



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee Agenda

10.00 am

Thursday, 5 March 2026

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 held on :-
 - (a) 30 December 2025 (Pages 3 - 6)
 - (b) 6 January 2026 (Pages 7 - 8)
 - (c) 15 January 2026 (Pages 9 - 14)
4. Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 –
Report of the Assistant Director – Environmental Services and Community Safety
(Pages 15 - 58)
5. Annual Electric Vehicle Charging Policy Review –
Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Capital Projects
(Pages 59 - 72)
6. Active Travel Neighbourhoods' Feasibility Report –
Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Capital Projects

(Pages 73 - 82)

7. Network Management Plan –
Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Capital Projects
(Pages 83 - 86)
8. Work Programme –
Report of the Assistant Director Law and Governance
(Pages 87 - 102)
9. 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 the meeting.
10. Questions

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

Amy Wennington
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Wednesday, 25 February 2026

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

Councillors Beckett, Cossins, Coe, Mrs Culley, Keir, Mahmud, McGill, M Nicholson, Snedker and Walters

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Hannah Miller, Democratic Officer, Resources and Governance, 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 email: hannah.miller@darlington.gov.uk or telephone 01325 405801

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 30 December 2025

PRESENT – Councillors McGill (Chair), Cossins, Coe, Mrs Culley, Keir, Mahmud, M Nicholson, Snedker and Walters

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Garner (Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Amy Wennington (Assistant Director, Law and Governance), Seth Pearson (Partnership Director), Mike Poulter (Executive Director of Economy and Public Protection) and Hannah Miller (Democratic Officer)

CLS13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

CLS14 PRIDE IN PLACE

A report (previously circulated) was submitted following the receipt of a ‘call-in’ from Cabinet held on 2 December 2025 (Minute C54/Dec/25) in relation to its decision in respect of Pride in Place. The ‘Call-in’ was taken in accordance with the Council’s Constitution and had been signed by three Members of this Council.

The Chair invited those Members who had signed the documentation and who had requested that the decision be ‘called-in’ to outline their reasons for that decision and, in doing so, raised questions and sought clarification to understand the make-up and skills of an unelected board who will be responsible for disposing of ~£20M of public funding; to establish how council elected members will have scrutiny and oversight of ~£20m of public money spend; to determine if the current arrangements obviate the democratic process in respect to ~£20M public funding given to DBC; to understand how the decisions, laid out in the agenda, were made and if indeed the current proposal decisions are valid; to understand why this has been pushed through Cabinet so quickly with no member involvement other than cabinet; and how Cabinet satisfied itself that the paper had to be considered at this meeting and not deferred until a future date, given a ward benefiting from the proposals was under purdah rules due a live by-election.

Members were provided with clarity regarding the Government’s Pride in Place programme, with Members noting that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) was the grant funding body and set out the rules for managing the grant. Members were advised that a Neighbourhood Board had been established to lead the programme and would act as the main decision-making body and that the Council’s role was as the accountable body.

In relation to the makeup of the Neighbourhood Board that had been established, Members were advised that guidance from the MHCLG was clear regarding membership and that where a Towns Fund already existed, this would be the basis of the Neighbourhood Board; that membership included representatives from the voluntary and community sector and Membership had been approved by the MHCLG. Members were satisfied that there was an

appropriate range of skill level across the Board.

In relation to the scrutiny and oversight of the funds and the arrangements for allocating the funds, Members raised concern regarding a lack of understanding of the process for investing the funds and the lack of involvement of all Councillors in the process. Members were assured that the MHCLG had provided strict guidance regarding the governance arrangements; that regular updates had been reported to full Council via the Stronger Communities Portfolio reports and membership of the Board included the Leader of the Council and the Stronger Communities portfolio holder. Members were advised that the Council was the accountable body with funds signed off by the S151 officer. Members were informed that representatives from the MHCLG sat on the Neighbourhood Board and that all minutes from these meetings were available to the public, but Officers acknowledged that these could be made more accessible on the Council's website.

Members entered into a discussion regarding the direct costs of management and delivery of the funds and financial liability. Members were assured that Council officers who were members of the board (including the Assistant Director Resources) would ensure that there were no unsustainable residual costs to the Council for any funding allocated.

Members sought clarification regarding independent scrutiny and were advised by Officers that this was still in development and noted that the MHCLG were independently audited. In relation to stakeholder engagement, it was stated that Board representatives were duty bound to engage with their communities and further work was being undertaken to build on local community engagement.

The majority of Members were satisfied following the discussion held on scrutiny and oversight.

Members held a discussion regarding the decisions that led to the five communities being chosen to receive funding; Members were informed that the Board made their decisions based on the data analysis of indices of deprivation and that the guidance from the MHCLG was clear that funds should be focussed on left behind neighbourhoods. Members also discussed the responses to the community engagement exercise, noting the spread of responses across the town.

In relation to the timing of the Pride in Place report to Cabinet, Members noted that to ensure deadlines for application processes were met, the governance arrangements for the Board were required to be in place by 28 November; that Cabinet sought advice from the Assistant Director Law and Governance who confirmed that purdah did not prevent Cabinet from discharging its normal business and the report did not affect public support for a particular political party. It was also stated that the Council did not undertake any publicity in relation to this cabinet report during the pre-election period.

Members were also informed that if the report had been deferred to a later Cabinet meeting, the Board would not have been in a position to move forward with a specific project.

RESOLVED – That, having considered and heard all the information presented to and at this meeting, the majority of this Scrutiny Committee is satisfied with the decision of Cabinet at Minute C54/Dec/25, in relation to all points raised in the Quad of Aims and that no further action in relation to the call-in is required.

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COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 January 2026

PRESENT – Councillors McGill (Chair), Mrs Culley, Keir, Mahmud, M Nicholson, Snedker and Walters

APOLOGIES – Councillors Cossins and Coe

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillors Garner (Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Anthony Hewitt (Assistant Director Highways and Capital Projects), Ben Grabham (Assistant Director Environmental Services and Community Safety), Brett Nielsen (Assistant Director Resources) and Hannah Miller (Democratic Officer)

CLS15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations reported at the meeting.

CLS16 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 - 2029/30

The Assistant Director Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that Members give consideration to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2026/27 to 2029/30, which had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 2 December, as a basis for consultation.

The submitted report stated that an MTFP Briefing that was delivered to Members on 15 December outlining the overall contents of the MTFP, and requested that Members of this Scrutiny Committee now consider contents in relation to the services and finances within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee to enable a response to be formulated and forwarded to the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee for consideration at its meeting scheduled to be held on 20 January 2026.

The Assistant Director of Resources provided an update on the draft Local Government finance settlement, which had been received on 17 December, subsequent to the approval of the draft MTFP by Cabinet and advised on the impact this draft settlement had on the assumptions made within that approved draft MTFP.

Discussion ensued regarding the cost savings related to the children's sufficiency programme including how the changes in service demand were modelled; the spend to save transformation programme and what this entailed; and Members queried the additional £0.5m funding for adult social care and whether any further savings could be made in this area.

Members entered into a discussion regarding the pressure relating to the reduced income from Hopetown, with Members noting that a review of all funding and income streams for the museum was being undertaken to address shortfalls; the assumptions in relation to savings made following the review to reduce the number of Councillors; and the implications should the Council tax not be increased by 4.99 per cent.

Members posed questions in relation to the reserves and were informed of the different types of reserves in place; and sought clarification regarding the schedule of charges, with the proposal that these were set annually in line with the Consumer Price Index to ensure charges reflected the staffing costs to deliver services.

Discussion ensued regarding savings and efficiencies, in particular back-office efficiencies; the reasons for the increased budget for ICT; requested clarification regarding the proposed additional spending in Street Scene and the origin of this additional funding; and figures relating to food waste collection.

RESOLVED – (a) That the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee be advised that the Members of the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee:-

- i. Request that further work be undertaken to identify additional savings in Adult Social Care;
- ii. Request that a systematic review of the schedule of charges be undertaken.

b) That the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee be advised that the minority view of the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee is that this Committee does not support the proposed council tax increase of 4.99 per cent.

(c) That the Chair, in consultation with the Lead Scrutiny Officers supporting this Scrutiny Committee, be given authority to agree the Minutes of this Scrutiny Committee, to enable the Minutes to be considered at a Special Meeting of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee scheduled to be held on 20 January 2026.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 15 January 2026

PRESENT – Councillors McGill (Chair), Mrs Culley, Keir, Mahmud, M Nicholson, Snedker and Walters

APOLOGIES – Councillors Cossins and Coe

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillors McCollom

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Anthony Hewitt (Assistant Director Highways and Capital Projects), Ben Grabham (Assistant Director Environmental Services and Community Safety), Shaun Trevor (Trading Standards and Animal Health Manager), Neil Bowerbank (Head of Strategy, Performance and Communications), Eleanor Swan (Inclusion, Engagement and Performance Manager), Andrew Casey (Head of Highway Network Management), Gill Hutchinson (Transport Planning Manager), Joanne Roberts (Transport Planning Manager) and Hannah Miller (Democratic Officer)

CLS17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

CLS18 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY HELD ON 28 AUGUST 2025

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 28 August 2025.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 28 August 2025 be approved as a correct record.

CLS19 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 2 - 2025/26

The Assistant Director Community Services, Assistant Director Highways and Capital Projects, Head of Community Safety and Assistant Director of Economic Growth submitted a report (previously circulated) providing Members with an update on performance against key performance indicators at Quarter 2 2025/26.

It was reported that of the 28 indicators reported to this Scrutiny Committee, 19 were reported six monthly and nine were reported annually; and that nine indicators were reported by Culture, nine by Community Services, one by Community Safety, one by Trading Standards and Animal Health and nine by Highways and Capital Projects.

The report stated that, when taking into consideration what was the best performance for each indicator and comparing against the same period from the previous year, that five of the nine Culture indicators had improved, three were not as good and one had no data available; that all of the nine Community Services indicators had improved; that the Community Safety indicator was not as good; that the Trading Standards and Animal Health indicator had improved; and in relation to the Highways and Capital Projects indicators, three

had improved whilst 6 were not as good as the previous year.

Discussed ensued regarding the number of visits to Hopetown and Members requested figures for the year to date; and following a question relating to the percentage of household waste that is reused, reduced and recycled, Members were informed that the decline was as a result of reduced garden waste. Members were also reminded that food waste recycling was being launched on 31 March and that recycling would be undertaken on a weekly basis; that these changes would help to improve performance. Members did raise concerns regarding communication to residents and were advised that all households would receive an information pack regarding food waste recycling, which would also include a leaflet pertaining to general recycling and a dedicated comms pack is in place for the launch of food waste recycling. This includes social media, radio and billboards. Members also noted that there is a national website called 'Recycle Now', a recycling locator for locating recycling facilities which anyone can search to see how to recycle any items that cannot be recycled at home.

Members entered into a further discussion regarding the number of registered Street Champions, road maintenance and residents' perceptions and in relation to prosecutions for fly tips, including progress on portable surveillance, Members noted that portable surveillance was being trialled in some areas and it was hoped to be rolled out wider in the future.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CLS20 SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF MODERN SLAVERY

The Head of Strategy, Performance and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated) providing an overview of the Council's role in identifying and tackling modern slavery and its role in supporting the victims, including safeguarding responsibilities, housing, procurement and partnership working, following a request from the Vice Chair of this Scrutiny Committee.

The submitted report stated that Modern slavery was an umbrella term for severe forms of exploitation where individuals are controlled and deprived of freedom for personal or commercial gain, including human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, domestic servitude, sexual and criminal exploitation, and child exploitation; and that Local Authorities played an important role in identifying and referring victims, providing safeguarding and housing support, disrupting criminal activity, and ensuring ethical supply chains.

Details were provided of the key features of modern slavery; that in 2024 there 133 cases of potential modern slavery reported to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in the Durham Constabulary area; and reference was made to the four areas that the Local Authority have a key role in tackling modern slavery.

It was reported that support for victims from the Council came in the form of Safeguarding children and adults, youth justice, housing and homelessness services including emergency accommodation; there is a Modern Slavery champion in each relevant service area, Children's, Adult's and Housing; and the report outlined the support provided by each service. Members were also informed that the support and procedures around modern

slavery were comprehensive, involving multiple agencies and that each case was dealt with individually depending on the circumstances of the case.

Discussion ensued regarding proactive work being undertaken to identify victims of modern slavery and Members noted that consideration was being given to the development of an overarching Council policy.

RESOLVED – That the Council’s statutory responsibilities and current actions be noted.

CLS21 RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Assistant Director – Highways and Capital Projects submitted a report (previously circulated) setting out the requirements and timeline for implementing a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

It was reported that under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Council was required to implement a ROWIP every ten years; that the current plan was now out of date; and that it was necessary to seek views of stakeholders and the public as part of the implementation process.

The submitted report stated that Darlington’s public rights of way network covered a wide variety of landscapes, both rural and urban in nature; that some paths were surfaced and many were tracks across countryside owned by farmers and landowners; and that there were 216 miles (346 kilometres) of rights of way in the borough that also includes the Teesdale Way passing through the southern part of the borough that is a long-distance route.

Details were provided of the process and programme to be followed to ensure maximum opportunity for stakeholder engagement to obtain meaningful feedback to help inform the updated plan and Members were informed that the process would commence in January 2026, in the form of a Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Community & Stakeholder Questionnaire (also previously circulated).

Discussion ensued regarding the definitive Public Rights of Way map, with Members noting that work was ongoing.

RESOLVED – (a) That the contents of the report be noted.

(b) That a future draft version of the ROWIP be presented to the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee.

CLS22 RESIDENT'S PARKING ZONE CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Executive Director – Environment, Highways and Community Services submitted a report (previously circulated) updating Members on the consultation and emerging themes following the recent Borough wide Residents Parking Zone (RPZ) consultation.

The submitted report stated that the Council operates RPZs to prioritise on-street parking for residents in areas where there can also be demand for visitor parking; that the existing policy had been in place for a number of years was subject to a review to ensure it meets current

needs; and that a Quad of Aims submitted by members to consider the implications of vehicles of different sizes and emissions parking within the zones was also being considered as part of the review process.

Details were provided of the emerging themes from the initial findings report that was presented to Members in April 2025; and in terms of the consultation process, which ran from 16 September to 3 November, it was reported that a total of 1373 responses were received which equated to 73 per cent from households within a RPZ and 27 per cent from households no within a current RPZ.

The report provided further details regarding the responses to the consultation and the next steps were outlined.

Following a question, Members were informed that there was a demand for new zones and that clear criteria was required to be in place to identify these; that consideration was being given to both an extension of existing zones and the creation of new zones; and a review of the time restrictions in individual zones could be considered, any changes would be based on clear evidence.

Particular discussion ensued regarding RPZ enforcement. Members were assured that a review of enforcement activity and resource requirement would be undertaken as part of this review. Concerns were also raised regarding the number of permits issued to residents being greater than the number of spaces available.

Members of the public in attendance at the meeting addressed the Committee, highlighting their concerns regarding the current RPZ in relation to Hargreave Terrace and Greenbank Road.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report detailing the consultation responses and emerging themes that are being considered as part of the RPZ Policy review, be noted.

(b) That a further update be provided to this Scrutiny Committee prior to the final approval of the updated draft RPZ policy.

CLS23 DARLINGTON TRANSPORT PLAN - DELIVERY REPORT

The Assistant Director – Highway and Capital Projects submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the draft Darlington Transport Plan – Delivery report 2026/27 (also previously circulated) prior to its consideration at Cabinet on 3 March 2026.

The submitted report provided an annual update on highways and transport from a regional and local perspective; outlined delivery, performance and public satisfaction in 2025/26; and sought approval for the 2026/27 Darlington Transport Plan and Highways maintenance programme, including the release of funding.

It was reported that in 2022/23 the Darlington Transport Plan, a Town Centre Transport Plan and Parking Strategy for the borough were adopted by the Council; that work continued in implementing the associated plans; and that there had been good progress on the

development and delivery of the transport capital programme.

Details were provided of the significant funding in the Tees Valley region that had been secured from the Government; and that the Council continued to monitor transport patterns, highway condition, road safety and public satisfaction to inform investment decisions.

Reference was made to the progress on delivery of the Darlington Transport Capital Programme schemes in 2025/26 and the proposed delivery in 2026/27; projects and programmes delivered in partnership with the Tees Valley Combined Authority; and performance and monitoring information 2025/26.

Questions were raised regarding the timescale for the review of Darlington's Electric Vehicle Charging Policy, charging infrastructure including cross pavement channels with Members requesting further details of the site location list for the on street electric vehicle charging; and the work undertaken in relation to highway maintenance.

Further questions were raised regarding active travel, with Members noting that a significant programme of work was in place; the Northern Link road; and in relation to public perception of accessibility Members were informed that a bid into Pride in Place for dropped curbs was being prioritised. Further discussion ensued regarding the bus priority schemes to be delivered across the Tees Valley and what these improvements would look like.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CLS24 REDUCTION OF ROAD HARM REPORT

The Assistant Director – Highway and Capital Projects submitted a report (previously circulated) introducing the topic of road harm reduction and beginning the examination of the role of the Council in reducing the impact of the risks posed by road users on residents and visitors to Darlington.

The submitted report stated that road harm covered a wide range of issues including road collision casualties and environmental impacts including air and noise pollution; that an overreliance on private vehicles also had health impacts and a lack of transport accessibility could lead to social isolation, poor mental health and loss of economic activity. It was suggested that an examination into the role of the Council would suit a task and finish style review with an evidence led approach.

It was reported that in 2024 there were 119 collisions in Darlington, resulting in 156 casualties; that of the casualties, two were fatal, 40 were serious and 77 had slight injuries; reference was made to the cost of collisions; and the suggested areas of focus for a review were outlined.

Members were advised of the potential outcomes of a review and Members sought clarification as to whether meetings of a Task and Finish Group could be held virtually.

RESOLVED – That a Task and Finish group be established to examine road harm, causes, consequences and mitigation and that an invitation be extended to the Members of the Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee.

CLS25 WORK PROGRAMME

The Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's work programme and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included in the previously approved work programme.

Members sought clarification regarding the possibility for a review of the key performance indicators relating to this scrutiny committee including how these were presented.

RESOLVED – That the current work programme be noted.

CLS26 QUESTIONS

Questions were raised regarding the public's perception of Darlington Borough Council, with a Member highlighting that further work was required to address this; and membership of this Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the discussion be noted.

COMMUNITIES & LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 MARCH 2026

COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2026-2029

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of five responsible authorities; Darlington Borough Council, Durham Constabulary, NHS (Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys), County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service and the National Probation Service. These agencies all have a statutory duty to work together to tackle crime and disorder. Furthermore, additional members of the Darlington CSP include County Durham and Darlington Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and representative of the voluntary and community sector.
2. The CSP has a 2021-2026 Partnership Plan which is coming to the end of its life cycle. To inform the development of the new plan, the CSP consulted with the public to understand which areas were a priority for the community to address as part of the new plan. A consultation exercise was undertaken in October and November 2025 to inform the development of an updated plan.
3. The new CSP Plan will be a three-year plan (2026-2029) as all partners felt a three-year plan period provides a more flexible approach to planning, enabling partners to develop and adjust their plans and approaches to ensure it can respond to any changes.
4. The plan sets out the key priorities of the CSP. The draft plan has been developed following feedback from members of the public and was considered at the last Community Safety Partnership meeting in late January 2026. The draft plan sets out the aims and objectives for the next three years and what the partnership intend to do to ensure Darlington becomes an even safer place to live, work and visit. The draft plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Summary

5. CSP's were created to tackle crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour through collective place based action, recognising that enforcement alone cannot address the root causes of harm. Therefore, the CSP looks at early intervention and prevention as well as physical actions to try to deal with issues.
6. Darlington CSP remains committed to providing an environment where people can go about their everyday lives confident in the knowledge that Darlington is 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. The CSP is aware that we still have to work to

build upon our successes and focus on a range of new challenges and activities.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that :-

- (a) Scrutiny note the content of the report, the consultation responses and the draft Community Safety Partnership Plan 2026-2029.
- (b) Scrutiny advise if they believe there should be any changes to the Plan before these are considered by Cabinet and full Council.

Ben Grabham

Assistant Director – Environmental Services and Community Safety

Council Plan	One of the objectives of the Council plan is to support a strong Community safety Partnership to ensure the issues affecting the safety and security of our communities are addressed collectively, including addressing hate crime.
Addressing inequalities	The CSP plan seeks to ensure that we support all members of the community to seek ensure no-one is adversely impacted by crime and disorder.
Tackling Climate Change	Not applicable to this report
Efficient and effective use of resources	Not applicable to this report
Health and Wellbeing	Crime and anti-social behaviour can affect a person's health and well-being and the CSP plan and the CSP will work to make Darlington a safe place to live, work, and visit.
S17 Crime and Disorder	The CSP is committed to making Darlington a safe place to live, work, and visit and aim to achieve this through early intervention and prevention as well as actions delivered across the Partnership.
Wards Affected	All wards affected
Groups Affected	The priority areas of the CSP seek to ensure that no group is adversely affected by crime and disorder.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report will make changes to the Council's current policy framework and therefore requires approval by full Council
Key Decision	Yes
Urgent Decision	No
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Consultations

8. The CSP consulted with the public to understand their views and perceptions on crime and anti-social behaviour and to identify the public's views on what the priorities for the CSP should be. The consultation was live on the Council's website between 13th October and 25th November 2025. The consultation was promoted by partners through various social media platforms and an article was placed in the One Darlington magazine (Autumn edition).
9. 117 responses were received from members of the public to the consultation, and the results of the survey are included in Appendix 2. The results of the survey have been used by the CSP to inform the priority areas included in the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2026-2029.
10. The headline results from the survey are as follows:-
 - 39.6% of respondents had been a victim of crime whereas 60.4% had not been a victim of crime
 - 52.9% of respondents had been a victim of anti-social behaviour whereas 47.1% had not been a victim of anti-social behaviour
 - 78.2% of respondents felt that incidence of anti-social behaviour had increased over the past 12 months whereas 3% felt it had decreased (18.8% of respondents felt it had stayed the same)
 - 59% of respondents felt that incidence of hate crime had increased over the past 12 months whereas 6% felt it had decreased (35% of respondents felt it had stayed the same)
 - 59.4% of respondents felt that incidence of overall crime had increased over the past 12 months whereas 4.95% felt it had decreased (35.65% of respondents felt it had stayed the same)
 - 46.5% of respondents were very concerned about anti-social behaviour of adults, 42.6% were somewhat concerned and 10.89% were not at all concerned
 - 64.36% of respondents were very concerned about anti-social behaviour of youths, 32.67% were somewhat concerned and 2.97% were not at all concerned
 - 14% of respondents were very concerned about their safety when out during the day, 39% were somewhat concerned and 47% were not at all concerned
 - 40.2% of respondents were very concerned about their safety when out during the night, 51% were somewhat concerned and 8.8% were not at all concerned
 - 28.4% of respondents were very concerned about hate crime, 42.2% were somewhat concerned and 29.4% were not at all concerned
 - 34.65% of respondents were very concerned about overall crime, 59.4% were somewhat concerned and 5.95% were not at all concerned
11. When respondents were asked which three issues the CSP should focus on over the next three years the highest responses were:
 1. Anti-social behaviour
 2. Drug dealing and substance mis-use

3. Off-road motorcycles
 4. Domestic abuse
-
12. The results of the CSP survey are included in full in Appendix 2 (please note that when the survey was first published an error in the wording relating to the question on equalities was discovered. This was corrected and only the figures for the 'correct' wording have been included in the Appendix).
 13. In addition to the CSP survey, the CSP have also considered other consultation exercises undertaken in recent months. These include the 'Being Included in Your Community' survey. The survey was undertaken in summer 2025 and this survey attracted 2,395 responses. As part of the survey, respondents were asked 'how safe do you feel in the area you live'? 66.49% of people said they felt very safe or safe whilst only 8.65% said unsafe or very unsafe (24.86% of people answered 'neutral').
 14. In addition, as part of the Being Included in your Community survey, respondents were asked which types of anti-social behaviour they experienced in the community in which they live. The highest responses were as follows:
 - Litter or rubbish (including fly tipping) or dog fouling
 - Vehicle related anti-social behaviours such as abandoned vehicles, off road bikes, speeding cars or motorcycles, cars revving etc
 - People hanging around or loitering
 - Drugs or evidence of drugs

Priority Areas for the CSP Plan 2026-2029

15. The CSP have digested the results of the surveys undertaken and coupled with intelligence data and trend analysis, the partnership has agreed the following areas should be identified as the priority areas in the CSP Plan 2026-2029. The priority areas are:
 - Anti-social behaviour and off-road motorcycles
 - Drugs and substance mis-use
 - Domestic abuse and sexual violence
 - Community cohesion
16. The CSP will work towards a (i) coordinated and efficient multi-agency response to reports of anti-social behaviour (ii) ensuring effective support is in place to meet the needs of victims (iii) that effective pathways are in place to deal with perpetrators and (iv) that there is an increase in community confidence to continue to report incidents
17. The CSP will continue to meet regularly and members will ensure that performance and progress are regularly monitored. This will cover a range of activities but will include (i) working with and supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour (ii) applying prevention and early intervention approaches to seek to reduce people becoming victims of crime and anti-social behaviour (iii) increasing public confidence to report crime and anti-social behaviour (iv) improving partnership working in Darlington and beyond via strategic groups and partnership boards and (v) providing support to the MAPS Group (multi-agency problem solving) to prioritise crime and disorder, threat, risk and action.

18. The draft CSP Plan 2026-2029 is included at Appendix 1. Please note that the figures of page 4 of the plan are historic data but are included to highlight an example of what the page will look like – when the plan is finalised up to date figures will be included in the document.

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DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Darlington Community Safety Plan 2026 - 2029

The Darlington Community Safety Partnership are committed to making Darlington a safe place to live, work, and visit and aim to achieve this through early intervention and prevention.

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Darlington Community Safety Partnership Plan 2026 -2029

The Darlington Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is pleased to introduce the Community Safety Plan for the next three years from 2026-2029. The document provides information on our background, structure and priorities.

The Partnership Plan brings together our aims, ambitions and priorities for the next three years. We will work in Partnership to tackle the issue which impact on, and matter to local people through early intervention and prevention.

CSP's were created to tackle crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour through collective, place-based action, recognising that enforcement alone cannot address the root causes of harm. Evidence consistently shows that early intervention and prevention.

- Reduces long-term crime and antisocial behaviour
- Improves life outcomes for children, young people and families
- Lowers future demand on policing, health, social care and criminal justice systems

The duty to collaborate for CSP's is rooted in section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which places a legal obligation on key local agencies to work together to reduce crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour, substance misuse and reoffending in their area.

Darlington Community Safety Partnership remains committed to providing an environment where people can go about their everyday lives, day and night, confident in the knowledge that Darlington is 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.

The plan has been developed following a period of consultation and community surveys and reflects the vision and priorities for the borough and the direction of local agencies who work together as part of our Community Safety Partnership.

Tackling crime and disorder with competing demands, limited resources and delivering a detailed plan is a challenge. Darlington continues to be a safe place to live, work and visit with falling rates of crime. As a partnership we are aware that we still have work to build upon our success and focus on a range of new challenges and activities.

Comments from Steve Long Chief Superintendent and Chair of the Darlington Community Safety Partnership.

As Chair, I'm pleased to introduce our Community Safety Partnership priorities for 2026-2029. These priorities reflect the issues that matter most to our residents and businesses, and we'll work together with partners to make Darlington safer for everyone. Community safety means people feeling safe and supported in their community. It's about reducing crime and the fear of crime, feeling secure in your home and public spaces, addressing issues like ASB, violence and substance misuse and building trust and cohesion among residents.

Our focus is on:

1. Tackling ASB and off-road bikes
2. Reducing harm from drugs and substance misuse
3. Supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence
4. Strengthening community cohesion

By working together, we'll keep residents safe, reduce crime, and make Darlington a great place to live, work, and visit. Darlington Community Safety Partnership will ensure that responsible authorities and services collaborate with voluntary groups and communities to keep Darlington safe. As a partnership we will endeavour to create an environment where people can thrive, feel protected and enjoy their community.

The plan sets out our aims and objectives for the next three years and what we intend to do to ensure that Darlington becomes an even safer place to visit, work and live.

To achieve our vision for Darlington we have identified **4 Key priorities**.

- 1) Anti-Social Behaviour and Off-Road Motorcycles**
- 2) Drugs and Substance Misuse**
- 3) Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence**
- 4) Community Cohesion**

Darlington on a Page

Darlington is a large market town in North East England, surrounded by a rural area consisting of 26 civil parishes. The town lies on the River Skerne, a tributary of the River Tees and owes its development to the influence of the local Quaker families in the Georgian and Victorian era, who provided much of the finance and vision in creating the stockton and Darlington Railway: the world's first modern passenger railway.

Crime over time



Population



55,214
recorded as
male



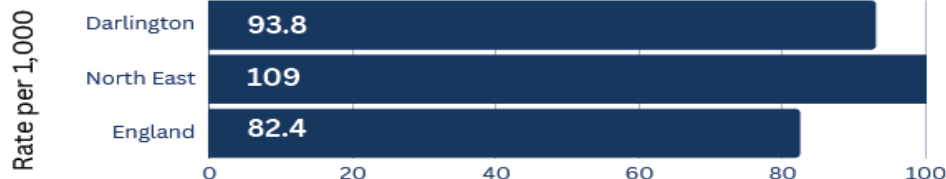
57,275
recorded as
female

Change in offences (2020-23)



Crime rates (2023) are **lower** in Darlington than the North East but are **higher** than England.

This has been the case over time



Role of Darlington Community Safety Partnership

Local authorities have a statutory duty to form a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, behaviour which effects the local environment and to reduce reoffending.

More information about Darlington's Community Safety Partnership is available on the webpage. [Darlington BC - Community safety partnership](#).

The changing landscape for Community Safety Partnerships

Community Safety Partnerships provide localised strategies tailored to meet the needs of their communities. They work on the principle that no single agency can address all crime and anti-social behaviour in an area, and that effective partnership working is vital to ensuring safer communities.

The Darlington Community Safety Partnership has a duty to meet our statutory obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In recent years there have been many changes to statutory duties and further changes planned.

Government guidance and legislation places some other groups on a statutory footing, and they function effectively with oversight from the Darlington Community Safety Partnership. For example, the County Durham and Darlington Serious Violence Prevention Partnership. This strategy sets out a new challenge for Community Safety Partnerships and other local partnerships with measures in place to help them respond to serious violence and to make it their mission to tackle this crime and involve communities in doing so.

Responsible authorities

Darlington Community Safety Partnership (CSP) includes 5 responsible authorities:



DARLINGTON
Borough Council



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service



**National
Probation
Service**



These agencies all have a statutory duty to work together to tackle crime and disorder, however, we also work with many public and private sector partners as well as voluntary and community groups to effectively implement and deliver initiatives that will assist in Darlington becoming a safe place to live, work and visit.

Additional members include:

County Durham and Darlington Police and Crime Commissioner's Office

Voluntary and Community Sector

Our Priorities 2026-2029

How have we identified our priorities?

The partnership has considered existing and emerging national priorities and legal obligations faced by members of the Community Safety Partnership.

Other factors which have been considered during the development of the new Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 include an analysis of:

- Community Surveys
- Volume of offences
- Level of harm on victims and communities
- Partnership strengths
- Trend analysis

Public opinion

A public opinion survey was conducted across Darlington between October and November 2025, which was made available in the October edition of the One Darlington magazine, on Darlington Borough Council's website and social media platforms. The survey was also promoted by all partners in the Community Safety Partnership.

As a partnership we also looked at the "Being Included in your Community" survey which was conducted by Darlington Borough Council in 2025 where there were 2,395 surveys completed.

- 66.49% of residents felt very safe or safe in Darlington
- 24.86% of residents remained neutral
- 8.65% of residents felt very unsafe or unsafe.

Governance

The Partnership and its members ensure that priorities can be effectively delivered, and that performance and progress are regularly monitored through appropriate checks including.

- Working with, supporting, and listening to feedback from victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Applying prevention and early intervention approaches that reduce the number of people becoming victims in the first place and preventing the escalation of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Increasing public confidence to encourage people to report crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Improving connectivity and partnership working to include working with others in Darlington and beyond and the sharing of information to obtain the right results.
- Being connected to County Durham and Darlington Strategic groups and partnership boards.
- Providing support to the Darlington Multi-Agency Problem Solving Group (MAPS) who meet monthly to prioritise crime and disorder threat and risk in our communities and take collective action to tackle and resolve.

Identified priorities 2026

1. Anti-Social Behaviour and Off-Road Motorcycles

Area of focus: anti-social behaviour and off-road motorcycles

Areas of assurance: reductions in reports of the above and increased community confidence.

2. Drugs and Substance Misuse

Area of focus: Drugs and substance misuse

Areas of assurance: Combatting drugs and alcohol and effective support for those addicted to substances.

3. Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence

Area of focus: Domestic abuse & Sexual Violence

Areas of assurance: Domestic abuse, serious violence, violence against women and girls.

4. Community Cohesion

Area of focus: Community cohesion

Areas of assurance: Hate crime, community engagement and counter terrorism.

Priorities

Darlington Youth Parliament.

Pride in Place Programme

Anti-social behaviour/ Off Road Motorcycles
ASB Strategic Group

Drugs & Substance Misuse
Combating drugs & alcohol strategy

Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence
County Durham & Darlington Violence Executive Group (DASVEG)

Community Cohesion
Joint Hate Crime Action Group

Community Safety Partnership

Intelligence Led

Data Driven

Problem Solving

Partnership Approach

Prevention

Early Intervention

Assurance Groups

- County Durham & Darlington Road Safety Partnership.
- Contest Group
- Local Criminal Justice Board
- Reducing Reoffending Delivery Group
- Serious Violence Group
- Organised Crime Group
- Prepare and Protect Group

The CSP Plan links to other documents such as the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police Crime and Justice Plan 2025-2029 and is aligned to Darlington Borough Council's Council Plan.

Performance Measures

The CSP will use a range of performance measures to track progress against the delivery of priorities in the Plan. These will include (but not be limited to):-

- Number of reported crimes
- Number of reported Hate Crimes
- Number of reported violent crimes
- Number of reported sexual offences
- Number of possession of weapons incidents
- Number of reported anti-social behaviour incidents
- Number of repeat victims, locations and perpetrators on anti-social behaviour
- Number of reported begging incidents
- Number of fly tips
- Number of Fixed Penalty Notices for (i) littering and (ii) dog fouling
- Number of other environmental associated Fixed Penalty Notices
- Number of deliberate secondary fires
- Number in treatment for alcohol / substance misuse
- Accident & Emergency attendances for overdose
- Number of community needle finds
- Further NHS measures (to be confirmed)

Priority 1. Anti-Social Behaviour and Off-Road Motorcycles

Why is this a priority?

During the last year 2025-2026 Darlington like many other communities across the country has seen an increase in anti-social behaviour which includes among other issues the use of off-road motorcycles.

Those who live, work and visit Darlington need to feel safe and incidents of anti-social behaviour impacts on both our emotional and physical wellbeing. Such incident also impacts negatively on community cohesion.

Anti-social behaviour and crimes which disrupt our community is the number one priority for residents across Darlington. Residents are clear that these behaviours disrupt our neighbourhoods.

ASB can have a massive impact on those who are subjected to it and can be a precursor to more serious crime and early intervention prevents further escalation into other more serious crimes.

As a partnership we want residents to have pride in the area they live, to feel safe in their own homes and have confidence in reporting incidents to the authorities.

What do we want to achieve?

- A coordinated and efficient multi-agency response to reports of ASB
- Effective support that meets the needs of the victim
- Effective pathways for the perpetrators.
- An increase in community confidence to report incidents

Case Study

Increase in anti-social behaviour in Darlington Town Centre

During the latter part of 2024 and early 2025 Darlington like many town centres across the country saw an increase in anti-social behaviour (ASB).

As a result, a multi-agency meeting was called bringing together partners such as the Police, Darlington Borough Councils Community Safety Team, Civic Enforcement, Young Peoples Engagement & Justice Service, CCTV, Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Cornmill Centre Staff, Dolphin Centre and other retailers to stamp out ASB.

The meeting focussed on the correct reporting procedures, the sharing of intelligence, building relationships between partners and retailers and reducing the ASB within the town centre.

The joined-up action between all has resulted in a reduction in ASB with extra foot patrols by Police and Civic Enforcement at key times and timely action taken against those acting in an anti-social manner.

Regular meetings are now held between retailers and partners to discuss current patterns and trends to address the issues and monthly "Cuppa with a Copper" sessions within the Cornmill Centre where partners and retailers attend where members of the public can raise concerns and discuss issues over a cup of tea or coffee.

As a result as a partnership, we have been able to act swiftly obtaining two injunctions banning key offenders for ASB out of the town centre and have obtained several Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA's) to control young people's behaviour.

As a partnership we are committed to supporting safer, stronger communities and as a result have seen significant drops in ASB in Darlington town centre as a result of sharing intelligence, building positive working relationships and taking robust actions against offenders.

Priority 2. Drugs and Substance Misuse

Why is this a priority?

Substance misuse is the abuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances that affect perception, consciousness, understanding, mood or emotion and is a worldwide public health issue.

Substance misuse not only harms the individual, but also their family, communities and society. The UK is one of the European countries most affected by drugs and demand for drugs across the population is very high – 2.9 million adults reported using drugs in England and Wales in 2025.

Drug and/or alcohol use increases crime, damages people's health, can put children and families at risk and reduces productivity. It affects everyone, with the most deprived areas facing the greatest burden.

The UK Government estimates that drug use costs society nearly £20 billion a year and new research from the Institute of Alcohol Studies has found that alcohol harm costs society in England alone £27.44 billion each year.

In 2024, there were 5,565 deaths registered related to drug poisoning, which is the highest annual total since records began in 1993 with the North East region experiencing greater numbers than any other region. The latest government figure for deaths related to drug misuse in England, Wales and Darlington indicates a continued rise in mortality rates of 5.8, 8.5 and 10.0 deaths per 100,000 people, respectively.

The latest government figures on alcohol-related deaths in England and Wales indicate a concerning trend. In 2023, there were 10,473 deaths from alcohol-specific causes registered in the UK, the highest number on record. The rate of alcohol-specific deaths in England, Wales and Darlington increased to 15.0, 17.7 and 21.5 deaths per 100,000 people, respectively.

In Darlington, statistics show that substance misuse is still an issue which needs to be prioritised, and that to tackle it we need a long-term approach where relevant agencies work in partnership.

What do we want to achieve?

- Prevention and early intervention: Delivering prevention and early intervention programmes that reduce likelihood of substance use initiation and offer timely support in preventing the development of more harmful patterns of use and cessation.
- Effective Harm reduction: Providing interventions and strategies to minimise harm to individuals, families and communities caused by substance use e.g. emergency antidotes like naloxone, initiatives to reduce blood borne viruses and supporting non-fatal overdose pathways to connect individuals to the right services.
- Increased access to treatment and support services: Ensuring that people have access to high-quality treatment and support services, empowering them to obtain and maintain recovery.
- Recovery community empowerment: Provide a sense of belonging, uplifting communities and making recovery visible and inspiring, whilst offering practical and emotional support to individuals and their families, helping them connect to wider communities of people in recovery.
- Enhanced community engagement: Inviting input from residents and partners to address local priority areas where the community can have the greatest impact.

Case Study

In June 2023, I took myself to Accident and Emergency because I thought I was going into withdrawal from drinking alcohol. After being checked out the doctor asked me if I would like to talk to someone about my drinking. I said yes and within half an hour the STRIDE Engagement team came to speak to me in the Hospital. They were warm and welcoming, and we had a good conversation about my situation, how I was feeling, and what services were available to me.

I was very impressed with the communication between the hospital and recovery services and how swiftly they were able to come and see me. It was exactly what I needed at the time. I arranged an appointment for an assessment and entered structured treatment through the STRIDE Clinical team.

I began to attend as many of the groups, activities and outings as I could fit in around work. I was grateful that there was such a full and varied timetable so that I had something to attend when I needed it.

In September I approached the STRIDE Individual Placement Support (IPS) team who helped me put together a CV, discussed what kind of work I was looking for and went over some interview techniques with me which ended in me starting a new Job.

In March I started the Ambassadors Course and with the continued support and encouragement from the STRIDE Recovery team I completed it. In June I applied for a position with Recovery connections, went for the interview in July and started working in September.

When I first entered the service back in June 2023 I had absolutely no confidence. Without the opportunities and multidimensional services and resources that have been made available to me through STRIDE I would never have believed that I could achieve what I have.

Priority 3. Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence

Why is this a priority?

Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence represents one of the highest-harm crimes in the borough. It is a complex issue that crosses all demographics, encompassing physical violence, coercive control, financial abuse, and stalking. A multi-agency approach is essential because domestic abuse is rarely a "one-off" event; it is a pattern of behaviour that requires the combined intervention of the police, health services, and social care to break the cycle of re-offending. The rate of domestic abuse-related offences in the Durham Constabulary area is significantly higher than the national average, with approximately 22 incidents per 1,000 population (compared to 13 per 1,000 nationally). Crucially, the partnership recognizes that abuse extends beyond the traditional adult-partner dynamic. It explicitly includes teenage relationship abuse, acknowledging that 1 in 4 teenage girls and 1 in 6 boys experience physical force in their first relationships. By prioritizing this, the CSP aims to intervene before these behaviours escalate into lifelong patterns of violence.

What we want to achieve?

The Darlington Community Safety Partnership aims to achieve a "Whole System" response to domestic abuse & sexual violence, ensuring that no victim falls through the cracks. Primary objectives for 2026 include improving early identification, putting the "Survivor Voice" at the heart of decision-making, and increasing the effectiveness of perpetrator accountability. A key local goal is the successful operation of the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, which focuses on providing safe accommodation and therapeutic support for children who are often the "hidden victims" of household abuse. By targeting education and awareness in schools, the CSP also seeks to reduce the prevalence of teenage relationship abuse, empowering young people to recognize red flags like digital stalking and coercive control early on.

This local work is directly linked to the UK Government's national Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. By aligning with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the CSP ensures that local services meet the "National Set of Expectations" for victim support. Treating domestic abuse as a public health issue rather than just a policing

matter, the CSP supports the national drive to shift society's culture away from the acceptance of gender-based violence.

Case Study

This case consists of 2 x adult female victims who were subject to abuse from a single adult male, over an extended period of time. Both females provided detailed accounts of multiple sexual and physical assaults, alongside control and coercive behaviour (CCB) throughout the relationship.

The first complainant was in a long-term relationship with suspect during which she suffered serious sexual abuse, mental abuse, violence, financial control and was isolated from friends and family.

The second complainant confirmed that she was subjected to serious sexual and physical assaults during her relationship with the male. The suspect demonstrated CCB threatening to harm himself, contacting the victims' children using them to apply pressure to rekindle the relationship, reducing and controlling her contact with family and friends, preventing her from socialising, and financially exploiting her, taking out credit in her name.

Police, working in partnership with the local authority child services, health bodies, education, and voluntary organisations, including the victims GP's, mental health teams, local hospitals, schools, Harbour (Independent domestic violence advisor) and ISVA (independent sexual violence advisor) compiled a comprehensive evidential case, covering all aspects of the abuse and its long term effects. Importantly partners continue to provide ongoing support for the victims, and their children.

A Civil Sexual Risk Order was obtained with 5 prohibitions/requirements, and the suspect has been charged with multiple offences.

Support for both victims remain in place to help them with the long-term effects of this abuse and guide them through the criminal justice process.

Priority 4. Community Cohesion

Why is this a priority?

Strong and inclusive communities, underpinned by shared values and based on positive relationships and mutual respect, are the building blocks of a fair and stable society. No matter what our background, religion, or political persuasion, we all share some fundamental values: foremost among them being respect for the law; tolerance and freedom of speech. By reinforcing those common values, by supporting chances for people to come together, learn more about each other, and overcome misperceptions, we can reinforce those shared values and strengthen our communities.

High levels of community cohesion can lead to improved social well-being, reducing issues like crime and social isolation within the group.

There is a real strength in our communities in Darlington, brought to the fore during the COVID 19 crisis, recent storms and flooding where there have been some excellent examples of communities working together with a common purpose across Darlington. As a partnership we need to build on this to improve community cohesion so that our communities are safe and free from fear of crime and take pride in their area.

Hate crimes can have a profound effect on both individuals and communities causing emotional distress, fear and a sense of isolation within our communities. Such incidents often lead to a breakdown in community cohesion and create intolerance within communities.

If hate crimes are not tackled and dealt with swiftly in our society, then this can lead to an increase in confidence from extremist groups to get a foothold in our communities and a spread of their ideologies and targeting those who are vulnerable.

Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

What do we want to achieve?

- Cohesive communities which embrace diversity
- Effective support that meets the needs of the victim
- Effective pathways for the perpetrators.
- An understanding within communities that hate crimes will not be tolerated

- Confidence to report incidents of hate crimes

Case Study

The terrorist attack on 2nd October 2025 at Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation in Manchester, had had huge ramifications on the local Jewish diaspora throughout the country. Evidently planned on this date due to it being Yom Kippur, Jewish day of atonement, where there would be a high footfall of Jewish people attending Synagogue for the service and celebrations being one of the most important Jewish high holy days.

Durham Constabulary's community cohesion team picked the incident up while off duty and raised this with wider cohesion team, made direct contact within the local synagogue, who at the time were in their ceremony for Yom Kippur.

The Community Cohesion Team made necessary formal documented actions, highlighting this with the Neighbourhood Policing Team and colleagues within council community safety team.

Within the days proceeding, conversations held around the community concerns and suitable support which included: increased patrols, application for funding for religious premises for CCTV which was granted and then installed.

Connection between cohesion team and wider congregation for future events was made and an invitation to join Hannukah celebrations to meet the congregation, along with the Police Neighbourhood Policing Team who supported the celebration.

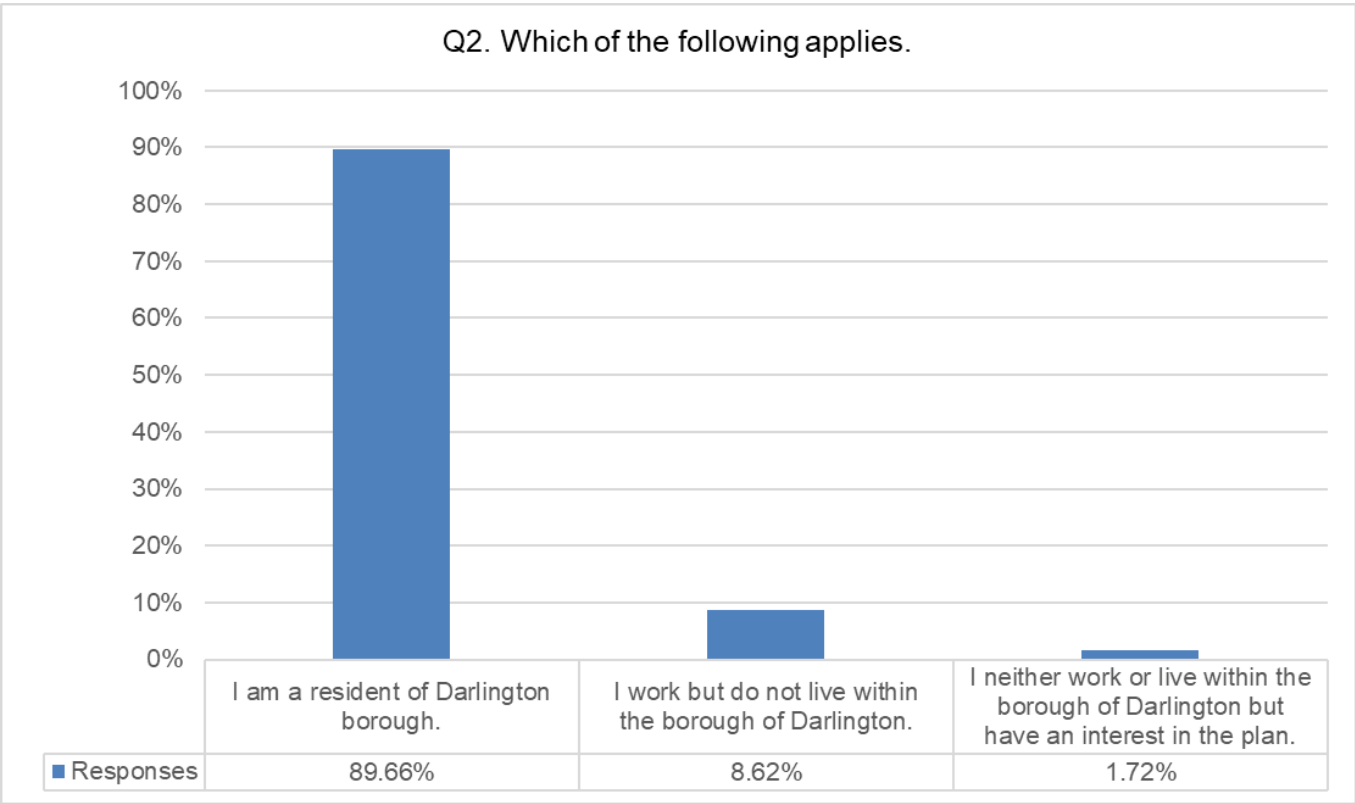
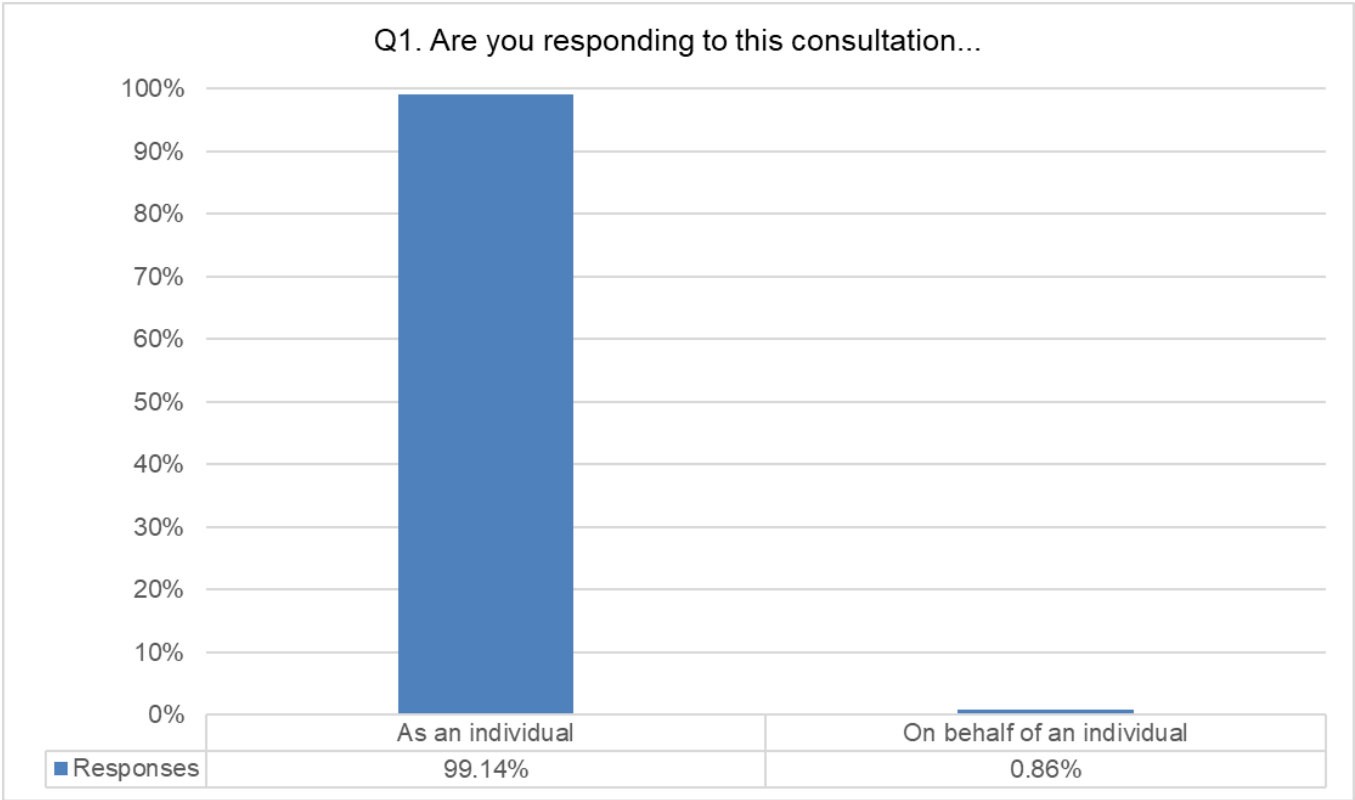
The Neighbourhood Policing Teams have direct contact with key contacts at the Synagogue and have been providing patrols and drop in's at well attended events to provide confidence and reassurance

Advice provided around lone working procedures and direct support provided during primary school RE visits at the synagogue which is conducted by the synagogue on their own.

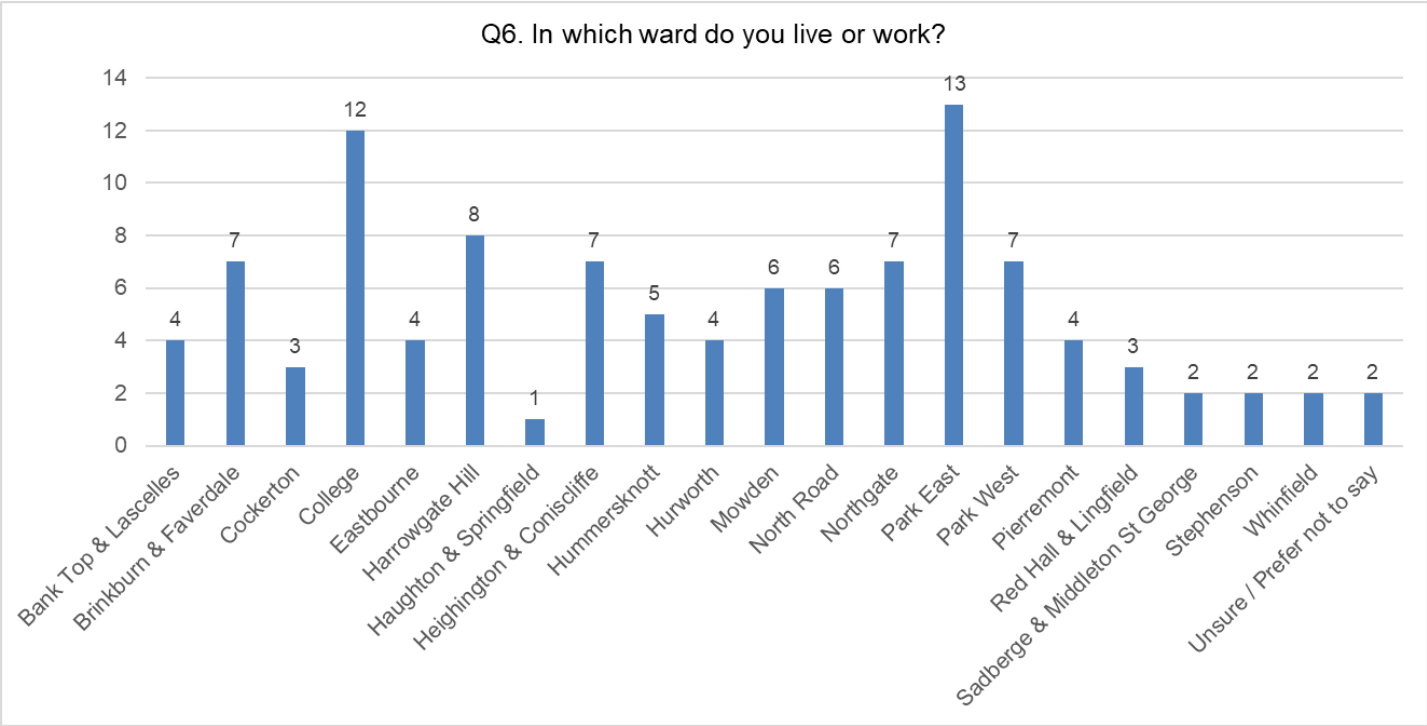
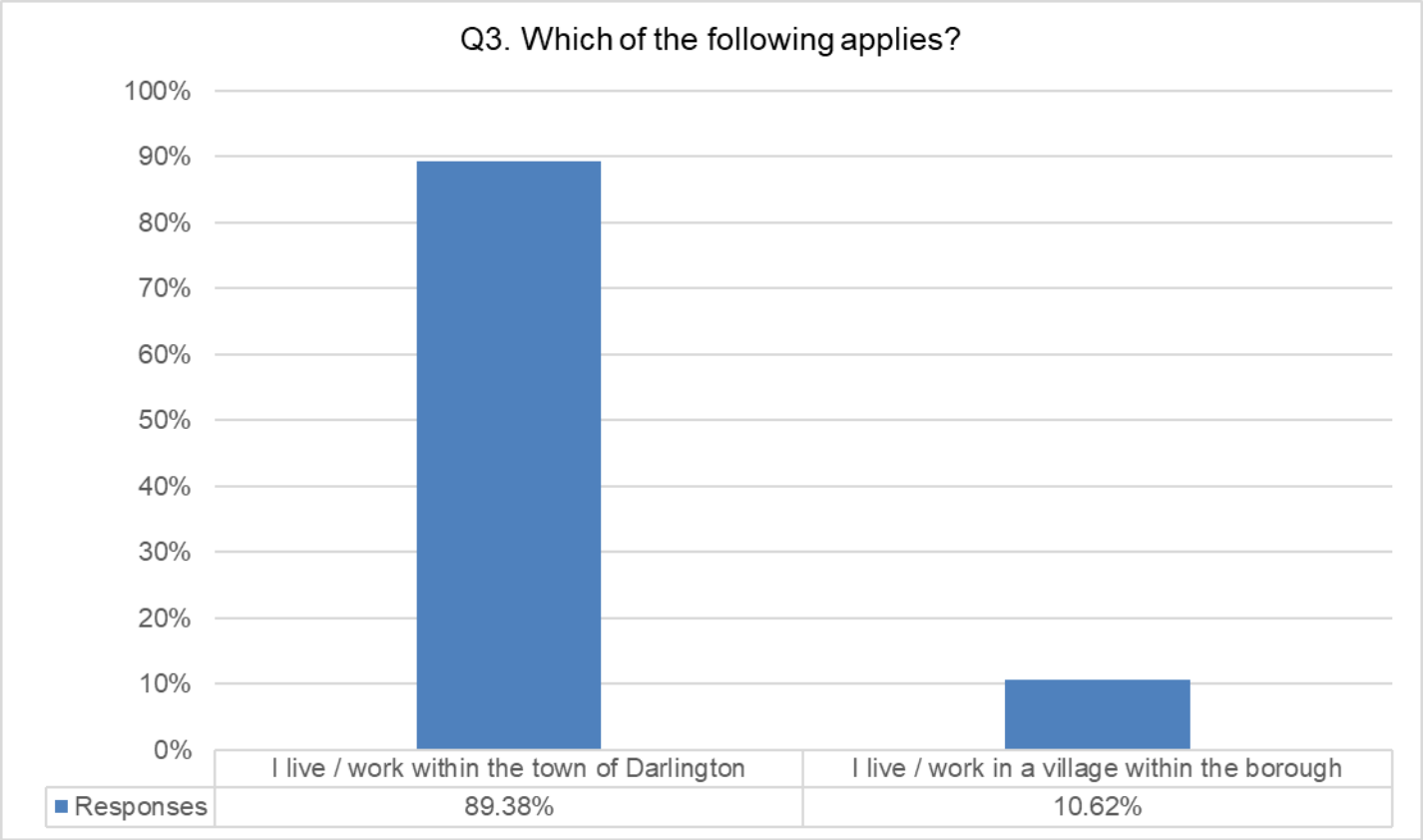
The partnership engagement has cemented the already strong relationship between the Jewish community and partners.

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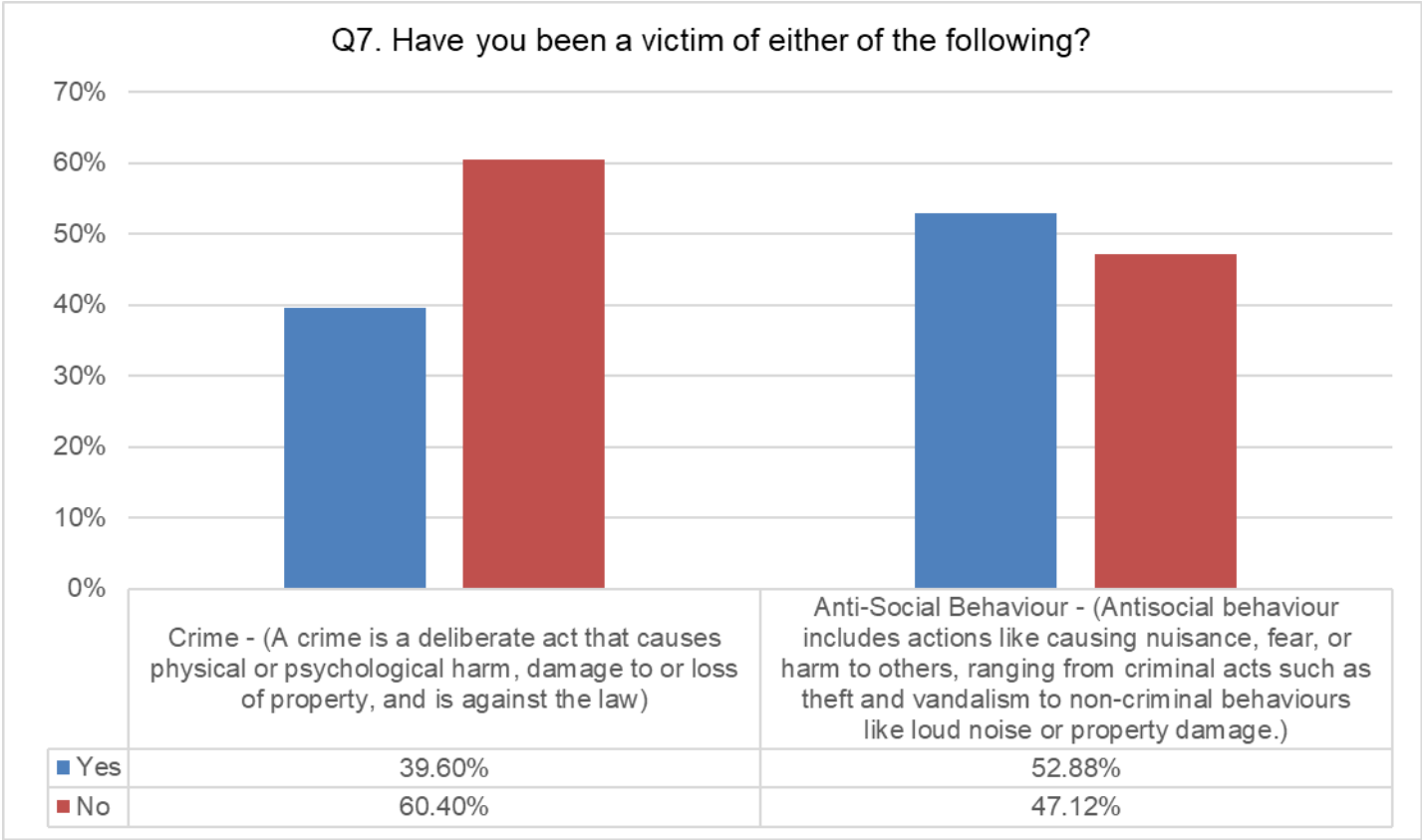
Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)
Appendix 2



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Appendix 2



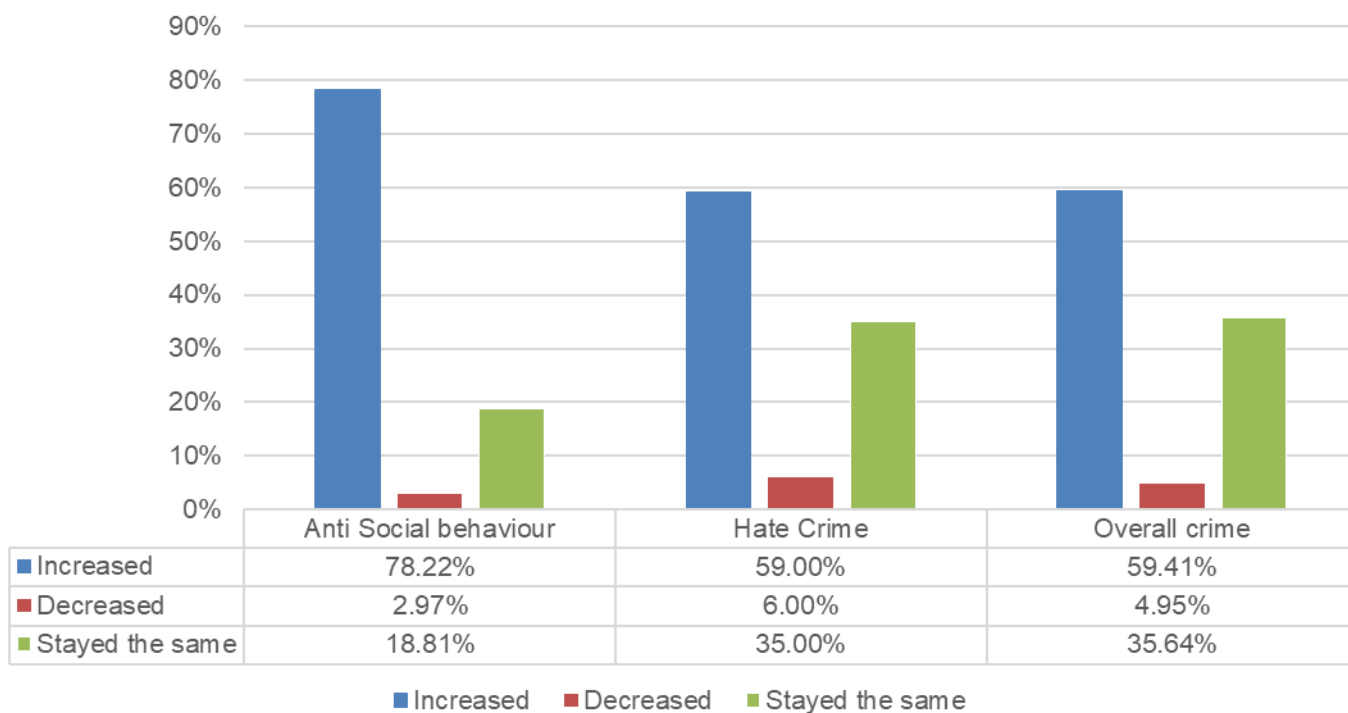
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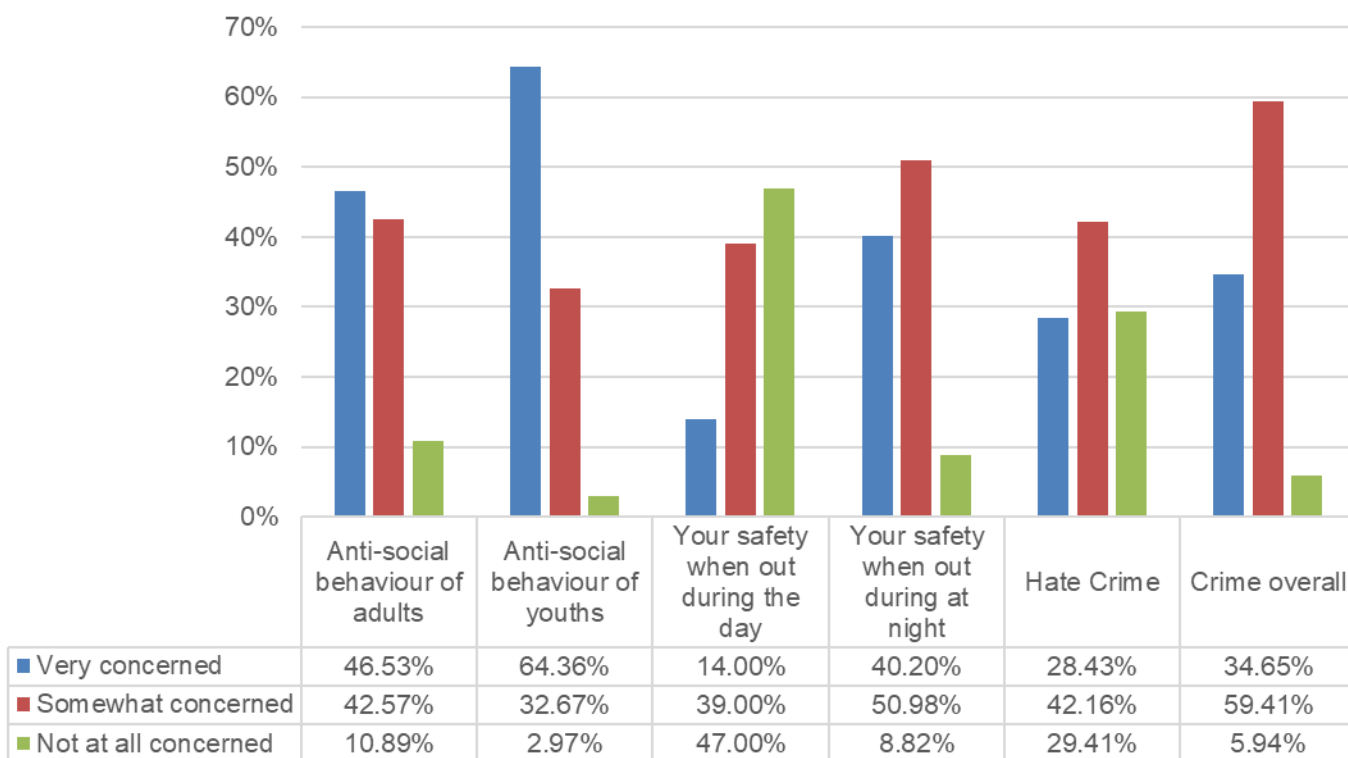
Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)

Appendix 2

Q8. Do you believe that the number of incidents of the following has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last 12 months?



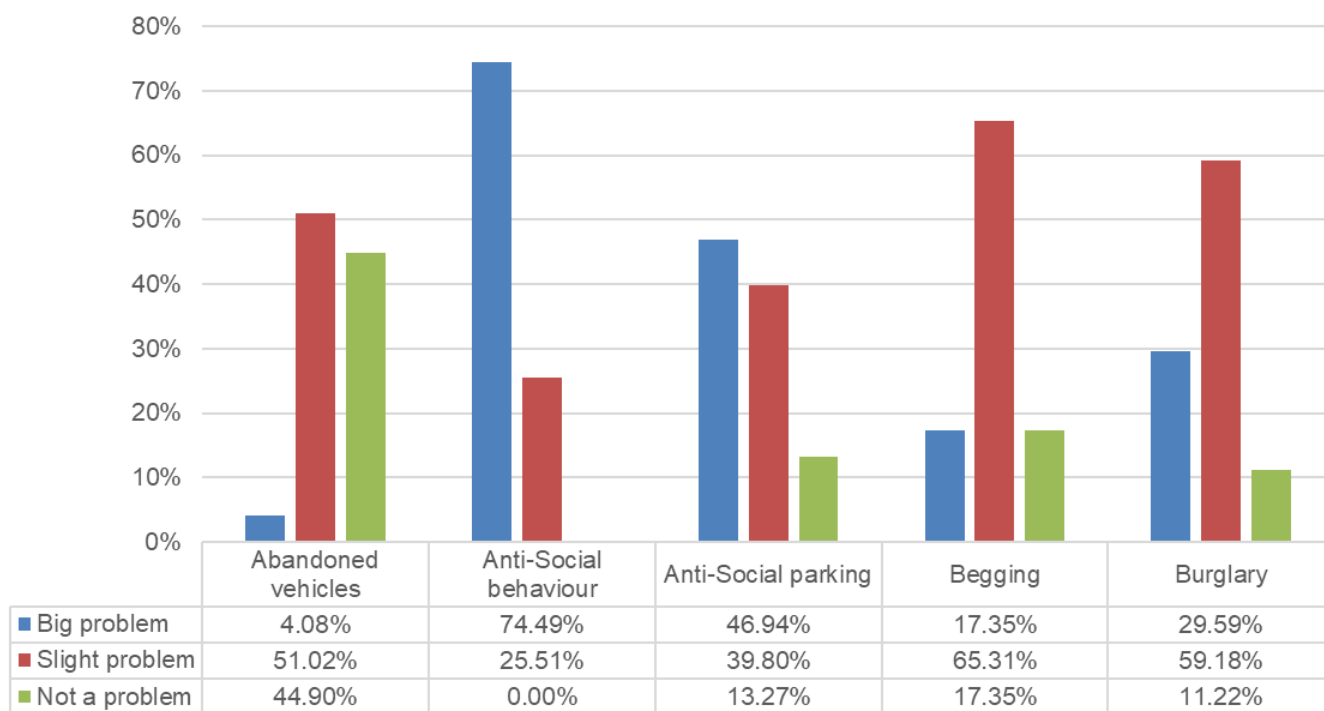
Q9. How concerned are you about the following?



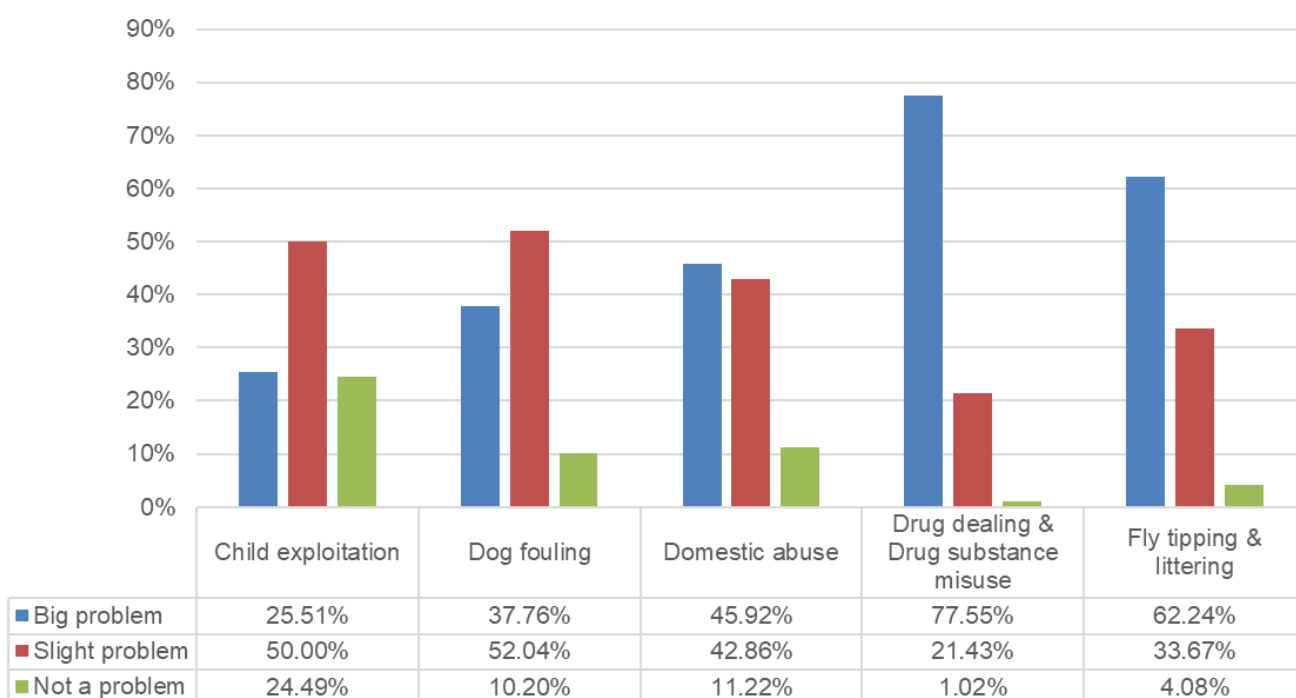
Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)

Appendix 2

Q10. How much of a problem do you feel the following incidents are in Darlington?



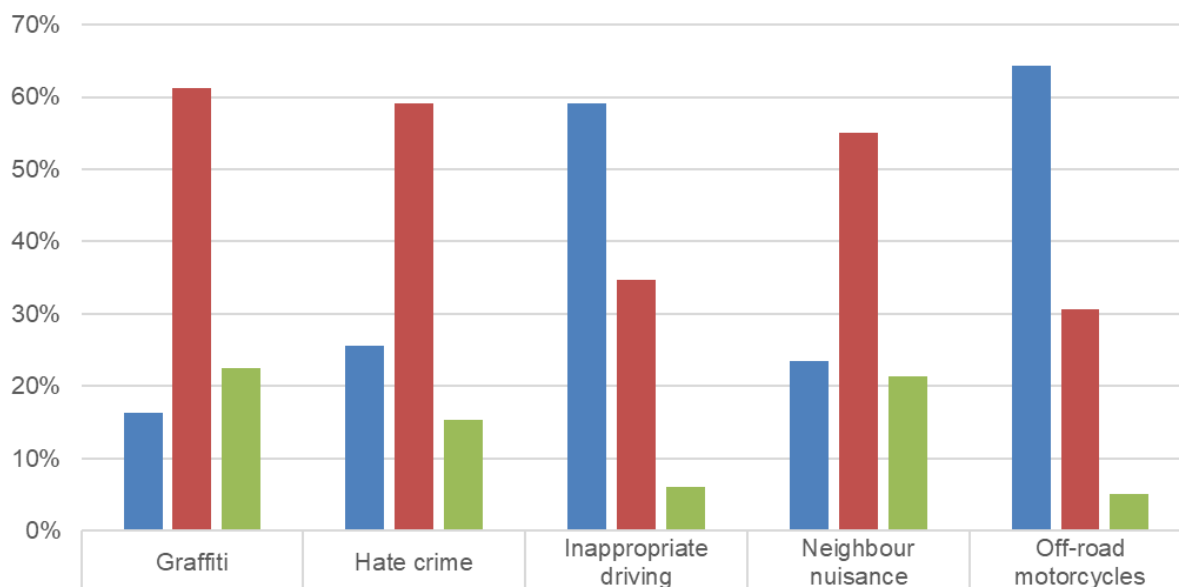
Q10. How much of a problem do you feel the following incidents are in Darlington?



Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)

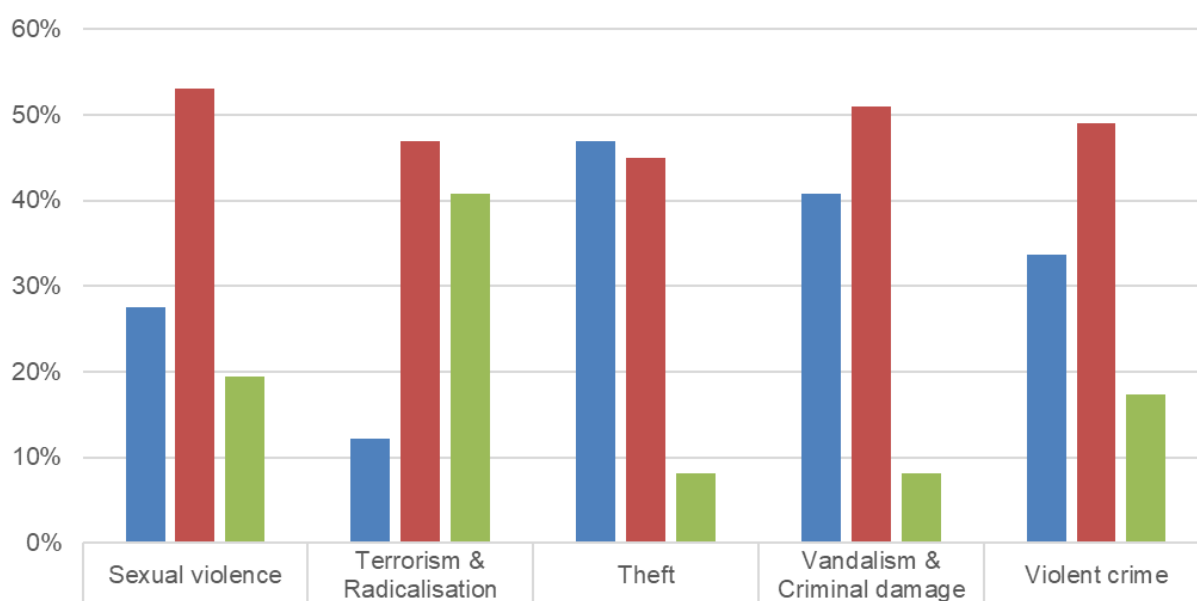
Appendix 2

Q10. How much of a problem do you feel the following incidents are in Darlington?



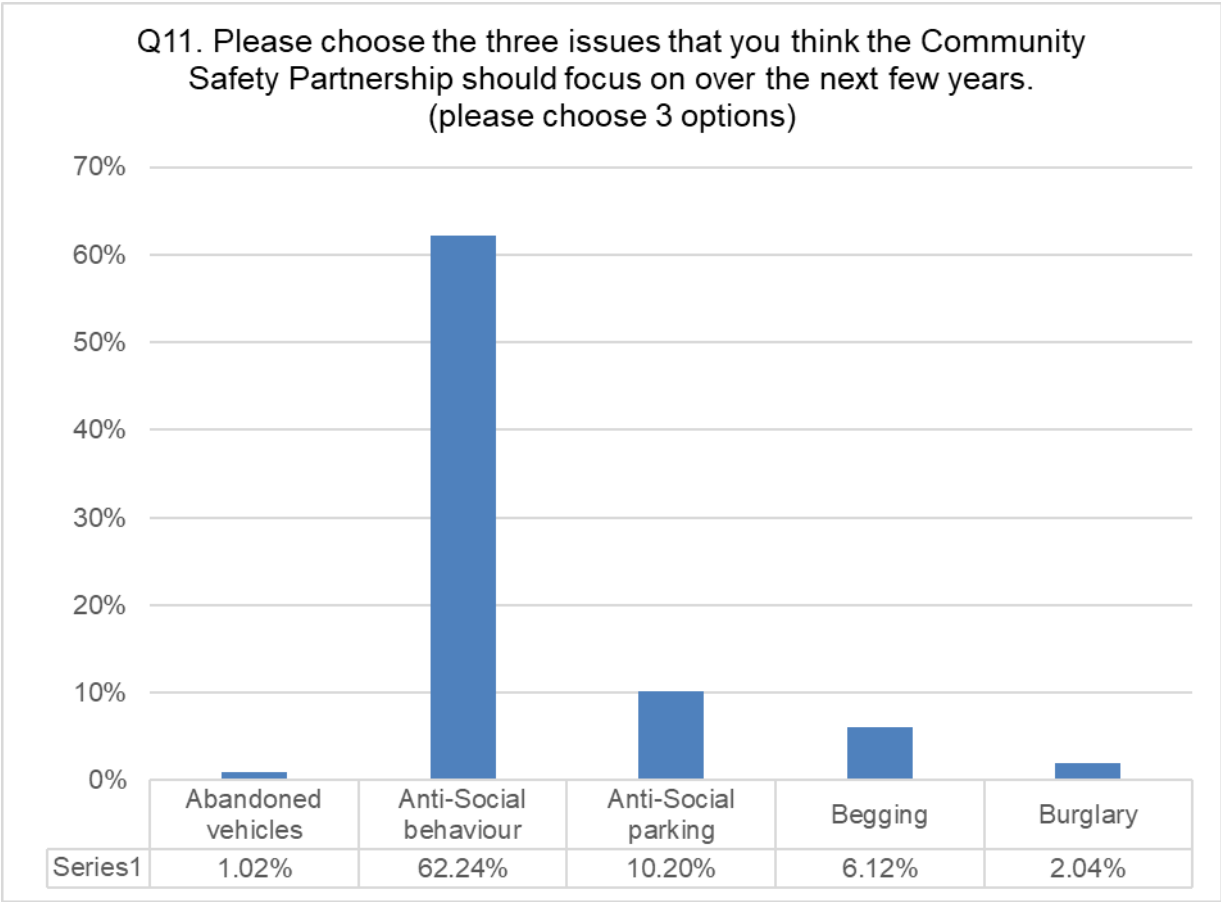
Big problem	16.33%	25.51%	59.18%	23.47%	64.29%
Slight problem	61.22%	59.18%	34.69%	55.10%	30.61%
Not a problem	22.45%	15.31%	6.12%	21.43%	5.10%

Q10. How much of a problem do you feel the following incidents are in Darlington?

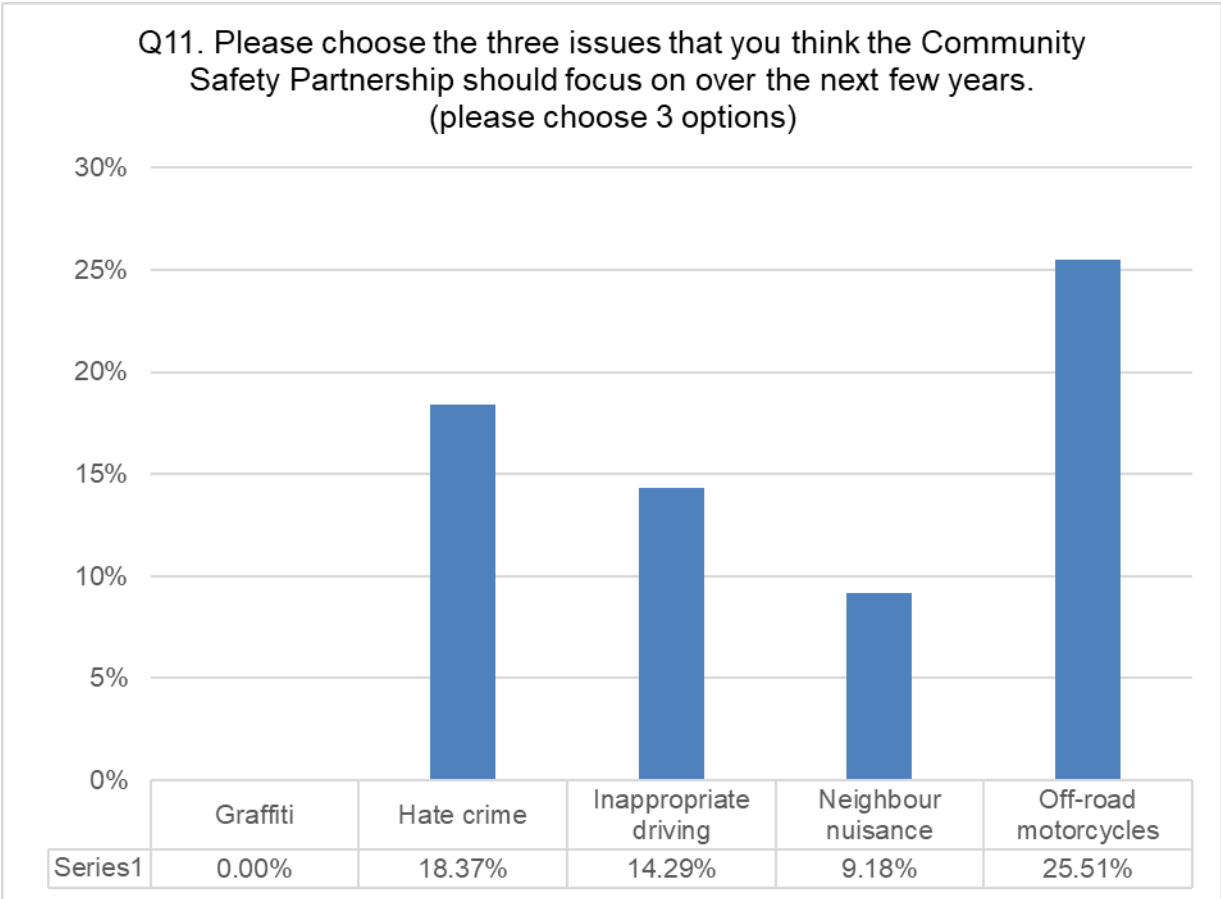
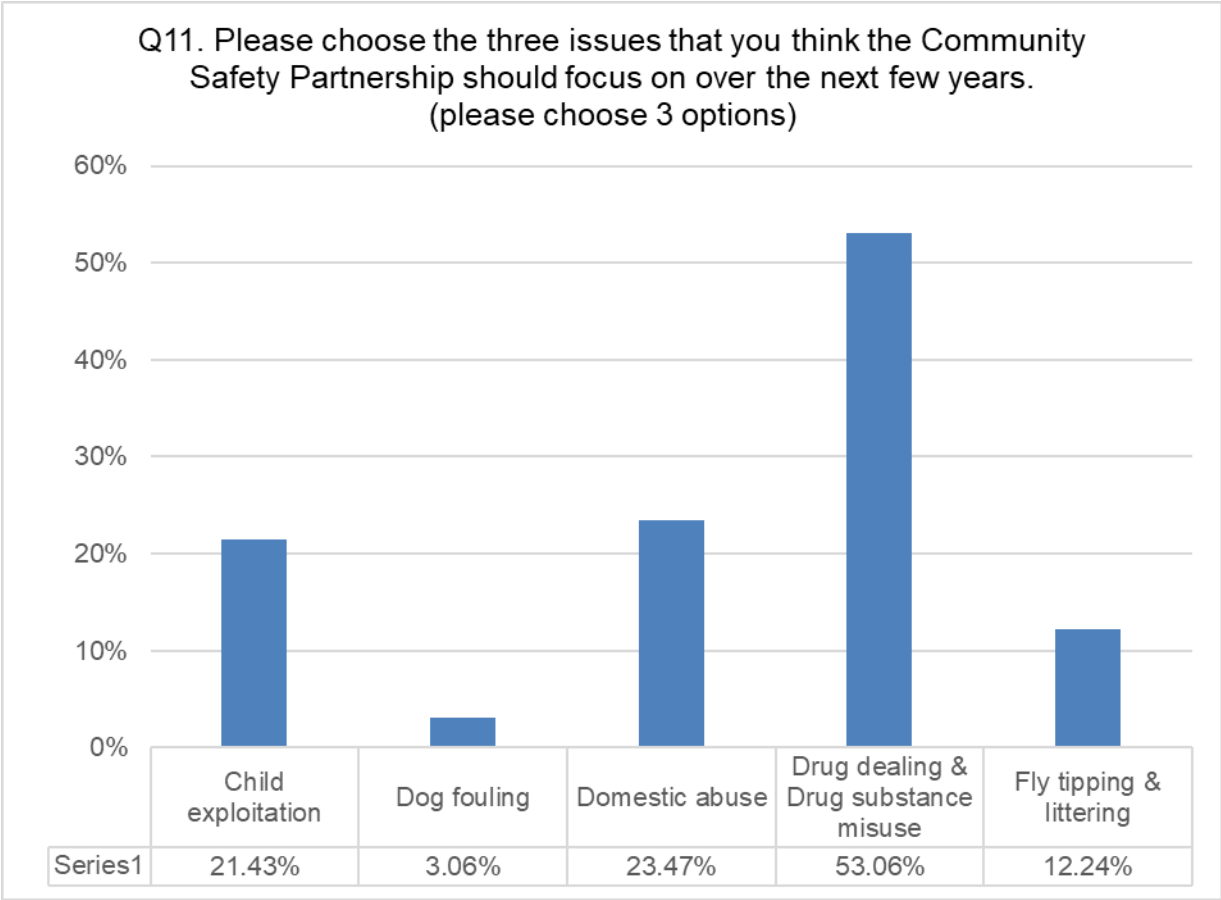


Big problem	27.55%	12.24%	46.94%	40.82%	33.67%
Slight problem	53.06%	46.94%	44.90%	51.02%	48.98%
Not a problem	19.39%	40.82%	8.16%	8.16%	17.35%

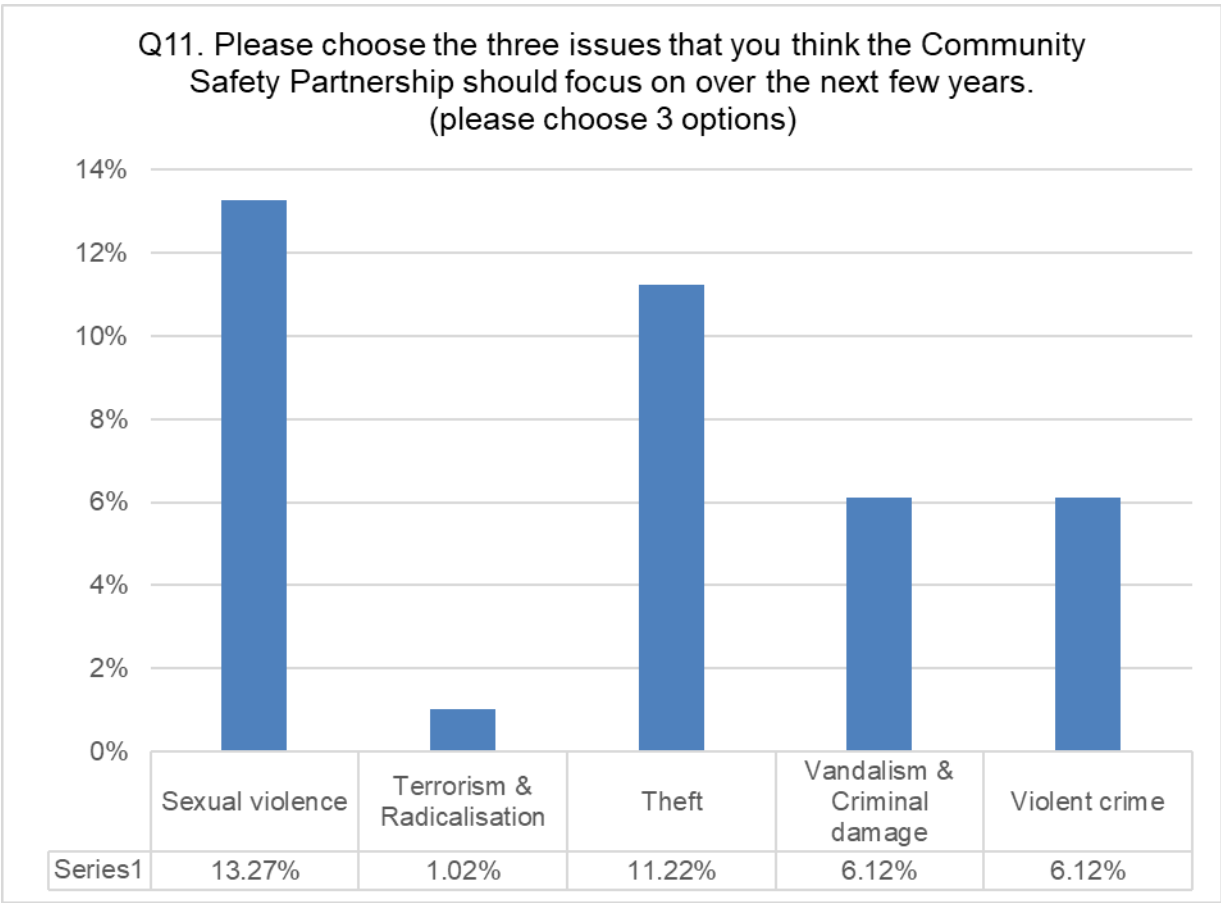
Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)
Appendix 2



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Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)
Appendix 2



Q12. To help us understand your choice to Q10 please add any comments as to why you made that choice.

Summary of written responses

Abandoned vehicles

Mentioned as a recurring localised problem (e.g., Cleveland Terrace), primarily framed as a persistent nuisance that residents “regularly” encounter rather than as a borough-wide issue.

Anti-Social behaviour

By far one of the most frequently discussed themes. Respondents describe rising youth-related ASB in the town centre and neighbourhoods (noise, rowdiness, intimidation), often linked to drug use and to groups on e-/off-road bikes. People report avoiding parks/play areas and feeling less safe, and many perceive limited visible enforcement or consequences. A few comments connect ASB with broader social tensions and a decline in civility.

Anti-Social parking

Common concerns include pavement/grass-verge parking (blocking wheelchair/pushchair access), driveways obstructed near schools, and hazardous parking around busy junctions—repeatedly citing Yarm Road and nearby shops/takeaways. There’s frustration about disregard for restrictions and the risk this creates for pedestrians forced into the carriageway.

Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)

Appendix 2

Begging

Visible in the town centre and outside supermarkets, with some reports of aggressive behaviour. Several comments suggest an apparent increase and note that not all individuals who beg are necessarily homeless; overall, respondents say it affects how safe and welcoming the centre feels.

Burglary

A small number of comments, but they highlight repeat victimisation (e.g., being burgled multiple times) and the lasting anxiety it creates.

Child exploitation

Strong concern about county lines and sexual exploitation (including financially motivated forms). Respondents stress the severe, long-term trauma on victims, call for earlier prevention/Early Help, and emphasise that harm is often hidden yet life-changing for children and families.

Dog fouling

Limited but pointed feedback that enforcement feels inconsistent (e.g., “not policed” alongside smokeless zones). The emphasis is on hygiene, neighbourhood pride, and the need for routine action.

Domestic abuse

Repeatedly described as under-reported and insufficiently addressed across agencies. Comments say women and children are particularly affected; repeat offending persists despite safeguarding tools (e.g., MARAC/Clare’s Law). Suggestions include keeping survivors safely in their homes, better multi-agency understanding of coercive control, perpetrator programmes, and improved police/judicial responses.

Drug dealing & drug substance misuse

Another major theme. Respondents report open street dealing, a pervasive smell of cannabis, and activity in both the town centre and residential areas. They link drugs to theft, begging, violence and ASB; several mention delivery via e-bikes/quad bikes (“ORB”), with a belief that reports rarely lead to action. Many say the problem drives fear, damages local pride/economy, and erodes community standards.

Fly-tipping & littering

Frequently observed in alleys, parks, lanes and countryside edges (e.g., Burtree Lane; paths between Carmel Road North and Edinburgh Drive). Residents note daily litter-picking efforts, want tougher penalties and faster clear-ups, and connect cleaner streets to reduced fear of crime and better community morale.

Graffiti

No substantive comments were recorded for this category in the dataset.

Hate crime

Comments reference heightened tensions and intimidation, including the use/misuse of Union and St George’s flags and a perceived rise of far-right activity. People describe an atmosphere that makes some residents (including minorities and others) feel less safe, citing social media as an amplifier and calling for community cohesion and firmer enforcement.

Inappropriate driving

Residents report speeding, red-light running, aggressive/erratic driving, suspected driving under the influence, and road rage. Specific hotspots include Victoria Road and Yarm Road, with requests for measures like

Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)

Appendix 2

speed-awareness signs. Several accounts describe intimidating behaviour from drivers of powerful vehicles and fear of serious collisions.

Neighbour nuisance

Accounts focus on loud/abusive behaviour, persistent disorder and nearby “drug houses” that attract associated problems. There’s frustration about response—some feel patterns aren’t recorded or acted upon—leaving neighbours feeling trapped and unsafe in their own streets.

Off-road motorcycles

E-bikes/quad bikes feature heavily: riding at speed on roads, pavements and in parks; often unlit, unregistered and with faces covered. People fear a serious injury is inevitable and link this behaviour to drug delivery and wider ASB. A few propose designated/supervised areas for riding to reduce offending and improve safety.

Sexual violence

Comments stress the severe, long-term trauma to victims and under-reporting due to low confidence in outcomes. Some cite areas that feel unsafe for women; others link sexual violence with substance misuse and call for earlier prevention, better survivor support and stronger justice outcomes.

Terrorism & radicalisation

A small number of remarks caution against rising political tensions and “mob violence,” urging proactive community safeguarding and education to prevent escalation.

Theft

Perceived as rising—especially shoplifting—with stolen goods openly offered in public places. Respondents want stronger protection for businesses and consequences for offenders, and frequently link acquisitive crime to substance misuse.

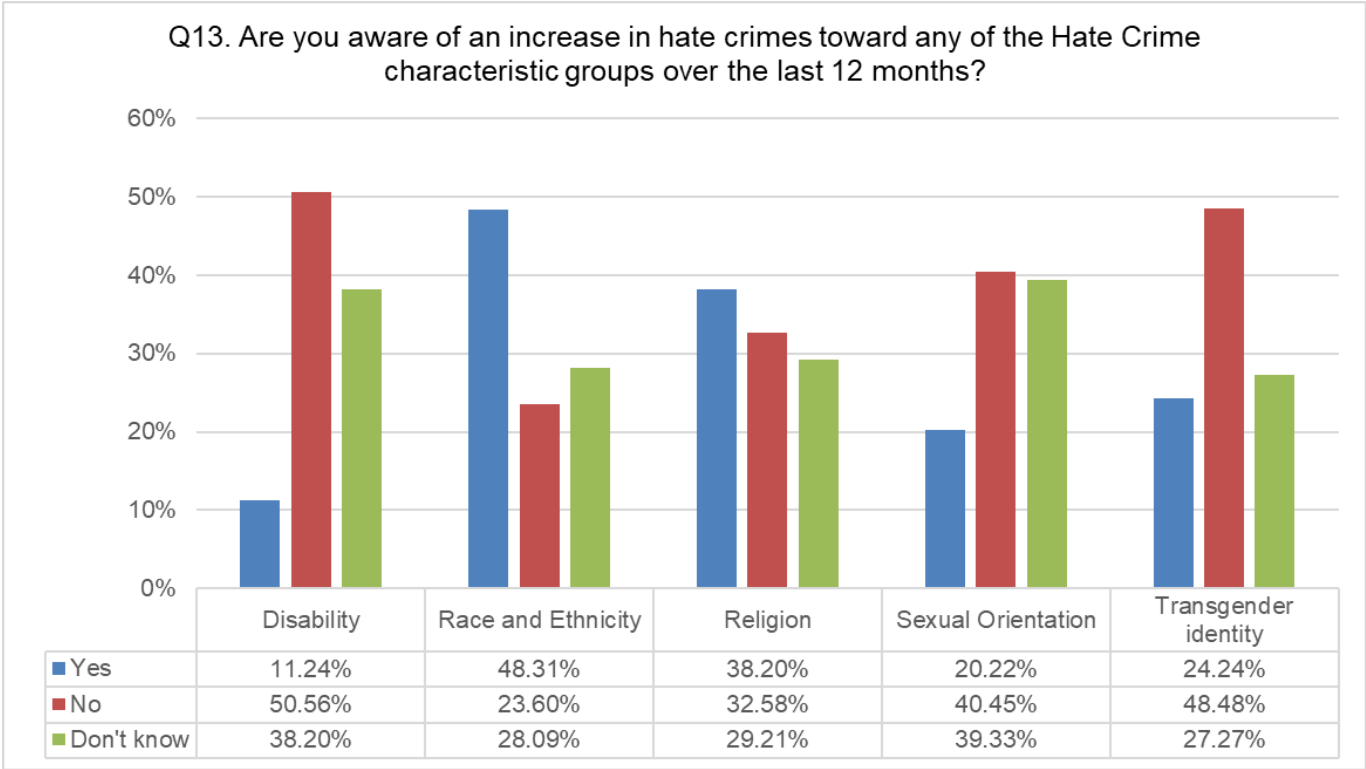
Vandalism & criminal damage

Described as “mindless” damage, including attacks on play areas and car damage. Many frame it as a quality-of-life issue that raises fear and fuels further ASB unless addressed quickly and consistently.

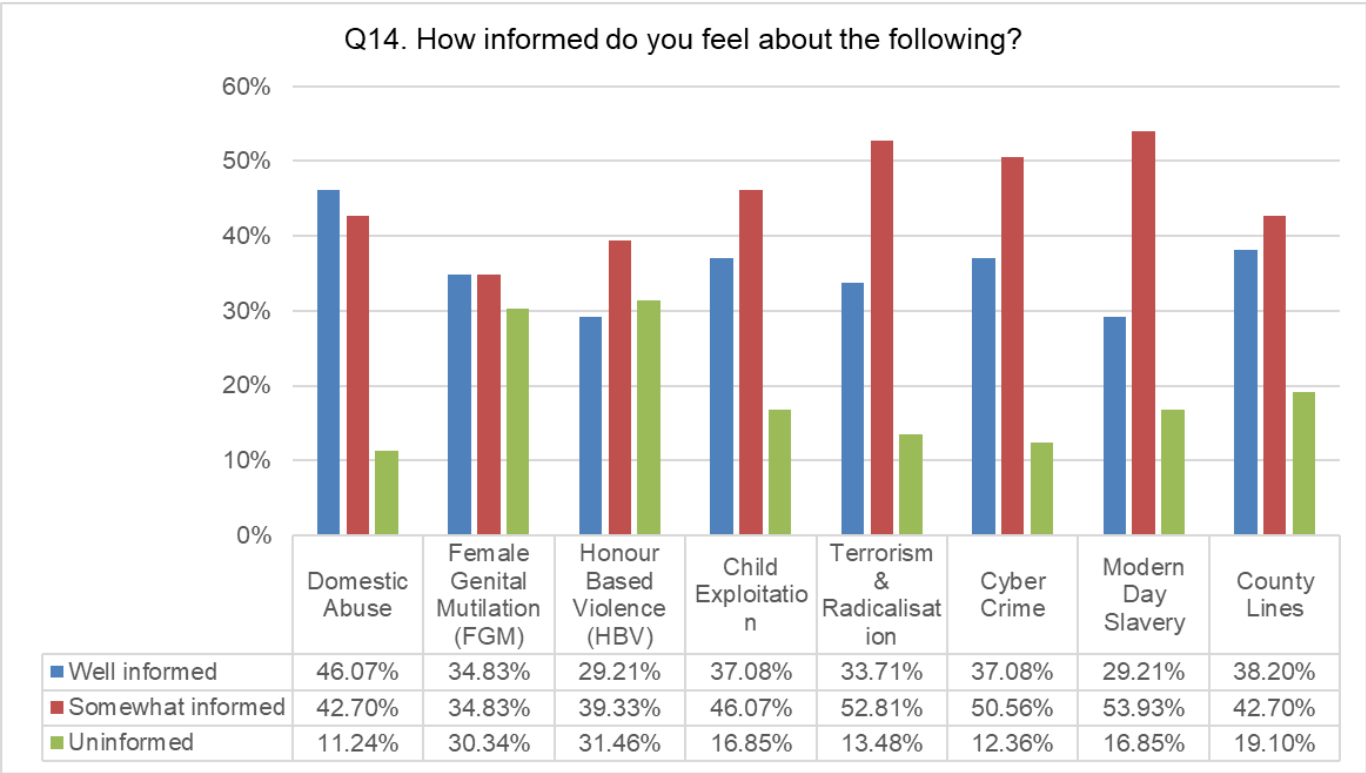
Violent crime

A minority of but serious comments point to threats from intoxicated individuals and groups, deteriorating civility/tolerance, and people avoiding nights out due to fear. Several view violent crime as intertwined with drugs and ASB and want more visible, confident enforcement.

Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)
Appendix 2



The results reported on this page are from 28th October 2025 onwards (the survey ran between 13th October and 25th November 2025). An error was made on the phraseology of this question when the survey was first launched and therefore only the data for the updated question is included.



Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)

Appendix 2

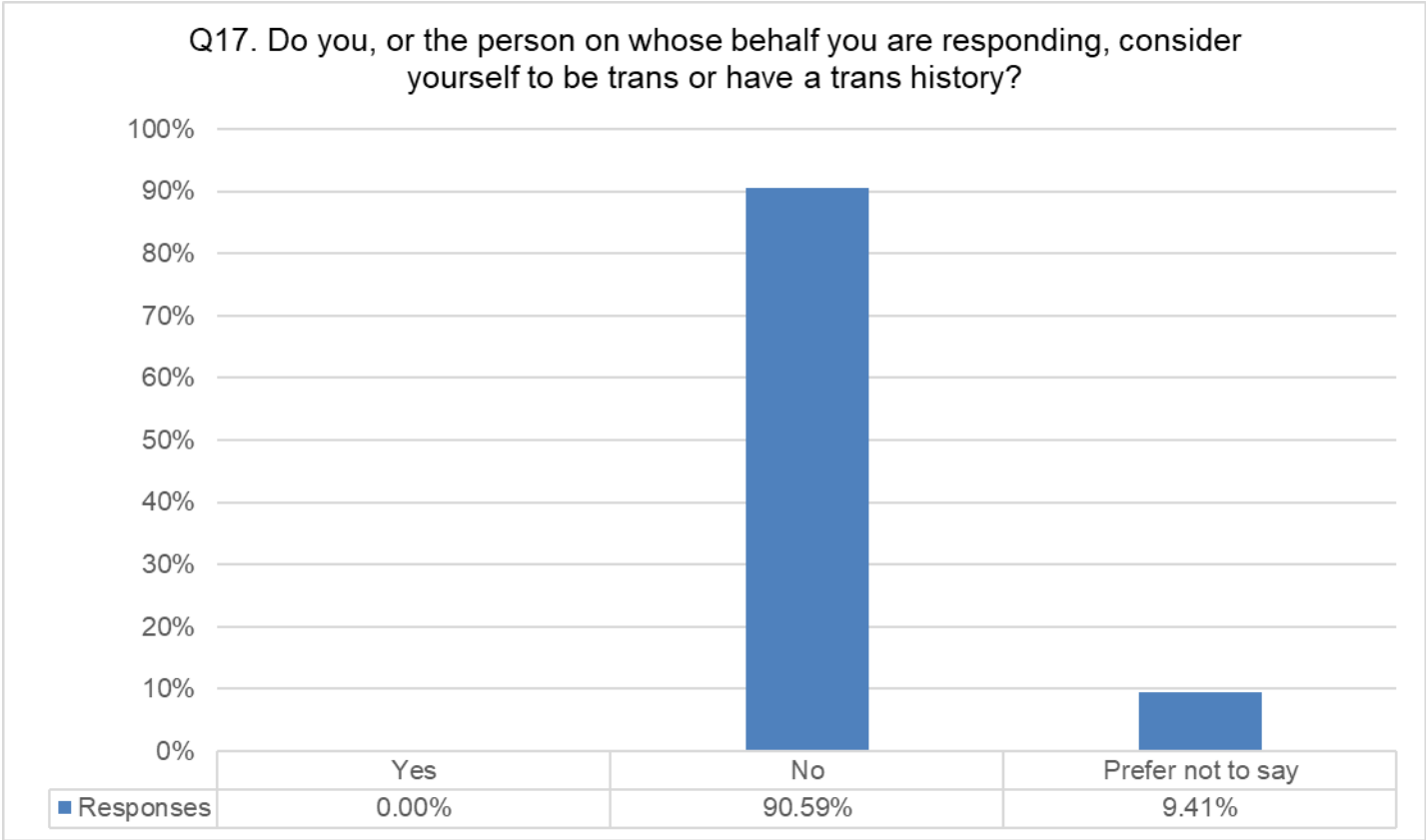
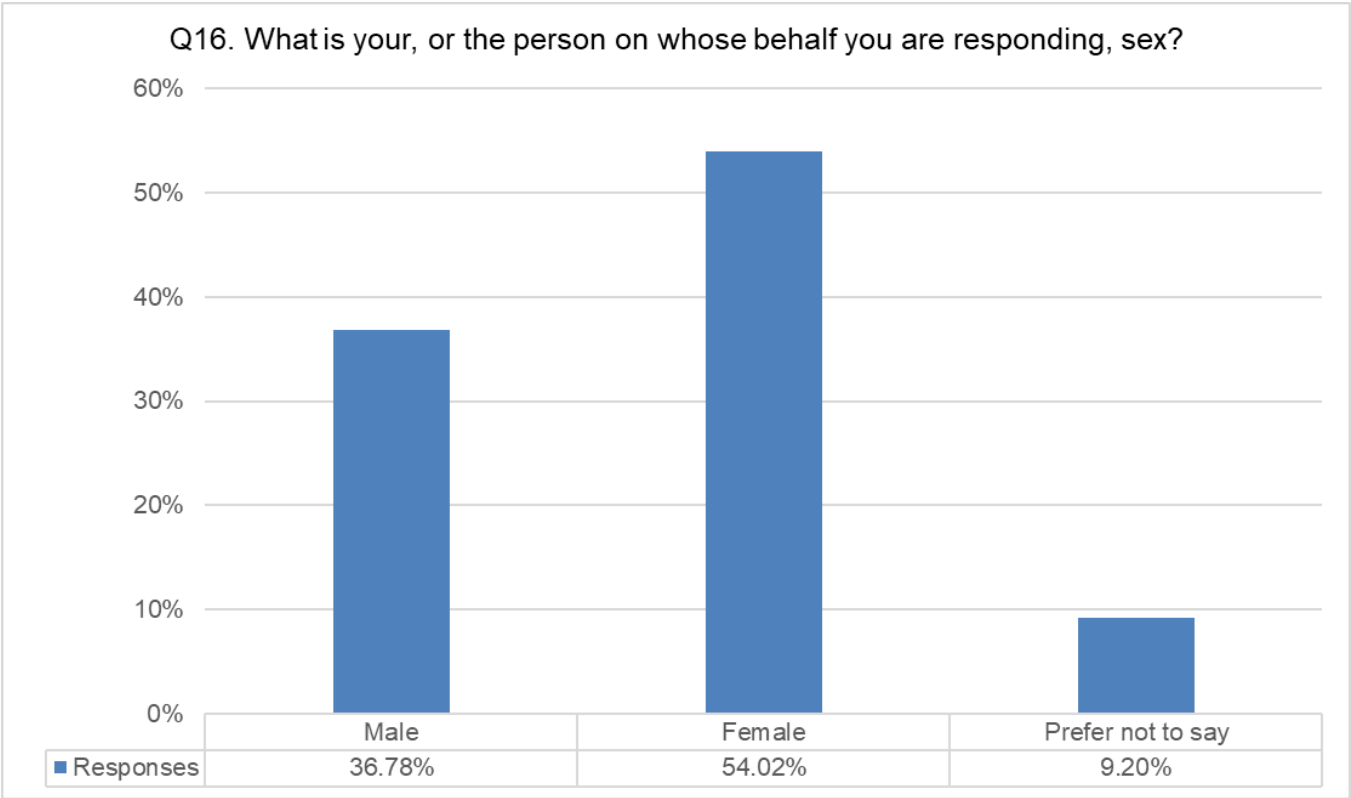
Q15. Please add any comments you have with regards to community safety.

Summary of written responses

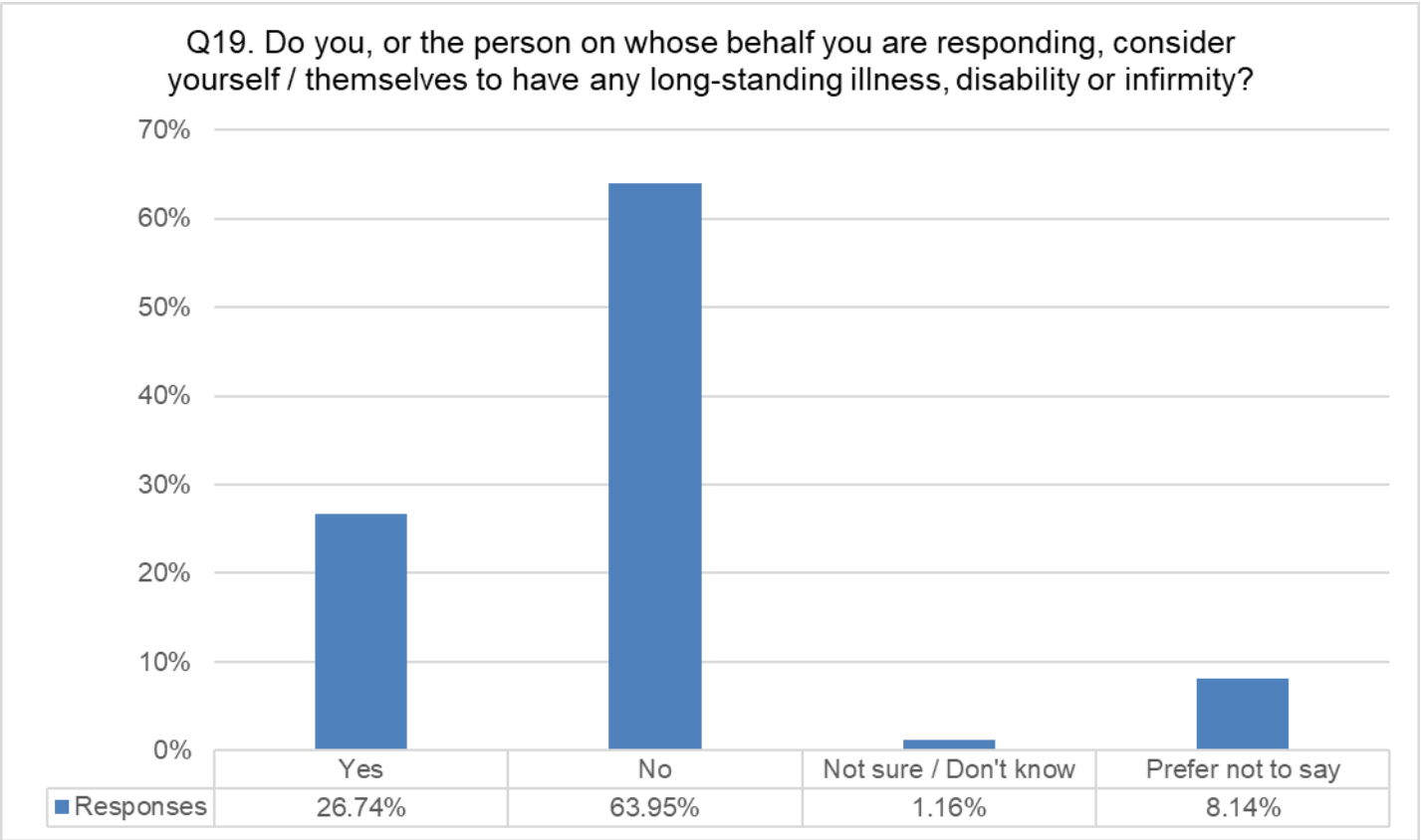
Across the responses, many residents expressed growing concern about antisocial behaviour, visible drug dealing, motorbikes and e-scooters being used dangerously, pavement parking, and a general decline in feelings of safety. A repeated theme was frustration with limited police visibility, under-resourcing, and slow responses to reports of crime or disorder. Several people described intimidation in specific areas—including Northgate, the Dene, and town parks—and reported that unmanaged HMOs, poor landlord practice, and high-turnover rentals were contributing to disorder. Others noted that community pride has fallen, littering has increased, and the town feels less cohesive and less caring than in previous years.

Another strong theme centred on community cohesion and the need for collective action, better education, early intervention, and more support for young people before they become involved in criminal activity. Suggestions included neighbourhood watch schemes, stronger role-modelling, and the importance of engaging the public and demonstrating how their input is used. While many comments were critical and highlighted fear or frustration, a smaller but notable group expressed appreciation for the efforts of local authorities and police, emphasising that negative perceptions can be shaped by media rather than lived experience. Overall, the responses show a community that wants greater enforcement, better communication, and more visible action on the issues that most affect daily life.

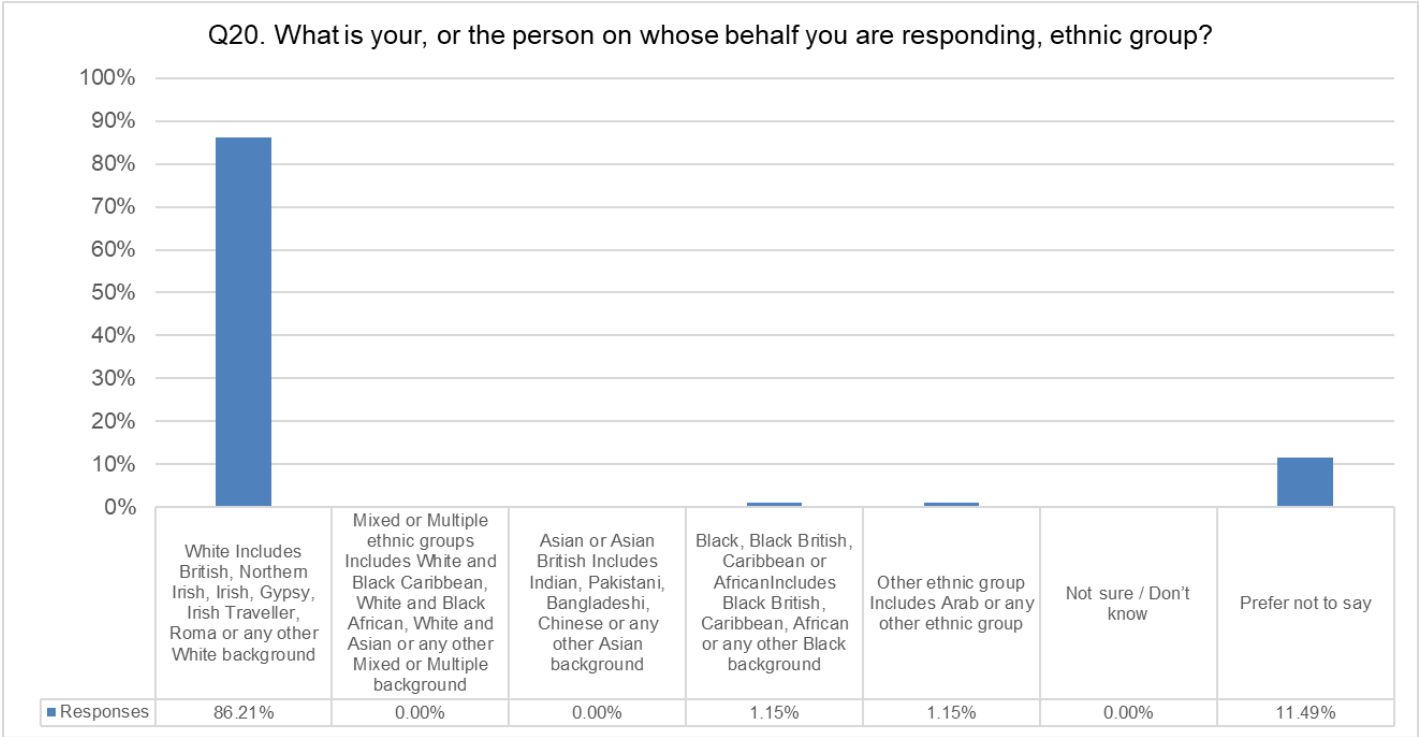
Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)
Appendix 2



Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)
Appendix 2



Community Safety Plan 2026-2029 – Consultation (Survey results)
Appendix 2



COMMUNITIES & LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
3 MARCH 2026

ANNUAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POLICY REVIEW

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides an update on electric vehicle (EV) charging, since the adoption of the Darlington Electric Vehicle Charging policy in February 2025, with a focus on cross-pavement channel solutions, for those without off-street parking.

Summary

2. The Council's approach to electric vehicle charging as set out in the Darlington Electric Vehicle Charging policy is to provide and encourage the use of shared public facilities. Provision is already available in Council owned car parks, and the next phase is to create commercially operated charging hubs (pedestal charging) in community locations.
3. The development of cross pavement charging solutions is in the early days of development and a number of trials are being undertaken both in the Tees Valley and in the UK. More details are provided in the main report but Darlington's position remains as outlined in the current policy, with a commitment to keep this under review as trials and products conclude.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that:
 - (a) The contents of the report are noted.
 - (b) It is noted that a future review of the Electric Vehicle Charging policy will be presented to Members of the Communities and Local Service Scrutiny Committee in March 2027.

Anthony Hewitt
Assistant Director – Highways & Capital Projects

Background Papers

[Electric Vehicle Charging Policy](#)

Gill Hutchinson: Extension 6492

Council Plan	This report contributes to the Council Plan through the involvement of Members in contributing to the development of policy.
Addressing inequalities	Public charging equipment must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and any other relevant legislation.
Tackling Climate Change	This report has implications for tackling climate change through the contribution of electric vehicles in achieving Net Zero.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The outcome of this report does not impact on the efficient and effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has no implications on the health and wellbeing of residents of Darlington.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual group is considered minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
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

Strategic Overview

- The UK's EV policy to phase out petrol and diesel cars by 2035 is central to achieving the Net Zero 2050 target, given that transport is the largest source of UK emissions. To date, Government have invested £200M in charging infrastructure, aiming for 300,000 public chargers by 2030. At the end of December 2025, there were 87,796 EV charge points across the UK¹, which is a 19% increase from December 2024. Several Government grants for EV purchase and infrastructure are available, as outlined in **Appendix 1**.
- To meet Tees Valley Combined Authority's (TVCA) vision, as set out in the [Strategic Transport Plan](#) (STP) for the region, "to provide a high quality, quick, affordable, reliable, low carbon and safe transport network for people and freight to move within, to and from Tees Valley", TVCA aim to implement a comprehensive network of EV charge points. The STP outlines TVCA's intention to expand the network of charging infrastructure across Tees Valley to facilitate an increased uptake of electric vehicles.

¹ [EV charging statistics 2026 - Zapmap](#)

7. The EV Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out how TVCA will deliver the objectives set out in the STP in relation to EV charging infrastructure (EVCI). The Delivery Plan presents a vision for the development of EVCI within the context of both national and regional policy and the economic growth ambitions of the TVCA and its five local authorities. The vision is that “the EV charging network in Tees Valley will work for everyone, prioritising equity, ease of use, and accessibility to inspire confidence in charging opportunities. The network will have comprehensive coverage across the region, including rural areas, to ensure no community is excluded from the transition to zero emission transport”.
8. As of October 2025, it is estimated there are 495 publicly accessible EV charge point locations in Tees Valley, consisting of 370 owned by private entities and 125 public charge points owned by TVCA.
9. Darlington has a crucial role to play at a local level in enabling the transition to EVs, in proactively supporting the delivery of the rollout of EVCI and helping to ensure that the transition is integrated into wider local transport and community needs. Darlington’s Electric Vehicle Charging Policy became operational in February 2025, adopting an approach to provide public charging facilities for EV charging. A project for the roll out of charging points in Council owned car parks is complete, with 58 charge points installed and TVCA issued a tender specification in early 2026, for a charge point operator to deliver and operate on-street charge points across the Tees Valley area.

On-Street Residential Charging

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding

10. The Government’s LEVI fund directly supports the government’s long-term strategy to accelerate EV adoption and complements other grants available towards charging infrastructure (Appendix 1). The aim of the LEVI capital fund is twofold:
 - (a) to deliver a step-change in the deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street charging infrastructure across England and,
 - (b) accelerate the commercialisation of and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector.
11. The fund supports local authorities in England to plan and deliver charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking and includes capital funding to contribute to the costs of delivering charge points. It also includes capability funding to employ and train new staff specifically to plan and deliver the charge point infrastructure.
12. In April 2023, local authorities were informed of their LEVI capital funding allocation, with TVCA allocating a maximum of £6.596M. Following a successful application, TVCA were awarded the full allocation in March 2024. Since the award, TVCA have been working with the LEVI Support Body, on project development. To satisfy the scope and conditions of the LEVI fund TVCA propose to procure a single Concessionaire on behalf of the five local authorities, to deliver and operate on-street charge points across the Tees Valley. The Concessionaire will finance, install, own, maintain and operate the on-street charging infrastructure, with 80% of the agreed programme to be delivered within the first five years of the contract.

13. Darlington's preference around the type of on-street infrastructure that's installed, is defined through LEVI as 'pedestal charging' which describes a charging unit, requiring build outs on the carriageway, which could be installed in locations such as the end of terrace streets and in existing parking bays.
14. To achieve equity of access in the EVCI roll-out across the Tees Valley, TVCA will utilise LEVI capital funding to provide a degree of subsidy, with a list of key locations included in the tender specification which the Charge Point Operator (CPO) will be contractually obliged to deliver, subject to an agreed site assessment. Key locations (exact sites to be determined) included in the list incorporate areas where provision of on-street charging opportunities are of strategic or local importance but are likely to be less commercially attractive to the CPO.
15. To arrive at the contractually obliged list (short list), the following steps were taken:
 - (a) A long-list was derived from desk-based analysis of strategic site locations and current infrastructure, and EVCI demand forecasting carried out by TVCA's consultant, Mott Macdonald during development of the EV Infrastructure Delivery Plan to identify potential sites in the region.
 - (b) The long list for Darlington was reviewed by Officers to determine a short list for inclusion in the procurement specification, which includes a priority categorisation.
 - (c) TVCA appointed a contractor, Wyson, to undertake a feasibility of each site in relation to power supply, site specific location and to ensure deliverability.
16. Once the CPO has been successfully appointed, they will conduct a technical assessment on the short list which will include sharing the locations with Northern Powergrid for review on capacity availability. The technical assessment will also outline the most suitable charging infrastructure per site, which will be agreed by the local authority and TVCA. Based on Northern Powergrid feedback, a cost assessment, stakeholder engagement and an Equality Impact Assessment, the CPO will be contractually required to deliver the short list of key locations. Should the technical assessment or stakeholder engagement, which will include resident consultation, highlight barriers to installation there will be a change control process within the contract for the CPO to raise concern regarding any of the key locations listed and suggest a suitable alternative for consideration and approval by the relevant local authority and TVCA. The local authorities and TVCA reserve the right to add additional sites to the list the CPO is required to deliver at any point during the contract period.
17. One of the main aims of the LEVI funding is to maximise the private sector investment that can be leveraged by the funding. Therefore, the concession contract will enable the CPO to put forward additional locations for installation for the relevant local authority and TVCA to approve during the lifetime of the contract (15 years). Locations proposed by the CPO will go through the same technical assessment as detailed above, including resident consultation for the location. Locations deemed feasible will be provided to the local authority and TVCA for review and approval.
18. TVCA issued the tender for the provision of on-street EVCI on 5 January 2026, with a closing date of end March 2026.

Cross-Pavement Solutions

19. According to DfT research², 90% of EV users charge at home using a domestic EV charger. This has several benefits compared to public charging and consequently EV ownership is heavily influenced by access to home charging and households without off-street parking may see slower rates of EV adoption. According to the 2021 census 30.5% of properties in Darlington comprise of terraced, flats and shared housing and are therefore unlikely to have access to a driveway.
20. Cross-pavement charging solutions enable residents without off-street parking to safely extend a charging cable from their domestic electricity supply, over or under a public highway to charge an EV legally parked by the roadside. There are both benefits and challenges of this type of charging infrastructure, as set out in **Appendix 2**.
21. Cross-pavement channels are designed to house the charging cable whilst the vehicle is being charged and should be removed when this is complete. There are two main types of solution:
 - (a) Cable channels embedded within the pavement – this most used approach is a slot across the highway with a cable inserted into it that connects to at-home charging.
 - (b) Permanent under pavement cables - a permanent charging cable introduced under the footway connecting the domestic charge point to a removeable bollard or other connector to the vehicle, the cable is then retracted into the bollard or similar when not in use.
22. Whilst there are also other solutions to accommodate trailing EV charging cables that cross the footway, such as mats, these are temporary in nature and have been installed in a very small number of cases and haven't been widely tested.
23. Several organisations provide guidance and advice on cross-pavement solutions, including the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), which recently published its guidance³. In addition, the Energy Saving Trust offers online information⁴ for local authorities and the LEVI Support Body have also recently published a Delivery Blueprint⁵. Aside from this guidance there remains a lack of detailed and specific technical information or standards, to inform policy development, around electrical safety, regulatory compliance, and installation and maintenance.
24. Despite the potential benefits, the market for cross-pavement solutions is in the nascent stages, with implementation largely confined to small scale trials, such as those being undertaken in the Tees Valley:

² [Electric Vehicle Charging Research. Survey with electric vehicle drivers. Research report.](#)

³ [Cross-pavement solutions for charging electric vehicles - GOV.UK](#)

⁴ [Cross-pavement charging solutions - Energy Saving Trust](#)

⁵ [Delivery Blueprint for Cross-Pavement Solutions](#)

Tees Valley Local Authority	EV Policy	Cross Pavement Scheme
Middlesbrough Borough Council	No specific policy currently.	• Taking part in a trial alongside TVCA, to install cross pavement channel equipment requested by residents. • Part funded by TVCA to cover up to 50% of the equipment and installation costs, with the remaining 50% being funded by the resident for up to 20 installations. • The allocated funding is expected to be used up during early 2026. • Middlesbrough has had five requests (one installed). • Hartlepool has installed 20 channels.
Hartlepool Borough Council	Policy to be formulated on completion of current cross-pavement trial to inform future installations.	
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	EV Charger Strategy 2023-2030 (currently being updated).	• A pilot scheme is running enabling residents with on street parking to install EV chargers at the front of their properties and running the charging cable under a cable mat. • The resident provides public liability insurance of £5m and a cable mat to join the trial.
Stockton Borough Council	Currently developing an Electric Vehicle (EV) policy to support the growing demand for sustainable transport solutions.	Seen an increase in resident interest regarding cross-pavement channel solutions and are actively exploring opportunities to join pilot schemes.

25. Hartlepool Borough Council considered insurance and maintenance as part of the current trial and set out Terms and Conditions, which specify:

- (a) Residents must have relevant public/third party liability insurance cover, through their car insurer, house insurer, or specialist third party insurer to cover cable trip claims.
- (b) The Licensee shall indemnify the Council against any claim in respect of injury, damage loss or third-party claim with respect to the ongoing use of the cable channel.
- (c) The Licensee is responsible for the maintenance of the product itself should it become damaged after the agreed guarantee period has lapsed. Hartlepool Borough Council will only be responsible for the surrounding highway infrastructure.

OZEV Guidance

26. The OZEV guidance contains details of the main types of solutions that have been trialled by local authorities and the learning points from these trials have been adopted in the guidance. It states that the following factors need to be considered as part of any policy for implementing solutions:
- (a) Local environment/landscape
 - (b) Costs and financial support (such as grants)
 - (c) Ownership model, installation requirements and maintenance and associated standards
 - (d) Permission, liability and agreement on responsibilities.
27. The guidance suggests that the installation can be instigated by either a local authority or resident and the LA needs to consider how an individual resident solution would complement the local charging strategy. Permission for installation sits with both the highway and planning authorities so installation should be co-ordinated and the local authority should maintain records of location and type of infrastructure and who is responsible for maintaining it.

Ownership Model, Installation Requirements and Maintenance and Associated Standards

28. It will be a requirement to ensure that installation and ongoing maintenance is identified, and a suitable supplier is provided. Local authorities can either pre-approve suppliers or allow residents to seek their own. A qualified electrician will be required to undertake the work.
29. There are two types of ownership model:
- (a) the first being local authority owned and maintained where a resident pays an upfront cost then an ongoing subscription to use it.
 - (b) the second model is owned and maintained by the supplier once permissions have been obtained by the local authority.
30. In terms of maintenance, responsibilities should be identified including who is responsible for reporting damage and long-term maintenance strategies. As part of their current trial the likes of Hartlepool Borough Council are exploring options around this.
31. Cross-pavement solutions do not have a specific British Standard (BS), but gully tops and manhole tops do have BS references and its recommended these are followed. Ensuring mobility remains inclusive and adhering to Manual for Streets is also required. Any installation should also comply with the Specification for the Reinstatement of openings in the highway.

32. Residents are responsible for safe and suitable charge points at their property and must comply with the appropriate BS. The installation of a home charge point, and cross-pavement installation may need to be co-ordinated.

Permission, Liability and Agreement on Responsibilities

33. Legal liability should be identified in the event of accidents when the cross-pavement solution is both in use and not in use and when damage to the infrastructure has occurred. For example, if a reinstatement has not been undertaken to the correct specification, this would likely be considered the liability of the highway authority, however if a cable is left trailing and a tripping hazard then this would be the responsibility of the householder.
34. Under section 178 of the Highways Act 1980, overhead beams, rail, pipe, cable or other apparatus cannot be installed without the permission of the Highway Authority. An agreement under s178 can therefore be set out incorporating the responsibilities.

Electric Vehicle Pavement Channels Fund

35. Government announced the EV Pavement Channels grant in August 2025, which is a £25m capital fund, aiming to support local authorities to install cross-pavement channels and support residents without off-street parking to charge their EVs at home. The grant has the following objectives:
 - (a) To empower local authorities to adopt pavement channels in their EV strategies as a local charging solution.
 - (b) To increase EV uptake.
 - (c) To accelerate the rollout of pavement channels.
36. The grant is for permanent EV channels to temporarily house a charging cable whilst a vehicle is being charged and funds capital costs up to an average of £1,200 per channel. Maintenance costs aren't covered through the grant and residents must have or commit to installing an EV charge point.
37. In November 2025, DfT confirmed that TVCA's application for the grant was successful, following OZEV approval, with an award of £479k across the Tees Valley local authorities who have committed to take part (Middlesbrough, Stockton, Redcar & Cleveland and Hartlepool Borough Council's). Darlington Council is adopting a watching brief approach, aiming to learn from the trials that will be undertaken in neighbouring local authority areas.

Next Steps

38. Officers continue to monitor emerging guidance and solutions on cross-pavement EV charging and learn best practice from trials undertaken across England.
39. A further update will be brought to the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix 1**Government Grants for EV Purchase:**

Scheme	Who's it for	How much (up to)	Key dates/info
Electric Car Grant (ECG)	New car buyers	£3,750 (Band 1) £1,500 (Band 2)	Open since 15 July 2025, closes 31 March 2030 At point of sale
Plug-in Van Grant	Small & large van buyers	£2,500 (small) £5,000 (large)	Open since 1 April 2023, closes 31 March 2026
Plug-in Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Grant	WAV converters/buyers	£2,500, base vehicle cap £50,000	Open since 6 April 2025, closes 5 April 2026
Plug-in Motorcycle Grant	Motorcycle buyers	£500, vehicle cap £10,000	Open since 2016, to at least April 2026

Government Grants for infrastructure:

Scheme	Who's it for	How much (up to)	Eligibility
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding	Tier 1 Local Authorities	£6,596,000 Capital £806,520 Capability (2022-2026)	• Low powered charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking. • Capability funding for resource to plan and deliver.
Households with on-street parking	Residential	£350	• No driveway. • Permanent cross-pavement solution, • Need permission from local highways authority.
Renters and flat owners	Residential	£350	• Must have private off-street parking, that is clearly defined.
Workplace Charging Scheme	Businesses Public sector organisations Charities	£350 Up to 40 sockets across all sites.	• Must have dedicated off-road parking for staff or fleet. • On site or a reasonable distance from the place of work. • Can be used by residents outside of office hours.

Infrastructure grant for staff and fleets	Businesses (SME)	£15,000 £350 per socket £500 per parking space	• For small and medium-sized businesses with 249 employees or fewer. • Must have off-street, clearly defined parking spaces.
Infrastructure grant for landlords	Residential	£30,000 per property: £350 per socket £500 per parking space.	Must own or manage flats, houses, apartment block or business premises (residential and commercial).
	Commercial	£350	

Benefits and Challenges of Cross-Pavement Solutions

Benefits	Challenges
<u>Convenience:</u> Ability to charge near to home, is convenient, flexible and reliable. Could encourage more households to adopt an EV.	<u>Property constraints:</u> Proximity issues will affect how many residents in one street are able to have a solution installed outside their home. Not a viable solution for residents without parking immediately outside such as at junctions, street corners, or those in flats. When a resident with a solution moves homes, the Council would be responsible for maintaining or removing/facilitating a transfer of ownership.
<u>Accessibility:</u> Disabled residents and those with mobility restrictions may find charging near their homes particularly beneficial.	<u>Accessibility:</u> Currently, no cross-pavement solution is fully inclusive or compliant to a PAS 1899⁶ standard. Some users may therefore have difficulty with some of the solutions.
<u>Availability:</u> Can be integrate into broader EV charging network, enhancing availability. May offer a feasible cost-effective solution where there are space restrictions, grid connectivity issues, or existing street furniture.	<u>Planning permission:</u> For properties without off-street parking, 'permitted development' rights do not apply, since the charge point will be used to charge a vehicle on the public highway.
<u>Cost savings:</u> Residents can benefit from lower home electricity tariffs, which are likely to offset any costs associated with applying, buying, installing and maintaining the cross-pavement solution. Government grant funding is available to reduce the up-front costs (Appendix 1).	<u>Liability and Insurance:</u> The Council would need to consider who is responsible for any costs arising from a trip or fall on the public highway. This may involve developing a mechanism for indemnifying the local authority and transferring liability to a resident via a licence. Residents also need to have suitable public liability insurance to cover potential damages resulting from misuse of the cross-pavement solution. There are uncertainties around the

⁶ [PAS-1899-Summary_Doc_Energy_Saving_Trust.pdf](#)

	level of cover required and which insurance policies and providers include this.
<u>Equity:</u> Many households in Darlington have no access to off-street parking, so cannot access low-cost home charging. Cross-pavement solutions can address gaps in public charge points and reduce disparity between areas with off-street parking and those without.	<u>Parking disputes:</u> A cross-pavement solution does not guarantee residents a parking space outside their property. This may lead to disputes and complaints being made to the Council over parking and charging access.
<u>Highway Safety:</u> May help reduce safety risks associated with trailing or unsecured charging cables across the pavement, particularly for those with visual impairments or mobility issues.	<u>Highway Safety:</u> Reliant on residents using the product correctly and keeping it in a safe working condition. Solutions could pose a hazard to pedestrians if not used or maintained correctly. Solutions may impact the condition of the surrounding footway; this could increase local highway costs related to ensuring that the footway condition complies with highway standards. There is an electric shock risk if a person comes into simultaneous contact with a charging EV on the highway and other electrical conductors (e.g. lamp column or 2nd charging EV). Electrical safety standards⁷ suggest a minimum 2.5m exclusion zone, although there is no dedicated electrical safety standard for cross-pavement charging.

⁷ [The IET Code of Practice for Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment Installation, 4th Edition](#)

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**COMMUNITIES & LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
3 MARCH 2026**

ACTIVE TRAVEL NEIGHBOURHOODS' FEASIBILITY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report sets out the proposed requirements of Active Travel Neighbourhoods, that is an ambition of the Darlington Transport Plan and reported to Cabinet in the annual update. A draft Policy detailing the proposed requirements of Active Travel Neighbourhoods Feasibility is included at **Appendix 1**.

Summary

2. This report sets out the research and findings to date that has enabled development of the draft Active Travel Neighbourhood's Feasibility Policy that is included at Appendix 1. This includes considering best practice and current guidance on delivering active travel measures and suitable infrastructure that encourages short trips to be undertaken by walking, wheeling and cycling.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that :
 - (a) That committee notes the contents of the report and proposed actions.

Anthony Hewitt
Assistant Director – Highways & Capital Projects

Background Papers

No background papers were used to prepare this report

Joanne Roberts: Extension 3187

Council Plan	This report contribute to the Council Plan through the involvement of Members in contributing to the development of operational policy.
Addressing inequalities	This report has no implications for addressing inequalities.
Tackling Climate Change	This report contributes to tackling climate change by supporting the implementation of sustainable transport infrastructure.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The outcome of this report does not impact on the efficient and effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has implications on the health and wellbeing of residents of Darlington as it encourages walking and cycling that increases levels of physical activity.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual group is considered minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
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

- Darlington has success at implementing initiatives to encourage walking and cycling, including between 2004 and 2009 being a Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town which was an exemplar at a national level. In addition, between 2005 and 2011 Darlington was a Cycle Demonstration Town, with both initiatives encouraging non-motorised trips with a result in lower overall traffic levels. Let's Go Tees Valley and Personalised Travel Planning have provided tailored information to residents about travel choices that have been effective in encouraging use of alternative modes of transport. The benefits of walking and cycling include improved health through more activity as well as tackling climate change as sustainable travel modes reduce reliance on motor vehicles. Active Travel Neighbourhoods Feasibility considers how improvements can be made within local communities that ensures that short trips are undertaken by walking and cycling as the mode of choice.
- Government policy for a number of years has been to encourage short trips by walking, wheeling and cycling. This included providing previous guidance to implement 'Low Traffic Neighbourhoods' to reduce motor vehicle traffic, particularly through traffic movements in local areas. The previous government also issued the 'Plan for Drivers' that set out how the experience of motorists would be improved by making the driving experience

straightforward, accessible, environmentally responsible and as safe as possible. This new guidance led to a review of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods as they had attracted negative publicity, largely due to introducing restrictions for motor vehicle traffic. This review found that a significant number of Penalty Charge Notices likely from camera enforcement were issued as some schemes were signed as restricted but no physical restrictions to prevent motor vehicles were introduced. The review also found they were ineffective because of a lack of meaningful consultation with residents.

6. As part of the development of the Active Travel Neighbourhood Feasibility, a review of the current Department for Transport guidance, LTN1/20 (Cycling Infrastructure) has been undertaken, along with considering Active Travel England toolkits and best practice to develop measures that will encourage walking and cycling are set out in the document. It is considered that any measures implemented to prevent motor vehicle access that allows walking, wheeling and cycling will be physical, such as planters or bollards and not through schemes that rely on traffic signs to prevent access.
7. Any proposals would require detailed and meaningful community engagement and to ensure that if there are residents opposed to any changes that it can be demonstrated that they have been listened to and their concerns taken account of. A comprehensive Communications Plan would be developed as part of the scheme initialisation to ensure all stakeholder views are included and that there are a number of methods of communication undertaken to ensure widespread publicity.

Next Steps

8. The Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee considers and notes the research and policy development findings.
9. That the Policy be finalised and suitable Member engagement be undertaken.

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Active Travel Neighbourhood Feasibility

1.0 Introduction

Darlington Borough Council has a vision to have a safe and resilient low carbon transport system which offers choice, promotes health and wellbeing and supports inclusive economic growth.

Enhancing walking and cycling helps achieve this vision by meeting the objectives to reduce transport's impact on the environment and support health and wellbeing and improve safety for all road users. Darlington Borough Council is committed to climate action and transport is one of the biggest causes of greenhouse gas emissions. Providing infrastructure that is safe, usable and attractive will also encourage more active travel with health benefits being realised helping to make active travel the mode of choice for shorter journeys.

This document, Active Travel Neighbourhood Feasibility, outlines the measures that can be used to enhance walking and cycling in Neighbourhoods with community engagement needed at the centre of any proposal to ensure it works for people living within the communities in Darlington.

2.0 Guidance

- **Manual for Streets**

The aim of Manual for Streets is to bring transformational change to street quality and improved built environments, playing a key role in the creation of sustainable and inclusive communities. Manual for Streets defines place and movement status as a two-dimensional hierarchy, in residential areas, this means that the place function is a significant consideration in design and not solely based on motor traffic movement.



- **Inclusive Mobility**

Any proposals need to ensure they are inclusive and considers the accessibility needs of people with mental health conditions, dementia, age related and non-visible impairments, those with reduced mobility, including wheelchair and motorised scooter users and those with vision impairments. This includes suitable gradients and space for turning, particularly for wheelchair users at corners and appropriate tonal and colour contrast with surroundings and tactile paving in place for people with reduced vision. Dropped kerbs are essential at junctions and in locations that identify as suitable for crossing a road.

Enhancing the street scene will make the area more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists, however street furniture needs to be designed to ensure it does not create routes which are too narrow or a hazard for those with disabilities.

Access control measures such as barriers should not be used in scheme design, they reduce usability for everyone but particularly for people who use non-standard cycles or mobility devices such as scooters.

- **LTN1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design**

Government guidance for cycle infrastructure (LTN1/20) focuses on high quality, direct and attractive routes in urban areas, utilising features that encourage active travel such as modal filters. In residential areas where speeds are slower there needs to be an approach to encourage cycling and walking using quieter streets acceptable for on carriageway cycling that are typically suitable for a 12-year-old child trained to Bikeability level 2 to be able to cycle independently. These locations usually have less than 2500 vehicles per day creating cycling friendly neighbourhoods that requires careful planning and assessment of impacts. Traffic management features would encourage a reduction in car trips or displace them onto other routes, and the needs of refuse collection and emergency services has to be accommodated.

Carriageway conditions should be provided to encourage motorists to travel behind cyclists and not intimidate or drive aggressively, a clearance of 1.5m should be available for cars to overtake cyclists, that can be reduced to an absolute minimum of 1.0m in areas where a 20mph speed limit is in place. If traffic calming features are used, they should be designed to provide cycle by-pass features which reduces conflict between cyclists and motorists at these pinch point locations.

3.0 Funding

Recommendations for schemes, at all stages, concept, feasibility and detailed design will be included in the Darlington Transport Plan Cabinet Update for a decision on the provision of suitable funding levels from capital funding allocations.

4.0 Identifying Neighbourhoods

Selection of locations is informed by research that demonstrates an ideal size for an Active Travel Neighbourhood is around 1 Km², around a 15-minute walk. Areas larger than this start to attract neighbourhood car trips and it may be difficult or expensive to provide consistent enhancements for people walking, wheeling and cycling across larger areas. Consideration should be given to splitting areas up in a phased approach if larger than 1 Km² and areas much less than this are unlikely to realise full benefits for walking and cycling. It is also necessary to think about how a scheme connects to adjacent neighbourhoods and wider cycling and walking networks.

A consideration as part of any Active Travel Neighbourhood is to remove through traffic movements as this has high potential to increase walking and cycling. If a residential area has a collision history, then implementing measures that will reduce benefits to vehicle traffic and enhance walking and cycling will likely show positive benefits as well as providing sustainable access to amenities such as schools, shops, bus stops and parks.

5.0 Features in an Active Travel Neighbourhood

Good sightlines are essential to alert pedestrians and cyclists for the need to take care when approaching junctions and where there is a need to give way, for example cyclists giving way to pedestrians. Modal filters are a way of providing through access movements for pedestrians and

cyclists but removing motor vehicle through movements to enhance the area for active travel. If modal filters are implemented it is important that digital map providers are informed so that satellite navigation systems can be updated. Modal filters can be introduced in a number of ways:

- **Bollards, gates, trees or planters**

Bollards, gates or planters immediately remove vehicle traffic from an area and enhance routes for pedestrians and cyclists. They should be designed to allow motor vehicles to turn if required and the connections through a neighbourhood should be in place so that driving becomes unattractive. If planters are to be used it should be done to enhance the surrounding area and the maintenance requirements should be taken on board to ensure that the desired street scene is maintained. It is important when introducing any of these features to understand what the impact on utility service providers is to ensure they can maintain their apparatus.

- **One-way streets**

One-way streets remove all motorised traffic from travelling in one direction and allows widening of footways for example to enhance walking routes. Care should be taken to ensure that speeds aren't increased and that the traffic routes have been assessed to ensure that displaced traffic does not impact on neighbouring streets. Contraflow cycle infrastructure should be provided so that two-way pedestrian and cycle movements are maintained and it may be necessary to ensure adjacent streets are treated as opposing one-way routes for motorised traffic so that local vehicle access can be maintained.

- **Bus gates**

Bus gates allow access for buses and sometimes delivery vehicles in areas where public transport routes are to be maintained ensuring bus penetration in neighbourhoods but general traffic is re-routed. They are particularly effective on the edges of town centres and are enforced using either rising bollards that do have a maintenance cost associated with them or by camera enforcement without any physical barriers. These routes do require signage to be in place to ensure that motorists are clearly informed that restrictions and enforcement are in place.

- **Width restrictions**

Width restrictions are designed to allow movement of cars but remove the access to an area by HGVs. The routes will need to be clearly signed to ensure no HGV mistakenly enters an area and is then unable to turn around. As these restrictions still allow through vehicle movements they do not always offer wider benefits of reduced traffic and may not achieve the aims of the scheme.

- **Signage and enforcement**

It is possible to introduce restrictions in neighbourhoods to prevent access by motorised vehicles. The signs needed to enforce such restrictions may be perceived as being over-engineered for residential areas and they would also need to be largely self-enforcing which can attract some abuse of the restrictions during the hours they are operating. Prohibition of motorised vehicles is unlikely to be suitable in residential areas as people still require access to their homes.

- **Treatment of Active Travel Neighbourhoods at junctions with local distributor roads**

Where a neighbourhood area joins a distributor road there needs to be suitable transition for pedestrians and cyclists to travel between the two. Active Travel England has useful tools to help identify the most appropriate feature at the junction, such as a stand alone crossing feature or

signalised junction. Any area wide features need to terminate at suitable locations to ensure pedestrians and cyclists do not conflict with vehicles when joining major routes.

- **Traffic calming and speed limit reduction**

Traffic calming is a traditional method of reducing speeds in residential areas that can discourage through traffic movements and enhance local roads for residents. Traffic calming can be undertaken on an area wide basis, including suitable phasing so that funding over more than one financial year can be allocated. Local Transport Note Guidance exists for traffic calming which should be followed to ensure that any scheme meets the requirements of local people with the intention of reducing driving speeds and collisions.

If a system of street lighting is in place in a residential area with no alternative plated speed limit then the speed limit is 30mph. Evidence demonstrates that reducing speed limits influences the speeds motorists are driving and that in turn reduces collisions or the severity of any collisions that do occur. If measured speeds are at or below 24mph then it is a relatively cost effective measure to introduce a 20mph speed limit where terminal and repeater plates are placed along the highway and are enforced through an associated traffic regulation Order. If measured speeds are over 24mph then a speed limit can only be reduced to 20mph by implementing a 20mph zone where speed reducing features are required at least every 50 metres to encourage lower speeds. A traffic regulation Order is also required for 20mph zones but they are more expensive due to the introduction of physical features in the carriageway.

- **Car Parking**

On street car parking in residential areas can be unrestricted, limited or permit parking. Allowing cars to be parked on street does provide an element of traffic calming as drivers tend to slow as they pass parked vehicles due to reduced road widths. Residents Parking Zones are in place across the Borough and are subject to a separate policy but any area wide scheme to enhance walking and cycling does need to take account of resident's parking requirements. Any scheme also needs to take account of whether pavement parking exists and whether changes to the street scene would increase this creating hazards for pedestrians.

- **Access by Heavy Goods Vehicles including refuse collection**

It is possible to introduce environmental weight restrictions in areas that will prevent through traffic movements by heavy goods vehicles, they are a useful tool in removing this type of traffic to more suitable classified roads. It should be noted that all properties do require access by refuse vehicles but there is an acceptance that this is for a relatively short period and that their movements will be accommodated by other vehicles giving way whilst they are in the area. A scheme should not prevent access for refuse collection and reversing movements by larger vehicles should be kept to a minimum. If streets are closed to motor vehicle traffic then it may be necessary to provide turning areas as part of the proposals.

6.0 Gaining evidence to support Active Travel in Neighbourhoods

- **Area wide management of traffic**

Each neighbourhood is site specific and has unique characteristics, however there are some processes that can be followed that help assess whether an area is suitable for interventions. Undertaking traffic surveys to understand vehicle movements, volume and speed are integral to understanding how an area currently operates. It will likely be a requirement to undertake traffic

modelling to understand how vehicle traffic will move around an area and how implementing features in certain locations can impact on vehicle traffic movement. It needs to be established that implementing features in one location does not have unacceptable negative consequences in another that cannot be mitigated.

Access for emergency services must be considered and they are all important stakeholders in the development of proposals.

- **Active Travel England (ATE) Area Check Tool**

As well as the use of traffic modelling as a tool to consider changing motor vehicle traffic movements, the ATE area check tool can be used as a desktop scheme review tool developed to assess the design quality of area based schemes. It can be used for evaluating local neighbourhood improvement schemes, town centre pedestrianisation and area wide traffic management programs. The tool appraises how safe, easy and pleasant it is to travel through an area when walking, wheeling and cycling. A well designed area scheme is usually lighter trafficked and contains multiple routes connecting through and around the perimeter of the identified network, usually bordered by busier trafficked roads. Changes to an area and particularly to motor traffic flow can affect streets elsewhere so impacts need to be identified and mitigated.

- **Road Safety Audits**

A Road Safety Audit is an independent qualitative check on a design to ensure that a scheme does not present road safety problems. Designers retain responsibility for a scheme and the role of an auditor is to take account of the needs of all highway users and make recommendations to a designer if there are perceived road safety issues.

- **Crime Prevention**

When considering changes to residential area layouts it is important to ensure that crime prevention is not overlooked. Introducing routes for pedestrians and cyclists that have no natural surveillance are not attractive for users but they also have the potential to attract anti-social behaviour or crime if routes are narrow and not well used.

- **Community Engagement**

One of the most important pieces of evidence that a scheme is acceptable is community support. A community engagement process should provide residents with enough information to understand the reasons for a proposal, what the benefits and any potential disbenefits of a scheme are and demonstrating what evidence has been provided to support an intervention. Engagement needs to be proportionate with an understanding of the impacts on residents who are most affected and what the impacts may be for the wider community who may also be affected.

Depending on the proposal, appropriate methods of consultation will need to be undertaken. Whether this is public meetings or drop in sessions, along with letters and questionnaires and opportunities to provide comments in writing or by email. As part of a communication plan for community engagement it will need to identify how the engagement will be undertaken to maximise participation and encourage valid responses and identify how they will receive feedback. It also needs to be clear how comments will be used to develop the scheme.

- **Stakeholder Engagement**

The Council will engage with stakeholders to obtain views on proposals meeting the duties of the Equality Act 2010 which legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society with nine protected characteristics identified: age, disability, race including colour, nationality or ethnicity, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

The Council must also comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure discrimination, harassment and victimisation is eliminated, advance equality of opportunity between persons with protected characteristics and foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.

The Council is keen to engage with as many stakeholders as possible as part of the development of proposals including but not limited to bus operators, Darlington Action on Disability, Police and other emergency services, as well as local schools, hospital and places of worship if appropriate. An Equality Impact Assessment is an important consideration and will be undertaken to ensure that there is no disbenefit to communities.

**COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
3 MARCH 2026**

NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report sets out the requirements and timeline for implementing a Network Management Plan.

Summary

2. A Network Management Plan is a statutory requirement under the Traffic Management Act 2004 that sets out how a local traffic authority should manage the highway network to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic to reduce congestion and disruption.
3. Updating the Network Management Plan does not follow any statutory timescale and is undertaken when required by individual authorities on an ad hoc basis. This report sets out the process and programme for updating the Network Management Plan.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) The contents of the report are noted.
 - (b) It is noted that a future draft version of the Network Management Plan will be presented to Members of the Communities and Local Service Scrutiny Committee prior to approval by Cabinet.

Anthony Hewitt
Assistant Director – Highways and Capital Projects

Background Papers

None

Joanne Roberts: Extension 3187

Council Plan	This report contribute to the Council Plan through the involvement of Members in contributing to the development of operational policy.
Addressing inequalities	This report has no implications for addressing inequalities.
Tackling Climate Change	This report contributes to tackling climate change as the Network Management Plan will set out how the local highway network will be managed for all traffic including pedestrians and cyclists. Motor vehicle traffic should be managed to reduce congestion that will help reduce air pollution.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The outcome of this report does not impact on the efficient and effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has implications on the health and wellbeing of residents of Darlington by reducing congestion, the risk to residents from the effects of air pollution should also reduce. Measures that encourage walking and cycling can lead to an increase in activity that can improve health and wellbeing.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual group is considered minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
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. As Highway Authority, Darlington Borough Council is responsible for the management and movement of traffic on 547km of highway.
6. The Traffic Management Act 2004 sets out how a local traffic authority should manage the highway network to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic with a primary aim of reducing congestion and disruption. The Traffic Management Act 2004 sets out certain responsibilities to achieve this aim known as the Network Management Duty:
 - (a) Promoting better coordination of the various works carried out on the highway, whether there are authority roadworks, utility streetworks or miscellaneous activities that can cause disruption.

- (b) Coordination of other activities that may affect the highway network, such as events and fairs.
 - (c) Introducing a range of powers to allow utility works to be better controlled.
 - (d) Allowing certain contraventions, such as parking offences to be dealt with through civil enforcement rather than through the criminal process.
 - (e) The Traffic Management Act 2004 Part 6 also makes provision for local traffic authorities to assume powers to manage moving traffic offences, such as entering a yellow box junction. Darlington Borough Council has not yet applied for these powers and enforcement remains with the Police.
7. The Network Management Plan is an operational document and as a result there is no public consultation around its content as it sets out the network management duty and requirements of the Council. However, through the annual National Highways and Transport Network Survey public perception on tackling congestion performance is reported.
8. Updating the Network Management Plan does not follow any statutory timescale and is undertaken when required by individual authorities on an ad hoc basis. This report sets out the process and programme for updating the Network Management Plan that requires refreshing as follows:

Date	Progress
5 March 2026	Initial report presented to Members of Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee for information.
Spring	Draft initial version of the Network Management Plan
Autumn	Draft Network Management Plan to be presented at Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee for comments.
March 2027	Final version of the Network Management Plan to be presented to Cabinet for approval.

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**COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
5 MARCH 2026**

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 work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the remainder of the Municipal Year, which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and discussions held at the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee Annual Briefing which took place on 29 May 2025.
3. 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.

Amy Wennington
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Background Papers

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

Author: Hannah Miller

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 'Communities' - working together for safer, healthier and more engaged communities and 'Local Environment' – A well-connected, clean and sustainable borough.
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

5. 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.
6. 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.
7. The Council Plan identifies six priorities, including 'Communities', which states that our communities are the heart of our Borough and play an important role in shaping our health and wellbeing; and 'Local Environment', which states that Darlington is a thriving borough known for our railway heritage and our mix of urban and rural communities. These priorities are both supported by six key deliverables.

Forward Plan and Additional Items

8. 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.
9. A copy of the index of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 3** for information.

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COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to Performance Management Framework (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Community Safety Plan 2026-2029	5 March 2026	Ben Grabham		To review the draft Community Safety Plan 2026-2029
Annual review of Electric Vehicle Charging Policy	5 March 2026	Andrew Casey/Anthony Hewitt		To Update Scrutiny Members
Low Traffic/Active Travel Neighbourhood Feasibility Report	5 March 2026	Andrew Casey/Anthony Hewitt		To Update Scrutiny Members
Network Management Plan	5 March 2026	Andrew Casey/Anthony Hewitt		To Update Scrutiny Members
Darlington Cultural Strategy Action Plan 2025/2026	23 April 2026	Stephen Wiper		To consult scrutiny on proposed action plan.

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to Performance Management Framework (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Council and Police Co-working approach to Anti-Social Behaviour Report	23 April 2026	Chris Knox		Drone usage, to invite police to attend.
Resident Parking Zone Policy Update	May/June 2026 Last considered 15 January 2026	Andrew Casey		To Update Scrutiny Members
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements Update	To be confirmed	Anthony Hewitt		
Local Plan Refresh	To be confirmed	To be confirmed		
Tree and Woodland Strategy 2021-2031	Last considered June 2025	Brian Graham		To receive a yearly review of the strategy.
Quarter 2 Performance Report	15 January 2026	Relevant Officers		To receive biannual monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary
Year End Performance Report	To be confirmed			

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to Performance Management Framework (metrics)	Scrutiny’s Role
Rights of Way Improvement Plan	Last considered 15 January 2026	Steve Pryke/Anthony Hewitt		To Update Scrutiny Members
Darlington Transport Plan Delivery Report (2022-2030)	Last considered 15 January 2026	Anthony Hewitt		To receive an update on: - Capital Programme - Tees Valley Combined Authority Strategic Transport Plan Rail Station Improvement Plan

Task and Finish Groups:

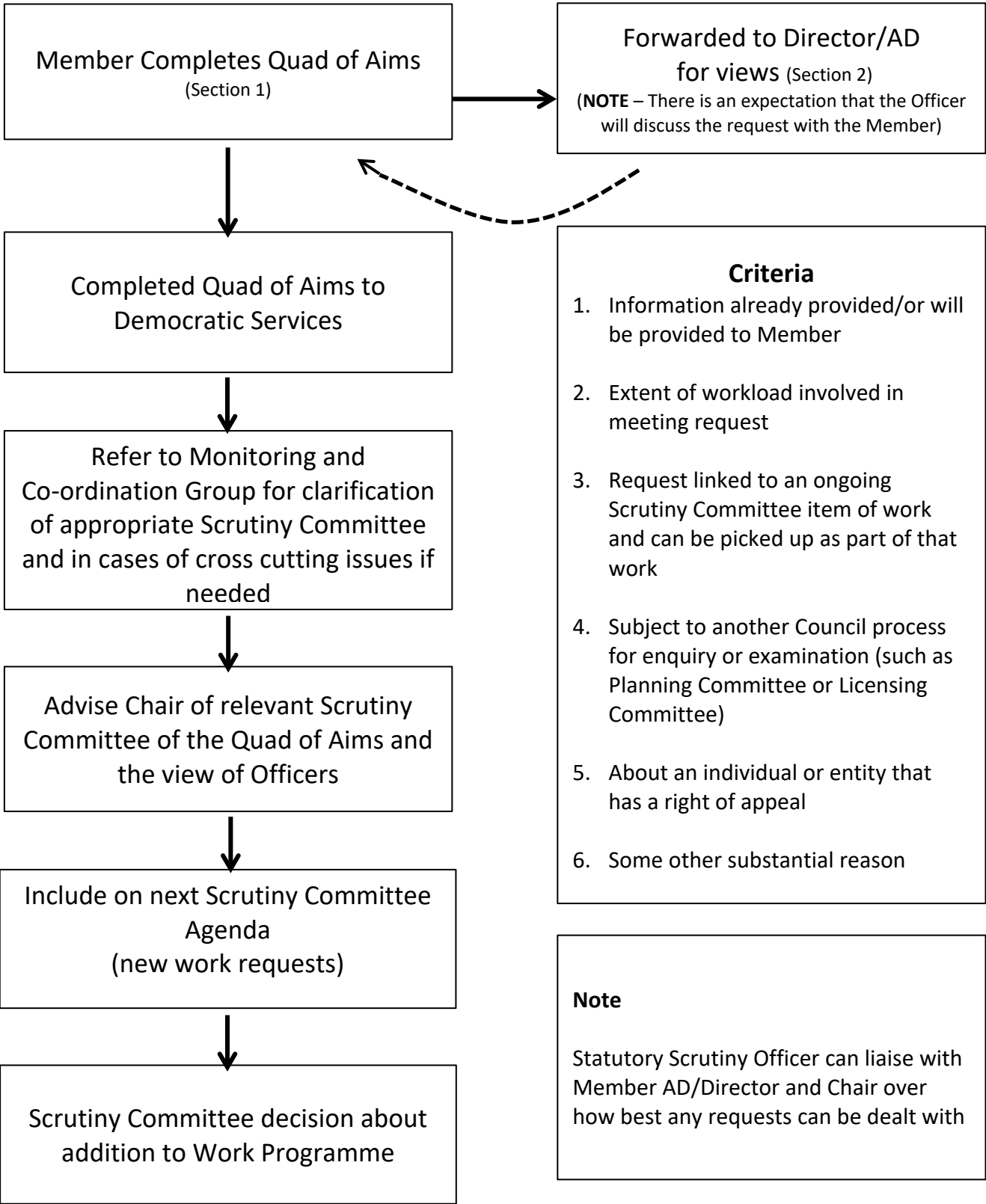
Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to Performance Management Framework (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Councillor Case Monitoring System	Scoping meeting held on 17 December 2026 Next meeting tbc	Neil Bowerbank		
Harm Reduction on Highways Approach	Scoping meeting held on 19 February 2026	Joanne Roberts		

Archived Items

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to Performance Management Framework (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Deployable Camera Policy	Last considered August 2025	Paul Branch		To Update Scrutiny Members
Public Safety Overview Report	Last considered August 2025	Chris Knox/Ben Grabham		To be confirmed
Modern Slavery Policy	Last considered 15 January 2026	Neil Bowerbank		To Update Scrutiny Members
Harm Reduction on Highways Approach	15 January 2026	Andrew Casey/Anthony Hewitt		To Update Scrutiny Members

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



PLEASE RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

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)

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? 2. If the request is included in the Scrutiny Committee work programme what are the likely workload implications for you/your staff? 3. Can the request be included in an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and picked up as part of that? 4. Is there another Council process for enquiry or examination about the matter currently underway? 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? 	Criteria 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 4. Subject to another Council process for enquiry or examination (such as Planning Committee or Licensing Committee) 5. About an individual or entity that has a right of appeal 6. Some other substantial reason
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Signed **Position** **Date**

PLEASE RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

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**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN**



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

**FORWARD PLAN
FOR THE PERIOD: 3 FEBRUARY 2026 – 30 JUNE 2026**

Title	Decision Maker and Date
Capital Strategy	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Land at Salters Lane, Cummins - Proposed sale of plot	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
MTFP 2025/26 - Final Version Post Consultation	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Housing Revenue Account - MTFP 2026-27 To 2029-30	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Schools Admissions 2027/28	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Special Free School	Cabinet 3 Feb 2026
Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings	Cabinet 3 Mar 2026
Consultation on Local Plan Review	Cabinet 3 Mar 2026
Darlington Transport Plan	Cabinet 3 Mar 2026
Delivery of the Stem Centre	Cabinet 3 Mar 2026
Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	Cabinet 3 Mar 2026
Annual Procurement Plan	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026
Annual Statement of Accounts 2025/26	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026
Blackwell Parkland - Proposed Village Green Registration	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026
Crisis and Resilience Fund	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026
Darlington Community Safety Plan 2026-2029	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026
Introduction of the Renters Rights Act 2025	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026
Land at Ingenium Parc and Morton Palms - Development Proposal	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026
Schedule of Transactions	7 Apr 2026
Town Centre Regeneration and East Street Development	Cabinet 7 Apr 2026

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