or over) accessing long term community support at the year end.
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	The proportion of people using social care who receive self directed support is currently 95.7%, this equates to 777 individuals currently receiving self directed support.

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

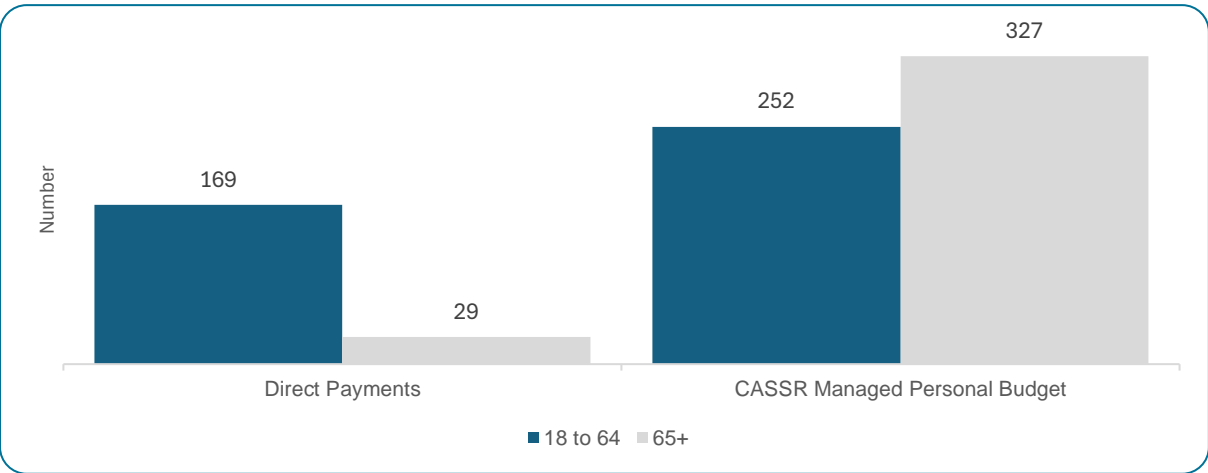


2023-24
For this indicator Darlington was ranked:
10th regionally
110th nationally

2023-24 regional results

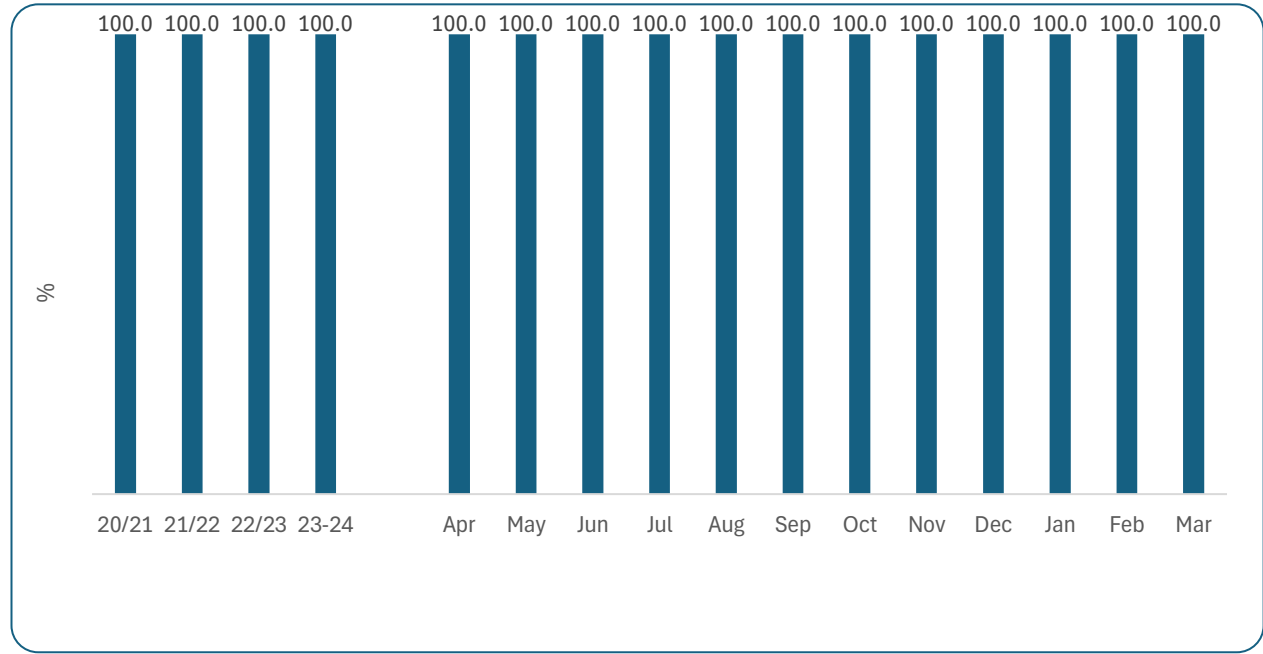


Breakdown of self-direct support

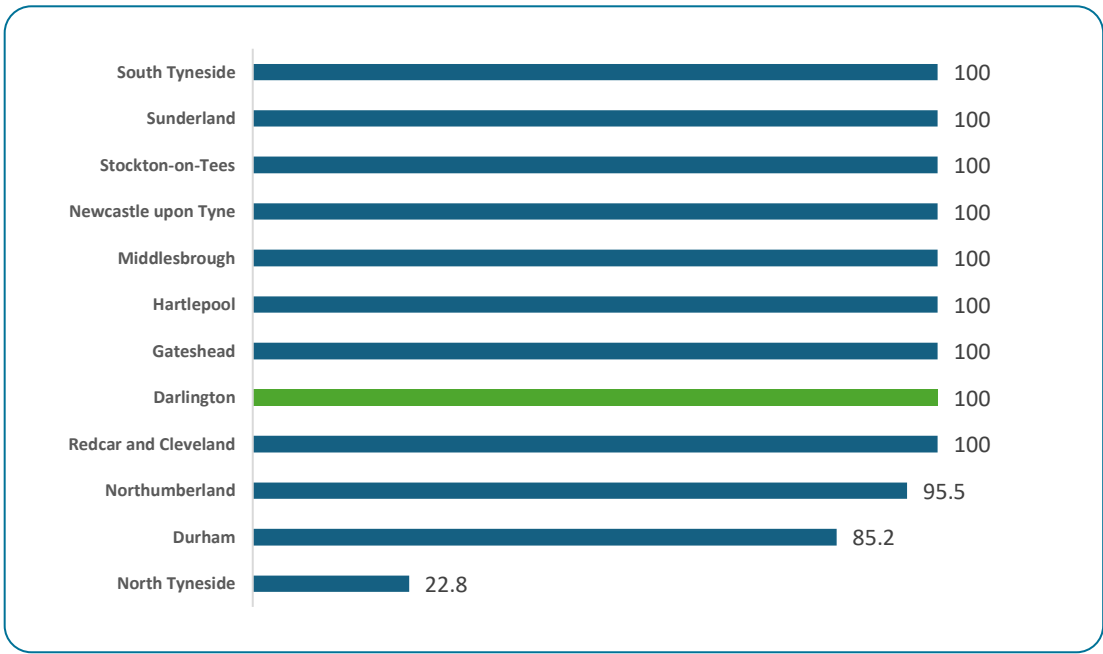


Empowerment	
Definition	Proportion of carers using social care who receive self direct support Numerator: The number of users receiving either a) Direct Payments, b) Part Direct Payments or c) CASSR managed Personal Budget at the year end Denominator: Carers (caring for someone aged 18 or over) receiving carer-specific services at the year end
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	This figure should always be 100%

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



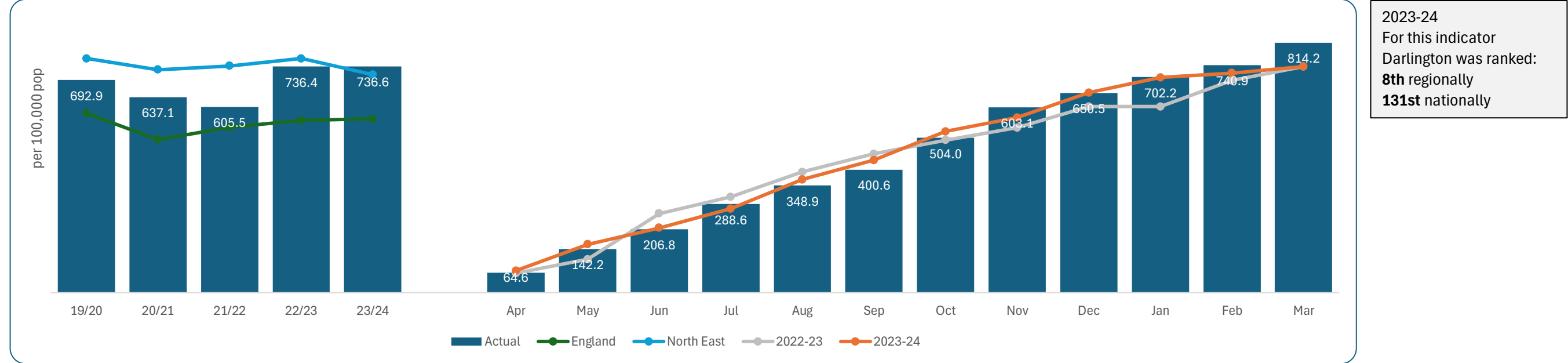
2023-24 regional results



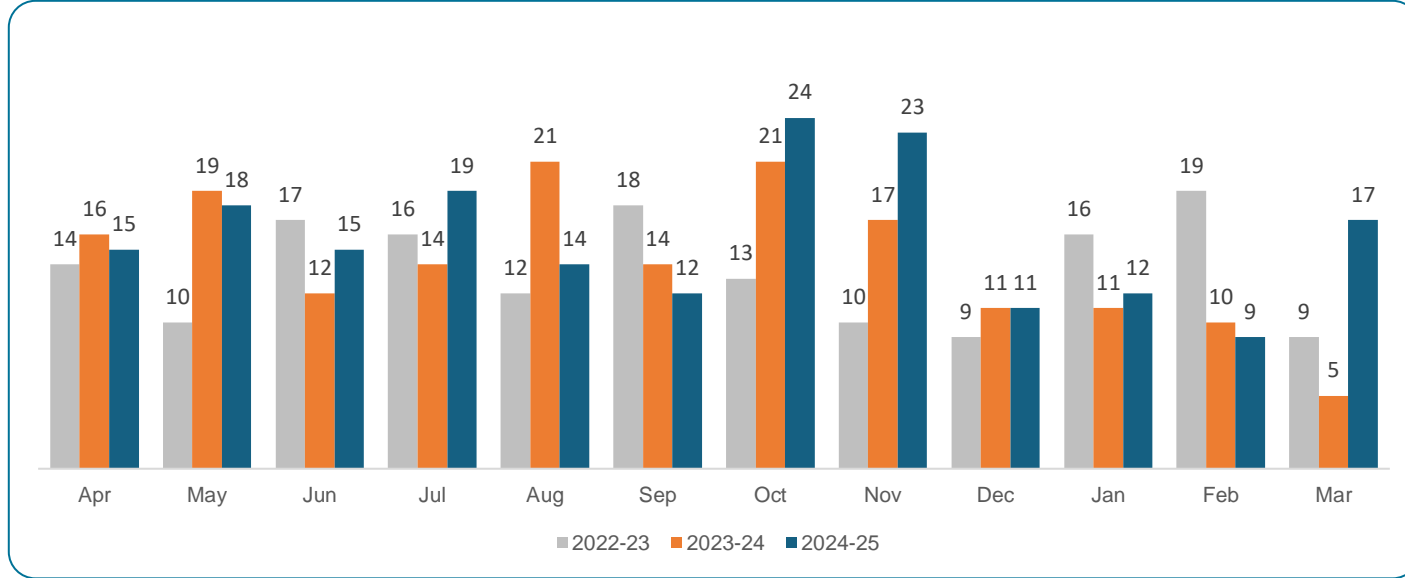
Darlington was ranked **1st (jointly)** regionally and nationally for this indicator in 2023-24

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.
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>As at the end of 2024-25 the total number of individuals who moved into permanent residential or nursing care is 188. This is slightly higher than the same period last year when the figure was 171 and 164 in 2022-23.</p> <p>The average age of individuals moving to permanent residential, or nursing care is 83, which is similar to the previous 2 years where the average figure was 85. The average number of years individuals who are currently living in permanent care have been there is 2.5 years.</p> <p>Since April, 160 (85%) 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 16 weeks, this is the same as the average figure for 2023-24 and an improvement from the 19 weeks for 2022-23.</p>

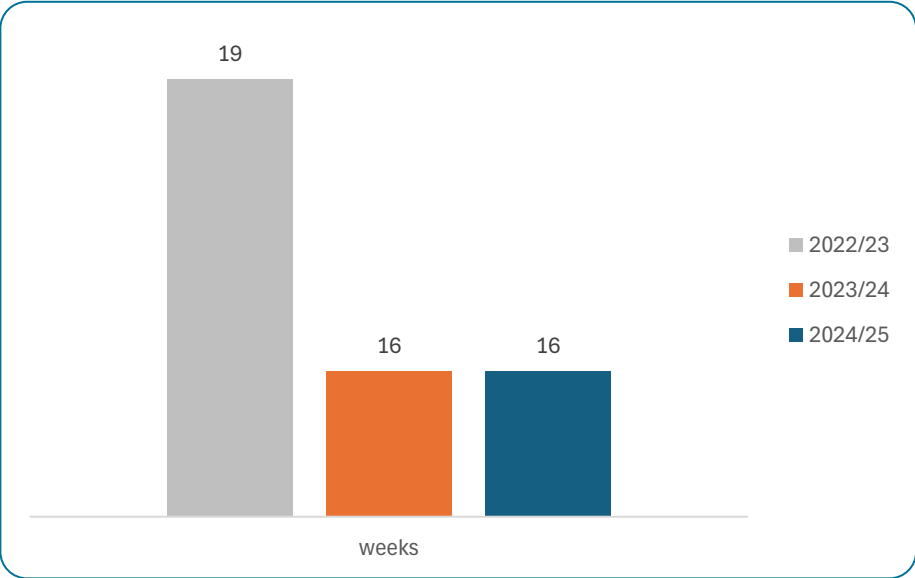
ASC 002 (ASCOF 2C): The number of adults aged 65 and over whose long-term support needs are met by admission to residential and nursing care homes



ASC 002a: Number of monthly permanent admissions



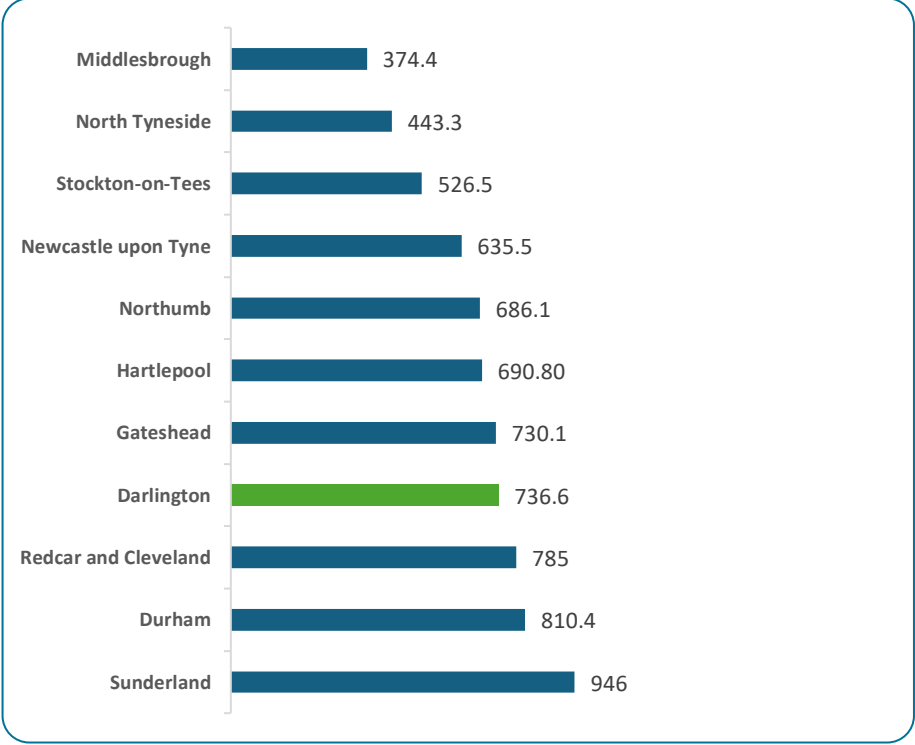
Average number of weeks in SBS prior to permanent care - YTD



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

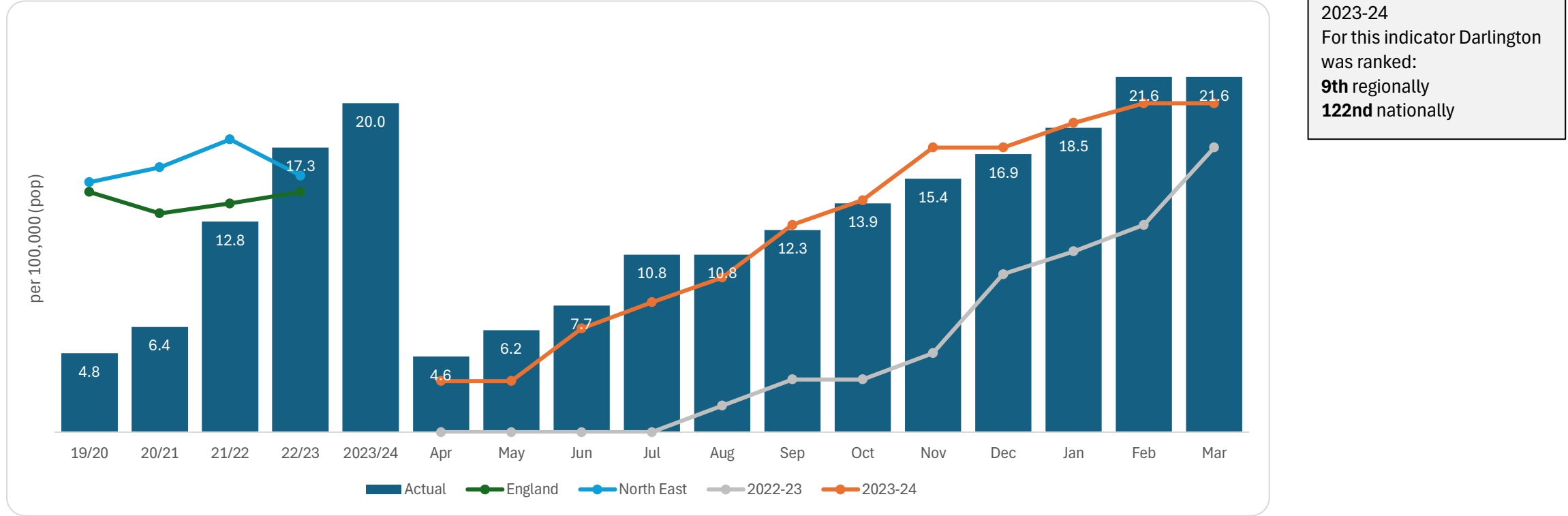


2023-24 Regional results (smaller is better)

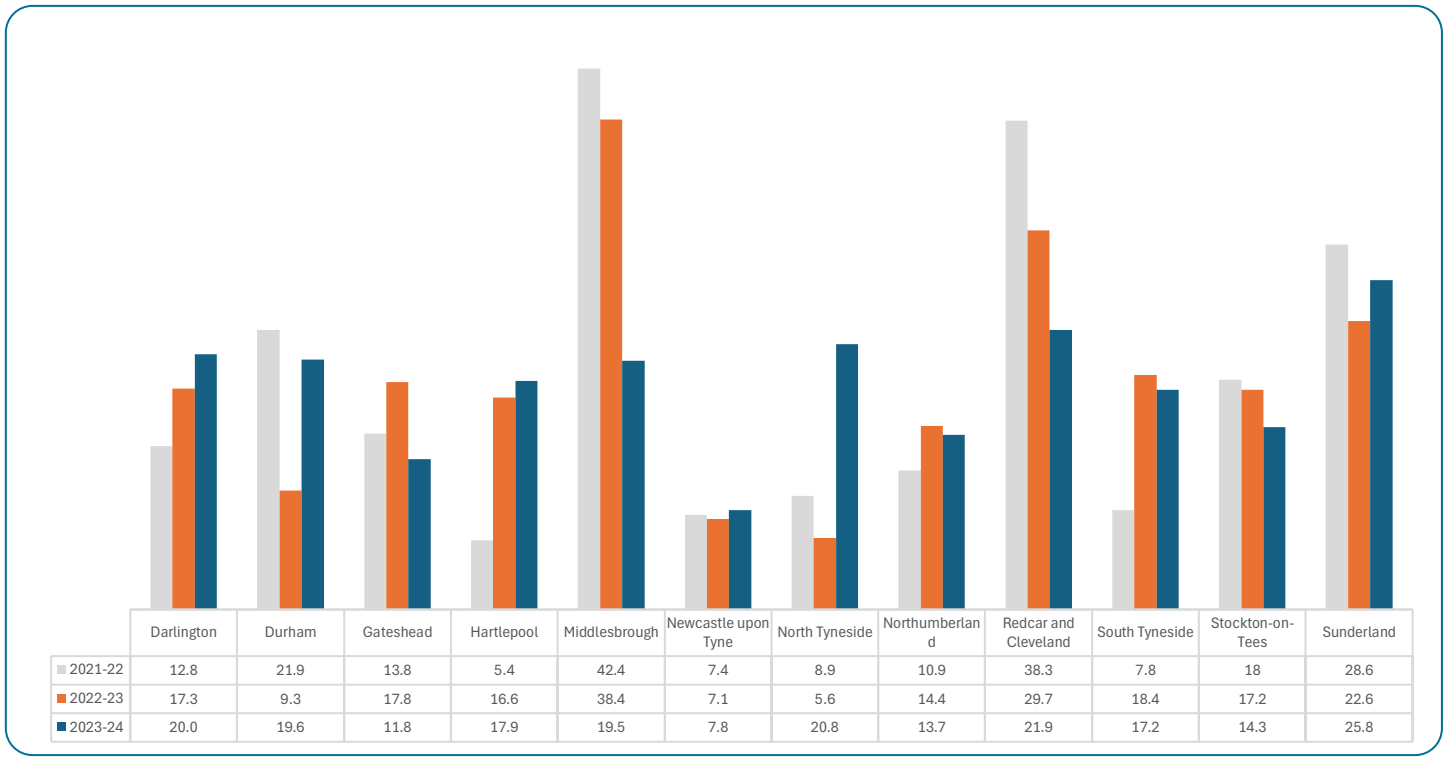


Independence	
Definition	<p>Avoiding permanent placements in residential and nursing care homes is a good indicator of maximising independence and delaying dependency. However, it is acknowledged that for some people drawing on care admission to residential or nursing care homes can represent an improvement 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>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>There have been 14 18–64-year-olds who have entered permanent care since April 2024, this has resulted in the current performance figure of 21.6.</p> <p>Since 2019-20 the proportion of 18-64-year-olds entering permanent care has increased year on year.</p> <p>Currently the average age of 18–64-year-olds in permanent residential or nursing care who moved to permanent residential or nursing care aged 18-64 during 2024-25 is 47. This is compared to the average age being 55 during the same period last year.</p>

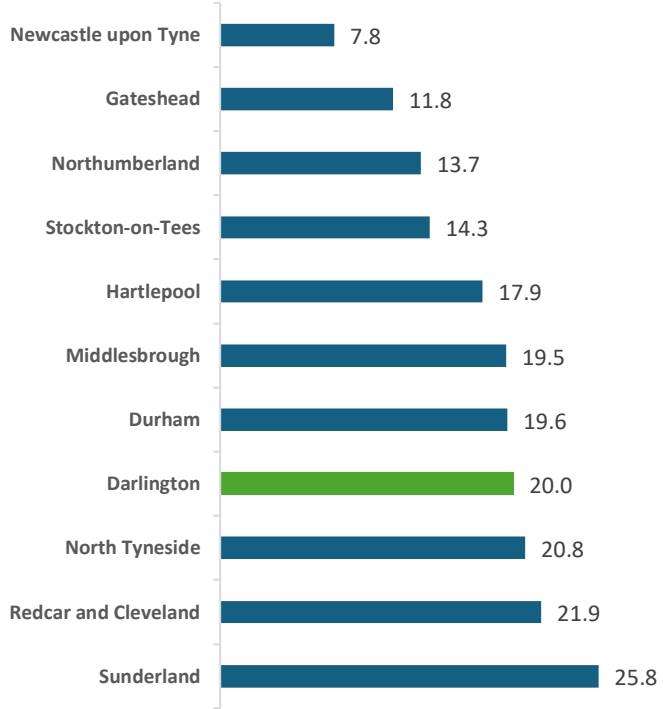
ASC 003 (ASCOF 2B):Adults aged 18-64 admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care



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

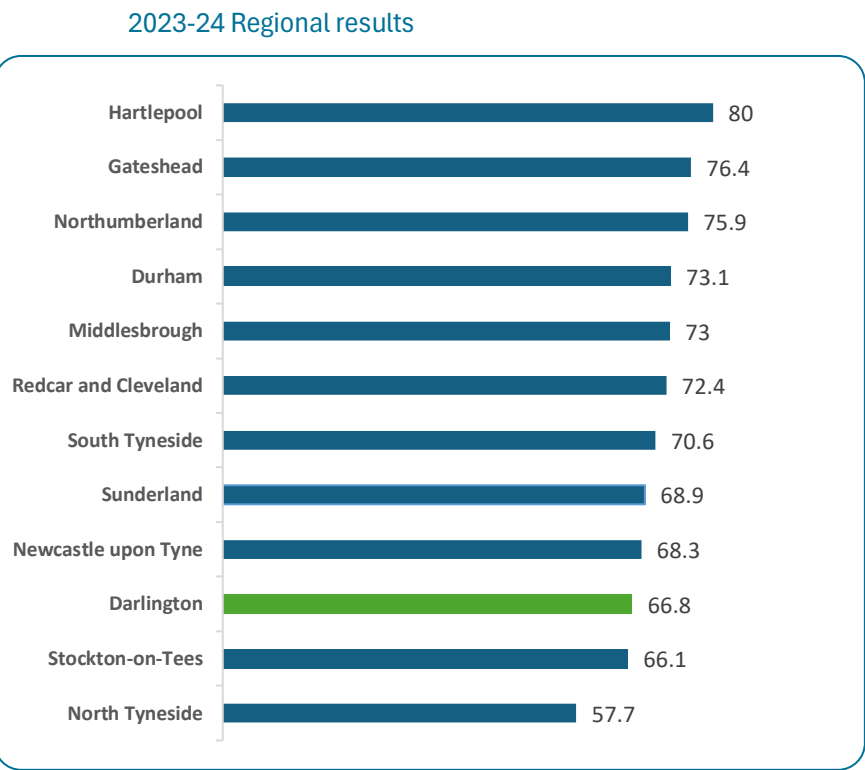
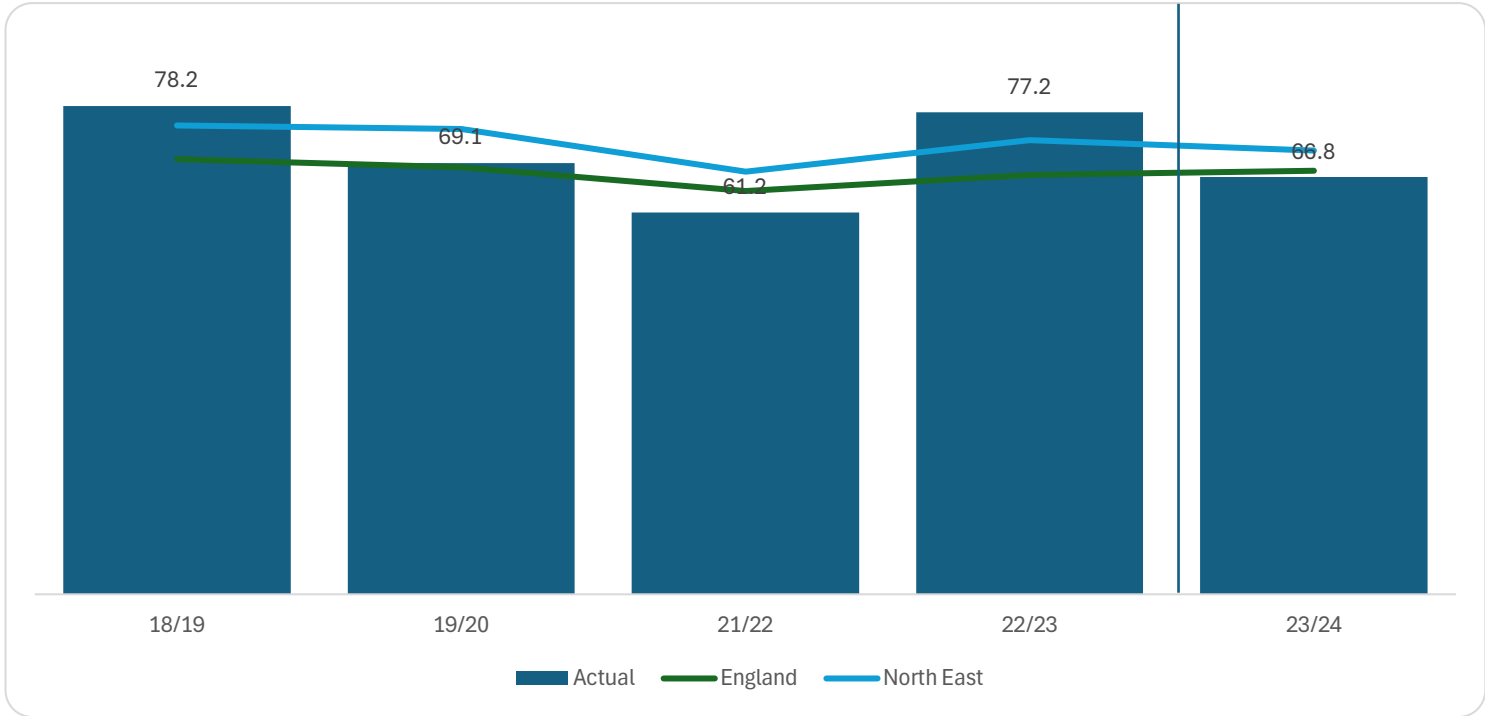


2023-24 Regional results (smaller is better)



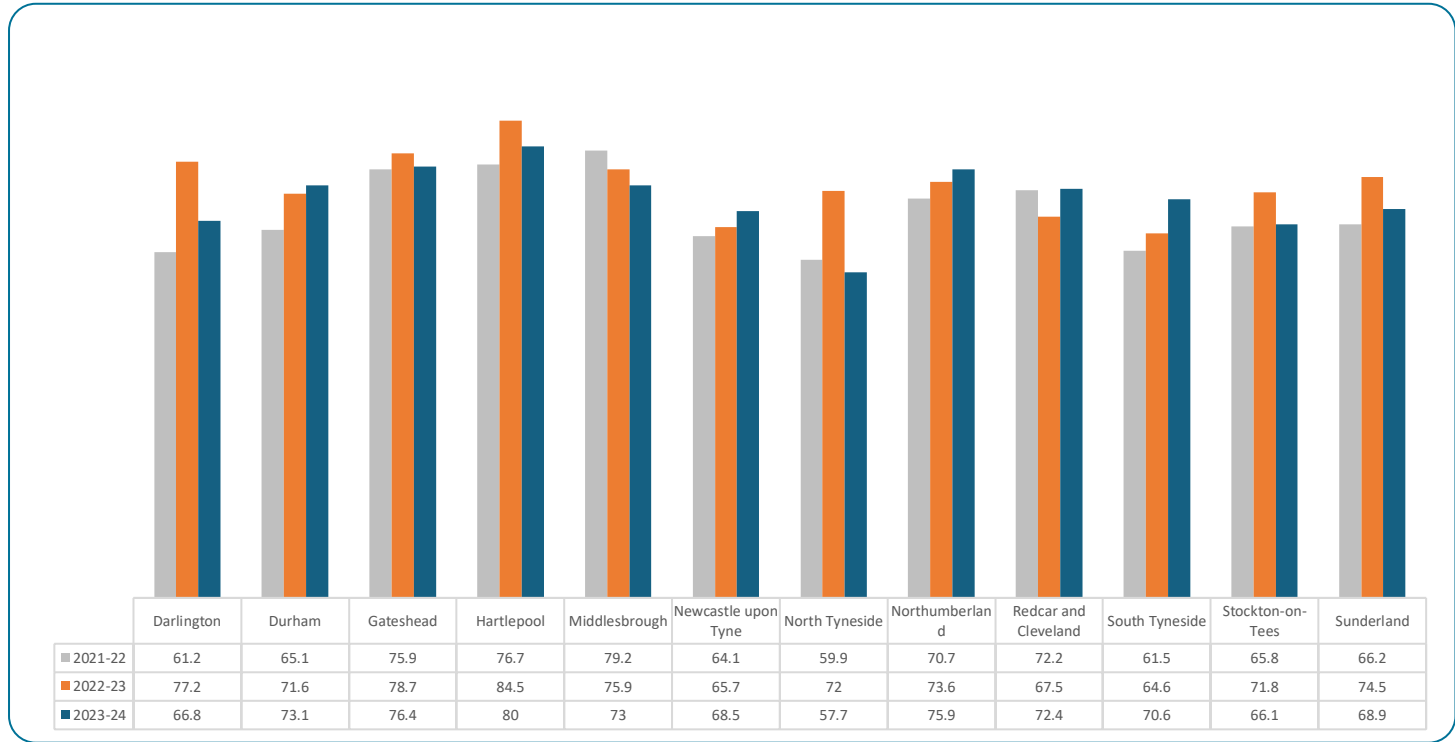
Empowerment	
Definition	<p>This metric reflects social services users' and carers' experience of access to information and advice about social care in the past year. Information is a core universal service and a key factor in early intervention and reducing dependency.</p> <p>Data Source: Adult Social Care Survey and Survey of Adult Carers in England</p>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>The data shows that the proportion of people who feel they can access information easily has reduced during 2023-24. The 2023-24 result for this measure is 66.8% which is a reduction in performance compared to last year's result of 77.2%.</p> <p>Regional benchmarking data is now available for 2023-24. The data shows Darlington is 10th in the regional table for performance in this measure, a fall from last year when we were 3rd. Positive feedback for this measure has reduced 10% between 2022-23 and 2023-24, the 2nd largest reduction in this measure when compared to our regional neighbours. The data shows that although Darlington has seen one of the biggest falls in positive feedback for this indicator, the majority of our regional neighbours also saw a fall in positive feedback.</p> <p>Nationally, Darlington has fallen from being ranked 9th during 2022-23 to 99th during 2023-24.</p> <p>The results are for 2023-24, the recent improvements to information during recent months should be demonstrated in the 2024-25 survey results. Improvements which have been made are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website• Netcall – which helps to signpost people• Easy Read documents• Podcasts• Improvements made to consistency of information

ASC054 (ASCOF 3D) - The proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information about services

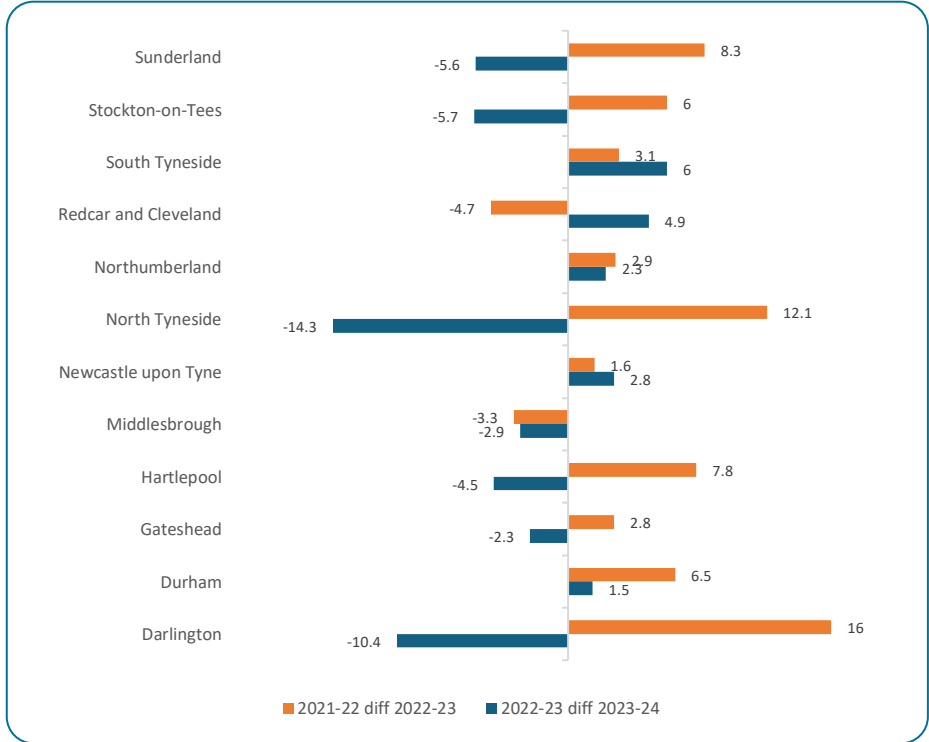


2023-24
For this indicator
Darlington was
ranked:
10th regionally
99th nationally

Regional Performance (bigger is better) - 2023-24 Regional results

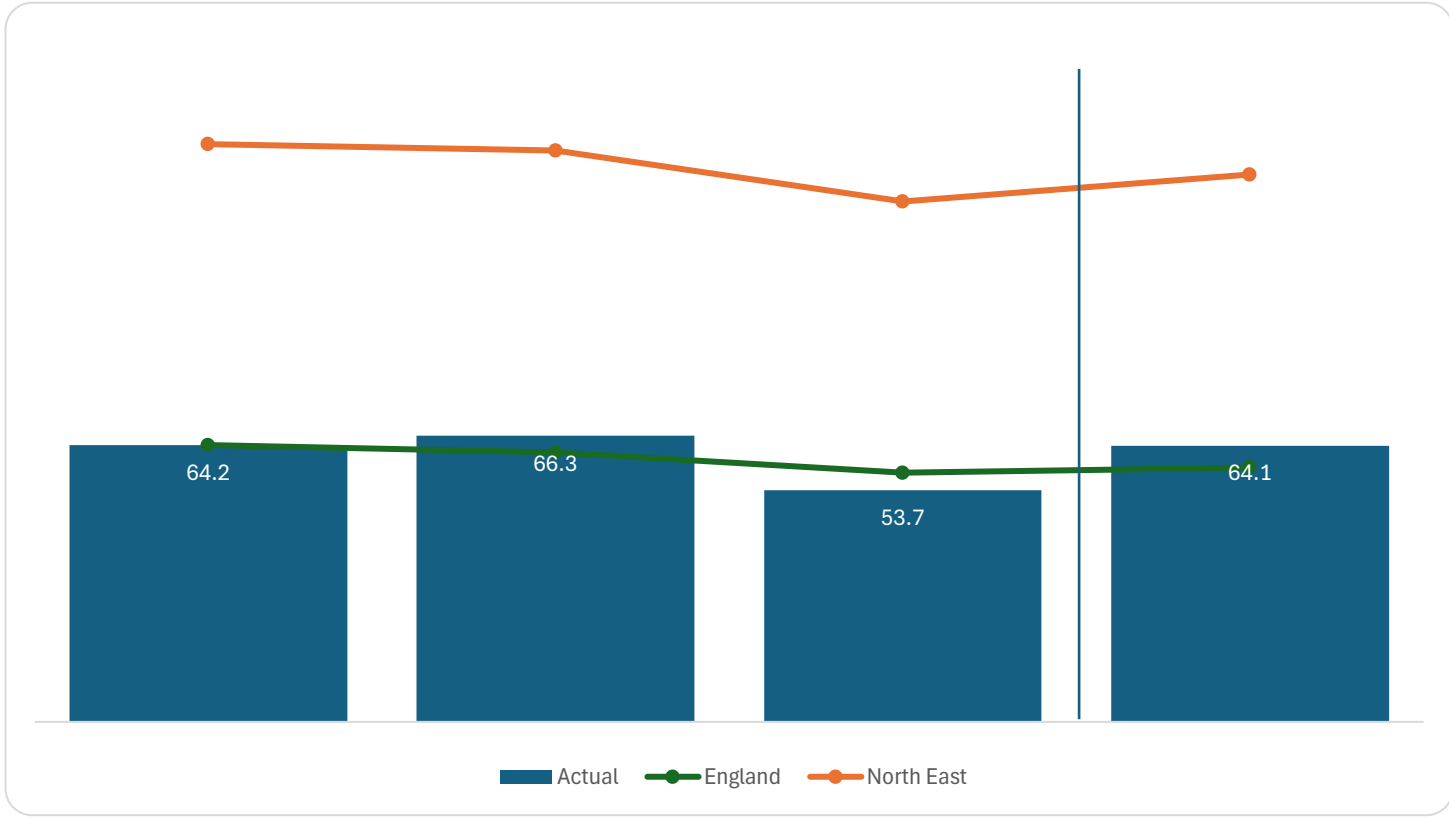


Difference in performance from previous years (positive value is better) - 2023-24 Regional results

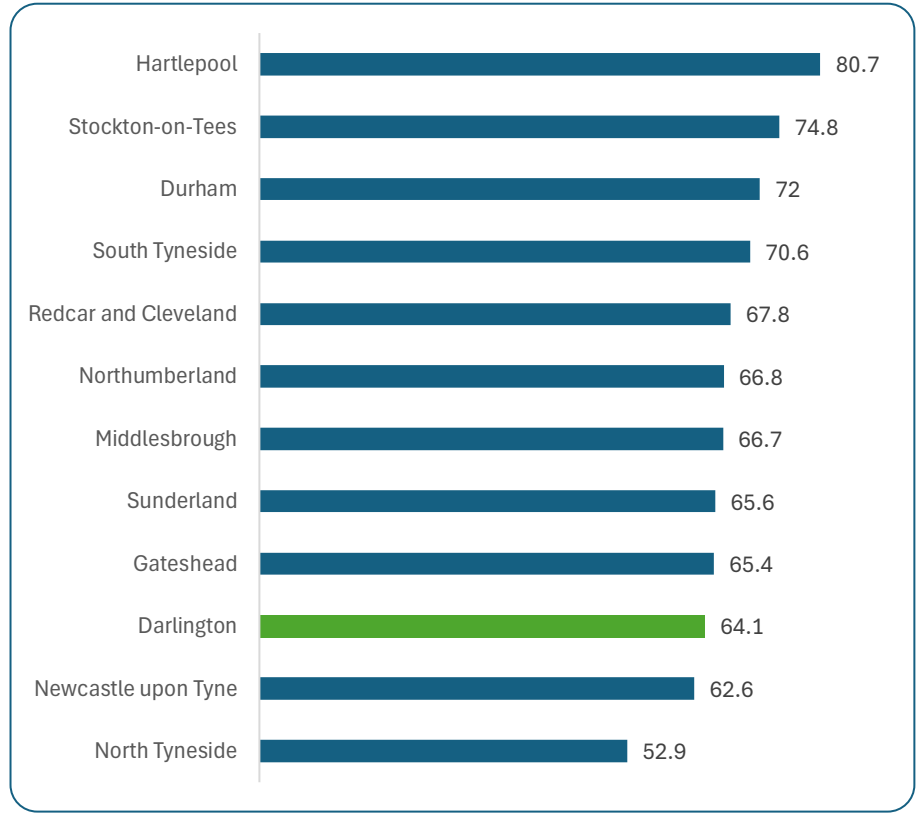


Empowerment	
Definition	<p>This metric reflects social services carers' experience of access to information and advice about social care in the past year. Information is a core universal service and a key factor in early intervention and reducing dependency.</p> <p>Data Source: Survey of Adult Carers in England</p>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>The data shows that the proportion of carers who feel they can access information easily has increased during 2023-24. The 2023-24 result for this measure is 64.1% which is an improvement in performance compared to the previous survey result of 53.7%.</p> <p>Regional benchmarking data is now available for 2023-24. The data shows Darlington is 10th in the regional table for performance in this measure. Positive feedback for this measure has increased 10.4% between 2021-22 and 2023-24, the 3rd largest improvement in this measure when compared to our regional neighbours.</p> <p>Nationally, Darlington is ranked 41st for this indicator following on from the 2023-24 survey results.</p> <p>The results are for 2023-24, the recent improvements to information during recent months should be demonstrated in the 2024-25 survey results. Improvements which have been made are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website• Netcall – which helps to signpost people• Easy Read documents• Podcasts• Improvements made to consistency of information

ASC 055 (ASCOF 3C): The proportion of carers who use services who have found it easy to find information about services

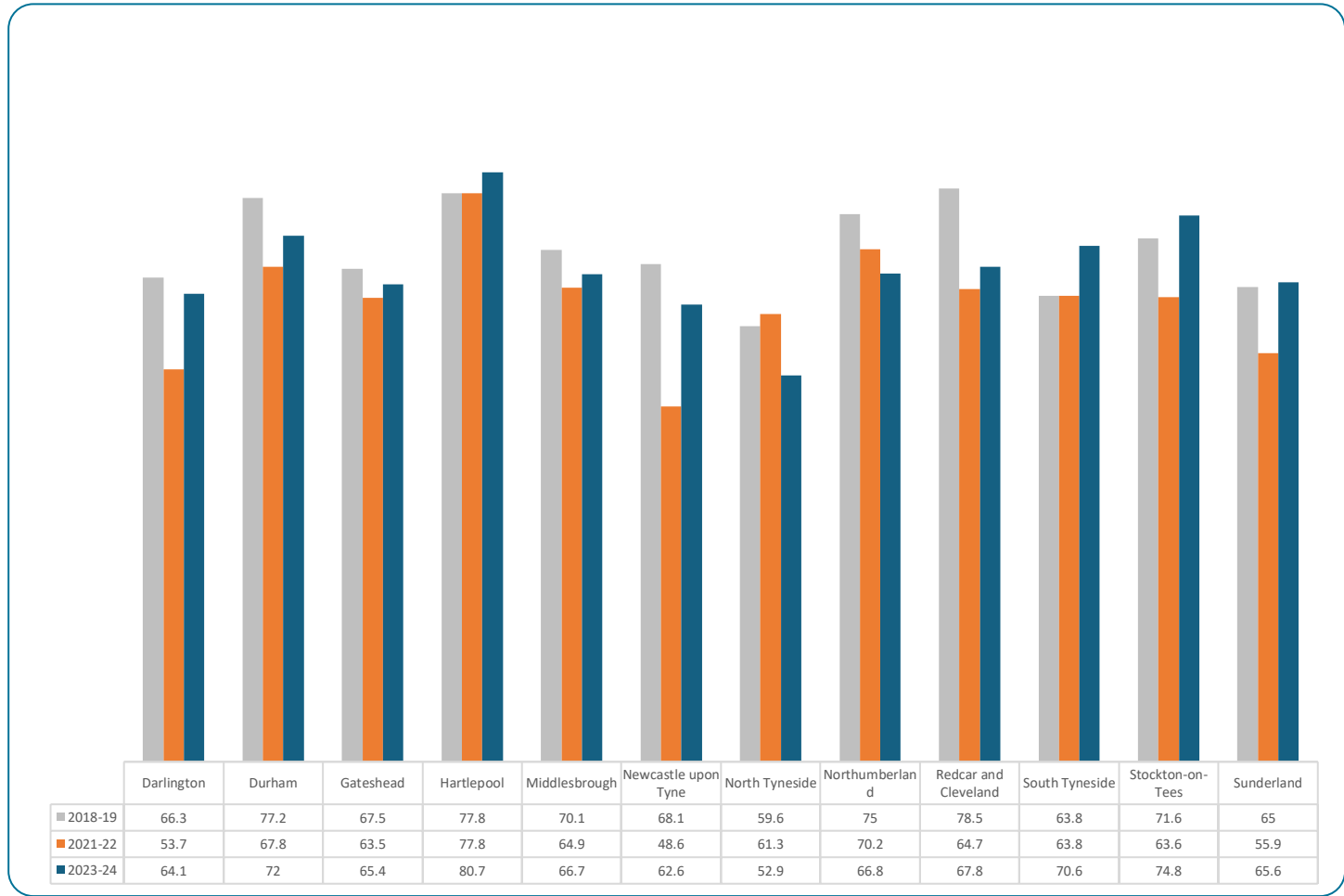


Regional Breakdown 2023-24

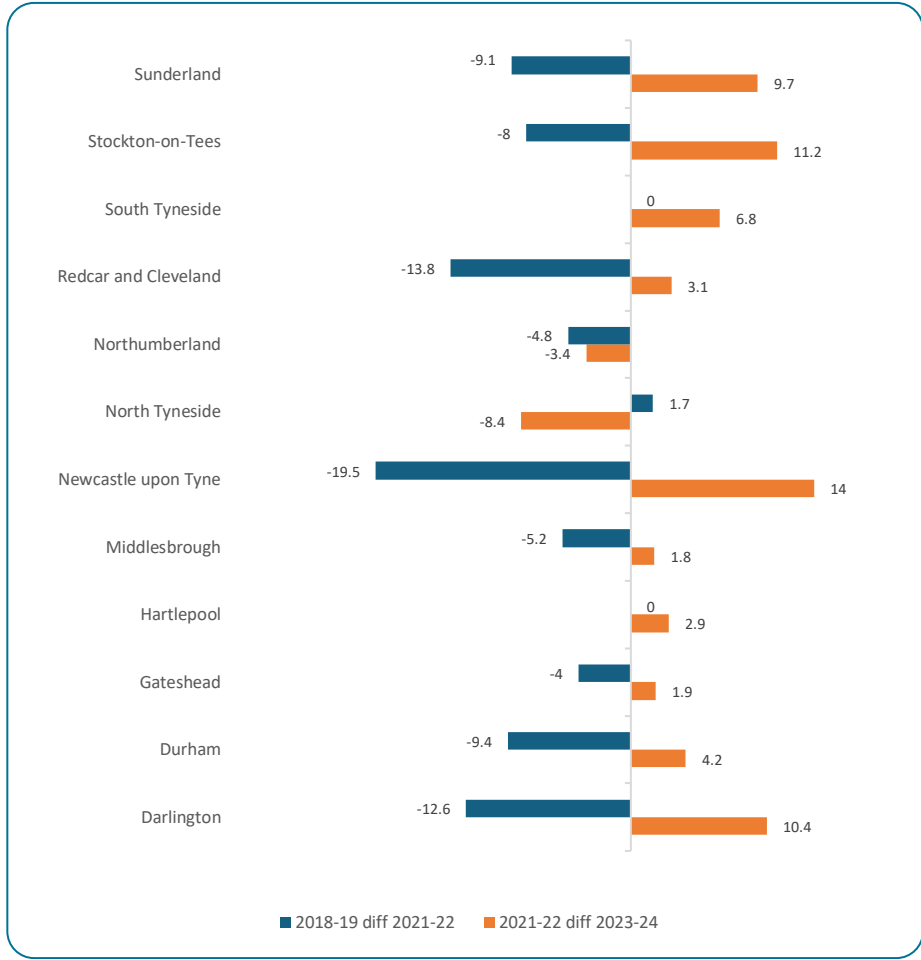


2023-24
For this indi
Darlington v
ranked:
10th region
41st nation

Regional Performance (bigger is better) - 2023-24 Regional results



Difference in performance from previous years (positive value is better) - 2023-24 Regional results



**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
10 JUNE 2025**

WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2025/26 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 discussions held at the Adults Scrutiny Committee Annual Briefing which took place on 23 May 2025.
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.

**Amy Wennington
Assistant Director Law and Governance**

Background Papers

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

Author: James McAllister

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.
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

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 there 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.

Climate Considerations

12. Pursuant to Minute AD22/Oct/2024, any matters pertaining to climate considerations will be outlined in the individual reports submitted to Committee.

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ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role / Notes
Safeguarding	10 th June 2025	Rachel Watt / Barbara Beadle		
Assessment of Services Commissioned from Out of Area	26 th August 2025	Sukhdev Dosanjh		
Performance Indicators End of Year Report 2024/25	26 th August 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	26 th August 2025	Joss Habron		
Adult Social Care Budget and Outturn	28 th October 2025	Joss Habron		
Autism Strategy and Action Plan Update	28 th October 2025	Jo Butler (<a href="mailto:jo.butler@inclusi
onnorth.org">jo.butler@inclusi onnorth.org), Joss Harbron.		
Medium Term Financial Plan	6 th January 2026	Joss Harbron / Christine Shields		

Performance Indicators Quarter 2 2025/2026	6 th January 2026	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.
Domestic Abuse Strategy - Update	6 th January 2026	Christine Shields		
Current day service provision for adults with learning disabilities in Darlington and future commissioning plans	6 th January 2026	Joss Habron/Sukhdev Dosanjh		
Darlington Association on Disability (DAD)	6 th January 2026	Lauren Robinson		
Care Homes in Executive Strategy Measures / Arrangements	24 th February 2026	Rachel Watt / Joss Harbron / Barbara Beadle		

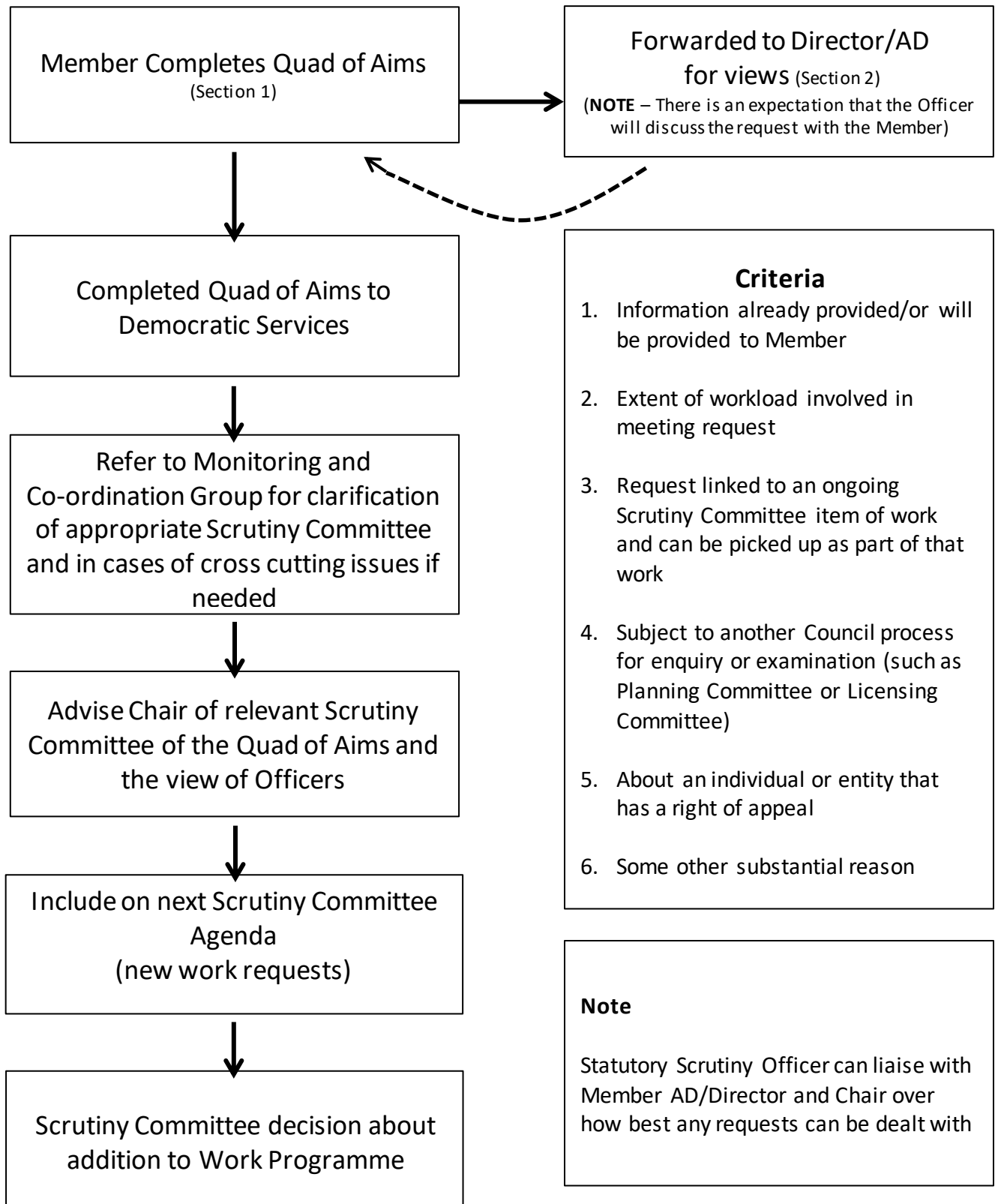
Darlington Safeguarding Partnership - Annual Report	24th February 2026	Amanda Hugill	ASC 028 ASC 029 ASC 059 ASC 061 ASC 062 ASC 199 ASC 200 ASC 201 ASC 202 ASC 203 ASC 204 ASC 205 ASC 206 ASC 207 ASC 209 ASC 210 ASC 213 ASC 214	To consider the Annual Report on the work of the Board and to receive reassurance 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.
Overview by Commissioning Services on Shared Lives	14 th April 2026	Christine Shields		
CQC Action Plan	Date to be confirmed	Joss Harbron		
Principle Social Worker Feedback Report	Date to be confirmed	Joss Harbron		

Task and Finish Review Group(s)

- **‘Loneliness and Connected Communities’ Task and Finish Review Group** – commenced Tuesday, 28th January 2020;

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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)

		Criteria
1.	(a) Is the information available elsewhere? Yes No If yes, please indicate where the information can be found (attach if possible and return with this document to Democratic Services) (b) Have you already provided the information to the Member or will you shortly be doing so?	1. Information already provided/or will be provided to Member 2. Extent of workload involved in meeting request 3. Request linked to an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and can be picked up as part of that work
2.	If the request is included in the Scrutiny Committee work programme what are the likely workload implications for you/your staff?	4. Subject to another Council process for enquiry or examination (such as Planning Committee or Licensing Committee)
3.	Can the request be included in an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and picked up as part of that?	5. About an individual or entity that has a right of appeal
4.	Is there another Council process for enquiry or examination about the matter currently underway?	6. Some other substantial reason
5.	Has the individual or entity some other right of appeal?	
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: 6 AUGUST 2025 - 31 DECEMBER 2025**

Title	Decision Maker and Date	Page
Annual Review of the Investment Fund	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Blue Badge Application Procedures	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Climate Change and Nature Restoration Strategy	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Reports 2023/24	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Complaints Made to Local Government Ombudsman	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Dolphin Centre – Invest to Save Projects	Council 2 Oct 2025 Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 1 2025/26	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2025/26 - Quarter 1	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Single Use Plastic Policy	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN**

		not defined.
Treasury Management Annual Report and Outturn Prudential Indicators 2024/2025	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Use of Land at Faverdale (Former St Modwen Land) for Biodiversity Net Gain and Nutrient Neutrality Credits	Cabinet 9 Sep 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Community Asset Transfer Policy	Cabinet 7 Oct 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Land at Ingenium Parc and Morton Palms - Development Proposal	Cabinet 7 Oct 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Procurement Plan Update	Cabinet 7 Oct 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Schedule of Transactions	Cabinet 7 Oct 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Asset Plan	Cabinet 7 Oct 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 4 Nov 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 4 Nov 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Town Centre Regeneration	Cabinet 4 Nov 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Woodland Road Waiting Restrictions	Cabinet 4 Nov 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Housing Services Tenancy Policy 2025-2030	Cabinet 2 Dec 2025	Error!

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN**

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Mid-Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management 2025/26	Cabinet 2 Dec 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.
MTFP for consultation	Cabinet 2 Dec 2025	Error! Bookmark not defined.

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