

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29 JANUARY 2026

Performance Indicators QTR 2 2025/26

Appendix 2

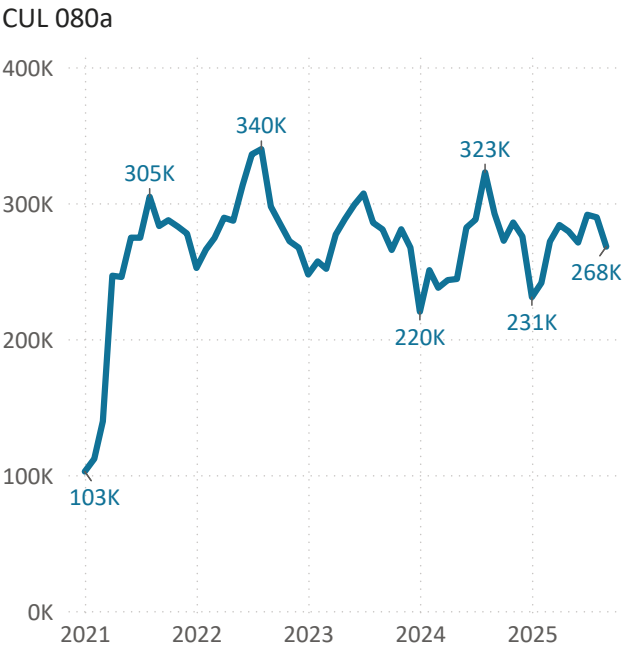
Town centre footfall weekly average for the month

Ongoing town centre animation and a vibrant events calendar aims to encourage town centre visits and encourage visitors to stay longer, explore more, and enjoy an enhanced experience across Darlington.

Interactive trails and events are designed to draw new customers into stores. The events team works closely with town centre businesses to support retail and hospitality.

Occupancy remains steady at around 85%, boosted by new openings that add to the town’s vibrancy. More businesses are expected soon, likely reducing vacancy rates further.

UK retail footfall declined for the sixth consecutive month in October. Source: Retail Gazette

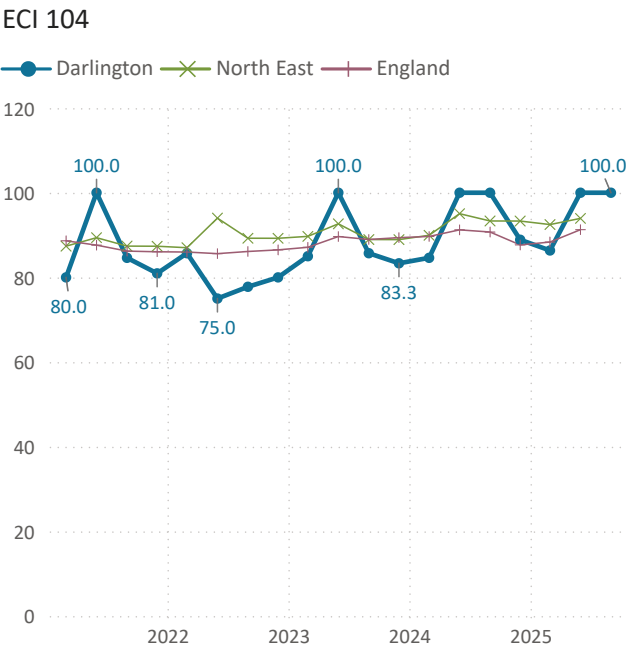


Lead Officer: Mike Crawshaw: Head of Culture & Heritage

Service Area: Culture

Percentage of major planning applications decided within 13 weeks or within agreed time

The percentage of major planning applications decided within 13 weeks, or with an agreed time period, is maintained at 100% from the previous quarter. This equates to five out of the total of five major applications decided this quarter. Performance sits above the latest available performance figures for both England (91.3%) and the North East (93.9%) respectively.



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

Service Area: Planning

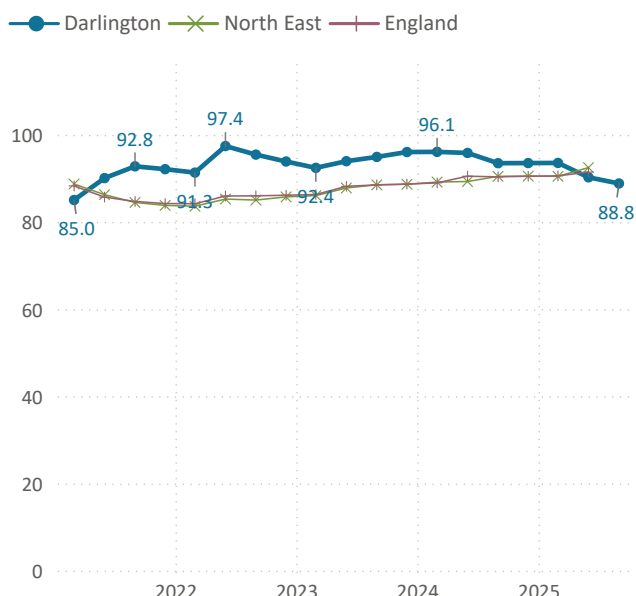
Percentage of non-major planning development decisions within 8 weeks or within agreed time

The percentage of non-major planning applications decided within 8 weeks for Q1 2025 was 90.24% and for Q2 2025 was 87.62%.

The cumulative percentage of non-major planning applications decided within 8 weeks for 2025 was 88.83%. A total of 159 non-major applications were decided within 8 weeks, from the cumulative total of 179. This represents a slight drop in performance compared to the previous report, however this coincides with the retirement of one of the Planning Officers earlier this year and the delay in the replacement member of staff being in post.

The department continues to monitor performance, ensuring that extension of time agreements are requested where possible.

ECI 105



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

Service Area: Planning

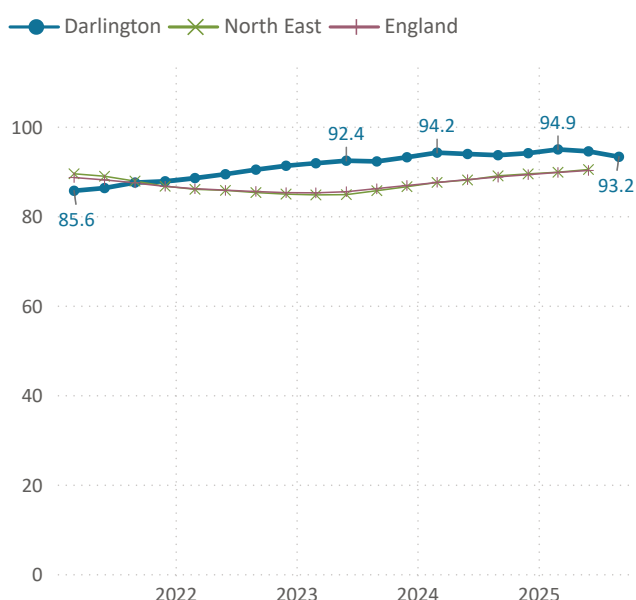
Percentage of non-major planning development decisions within 8 weeks or within agreed time (24 months to date)

The 24 month rolling percentage of non-major planning applications decided within 8 weeks has dropped slightly from 94.4% to 93.2%.

Darlington's percentage has been above the England and North East averages since December 2021. The latest averages available show England at 90.2% and the North East at 90.4%.

The applications which were not decided within the target were delayed due to various issues, including Nutrient Neutrality and missing extension of time agreements, together with a period of time earlier this year where a post was vacant. The department will continue to monitor performance.

ECI 106



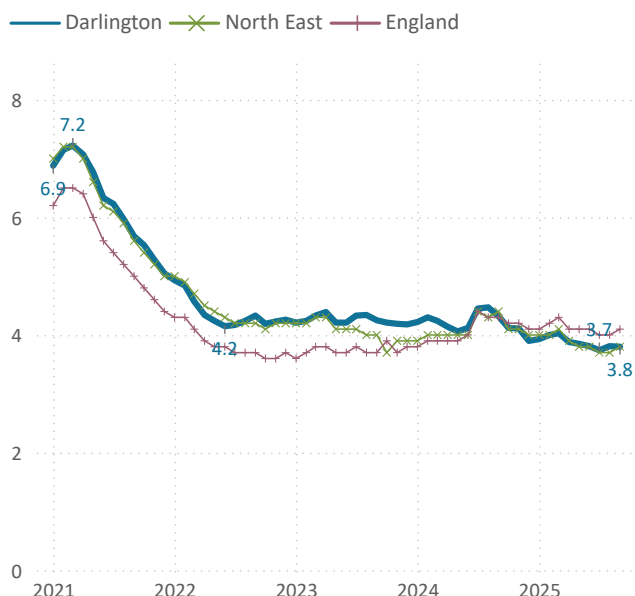
Lead Officer: Trevor Watson: Executive Director - Economy & Public Protection

Service Area: Planning

Monthly unemployed claimant count (%)

Since mid-2022 to date, the monthly unemployed claimant count in Darlington has remained relatively static - a trend which is mirrored in national and regional statistics. The claimant count in September 2025 stands at 3.8% - a reduction of 0.5% in the last 12 months. The rate in Darlington is below the England rate (4.1%) and equal to the North East rate (3.8%). The static nature of this measure since 2022 can be attributed to several factors, including economic inactivity, post-pandemic labour market mismatches and economic uncertainty.

ECI 321



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

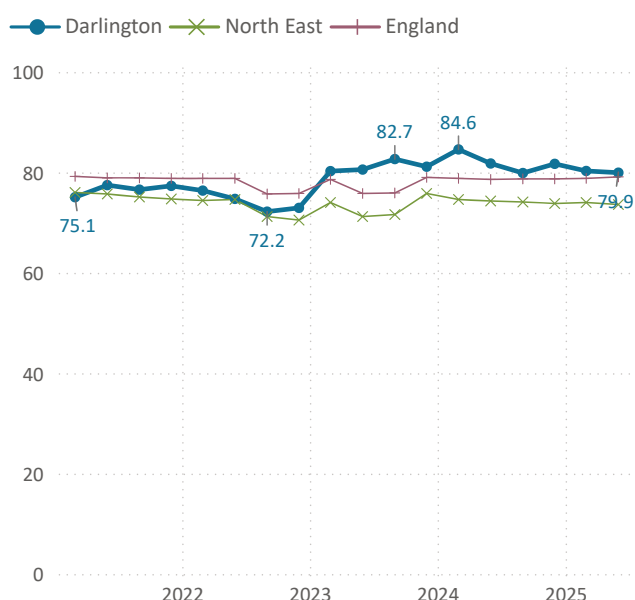
Service Area: Economic Growth

Percentage of working age adults who are economically active

The Darlington economically active rate (employed and unemployed) has generally remained consistent since March 2023. In June 2025, the percentage of working age adults who are economically active in Darlington stands at 79.9% (June 2025). Meanwhile the rates for both the North East (73.6%) and England (79.1%) remain lower than Darlington.

Working age economically inactive people have various reasons for not looking for and/or being able to start work, eg students, sickness, caring and family responsibilities and early retirement. Higher economic activity rates are generally influenced by demographic changes and improved labour market conditions.

ECI 327

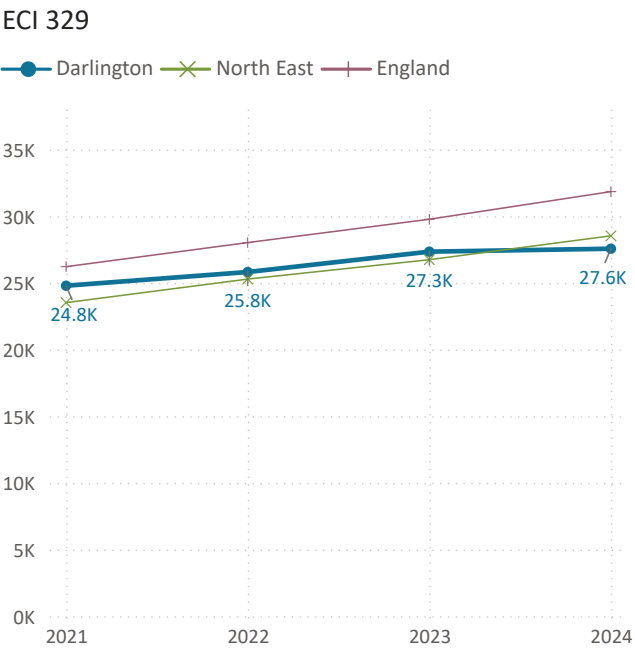


Lead Officer: Trevor Watson: Executive Director - Economy & Public Protection

Service Area: Economic Growth

Average (median) annual income: Darlington residents

Darlington residents average (median) annual income has risen for the 6th year in succession to £27,559. This is lower than both the figure for the north east region (£28,526) and the England average £31,840. Between December 2023 and December 2024, Darlington residents average (median) annual income increased by just 0.8%, a rate that is lower than the England and north east rates of 7.0% and 6.7% respectively.

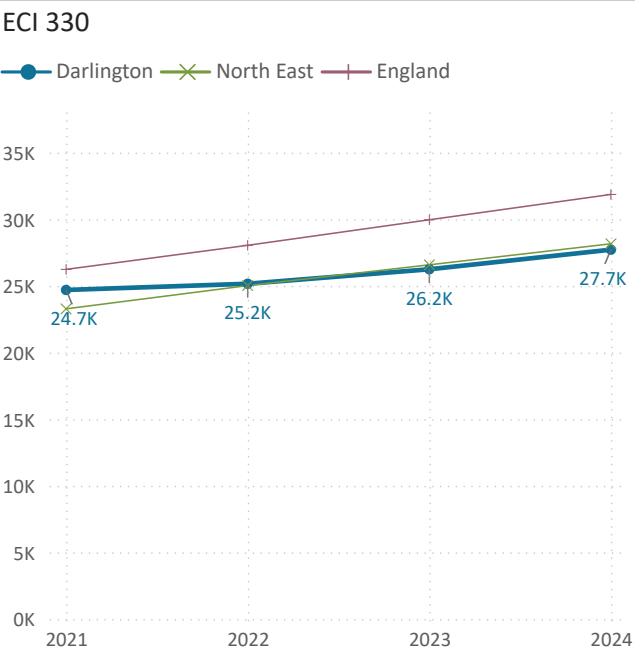


Lead Officer: Trevor Watson: Executive Director - Economy & Public Protection

Service Area: Economic Growth

Average (median) annual income: Darlington employees

Employees average annual income in Darlington has increased in 2024 to £27,712 (5.6% increase on 2023) - this represents five years of year on year increases. The income level is similar to the north east average at £28,153, and below the England figure of £31,857. Residents who live in Darlington now have a similar annual average income to those employees who work in the borough.



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

Service Area: Economic Growth

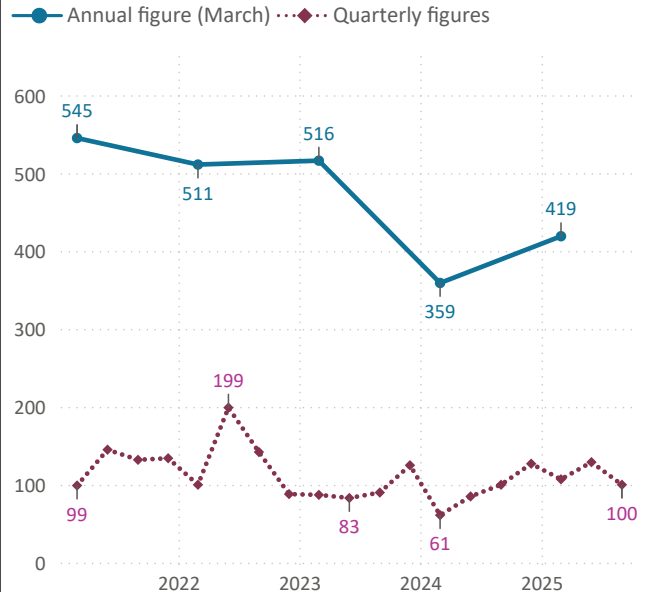
New homes delivered, annually

Housing delivery has seen a significant recovery since the 2023/24 financial year. The previous fall in delivery can be directly attributed to the Nutrient Neutrality (NN) designation affecting the whole Tees Catchment.

Applications are now progressing and gaining consent largely due to the Natural England NN credit scheme. The Borough has fared well in the proportion of credits allocated to developments in Darlington.

Latest monitoring indicates this recovery trend will continue. Our completions for this quarter were 100, which is down from the 129 completions in Q1. It gives a cumulative figure for the year so far of 229, which is 44 completions higher than at this point last year.

ECI 401



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

Service Area: Economic Growth

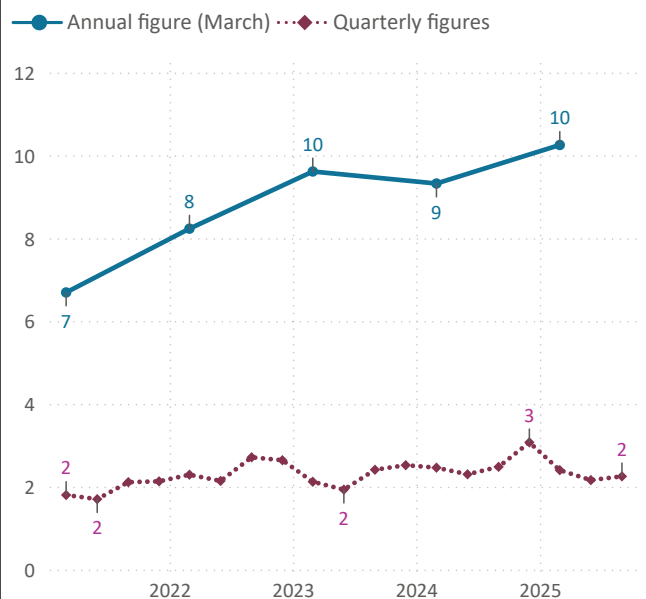
DBC number of working days per FTE lost due to sickness (excluding schools)

At the half year stage for 2025/26, there has been an improvement of 594 days, 0.37 per Full Time Equivalent (FTE), of days lost to sickness in comparison to the same point in 2024/25.

Human Resources officers continue to support managers at all levels to manage sickness through the Council's sickness management policies.

The Wellbeing programme is popular with our workforce, with a calendar of events and initiatives that produces benefits to assist with sickness absence across our workforce. We continue to look for new ideas and improvements to the programme, to support all employees.

FHR 001



Lead Officer: Brett Nielsen: Assistant Director - Resources

Service Area: Human Resources

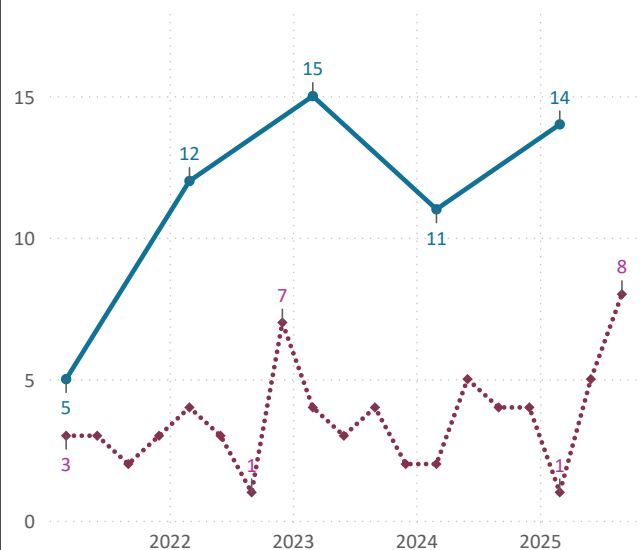
Number of reportable employee accidents / ill health

A total of 13 reports were made to the Health and Safety Executive as required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations at Quarter 2 in 2025/26, including two diagnosis of work related occupational disease/ill health.

All accidents and ill health reports are investigated by management and the Health and Safety Team to establish the causes, to identify issues or trends and make recommendations to prevent reoccurrence. Health and Safety is a key priority for the Council at all levels and is promoted through all working practices.

FHR 003

—●— Annual figure (March) ... Quarterly figures



Lead Officer: Brett Nielsen: Assistant Director - Resources

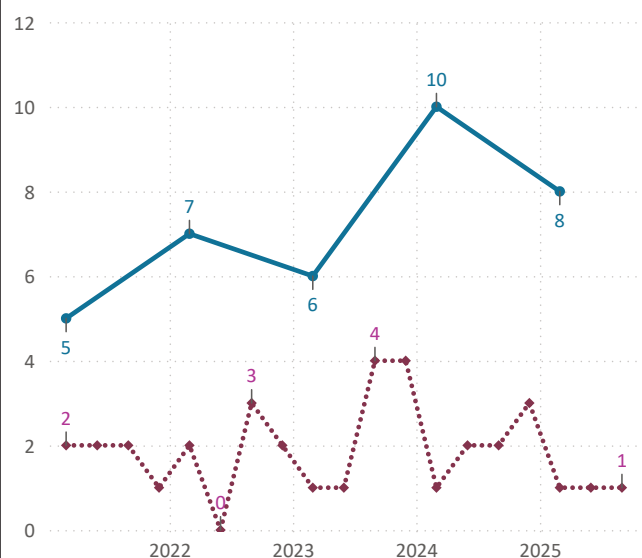
Service Area: Health & Safety

Number of complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman/Housing Ombudsman

The Council received two upheld decisions during quarters 1 and 2 of 2025/26. Both upheld decisions were from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. One concerned Adult Services, while the other was for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. This was a decrease from four for the same period in 2024/25.

FHR 008

—●— Annual figure (March) ... Quarterly figures



Lead Officer: Amy Wenington: Assistant Director - Law & Governance

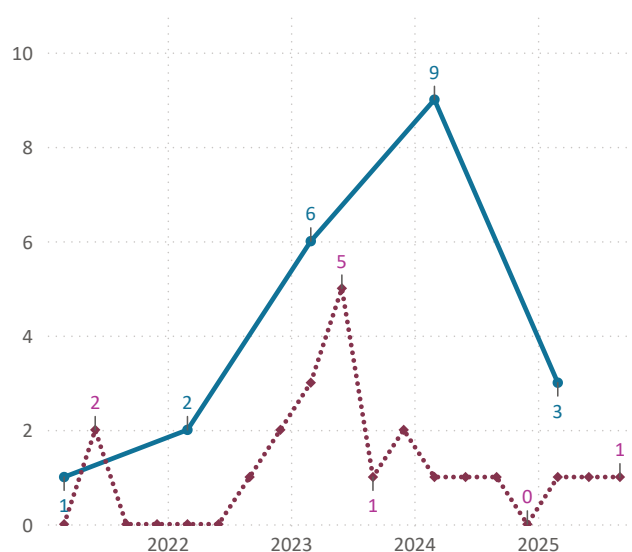
Service Area: Complaints & Information Governance

Number of complaints upheld by the Information Commissioner's Office

The Council received two upheld decisions during quarters 1 and 2 of 2025/26. One concerned a data breach where Commissioning, Performance and Transformation disclosed a partial address when seeking to verify someone's identity. The other concerned a delay in responding to a Subject Access Request (SAR) and work is ongoing to reduce the risk of this occurring in the future. This was the same number as received during quarters 1 and 2 of 2024/25.

FHR 009

—●— Annual figure (March) ...◆... Quarterly figures



Lead Officer: Amy Wennington: Assistant Director - Law & Governance

Service Area: Complaints & Information Governance

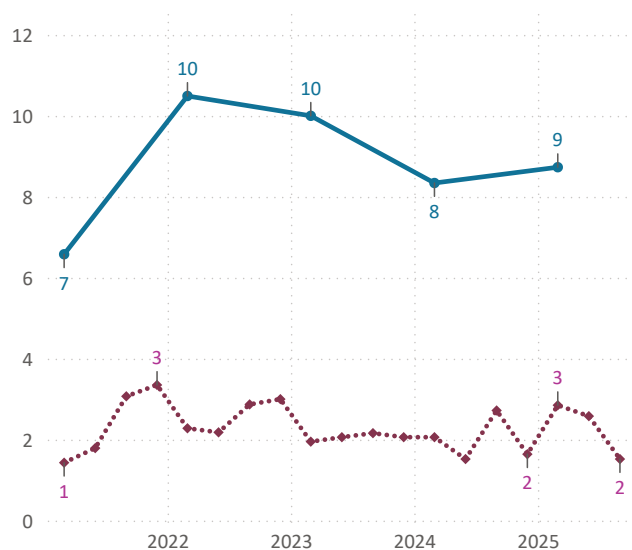
Staff turnover - Voluntary Leavers (Divided by average number of staff in period)

The number of voluntary leavers is slightly lower at the half year point of 2025/26 than at the same point in 2024/25 (91 v 92), equating to a 4.1% turnover rate. Exit surveys are undertaken to understand why employees leave the Council and to inform improvement and retention where appropriate. Of those employees completing an exit survey, 95% said they would work for the Council again

Within our new Workforce Strategy we address retention, with the creation of a talent pool, succession planning and clearer career paths, this along with other benefits will help to ensure that we attract and retain the best talent for all roles across the Council.

FHR 019

—●— Annual figure (March) ...◆... Quarterly figures



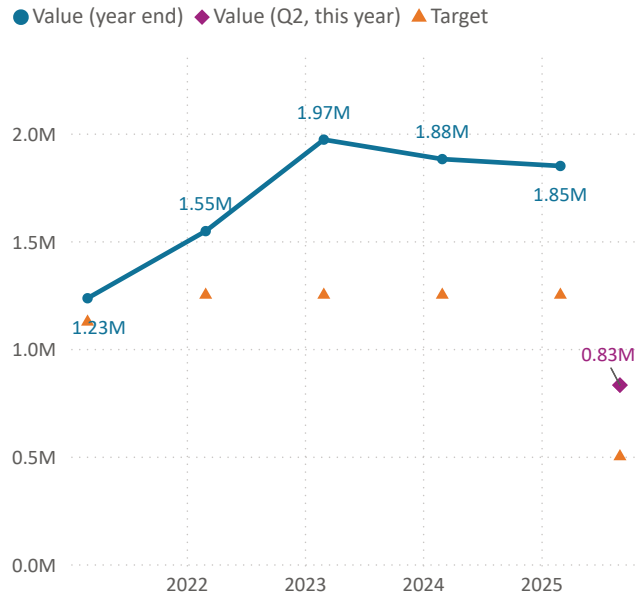
Lead Officer: Brett Nielsen: Assistant Director - Resources

Service Area: Human Resources

Amount of Council Tax arrears collected (£)

The amount of Council Tax arrears collected by quarter 2 has exceeded the target for 2025-26, with £0.83 million collected, which is slightly lower than the £0.88 million collected by the same period in 2024-25. This is a positive result as the team is still dealing with arrears resulting from Covid and also with the continued cost of living crisis. The amount of outstanding arrears is £6.2 million at the end of quarter 2 with all debts being pursued in line with our recovery strategy.

HBS 002



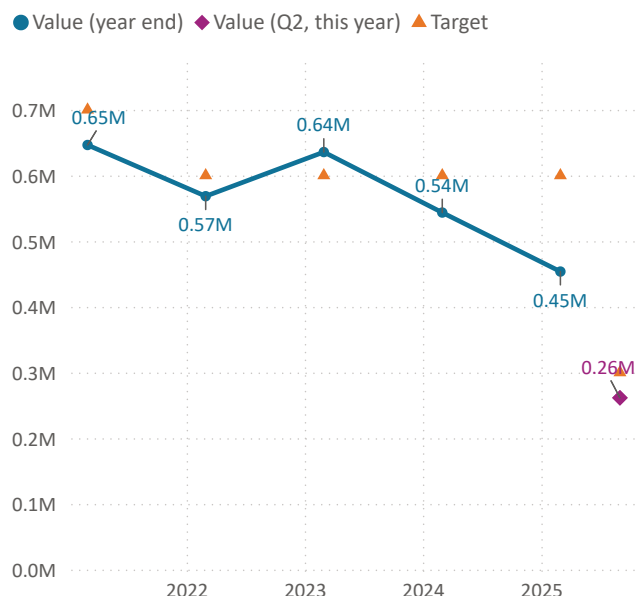
Lead Officer: Anthony Sandys: Assistant Director - Housing & Revenues

Service Area: Housing & Revenue

Amount of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered (£)

The amount of Housing Benefit overpayments collected in quarter 2 for 2025-26 was £261K compared to £233K for the same period in 2024-25. Collection rates are currently at 78% of the new overpayment debt created (£334k), and the overall outstanding debt has slightly increased this quarter (currently at £1.15 million) due to an increase in new debt identified. It is likely however that as Housing Benefit claims continue to transfer to Universal Credit (UC), especially this year with the Managed Migration to UC, the amount of Housing Benefit overpayments created (and therefore the amount collected) will continue to decrease.

HBS 003



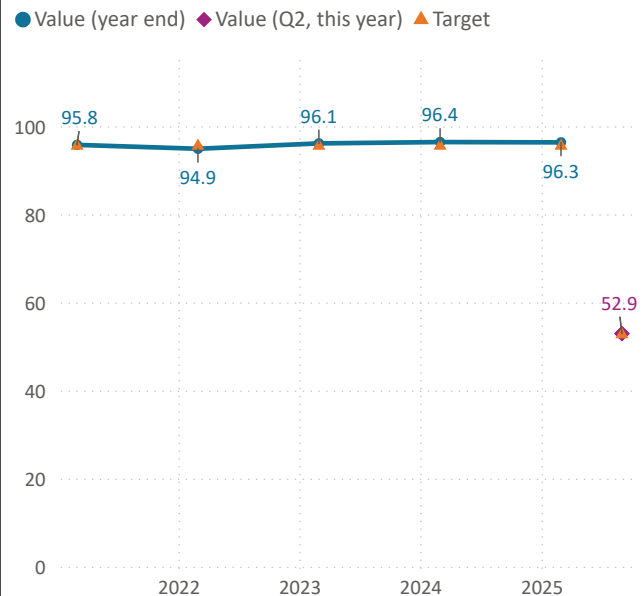
Lead Officer: Anthony Sandys: Assistant Director - Housing & Revenues

Service Area: Housing & Revenue

Percentage of Council Tax collected in-year

The percentage of Council Tax collected is slightly above the target for quarter 2, with 52.91% of Council Tax collected, compared to 52.78% at the end of quarter 2 for 2024-25. The overall amount collected by quarter 2 was £45.3 million compared to £42.4 million by quarter 2 in 2024-25, an increase of £2.9 million or 6.8%.

HBS 009



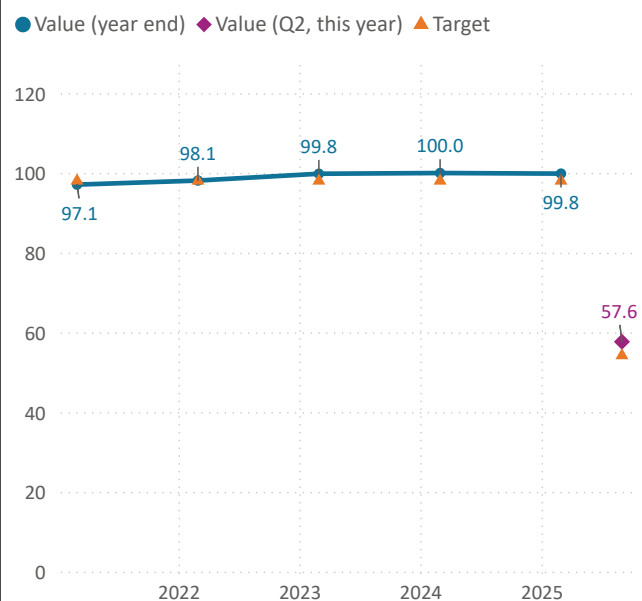
Lead Officer: Anthony Sandys: Assistant Director - Housing & Revenues

Service Area: Housing & Revenue

Percentage of Business Rates collected in-year

The percentage of Business Rates collected exceeded the target for quarter 2, with 57.64% of Business Rates collected, although slightly less than the 58.96% at the end of quarter 2 of 2024-25. The overall amount collected by the end of quarter 2 was £21.1 million compared to £20.4 million by the end of quarter 2 of 2024-25, an increase of £0.7 million or 3.4%.

HBS 010



Lead Officer: Anthony Sandys: Assistant Director - Housing & Revenues

Service Area: Housing & Revenue

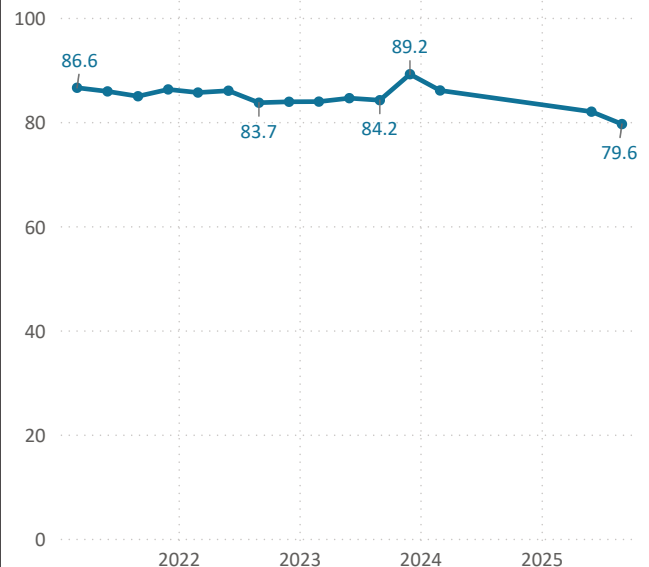
Contracted spend as a percentage of total non-salary spend

Following the migration of the Contracts Register to the new E-Tendering system Open, the Procurement section were advised that some of the data was corrupt. The data has now been updated, and is in the correct format in the Open system.

Procurement have carried out a piece of work to link the Contracts Register with the Prospend system to collate the data for the performance indicators. There is still further work to complete this but it is 90% completed.

Once this work is updated the figures should increase inline with previous quarters.

LGP 008



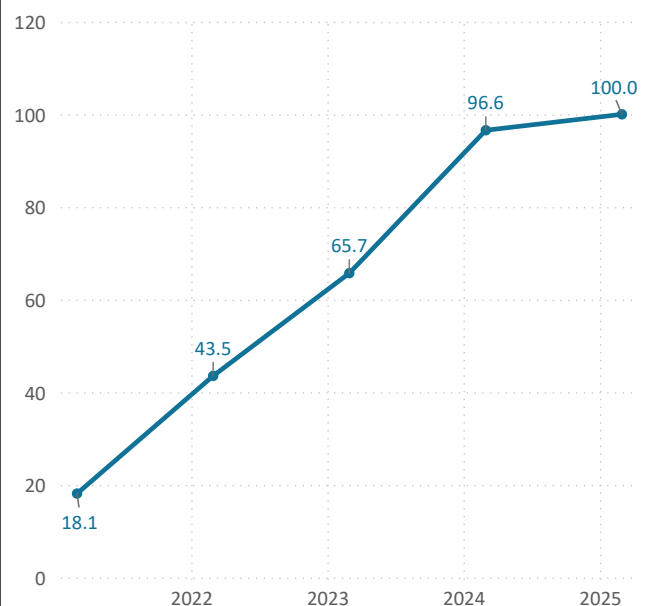
Lead Officer: Amy Wennington: Assistant Director - Law & Governance

Service Area: Procurement

Percentage of food premises which are inspected within the year in which they are due

We are currently on track with food hygiene inspections, however to do this we have been using a contract inspector to help us complete this legal requirement due to a number of historical vacancies in the team. We have finally managed to recruit suitable inspectors but as they are new to the profession they will need a period of training and familiarisation. There is a national shortage of qualified Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and to help with future proofing we have employed a student EHO to mitigate against future shortages.

REG 301



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

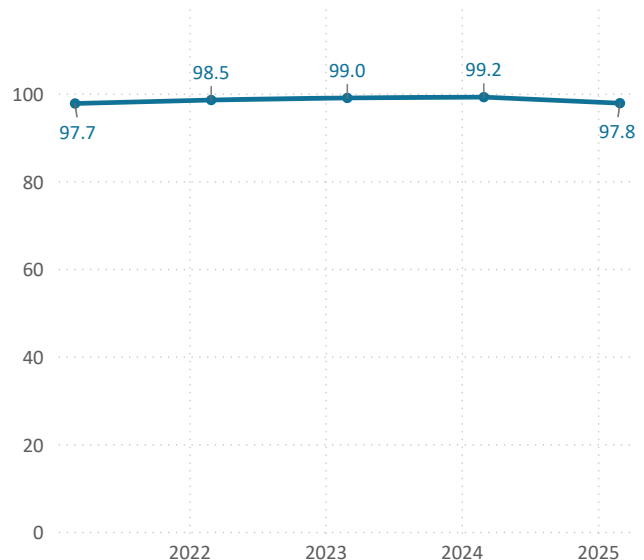
Service Area: Environmental Health

Percentage of premises broadly compliant for food hygiene

Premises within the Borough have shown a consistently high level of compliance year on year. This is due to a robust, consistent, and proportionate advice, inspection, and enforcement regime by officers. Inspectors have worked extremely hard to ensure that standards are maintained. This indicator illustrates the continued high level of compliance of food premises within the Borough of Darlington which is dependant on regular visits by a statutory service.

REG 308

Percentage of premises broadly compliant for food hygiene



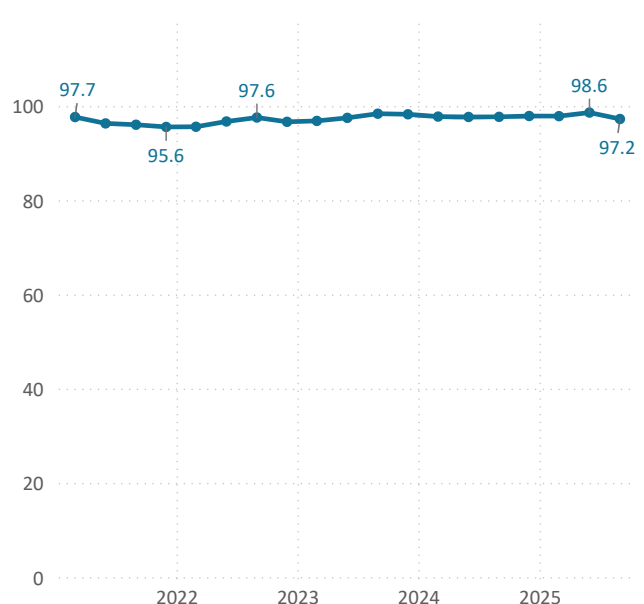
Lead Officer: Trevor Watson: Executive Director - Economy & Public Protection

Service Area: Environmental Health

Percentage of noise complaints investigated and completed within 6 weeks of the date of receipt (except where diary sheet returned)

Environmental Health continues to consistently meet this performance indicator. In the previous 12-month period up to the end of Quarter 2 1,021 noise complaints were received by Environmental Health. As well as investigating complaints about domestic properties officers investigate noise from commercial, retail and industrial premises. The most common types of complaint made about these premises relate to deliveries and collections, plant and equipment and music from licensed premises.

REG 312a



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

Service Area: Environmental Health