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Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

Annual Review March 2026

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What were the key aims of the strategy?

Vision

- To work in partnership to end homelessness in Darlington
- Every resident in Darlington has a secure, affordable place to call home
- The right support is in place at the right time
- Where homelessness occurs it is rare, brief and non-recurring

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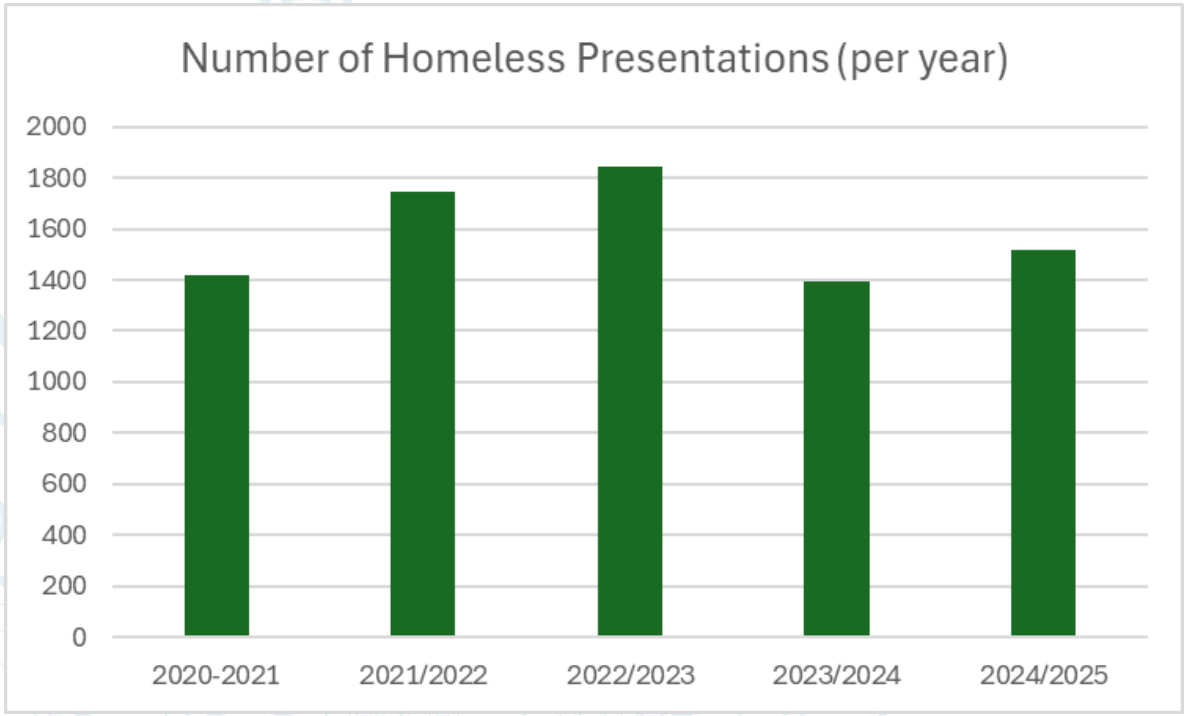
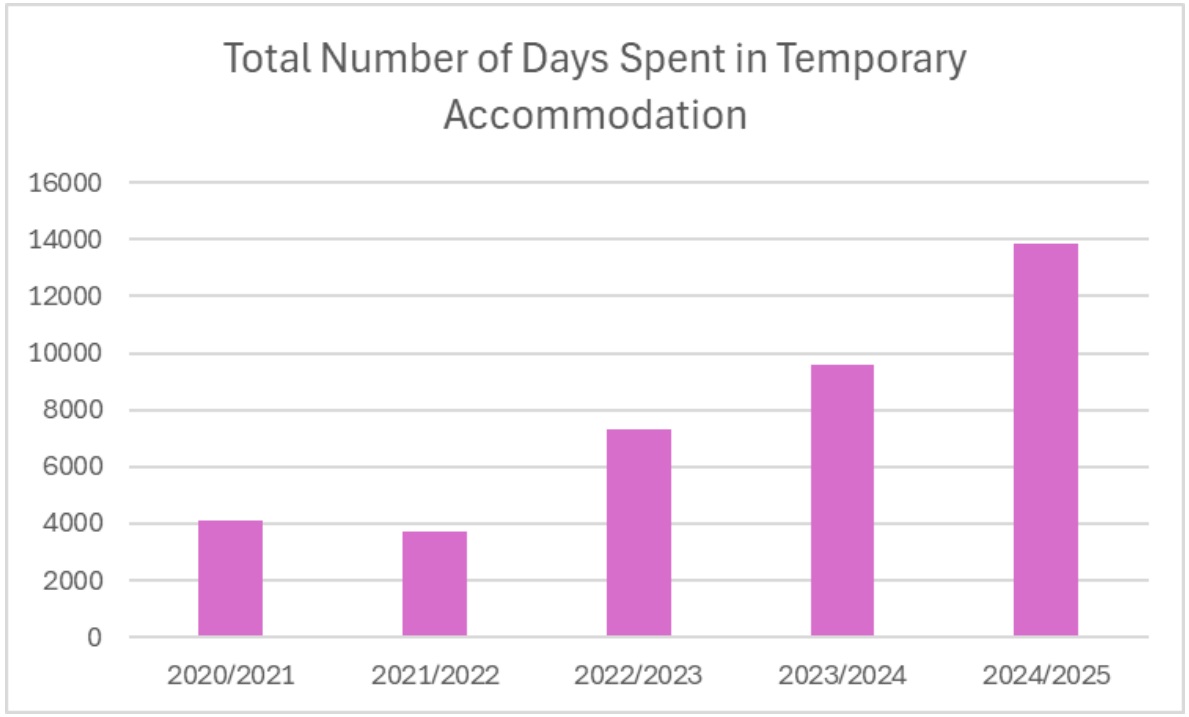
What is the data telling us about homelessness in Darlington?





The number of people presenting as homeless is slightly higher than pre-Covid, however clients are spending longer in temporary accommodation due to lower numbers of suitable move-on accommodation and due to clients housing and health needs

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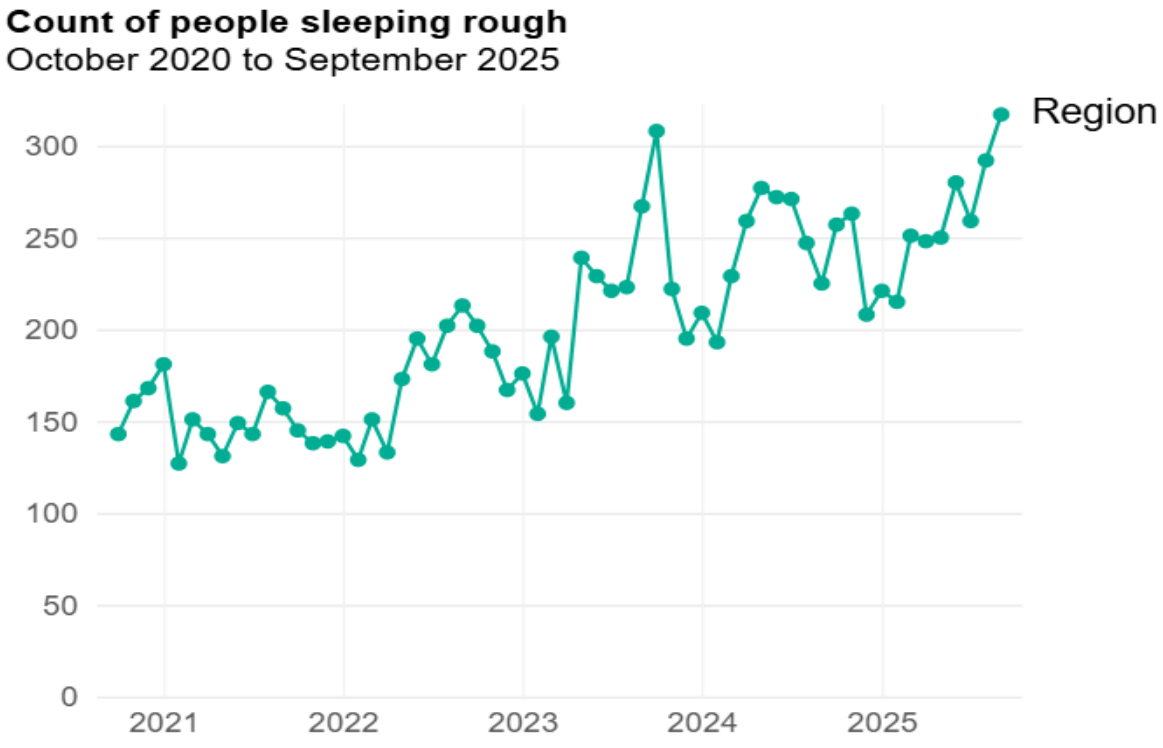
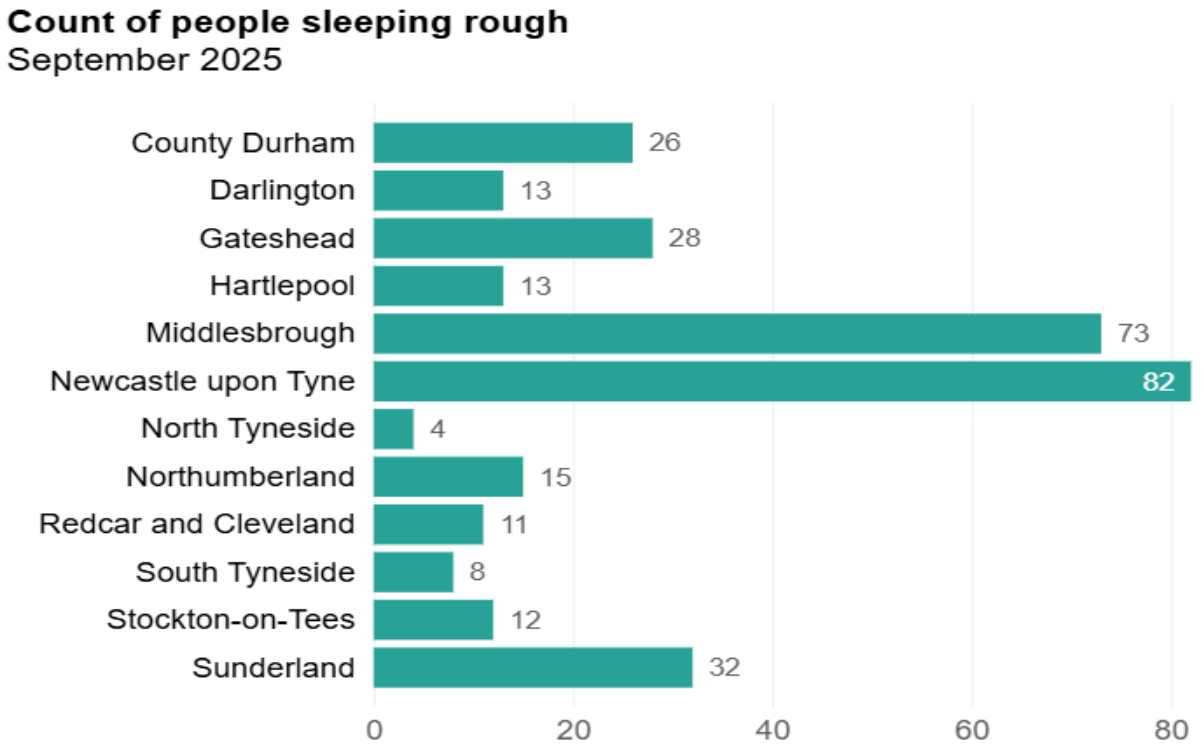
What is the data telling us? (cont)





- MHCLG data shows us in Sept 2025 there were 13 people sleeping rough across the month. This is an increase on 2024

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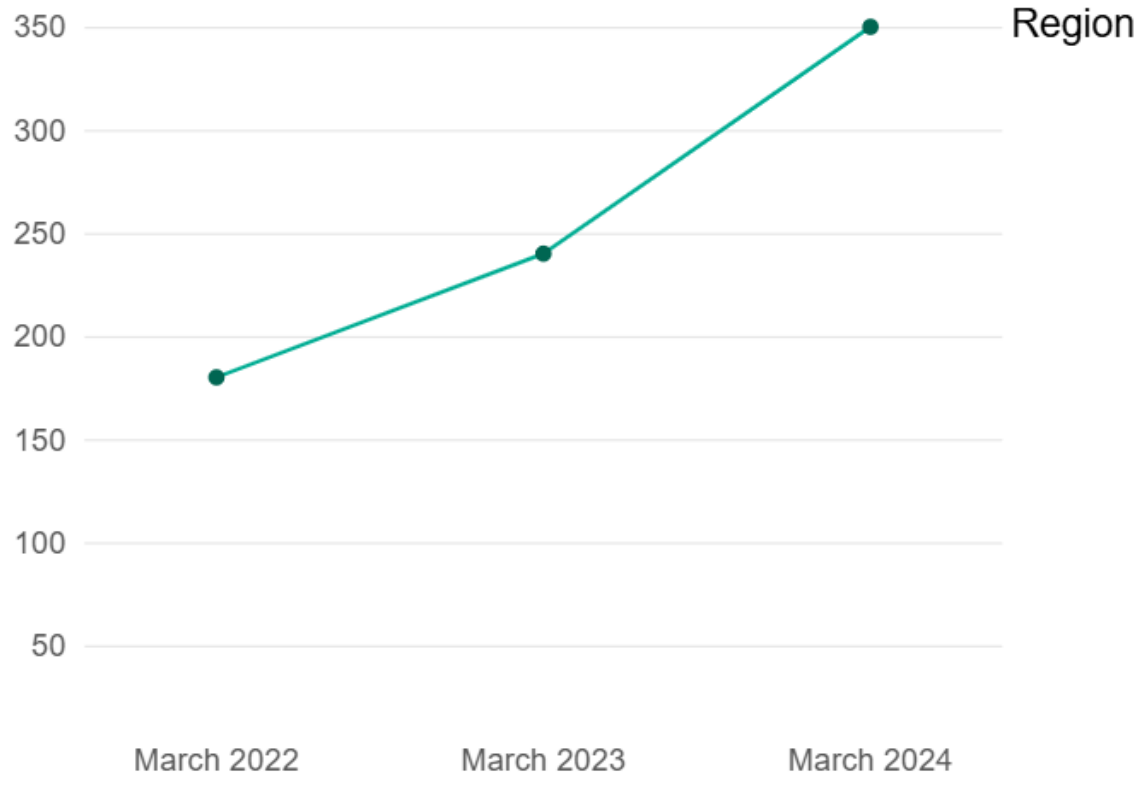
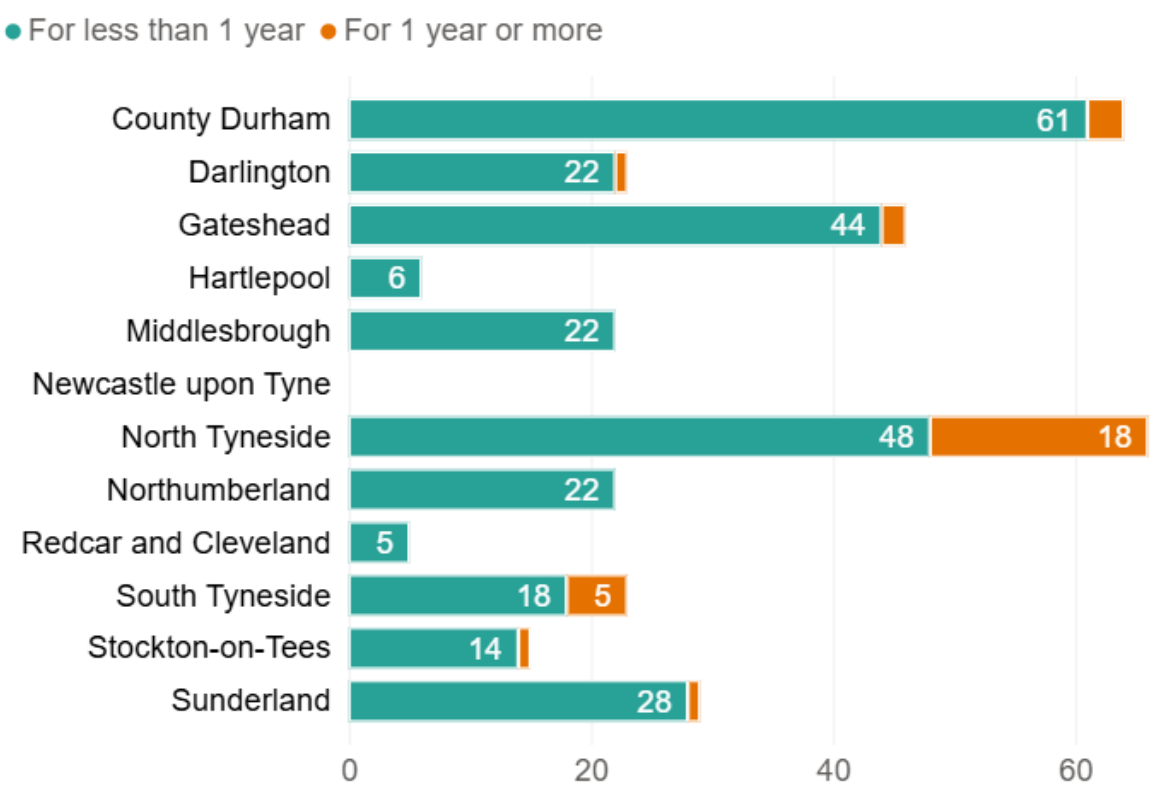
What is the data telling us? (cont)

Count of households with children in temporary accommodation
March 2022 to March 2024



Count of households with children in temporary accommodation
March 2024



- There has been an increase across all north-east local authorities of families in temporary accommodation.

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What have we done since the strategy was implemented?

- Set up the new Homeless Forum which is a multi-agency partnership group to help drive improvements and enhance partnership working.
- Recruited a dedicated Housing Options Officer (Domestic Abuse) and brought 2 dedicated domestic abuse properties online.
- Increased temporary accommodation numbers:
  - 3 additional temporary accommodation units (buying back properties)
  - Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP) working with partners way through to bring 12 units online for 18–25-year-olds
  - Forever Homes Project working with partners 700 Club to bring online 12 homes for families
  - Procured additional bed and breakfast accommodation
  - Probation CAS3 Accommodation
  - Rough Sleeper Bed

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What have we done since the strategy was implemented? (cont)

- Agreed a Severe Weather Protocol across the Tees Valley to provide a consistent approach to homeless presentations in times of severe weather.
- Set up Task and Finish Groups with the members of the Forum to look at specific areas:
  - Improve information available for public and professionals
  - Source additional move on accommodation. Nomination Agreements are in place and working with Registered Providers to use their stock for temporary accommodation. START and STEP projects
  - Increase specialist accommodation such as sit up services, accommodation for multi-complex needs
  - Identify funding opportunities
  - Rough Sleeping – pathways/ outreach / early morning sweeps /support

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A National Plan to End Homelessness

- On 11 Dec 2025 the new National Plan to End Homelessness was published.
- At its core it recognises that local authorities cannot end homelessness alone or overnight and partnership working and local action plans are key.
- It focuses on change across the whole homeless level:
  - Long-term sustainable solutions such as building more homes, reforming renters rights.
  - Medium-term improvements to shift from a crisis and reactive stance to a preventative model.
  - Immediate action to end long-term use of B&Bs for families and to improve temporary accommodation.

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A National Plan to End Homelessness (cont)

- Grant funding is available and has been included in the new consolidated local authority finance agreements.
- A new action plan must be produced by each local authority by October 2026 and agreed by MHCLG.
- Actions must be based on local need and link in with new or existing homeless strategies.
- A review of our existing action plan is under-way and the new Homeless Forum and Task and Finish Groups will be involved in this work.
- New action plans must include clear targets.

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The next 12 months

- Agree and implement the new action plan in line with A National Plan to End Homelessness.
- Agree and set local targets and performance indicators in line with the new National Plan.
- Continue to seek opportunities to increase good quality temporary accommodation within the Borough.
- Implement an agreed temporary accommodation standard which will help to ensure all temporary accommodation is good quality, safe and clean for clients.
- Commence a review of nomination agreements between DBC and other registered providers to ensure they adhere to these and assist in housing homeless clients.

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The next 12 months (cont)

- Improve communication and engagement with private landlords
- Explore landlord incentives.
- Renter Rights Act – May 2026, work with other teams to understand and prepare.
- Identify higher risk groups with partner agencies to understand and improve support available.
- Continue work around rough sleeping.
- Review staffing resource internally to ensure adequate focus is towards prevention of homelessness in line with new National Plan.

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Questions?

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