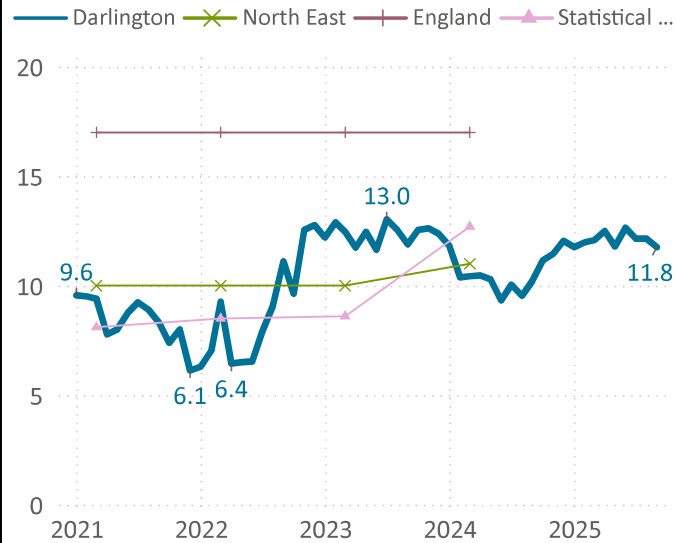


## Percentage of total looked after children (LAC) placed more than 20 miles away from home, inside or outside the boundary, as at the end of each reporting period (excludes children placed for adoption or where home address is "of no fixed abode")

As of September 2025, 11.8% of our Children in Care were placed 20 or more miles away from their primary home. This is positively below the national average of 17%, reflecting our commitment to keeping children as close to familiar surroundings as possible.

Every placement is carefully reviewed to ensure it is the most suitable option for the child. Whether it's staying connected to family or accessing specialised care, we focus on what will best support each child's wellbeing and development.



Lead Officer: Chris Bell: Assistant Director - Children's Services

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

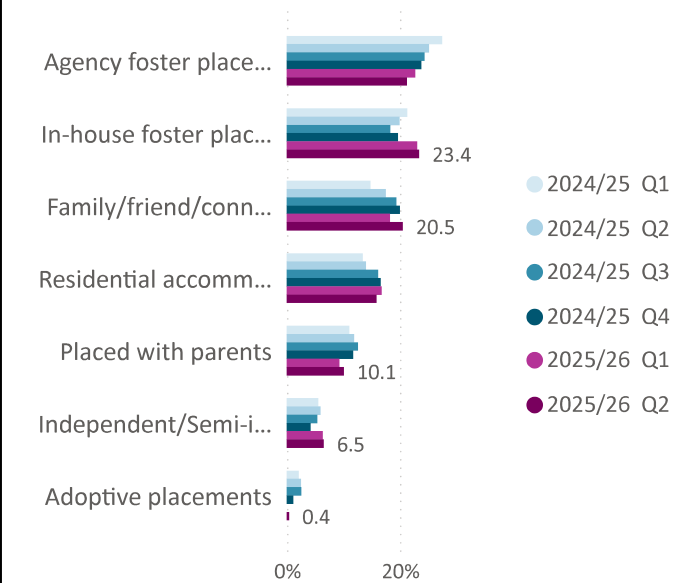
Key Deliverable: Provide a safe and supportive living environment for children cared for by the council by increasing the number of children placed in council foster care and, when appropriate, council-run residential homes.

## Percentage of looked after children by placement type

At the end of September 2025, a large proportion of Darlington's children in care were living in foster placements (45%), with 20% placed in kinship care - that is, with relatives, 10% were living with a parent, while 23% were in supported residential accommodation, and 2% were placed for adoption or in other types of placements.

Every placement is carefully reviewed to ensure it's the most appropriate for the child, offering the right support with the aim to provide stable, nurturing environments that meet each child's individual needs.

We're also seeing positive change in the steady reduction in the use of agency foster placements.



Lead Officer: Chris Bell: Assistant Director - Children's Services

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Provide a safe and supportive living environment for children cared for by the council by increasing the number of children placed in council foster care and, when appropriate, council-run residential homes.

Total number of approved foster carers

As of September 2025, Darlington Council has 59 approved foster care families and 53 approved kinship carers—relatives who care for children within their family network.

We’re also seeing continued interest in fostering: 12 families are currently going through the assessment process to become approved foster carers, helping to support children in care across our community.

To raise awareness and encourage more people to consider fostering, the Council continues to promote foster care through its website and social media channels. This outreach has led to 14 new fostering enquiries and the approval of 4 new foster care families.



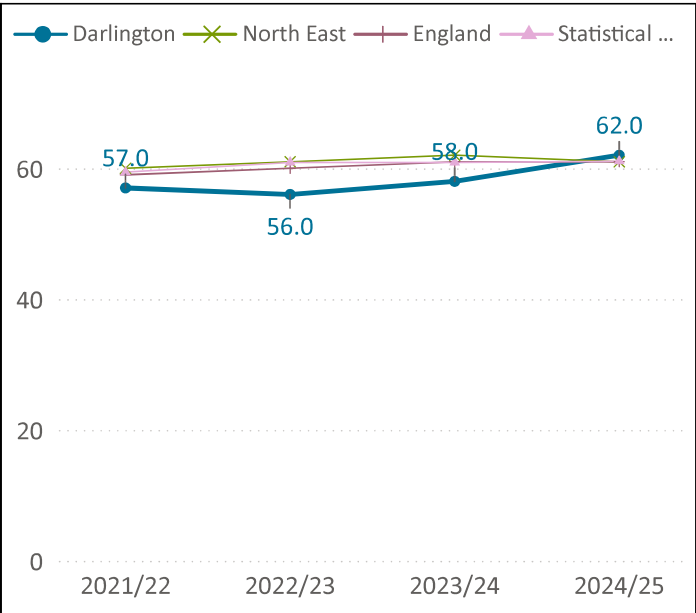
Lead Officer: Chris Bell: Assistant Director - Children's Services

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Provide a safe and supportive living environment for children cared for by the council by increasing the number of children placed in council foster care and, when appropriate, council-run residential homes.

Pupils reaching expected standard in Key Stage 2 for Reading, Writing & Maths (Percentage of all pupils)

The percentage of Darlington pupils achieving the expected standard in Key Stage 2 for Reading, Writing & Maths (RWM) has increased again between academic year 2023/24 and 2024/25, now sitting above national, regional and statistical neighbour comparators which have stayed the same or decreased slightly. Of the three categories (reading, writing and maths) Darlington students were strongest in maths followed by writing whereas comparators are all strongest in reading followed by maths.



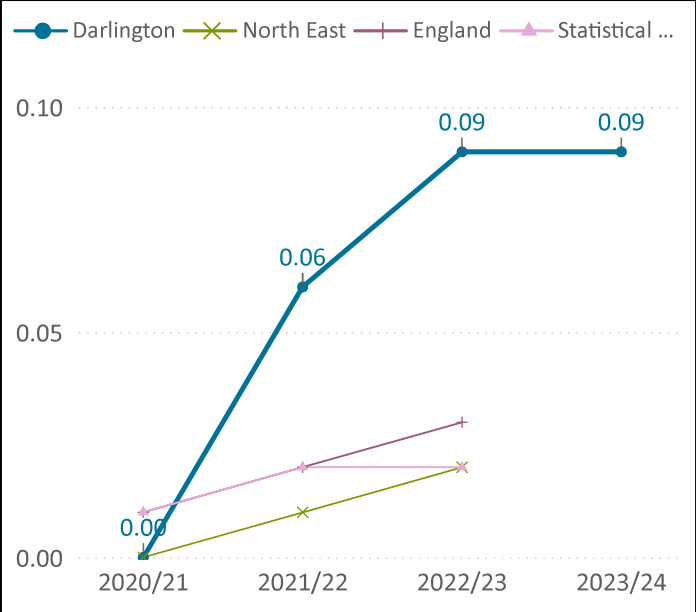
Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Work with multi-academy trusts and schools to develop a high quality and inclusive education sector in Darlington

Permanent exclusions in Primary schools (Percentage of total pupils)

The permanent exclusion rate for Darlington's primary school children has remained steady from 2022/23 to 2023/24 after rising sharply for the previous two years, although it still remains very high. Note that this is due to a small number of primary schools excluding a large number of pupils rather than an authority-wide trend. Published comparison data for this measure are not yet available.



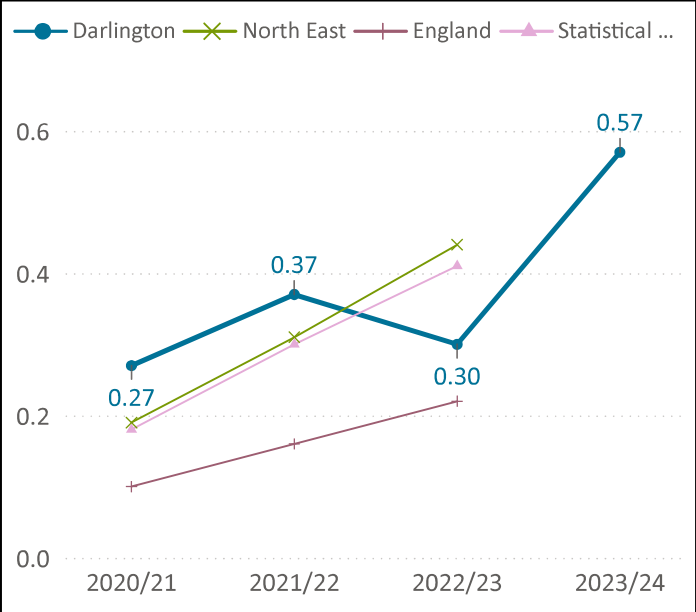
Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Work with multi-academy trusts and schools to develop a high quality and inclusive education sector in Darlington

Permanent exclusions in Secondary schools (Percentage of total pupils)

The permanent exclusion rate of Darlington's secondary school pupils has increased sharply between academic year 2022/23 and 2023/24 after a decrease the previous year. Note that this high value is due to a small number of secondary schools excluding a large number of pupils rather than an authority-wide trend, which is a trend seen across the region. Published comparison data for this measure are not yet available.



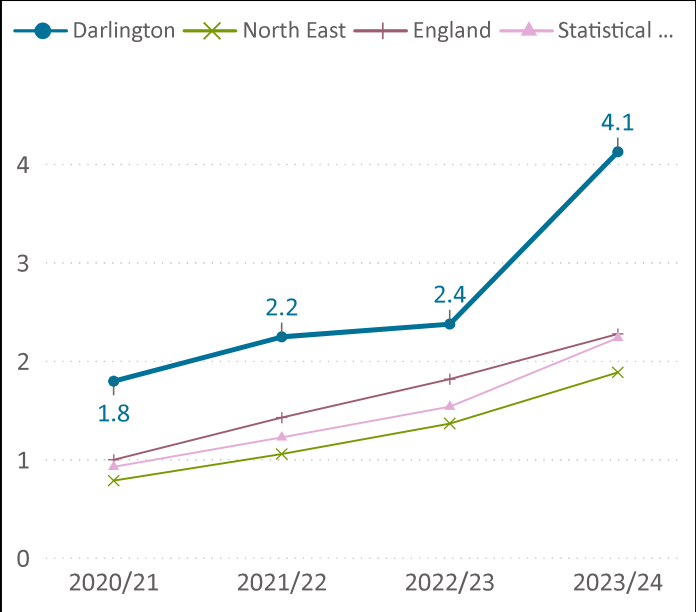
Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Work with multi-academy trusts and schools to develop a high quality and inclusive education sector in Darlington

Suspensions in Primary schools (Percentage of total pupils)

The suspension rate of Darlington's primary school pupils has increased sharply between 2022/23 and 2023/24 after slowing somewhat the previous year. It remains well above the national, regional and statistical neighbour comparators and the gap is increasing. Note that this high value is due to a small number of primary schools suspending a large number of pupils rather than an authority-wide trend.



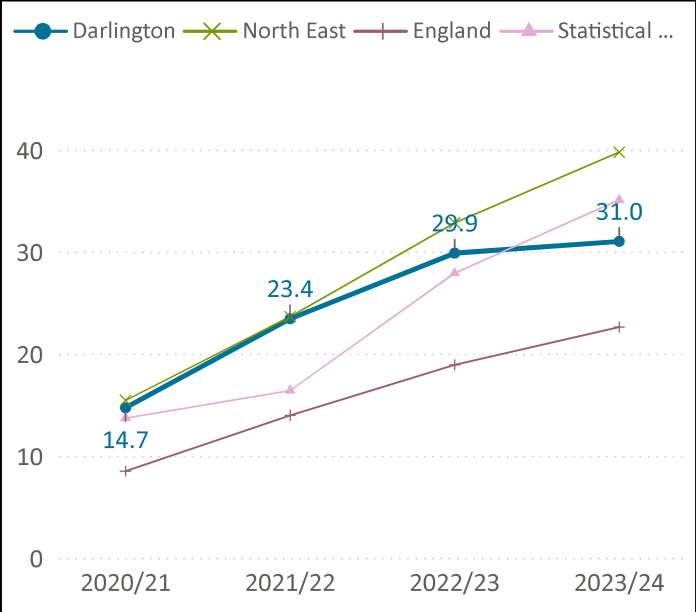
Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Work with multi-academy trusts and schools to develop a high quality and inclusive education sector in Darlington

Suspensions in Secondary schools (Percentage of total pupils)

The suspension rate of Darlington's secondary school pupils has increased again between academic year 2022/23 and 2023/24, but this increase is much smaller than the previous years, bringing it below the regional and statistical neighbour comparators. However it should be noted that in the same period the exclusion rate increased sharply suggesting that this decrease is due to more pupils being excluded rather than suspended. Note also that this high value is due to a small number of secondary schools suspending a large number of pupils rather than an authority-wide trend. This trend is reflected across the region.



Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

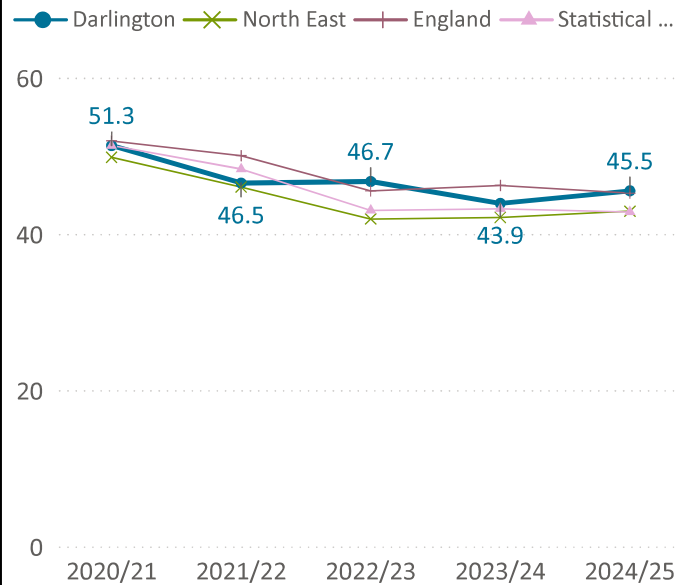
Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Work with multi-academy trusts and schools to develop a high quality and inclusive education sector in Darlington



Pupils achieving 9-5 pass in English and Maths (Percentage of pupils)

The percentage of Darlington's KS4 pupils achieving a grade 9-5 pass in English and Maths has increased slightly between academic year 2023/24 and 2024/25 after a small decrease last year. This increase contrasts with the overall trend of the national, regional and statistical neighbour comparators over the same time period where they all stayed fairly stable over the past year.



Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

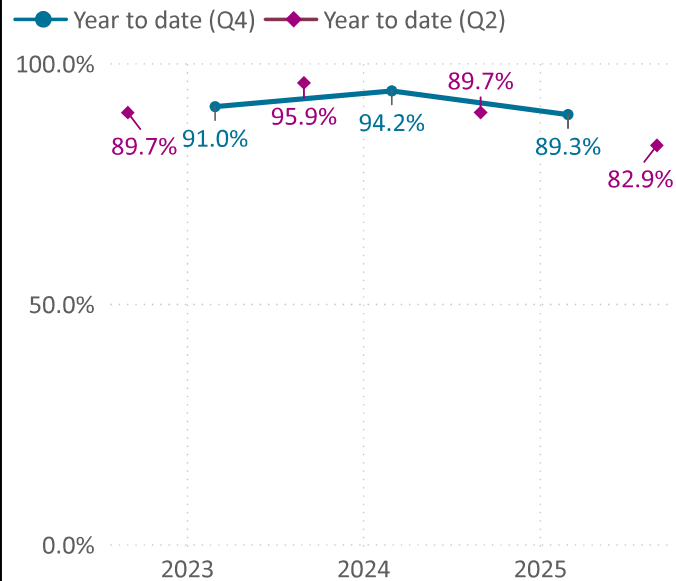
Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Work with multi-academy trusts and schools to develop a high quality and inclusive education sector in Darlington

Percentage of looked after children (LAC) reviews where the child participated (excludes children under the age of 4yrs)

In the first half of the 2025/26 year, 82.4% of child in care reviews held, for those children aged over four, saw the child actively involved in their review meetings. This means they either attended the meeting themselves or shared their views beforehand so they could be included.

An additional 2.0% attended their review but did not contribute directly, while 11.1% of all reviews involved children under the age of four. For these younger children, participation looks different, but their needs and experiences are still carefully considered throughout the process.



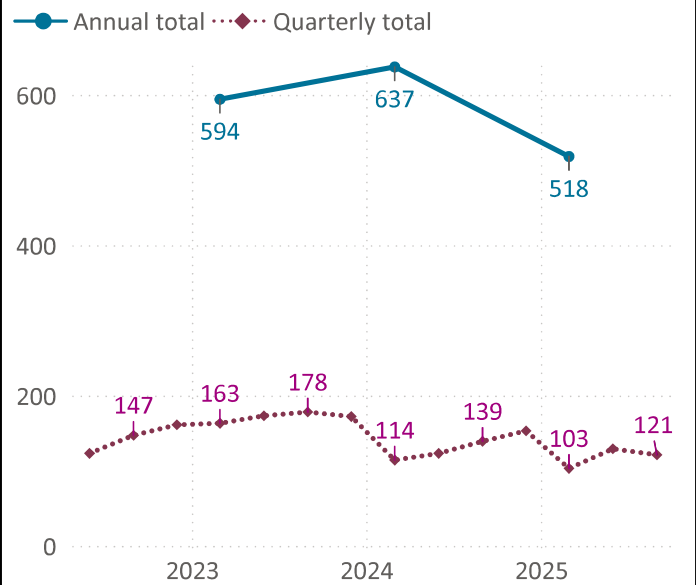
Lead Officer: Chris Bell: Assistant Director - Children's Services

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Develop more meaningful services by ensuring children and young people are involved in service development and commissioning activity

Number of looked after children (LAC) reviews where the child participated (excludes children under the age of 4yrs)

In the first half of the 2025/26 year, a total of 332 children had a Child in Care (CiC) reviews held. Of these, 295 were for children aged over four. 243 of those children took part in their review meetings—either by attending in person or by sharing their views ahead of time so they could be included in the discussion. It’s so important that children are involved in their reviews, as it helps ensure they have a say in decisions that affect their lives and care. We continue to encourage participation and make sure every child feels heard and supported throughout the process.



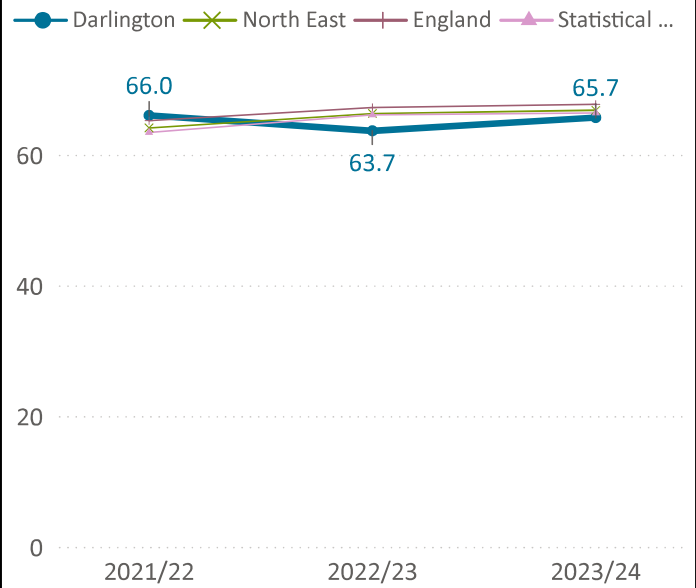
Lead Officer: Chris Bell: Assistant Director - Children's Services

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Develop more meaningful services by ensuring children and young people are involved in service development and commissioning activity

School Readiness: all children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception (Percentage of all eligible children)

After a large decrease between academic year 2021/22 and 2022/23, the percentage of Darlington children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception has increased slightly to fall roughly in line with the national, regional and statistical neighbour comparators in academic year 2023/24. However, it still sits below its 2021/22 value of 66% which was higher than all comparators.



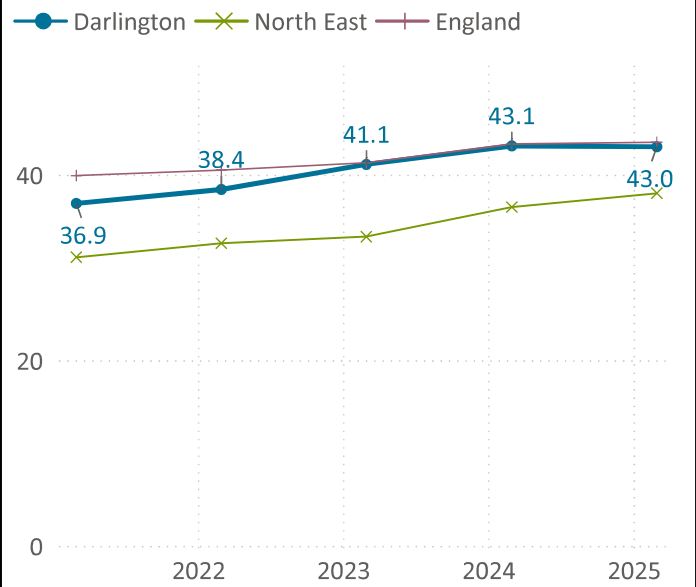
Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Work in partnership with the early years sector and health services to promote school readiness and the delivery of the expansion of funded childcare entitlement

Pupils with an EHCP educated in mainstream schools (Percentage of pupils with an EHCP)

With the support of mainstream schools and continued partnership working Darlington's percentage of pupils with Education Health and Care Plans educated in mainstream settings has risen from 34.2% in 2020 to 43.0% in 2025, higher than the North East average of 38.0%. The Darlington performance is now in line with the England average of 43.5%. There has been a year on year increase in pupils supported in mainstream settings since 2020 with a slight decrease between 2024 and 2025.



Lead Officer: Tony Murphy: Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion

Council Plan Priority: Children and young people

Key Deliverable: Continue the successful management of the Safety Valve plan for the education budget to improve outcomes for young people with SEND, eliminate the historic deficit on funding and deliver a financially sustainable system

## Council Plan Priority: Communities

Working together for safer, healthier and more engaged communities.

### Support communities to remain safe and resilient by working with key agencies and communities to address anti-social behaviour and crime issues in the community

During the reporting period, officers have continued to tackle problems associated with anti-social behaviour (ASB), fly tipping and waste in back lanes. The below figures provide an overview of activity:

(a) From 1st April 2025 to date 198 cases reported (of which 176 closed)

(b) 1 x Duty of Care Fail to pay Fixed Penalty Ticket (Fined £458)

(c) 7 x Section 110 Prosecutions (Total Fines £5,110)

(d) Fixed penalty Tickets issued:

2 x Fly Tipping @£1,000, total £2,000

3 x Duty of Care @ £600, total £1,800

4 x Breach of Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) @£100, total £400

2 x Littering @ £500, total £1,000

Number Forty is currently closed due to flooding of the premisses, however we are delivering a Street Friends medical support service which patrols the town centre during a Friday and Saturday night.

To address ASB, the Shopwatch scheme continues to grow, with the Yarm Road and North Road retail parks starting schemes shortly. The Council continues to contribute to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's 'Safer Businesses Group'.

The begging figures for this period compared to the previous year show a reduction in begging of 83.7%. There is currently around six people begging, partners are engaging with, offering all available support. Those individuals known to begging are reviewed at multi-agency meetings. Support is offered through an outreach worker who engages and signposts individuals to the service best suited to their needs.

Lead Officer: Chris Knox: Head of Community Safety

Council Plan Priority: Communities

## **Work with partners to reduce the burden of the cost of living, with a focus on food and fuel insecurity**

In addition to the Household Support Fund, the Council has been in discussion with the network of Food Banks that operate across Darlington. A meeting was called which was attended by eight of the 10 foodbanks that are known of in Darlington. It provided an opportunity for them to talk with one another which revealed that there would be great benefit in them collaborating.

The Council has agreed to collate a survey of them which will form the basis of a discussion at a further meeting.

Lead Officer: Seth Pearson: Darlington Partnerships Director

Council Plan Priority: Communities

## **Support and strengthen partnership working with voluntary and community groups with a focus on addressing the causes of inequality, financial inclusion, social exclusion, and vulnerable families with children and young people**

Largely as a result of the strong relationships with the voluntary sector that have emerged through the work of the Voluntary and Community Sector Engagement Group (VCSE), the Household Support Fund programme is being delivered through the sector as third party providers.

The group has established three working groups looking at social exclusion, financial exclusion and children and families.

Last year, the group selected four of its members to join the Long Term Plan for Towns Board which has subsequently become the Neighbourhood Board. The group has now been invited to be the primary link for the voluntary and community sector. Voluntary and Community Sector agencies worked together to deliver an engagement exercise across town. They achieved 2,400 respondents which is an unprecedented response rate. The information gathered will be used to inform the Pride in Place programme.

Lead Officer: Seth Pearson: Darlington Partnerships Director

Council Plan Priority: Communities

## **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**

The Community Safety Partnership thematic group 'Building Stronger and Cohesive Communities' meets regularly to support our hard to reach communities and address community concerns. In support of this process Darlington has a strong Unity Group which meets on a regular basis and has members in the group from all sections of our community.

North Road and Northgate Community Cohesion Panel has been set up focusing upon geographical areas and behaviours in the area. Uptake by partners and in particular, residents, is encouraging with initial grant funding to support locally driven community based initiatives, which will address issues negatively affecting those communities. Problem Solving techniques and co-ordinated partner approaches to those initiatives will be evaluated with lessons learned and best practice helping future work Borough wide. Recent projects funded through this group are: improved lighting on areas of concern in North Road, the installation of six defibrillators and bleed kits along the North Road Corridor and funding of two youth provision initiatives in the North Road area.

Across the whole of Darlington we now have 18 defibrillators and bleed kits which are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, along with 50 trauma kits deployed across the town centre.

Lead Officer: Chris Knox: Head of Community Safety

Council Plan Priority: Communities

## **Ensuring business activity is regulated, licensed and enforced effectively to protect the health and wellbeing of residents, visitors and businesses.**

Trading Standards will conduct 90 programmed inspections by the end of March 2026 which will include checking compliance with current legislation and offering advice on any issues discovered and any upcoming issues. Visits will be targeted against high-risk business activities including firework storage and suppliers of regulated safety products.

Environmental Health will inspect 400 food premises before the end of March 2026. Inspections are programmed on a national risk basis set by the Food Standards Agency and check on compliance with food safety and labelling requirements. Environmental Health will carry out 50 annual surveillance visits in relation to health and safety in the beauty sector including looking at infection control and consumer safety. Environmental Health will carry out 50 annual food sampling visits to ensure food and drink sold in the Borough is safe for consumers.

Licensing will check compliance with taxi/private hire legislation and policy requirements by conducting 60 random roadside checks per quarter. Licensing will hold weekly multi-agency meetings to share intelligence and risk assess licensed premises to prioritise inspection.

Private Sector Housing will conduct 30 inspections for Houses in Multiple occupation based on a risk-based system over 12 months.

Lead Officer: Trevor Watson: Executive Director - Economy & Public Protection

Council Plan Priority: Communities

**Work with the voluntary and community sector to develop a strategy for informal volunteering which empowers people to volunteer and directs volunteering to areas of greatest need, including working with Darlington Cares to deliver an enhanced volunteering programme**

A draft strategy framework has been produced for internal consultation in advance of a discussion at the Voluntary and Community Sector Engagement Group. It proposes a focus on:

- structured volunteering
- employer supported volunteering
- community volunteering.

After describing the positive messages to be promoted to encourage volunteering, it then outlines a series of actions that the Council could take to positively support the growth of each type of volunteering.

Lead Officer: Seth Pearson: Darlington Partnerships Director

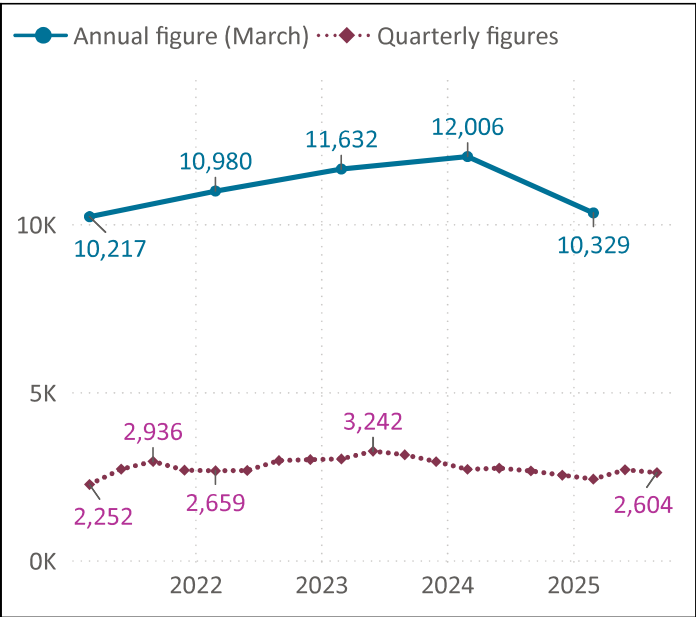
Council Plan Priority: Communities

**Number of crimes (total)**

The number of crimes reported year to date for this year is 5,292 compared to the same period last year at 5,389. This shows a decrease of 1.8% year to date and 97 fewer crimes across Darlington.

The town centre shows a reduction in crime, 626 crimes to date for this year compared to 782 for the same period last year, which is a decrease of 19.9% and 156 fewer crimes in Darlington town centre.

Community Safety continue to work with the Police to target criminality. Shoplifting has shown reductions across Darlington and the town centre during this reporting period with reductions of 12.8% and 18.9% respectively.



Lead Officer: Chris Knox: Head of Community Safety

Council Plan Priority: Communities

Key Deliverable: Support communities to remain safe and resilient by working with key agencies and communities to address anti-social behaviour and crime issues in the community

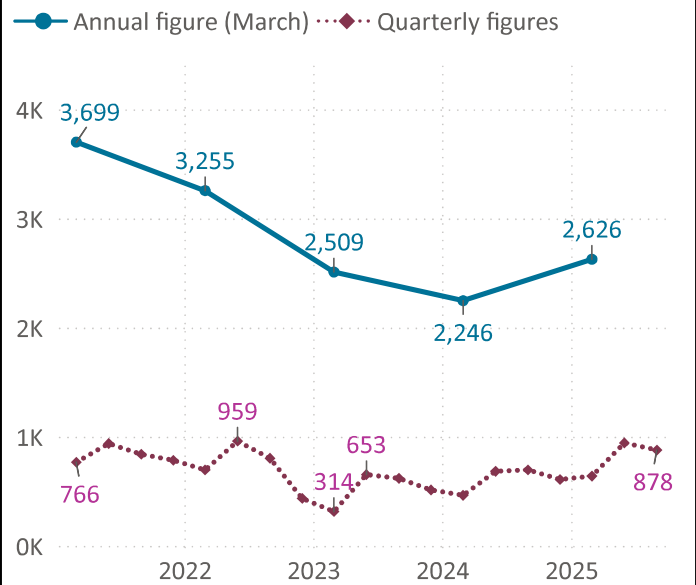
Number of ASB incidents, excluding duplicates (total)

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) has been on a downward trajectory. However, there has been a recent increase, with 1821 reports made across Darlington for the 2025-26 year to date, compared to 1379 for the same period last year. This equates to a 32.1% increase.

The increase has been seen across all areas of Darlington with the town centre having an increase of 23.4%, this equates to 33 more reports compared to the previous year. Regular meetings take place between partners and retailers to share intelligence and update retailers.

Targeted action has been taken by the Council, Police and partners to address the increase with extra resources being deployed by the Police, Council and partners.

Increases in ASB are being recorded across all of the Force area.



Lead Officer: Chris Knox: Head of Community Safety

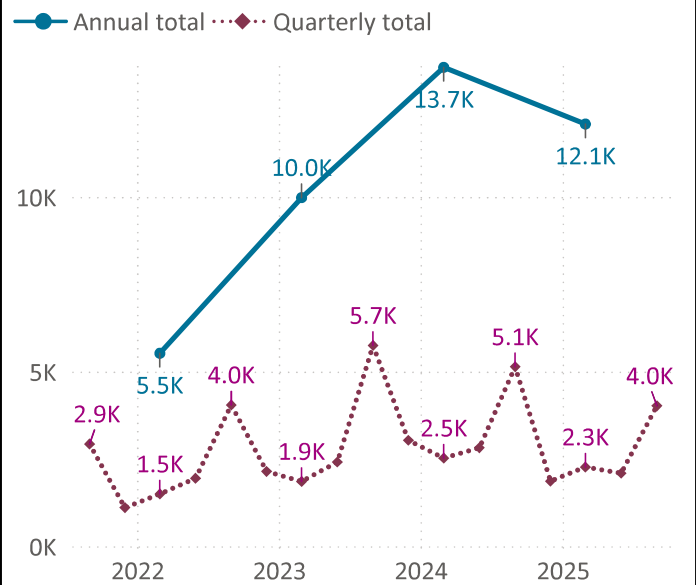
Council Plan Priority: Communities

Key Deliverable: Support communities to remain safe and resilient by working with key agencies and communities to address anti-social behaviour and crime issues in the community

Number of items of school uniform distributed

The Uniform Shop continues to grow from strength to strength with levels of both donations and collections remaining high, with each academic year.

The project is a collaboration between the Council and Darlington Cares. Providing support to parents in relation to the rising cost of uniforms. The project also makes a positive contribution to the environment in reducing the volume of uniform being discarded, particularly into landfill.



Lead Officer: Seth Pearson: Darlington Partnerships Director

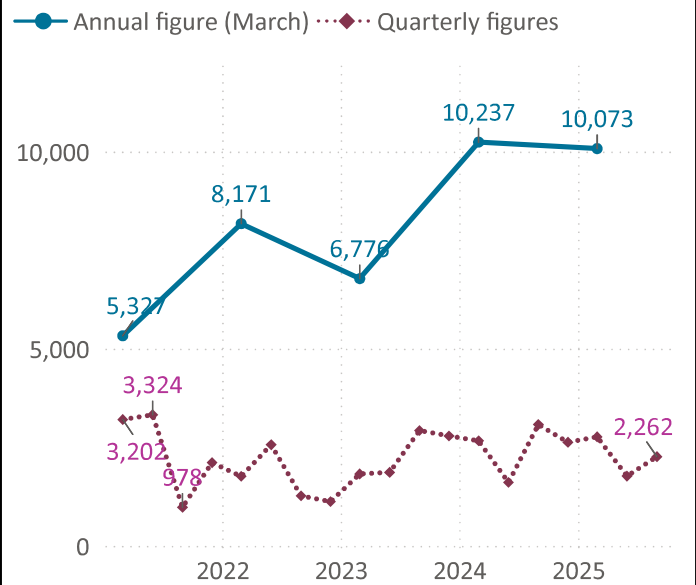
Council Plan Priority: Communities

Key Deliverable: Work with partners to reduce the burden of the cost of living, with a focus on food and fuel insecurity



## Number of Darlington Cares volunteer hours

Darlington Cares volunteering continues to grow as does its membership. The programme of activities delivered under the three areas of focus; environment, education and social justice, attract growing numbers of company volunteers. The Board continues to focus on the needs of foodbanks and in addition to providing volunteers is exploring what other support it can give them. The volume of volunteering remains similar to last year.



Lead Officer: Seth Pearson: Darlington Partnerships Director

Council Plan Priority: Communities

Key Deliverable: Work with the voluntary and community sector to develop a strategy for informal volunteering which empowers people to volunteer and directs volunteering to areas of greatest need, including working with Darlington Cares to deliver an enhanced volunteering programme

## Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

A well-connected, clean and sustainable borough.

**Enable improvements in transport systems by working in partnership with TVCA and public transport operators to deliver the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme, including the improvement of bus facilities and the reliability of services**

Work continues on the delivery of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme across the Tees Valley. In Darlington this means investment in the Darlington station project, development of walking and cycling schemes and improvements to key bus corridors.

The detailed design of Phase 2 of the Woodland Road Active Travel scheme is complete and construction work will start on site once the TVCA has completed its business case.

We are also working closely with the Tees Valley Combined Authority to develop projects for the Transforming City Regions (TCR) programme which runs from 2027/28 to 2031/32.

**Work with local stakeholders and businesses to promote a diverse and accessible programme of events that maximises footfall in the town centre and has a positive impact on the local economy**

The Town Centre Partnership team works closely with high street businesses to deliver a vibrant events programme aimed at encouraging visits to the town centre and encouraging longer visits in Darlington. These annual events are carefully curated to attract people into the town centre, inspiring them to explore, enjoy, and return.

Darlington proudly hosted the inaugural High Street Positives event in 2025, welcoming a national network of agents, towns, and businesses. The event aimed to strengthen positive perceptions of Darlington and showcase its vibrant town centre as a model for high street regeneration.

The events programme includes a wide mix, from unique experiences like the Misfits Market, hosted by a local independent, to family-friendly days such as Dinosaur Day, large-scale music events like Rhythm and Tunes Weekend, and smaller interactive trails.

Darlington’s Purple Flag status highlights its safe and lively evening economy, adding to its appeal. The town’s commitment to excellence was further recognised with a Gold award at Britain in Bloom 2025.

This diverse programme offers free, inclusive activities with broad regional appeal. The events team continues to engage with the community and local businesses to evolve the programme, ensuring it delivers value for both visitors and the town centre economy.

Lead Officer: Mike Crawshaw: Head of Culture & Heritage

Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

**Introduce food waste collections and support residents to increase overall recycling rates to move towards the national average**

The introduction of weekly food waste collections will commence from April 2026 in line with national changes as part of the Government's wider Simpler Recycling reforms. All English local authorities will be collecting food waste from April 2026 onwards (unless they already do so). There will be a move to weekly collections of recycling materials when the food waste collections launch. This should increase the amount of waste that is recycled and provide enhanced opportunities for residents to recycle as much of their waste as possible.

Detailed plans have been developed for the introduction of these changes with the procurement of new waste collection vehicles, caddies and food waste bins and disposal arrangements; all of which are required to treat food waste. The Council are utilising resources and expertise provided by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to inform the development of a communications programme to inform residents of the changes and maximise opportunities to recycle. An article was included in One Darlington (Autumn edition) with further communication planned for the New Year and in advance of the containers being delivered to all households. A member briefing session is planned for November 2025. Further updates will be provided in the coming months.

Lead Officer: Ben Grabham: Assistant Director - Environmental Services & Community Safety

Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

**Celebrate the opening of Hopetown and deliver a successful 2025 festival programme that helps to promote Darlington as a destination for visitors and investment**

Hopetown Darlington was the centre of the S&DR200 celebrations on 27th Sept. 4,000+ visitors enjoyed the site as well as watching Locomotion No1 cross the Skerne Bridge to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the first passenger rail journey. The Titans of Steam festival took place at Hopetown with 22,500 visitors over two weeks coming to see Flying Scotsman and Sir Nigel Gresley.

Lead Officer: Mike Crawshaw: Head of Culture & Heritage  
Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

**Work with statutory bodies to progress studies of flood risk in Darlington and enable funding to be sought to mitigate the impact of climate change.**

Two studies are being progressed in partnership with key agencies that will inform and assist future planning, investment and bidding opportunities. The two studies that are taking place are:

- \* The Darlington Northumbria Integrated Drainage Partnership (NIDP) study. The initial study is complete and a priority scheme has been identified which covers the West Beck and Cocker Beck watercourses, including Cockerton area. The current programme is for the stage 1/2 report to be complete by the end of 2026, business case for Government Grant in Aid (GiA) funding to take place in 2027, with construction from 2028 onwards (subject to successful business case and support from Northumbrian Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NRFC)).
- \* Flood Asset Risk Study. This is looking at the risks and impact associated with the possible failure or blockage of key assets such as bridges and culverts to determine investment and maintenance strategies to minimise the risk of flooding. A high level study identified locations where further investigation was warranted due to the impact a blockage or partial blockage of the channel or culvert would cause to properties. The main scheme identified was on West Beck, which was incorporated into the NIDP scheme. Another scheme has been identified at Killerby and costed options have been drawn up. The Council is continuing to assess the business case for this scheme.

A number of smaller schemes are being developed to address local issues.

Lead Officer: Anthony Hewitt: Assistant Director - Highways & Capital Projects  
Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

**Deliver revised supplementary planning documents that guide better design in new developments and contribute to a sense of pride in place**

The Council recently approved a revised Local Development Scheme, which in effect is a timetable for the production of planning policy documents. One of the documents within the timetable is a Supplementary Planning Document on design. This will replace the existing document which was adopted in 2011.

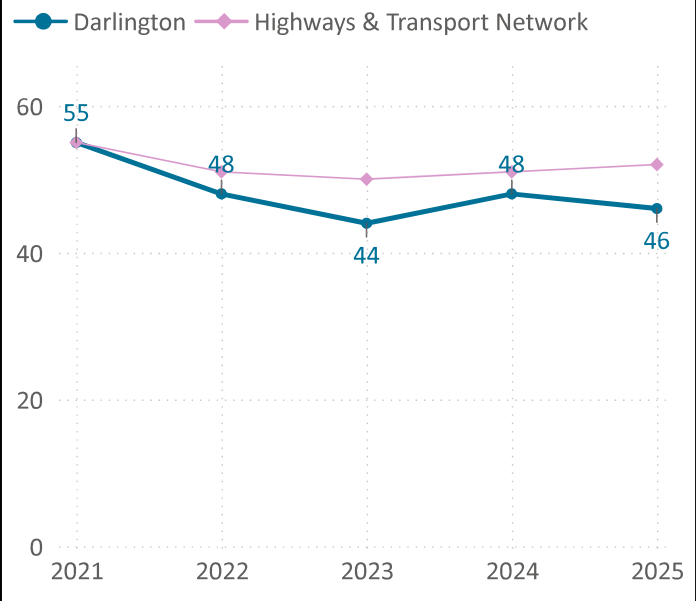
The intention is to consult on this document in the Spring of next year and to hopefully adopt a final version early in the Summer. The document when adopted will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Lead Officer: Trevor Watson: Executive Director - Economy & Public Protection  
Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

**Overall Public Satisfaction with Public Transport Theme (National Highways and Transport Survey)**

The satisfaction survey results are taken from a survey conducted by the National Highways and Transport Network, an organisation which provides a range of benchmarking services to Local Authorities. The overall public satisfaction with public transport has fallen from 48% in 2024 to 46% in 2025. This is below the Highways and Transport Network average of all the authorities taking part of 52%.

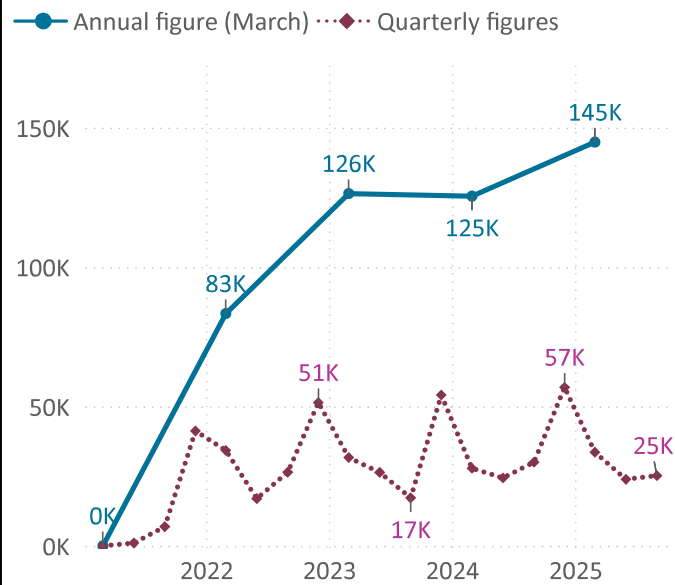
Tees Valley Combined Authority is the Local Transport Authority responsible for public transport and the Council will continue to work in partnership to steer investment into public transport in Darlington to improve satisfaction levels utilising Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding.



Lead Officer: Anthony Hewitt: Assistant Director - Highways & Capital Projects  
Council Plan Priority: Local Environment  
Key Deliverable: Enable improvements in transport systems by working in partnership with TVCA and public transport operators to deliver the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme, including the improvement of bus facilities and the reliability of services

Number of individual attendances at theatre shows

Audience attendances at Darlington Hippodrome shows for Q1 & Q2 2025/2026 were 49,026 (23,844 Apr - Jun / 25,182 Jul - Sep), compared to 54,340 for the same period last financial year. This reduced attendance can be attributed to the loss of the weeklong play, Kim's Convenience in June at short notice as well as a higher number of dramas across the period which attracts smaller audiences. Highest attendances were for The Rocky Horror Show (5,392 attendances over 7 performances), and week ending 20th July (4,730 attendances) that featured a successful run of one-night shows including James Bond Concert Spectacular, Rumours of Fleetwood Mac and Jools Holland.



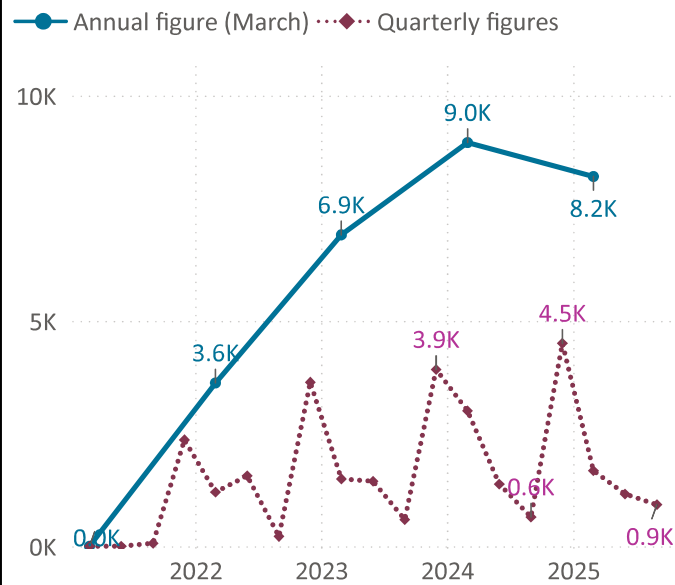
Lead Officer: Mike Crawshaw: Head of Culture & Heritage

Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

Key Deliverable: Work with local stakeholders and businesses to promote a diverse and accessible programme of events that maximises footfall in the town centre and has a positive impact on the local economy

Number of individual attendances at Hullabaloo shows

A total of 2,078 people attended performances at The Hullabaloo Theatre across Q1 & Q2 of 2025/2026 (up 53 attendances on the same period last year). 1,076 of the attendances were for Hipp@The Hullabaloo shows and 1,002 of the attendances were for Hullabaloo family shows. The Hippodrome has seen good attendance levels after a strategic focus on the programming of comedy which appeals to a larger audience, rather than drama.



Lead Officer: Mike Crawshaw: Head of Culture & Heritage

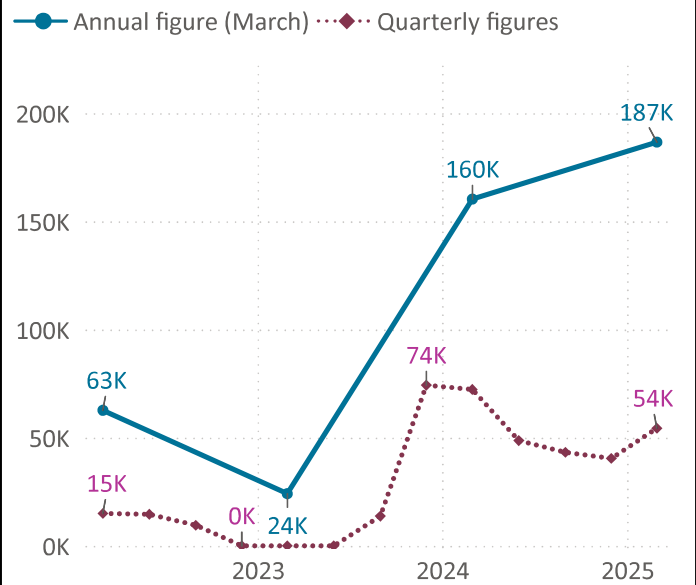
Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

Key Deliverable: Work with local stakeholders and businesses to promote a diverse and accessible programme of events that maximises footfall in the town centre and has a positive impact on the local economy

Number of physical visits to Darlington Library (door count)

We have observed an issue with our main door counter. Whilst this is being investigated our monthly figures will be absent.

The library remains thriving, with people visiting for activities, workshops and events, as well as borrowing. The Study sees a diverse range of people working, and the Art Gallery, Centre for Local Studies and The Hive has attracted many people, particularly interested in our programming celebrating Darlington’s railway history. Celebrations for our 140th birthday saw 72 babies and toddlers enjoying Rhymetime, and around 120 joined us for our Afternoon Tea Party.



Lead Officer: Mike Crawshaw: Head of Culture & Heritage

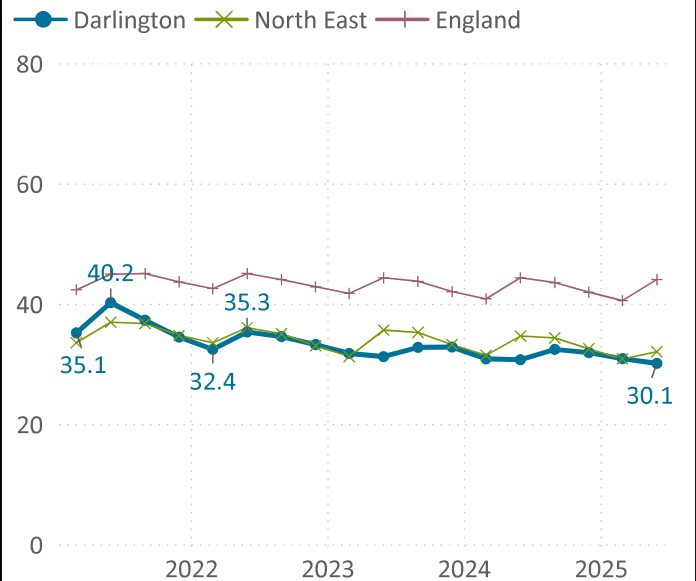
Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

Key Deliverable: Work with local stakeholders and businesses to promote a diverse and accessible programme of events that maximises footfall in the town centre and has a positive impact on the local economy

Percentage of household waste that is collected that is either reused, recycled or composted

The amount of waste that is recycled, composted or reused has fallen in recent years. The Council's performance has dropped to 30.1%. Work continues to be undertaken by Street Scene and communication teams to try to increase recycling and reduce contamination.

As part of the Government's Simpler Recycling Reforms, food waste collections will start in April 2026 and at this time we will transition to a weekly collection of dry recycling too. The service has also been looking into expanding the range of materials that can be recycled at the kerbside with cartons and Tetra Paks able to be presented from April 2026 onwards. This should help to increase overall recycling rates.



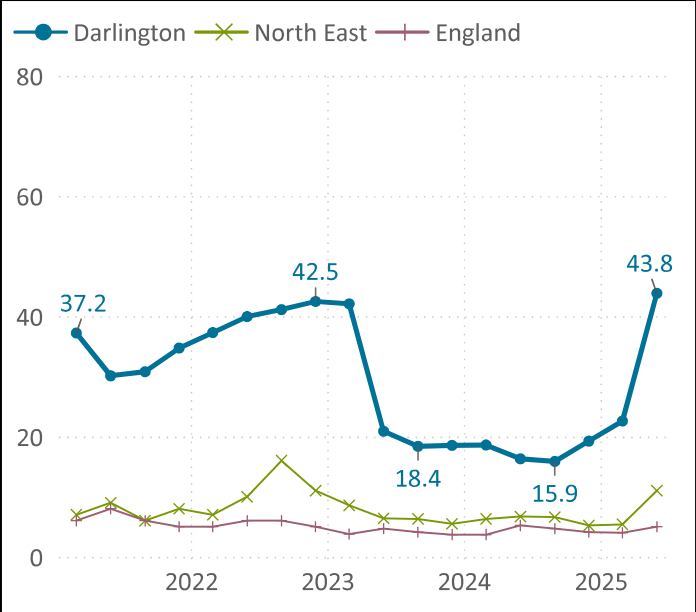
Lead Officer: Ben Grabham: Assistant Director - Environmental Services & Community Safety

Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

Key Deliverable: Introduce food waste collections and support residents to increase overall recycling rates to move towards the national average

Percentage of overall waste that is collected by the Council that is landfilled

The percentage of household waste sent to landfill has risen in the first quarter of the year. More of the Council's waste has been sent to landfill due to the availability of merchant capacity for energy recovery in the North East. The Council is above the North East average for landfill, as the majority of other North East Council's have primary contracts with energy recovery facilities.



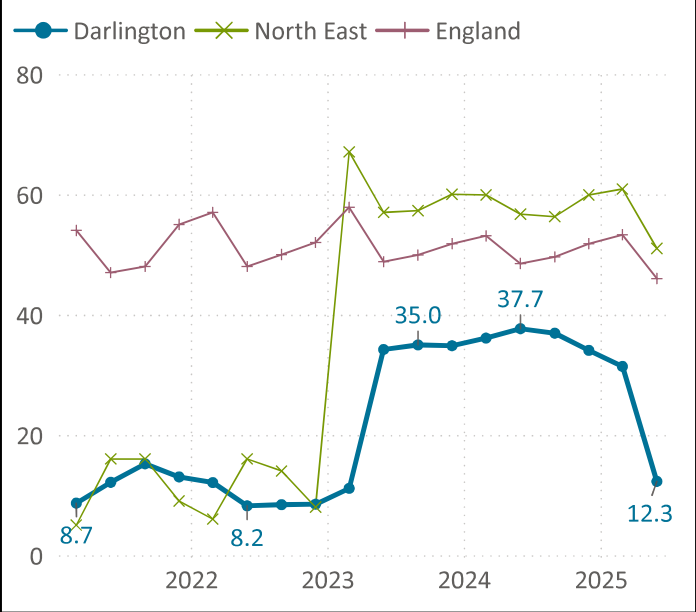
Lead Officer: Ben Grabham: Assistant Director - Environmental Services & Community Safety

Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

Key Deliverable: Introduce food waste collections and support residents to increase overall recycling rates to move towards the national average

Percentage of overall waste that is collected by the Council that is used for energy recovery

Performance is generally a result of available markets to accept the material from the Mechanical Biological Treatment process at affordable cost. Ultimately, the more waste, after recycling, that is sent to energy recovery reduces the amount of waste landfilled. Darlington Borough Council is below the North East average, as in most cases other North East authorities have a primary contract through energy recovery facilities.



Lead Officer: Ben Grabham: Assistant Director - Environmental Services & Community Safety

Council Plan Priority: Local Environment

Key Deliverable: Introduce food waste collections and support residents to increase overall recycling rates to move towards the national average