

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28 June 2022

Quarter Four, 2021/22 Performance Management Report



Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present an overview of progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework and highlight key messages to inform strategic priorities and work programmes.
- 2 The report covers performance in and to the end of quarter four, January to March 2022.

Performance Reporting

- 3 The performance report is structured around the three components.
 - (a) High level state of the County indicators to highlight areas of strategic significance. These are structured around the [County Durham Vision 2035](#).
 - (b) Council initiatives of note against the ambitions contained within the vision alongside a fourth 'excellent council' theme contained within our [Council Plan](#)¹.
 - (c) A long list of key performance indicators against the themes of the Council Plan.
- 4 It also includes an overview of the continuing impact of COVID-19 on council services, our staff, and residents.

More and Better Jobs

¹ approved by full council October 2020

- 5 A number of macroeconomic indicators show a positive trend. Latest data (December 2021) shows that employment rate has not fallen significantly despite the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) ending at on 30 September.
- 6 The unemployment rate has fallen to 4.1%. We have now seen 12 consecutive months of reducing unemployment since the peak of 7.3% (December 2020), levels are now lower than the pre-pandemic rate of 6.5% (March 2020). Nationally, the level of job vacancies in the labour market is still increasing although the rate has slowed.
- 7 Since May 2021 the Universal Credit claimant count has continued to fall and now stands at 4.0% (March 2022), returning to the pre-COVID position in March 2020. Both these rates show County Durham in a more positive situation when compared to England and north east rates which remain higher than pre-pandemic levels. However, as the cost of living begins to impact, we have noted an increase in demand in people wanting to access discretionary benefits such as Discretionary Housing Payments and welfare assistance.
- 8 Sub-county variations remain with Easington having the highest claimant count of the six parliamentary constituency areas. In relation to the 18-24 year olds cohort, all areas are showing rates lower than the March 2020 position, particularly Bishop Auckland. The age group with the highest proportion of claimants is the 30-34 year olds, although the largest gap between the latest position and March 2020 can be seen in the 35-39 and 40-44 year old cohorts.
- 9 Throughout the year demand has been high across the entire Business Durham portfolio and occupancy currently stands at 98.5%. Jade Business Park is now 100% occupied and accounts for 20% of the total commercial portfolio. Work continues on the development of strategic employment sites at NETPark and Merchant Park.
- 10 Business support has performed well throughout the year with the number of inward investments, businesses intensively assisted by Business Durham and businesses engaged with the economic development team exceeding targets. To date the County Durham Growth Fund has awarded £7.7m of the £8.9m fund, creating 239 jobs; and within the year Finance Durham invested £10m in 21 companies. Additional business support through our regeneration and economic development teams have created 108 jobs through the Targeted Business Improvement scheme and 48 jobs via our Towns & Villages Programme. However, although 571 businesses were engaged during quarter four, this is 296 fewer than the same period last year (-34%).

- 11 Registrations to Employability Durham are down as fewer people require support due to the healthy labour market and more people moving into employment.
- 12 Although our tourism and cultural sector was particularly hard hit by the pandemic and we have seen a reduction in the number of core tourism business since July 2021, confidence across tourism businesses is beginning to improve and visitor numbers to core attractions and our cinemas, theatres, attractions and libraries are increasing. County Durham has been announced as one of four locations to be shortlisted for the prestigious UK City of Culture 2025 title, bringing us a step closer to securing the significant anticipated social and economic benefits from this securing this award.
- 13 In the last 12 months, we have seen a 10% increase in contacts to the Housing Solutions Service, mainly due to an increase in presentations earlier in the year as a result of the eviction ban being lifted and eviction numbers returning to pre-pandemic levels, private sector properties becoming less sustainable and fuel poverty issues. We continue to see an increase in the number of rough sleepers; as well as these cases being more complex. Throughout the year the number of new households in temporary accommodation (TA) and the average length of time placed in TA have reduced by 11% and 1.5 days respectively when compared to 2020/21.

Connected Communities

- 14 We continue to maximise investment in our towns and villages. County Durham has been awarded £33.6 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which includes £2.8 million Multiply funds, for the period April 2022 to March 2025 to be delivered around the themes of Community and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills. However, this is estimated to be roughly half of previous European Union funding. We are also developing five proposals for County Durham worth up to £117 million for the Government's second round of Levelling Up Funding.
- 15 Construction of the new Durham Bus Station has recommenced following a temporary pause due to unforeseen structural works, and is expected to become operational in July 2023.
- 16 In response to the crisis in Ukraine, the council has established a multi-agency humanitarian support working group and an operational team scheme to assist individuals and families coming to the UK. Under the Government's Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, as at the end of April there were over 130 residents in County Durham who had put themselves forward; we are working to support both the sponsor and the refugees.

- 17 We continue to progress schemes to deliver high quality housing and ensure high quality standards within the social and private rented sectors. 64 out of the 67 constructed Chapter Homes located at Oakerside Drive in Peterlee are sold and construction of 60 new homes at Gilesgate site is on track for completion in December 2022. Our Selective Licensing Scheme which covers 42% of the private rented sector in County Durham came into operation on 1 April 2022, and in February Cabinet approved a Council Tenancy Strategy that sets out the Council's expectations to the registered providers of social housing operating.
- 18 Phase 1 of the Council Housing Building Programme to build 155 homes across seven sites continues with financial viability assessments currently being produced which will see individual sites progressing to planning and construction.

The impact of COVID-19 and the rising cost of living

- 19 The government has now removed the last remaining COVID-19 restrictions and launched a plan for '[living with COVID](#)' based on choice and personal responsibility.
- 20 However, as we transition from the pandemic, the household budgets of many of our residents remain tight. As of January 2021, the cost of living was at a 40 year high, prices had increased by almost 6% over a 12-month period, inflation is rising faster than wages and expected to climb above 10% within the year, and private rents are 7% higher than pre-COVID levels. In addition, more financial pressures are emerging with energy bills expected to increase by 50% following the removal of the energy price cap, and a 1.5% rise in National Insurance contributions in April 2022.
- 21 Almost 16% of households across the county are currently experiencing fuel poverty. And we expect that this will increase, with people in rural areas and/or already struggling being disproportionately affected. As fuel prices increase, the cost of transport will increase and accessibility of the poorest people to essential services is likely to decrease, again exacerbated in rural areas.
- 22 Through the Poverty Action Steering Group (PASG) we have adopted a coherent and co-ordinated strategic approach, both within the council and across our partners to address poverty across County Durham. We are currently consulting on a revised [Poverty Action Plan](#), which sets out a comprehensive response to the impacts of the wide-ranging poverty issues within the county.

Risk Management

- 23 Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's agenda. The council's risk management process sits alongside our change programme and is incorporated into all significant change and improvement projects. The latest report can be found [here](#).

Recommendation

- 24 That Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter four performance, the impact of COVID-19 on performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality measures are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Climate Change

We have declared a climate change emergency and consider the implications of climate change in our reports and decision-making.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

A number of performance indicators and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health indicators has been included to monitor staffing issues.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly performance management report.

Procurement

Not applicable.



Durham County Council Performance Management Report

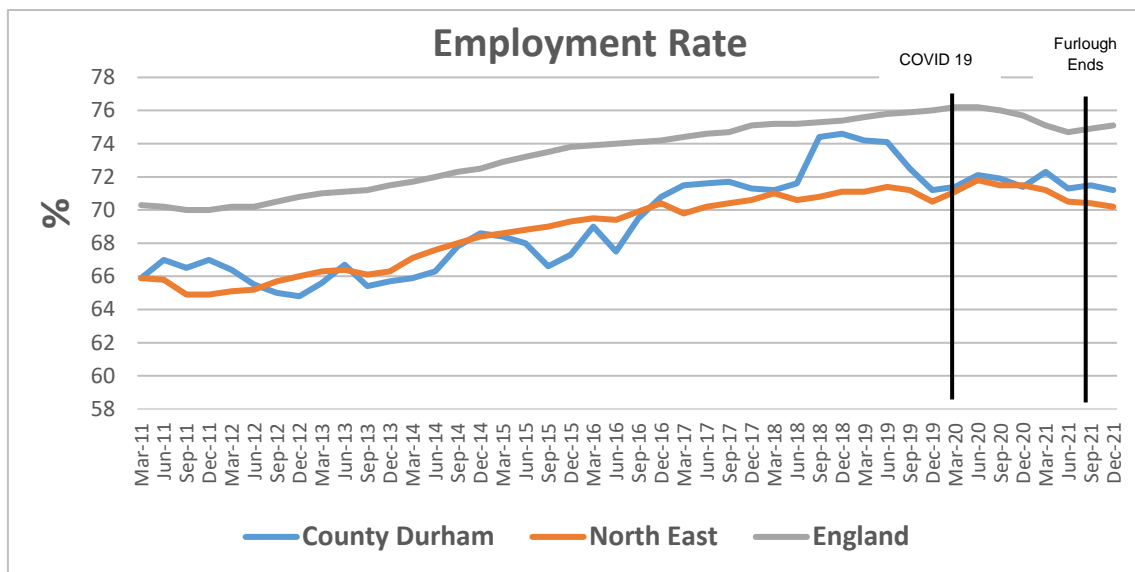
Quarter Four, 2021/22



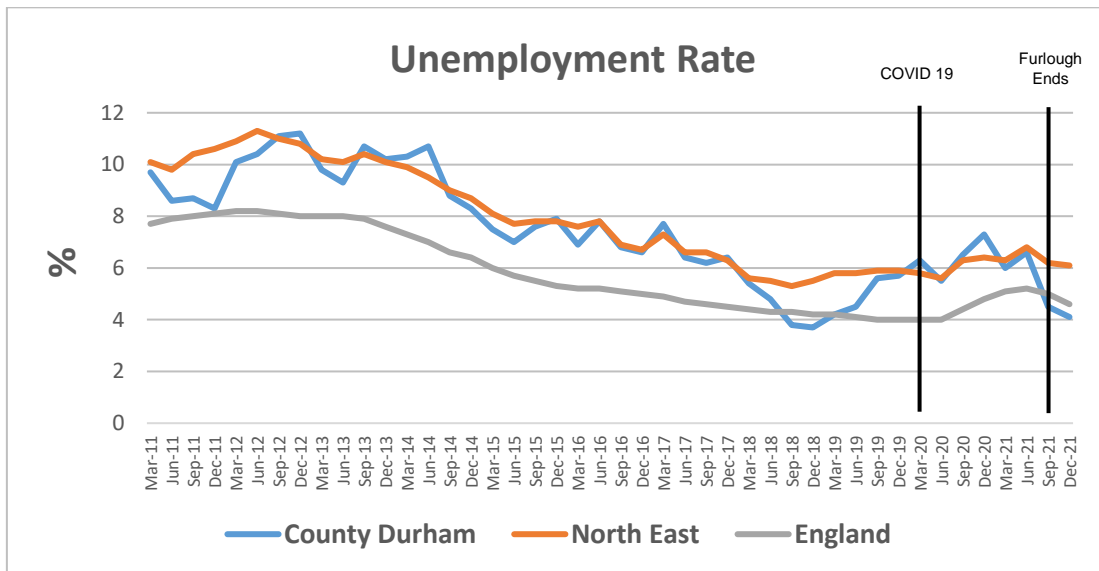
More and Better Jobs

- 1 The ambition of More and Better Jobs is linked to the following objectives:
 - (a) Delivery of a range of employment sites across the county;
 - (b) A strong, competitive economy where County Durham is a premier place in the north east to do business;
 - (c) A broader experience for residents and visitors to the county;
 - (d) Helping all people into rewarding work;
 - (e) Fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation within the county.

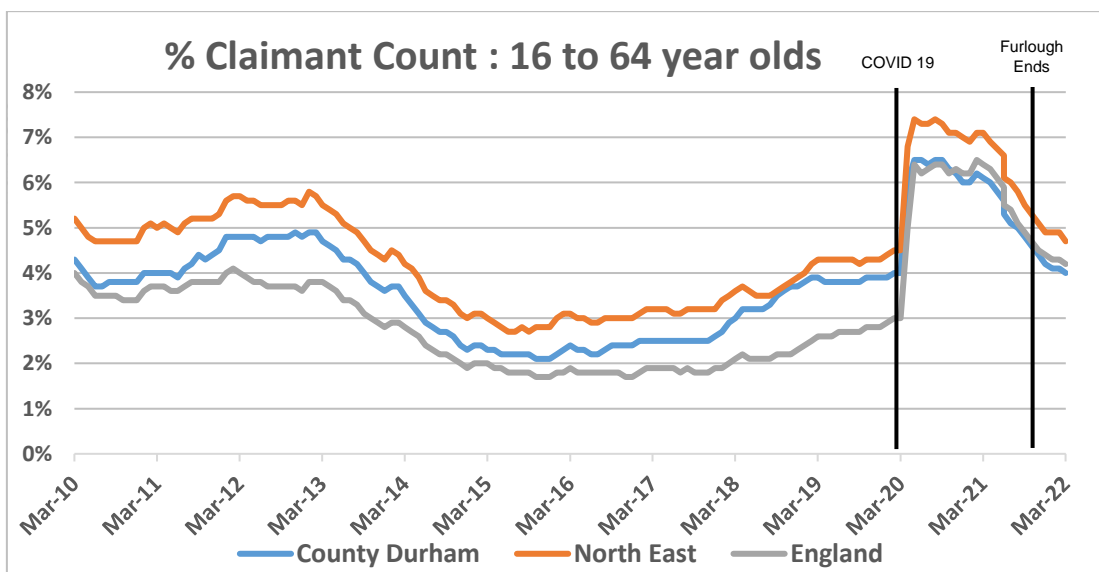
National, Regional and Local Picture



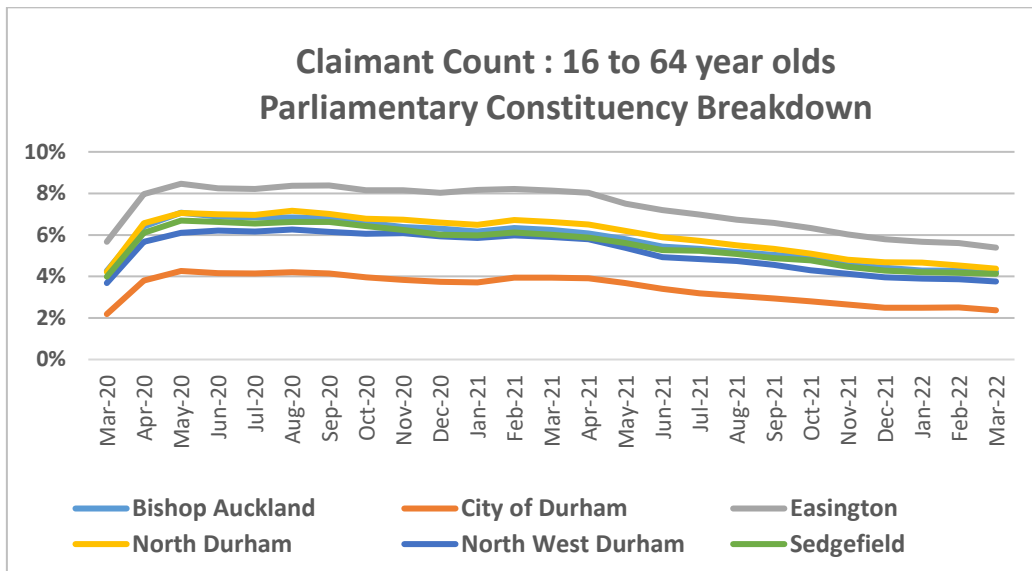
- 2 Latest data (December 2021) shows the employment rate has fallen slightly, in line with England and regional trends, but remains within the confidence levels for this data and therefore is not considered a significant change. Although the government removed its support packages (furlough and self-employment income schemes) at the end of September, we have yet to see any impact on the employment rate.



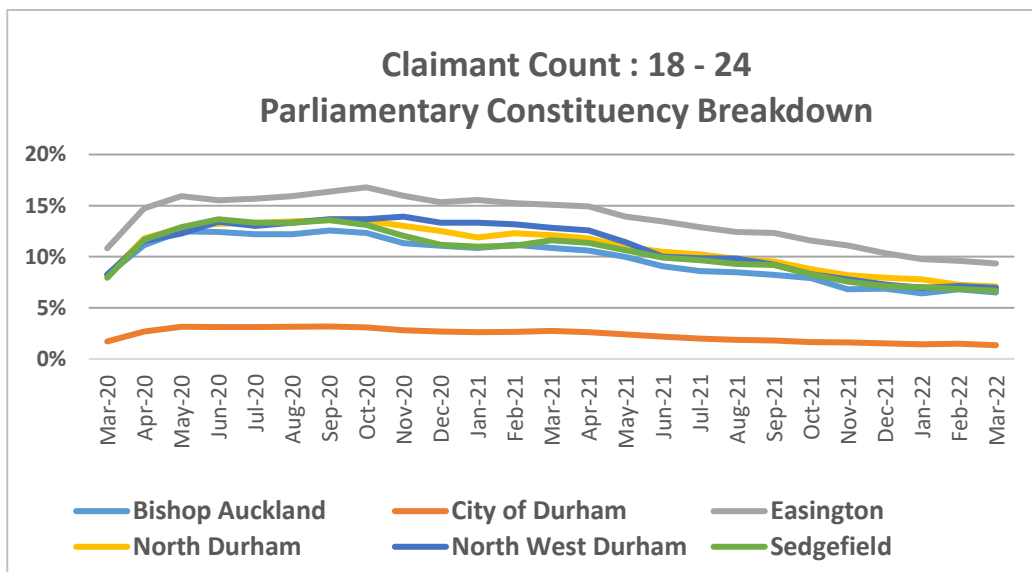
3 Similarly, the unemployment rate has fallen to 4.1% from 4.5% in the previous period, although this is within the confidence levels for this data and therefore is not a significant change. However, we have now seen a consecutive 12 months of reducing unemployment from the peak of 7.3% in December 2020 and levels are now lower than the pre-pandemic rate of 6.5% in March 2020. This shows County Durham in a more positive position compared to England and the north east which both still have higher unemployment rates than prior to the pandemic.



4 Following a significant rise in people claiming employment benefits between March and May 2020, the claimant count remained relatively static throughout 2020 and 2021 until the first notable drop in May 2021. Since this time, it has continued to fall and now stands at 4.0% (March 2022), returning to the pre-COVID position in March 2020. Again, this shows County Durham in a more positive position compared to England and the north east rates which both remain higher than prior to the pandemic.

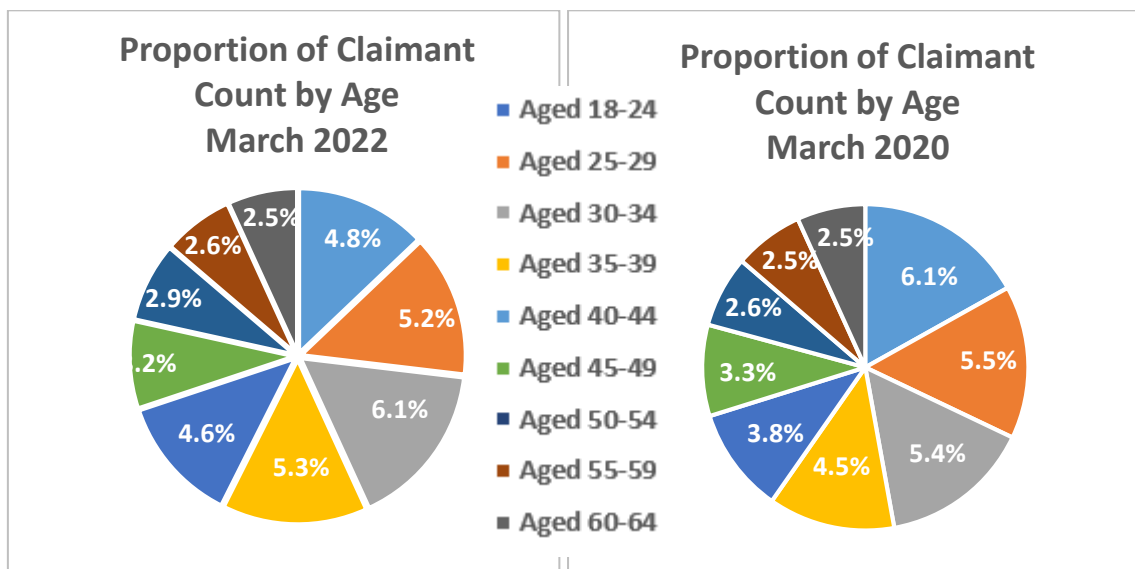


5 In relation to the 16-64 year olds cohort, Bishop Auckland and Easington areas have returned to their pre-COVID position with the rest remaining marginally higher than at March 2020. North Durham and Durham City are showing the largest difference between the latest position and March 2020, at 0.5pp and 0.3pp respectively and therefore are the furthest away from returning to their pre-COVID position.



6 However, in relation to the 18-24 year olds cohort, all areas are showing rates that are lower than the March 2020 position, particularly Bishop Auckland which at 6.4% is 2.2pp lower than March 2020.

7 Easington has the highest rate of claimants within both the 16-64 and 18-24 age groups.



- 8 The age group population with the highest proportion of claimants is the 30-34 year olds at 6.1%, 0.7pp above the pre-COVID (March 2020) position. Although, it is the 35-39 year old (5.3%) and 40-44 year old (4.6%) cohorts that are showing the largest gap between the latest position and March 2020 by 0.8pp.
- 9 Nationally there were around 1.3 million vacancies between January and March, again a record high and an increase of 492,000 from the pre-pandemic January to March 2020 position. Although vacancies are still increasing, the rate of growth has continued to fall since its peak of 43.3% in May to July 2021 to 4.1% this period, the lowest level of growth since June to August 2020.
- 10 The percentage change in the number of visitors to the core attractions² in County Durham continues an upward trend. As at the end of December 2021, there has been a 184% increase in visitors compared to the same period last year. However, it should be noted that last year many attractions were closed or offering reduced capacity entrance due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Council Services

Delivery of a range of employment sites across the county

- 11 The NETPark planning application was approved in March 2022 for the third phase extension providing up to 270,000sq ft of new laboratory, office, production and storage space. The new phase could generate up to 1,250 skilled jobs and be worth up to £625m to the County Durham economy. Works are expected to start on site October 2022.

² Auckland Castle; Beamish Museum; Botanic Garden; Diggerland; Killhope Museum; Oriental Museum; Palace Green Library; Raby Castle; Bowes Museum.

- 12 The construction of the industrial units at Station Place, Merchant Park (55,000sq ft in total) is progressing well with construction due to be complete by June 2022 when Business Durham will take responsibility for management and lettings.

	Business Durham activity		
	Jan-Mar 2022	Compared to last year	
Floor space occupied	98.5%	+15.5pp	↑

- 13 Within the quarter we saw a 3% increase in Business Durham portfolio occupancy rates, primarily due to increased lettings at Salvus House, Aykley Heads. Throughout the year high demand has been seen across the entire portfolio but especially at NETPark and Jade Business Park, which is now 100% occupied and forms 20% of the total commercial portfolio.

A strong competitive economy and premier place to do business

	Business Durham activity		
	Jan-Mar 2022	Compared to last year	
Inward investments secured	7	+4	↑
Businesses engaged	571	-296	↓
Jobs created or safeguarded	1,269	-292	↓
GVA from jobs created or safeguarded (£'million)	£37.1	-£8.7	↓

- 14 Seven inward investments were secured during the quarter, generating 222 jobs. In total for 2021/22, 18 inward investments were secured, exceeding the target of 10, signalling a recovery in the economy after COVID-19 and the uncertainty of Brexit.
- 15 The number of businesses engaged³ in 2021/22 totals 1,210, of which 270 were intensively assisted, exceeding the target of 140. This was driven by the number of businesses (188) intensively assisted⁴ through the Durham Business Recovery Grant. Business engagement also took place through regular networking events

³ Businesses engaged are those Business Durham engaged with through direct contact, attendance at Business Durham events, meetings or business networks or participating in business support programmes.

⁴ Businesses intensively assisted is a sub-set of businesses engaged where the assistance has been significant e.g working with the business over a period of time in relation to expansion or addressing key business needs, businesses receiving at least 12 hours support through ERDF programmes or those who have been awarded grants.

and large events such as the New Frontier Space Conference; as well as one to one engagement and via funded programmes.

- 16 Now in the third year of operation the Durham Ambitious Business Start-ups (DABS) Programme, has 260 (169 pre-start clients and 91 newly-started SMEs) actively engaged on the programme; an increase of 70 from last quarter. During February and March face-to-face client engagement has increased with a new seven-week programme of support named DABS Launch.
- 17 The County Durham Growth Fund has awarded a further £336,631 to eight businesses in quarter four. At the year-end the Fund had awarded around £2.3 million to 18 businesses, bringing the total awarded to date to £7.7 million out of the £8.9 million fund. 239 jobs have been created and private sector contributions have exceeded £10.4 million.
- 18 At the start of the year Finance Durham had invested £6.1 million in 15 companies. At the year-end it has invested £10 million in 21 companies with £2 million in the final quarter, in four companies; there were 10 investments during the year with six being new investments and four re-investments. An exercise is underway for the re-procurement of the fund management of the Finance Durham scheme.
- 19 During 2021/22, 31 businesses have been supported through the Targeted Business Improvement scheme (TBIs), creating 108 jobs. Additionally, we supported 22 businesses and created 48 jobs via our Towns & Villages programme, and one business via Seaham Townscape Heritage Business Improvement scheme, with four in the pipeline for grant offers. The Community Economic Development Team have also engaged with and supported 192 new businesses throughout the year which is well above our annual target (120).
- 20 We have also delivered a package of improvements funded from the Welcome Bank Fund (£506K) and an underspend from the Re-opening High Street Safely Programme (£469K) to assist retailers in re-establishing positive trading conditions following the end of lockdown restrictions in England. The programme included positive communication messages, clean and protect works to public areas in town centres and street entertainment festivals.

Helping all people into rewarding work

- 21 Despite referrals to Employability Durham increasing between October and December, registrations onto employment programmes have decreased. This is due to a combination of a healthy labour market and people finding jobs themselves before they are registered onto programmes; and an increasing number of people not engaging as they are still not mandated by Job Centre Plus to complete employability activity.

- 22 Fewer registrations this quarter has also seen a decrease in people moving into employment, however for the period April to December figures are higher than pre-COVID levels.
- 23 Although a large proportion of our clients have limited digital skills which prevent them from doing online courses, levels of people moving into education or training is slightly higher this quarter, mainly through our delivery partners on the L!NKCD programme. We anticipate figures will continue to increase due to delivery partners starting to deliver more training courses face-to-face.
- 24 Despite the impact of COVID-19, volunteering opportunities continue to grow within the council's culture and sport service, with 2,770 volunteers currently supporting the provision of these services. Since the start of the scheme in 2017, the culture and sport volunteer and skills team has also trained and supported 105 volunteers into employment. During 2021/22, 461 volunteers joined the service, and 13 were successful in gaining employment.

A broader experience for residents and visitors to the county

- 25 County Durham is one of just four locations to be shortlisted for the prestigious UK City of Culture 2025 title, bringing us a step closer to securing the social and economic benefits it would bring. The judging panel visited the county on 9 May and a technical interview took place in London on 17 May. The winner of the UK City of Culture 2025 title is expected to be announced at the end of May.
- 26 Killhope Museum was awarded £475,000 from MEND (Museum Estate and Development Fund) which we will match with £50,000 to fund the emergency works required to address structural issues and flooding at the mine entrance allowing the full site to be reopened for public access. Works will not prevent the visitor centre from opening and a programme of activity has been planned for unaffected parts of the site.
- 27 There were 11,154 visitors to Killhope between mid-May and October 2021, this performance is above the pre-COVID level of 11,066 visitors between April and October 2019. 2021 was also a shorter season than usual and was adversely affected by inclement weather closures. Visitor feedback suggests the increased numbers are due to the removal of admission charges which had been a barrier for some, and the improvements to the food and beverage offer
- 28 At the end of quarter four, there were 545 core tourism businesses across the county, of which 43.3% (236) were actively engaged with Visit County Durham, which is on par with the baseline in July 2021. However, there has been a reduction in core businesses of 8% compared to the baseline due to some businesses ceasing to operate, being sold or using Airbnb as their sole promotional tool.

29 Audiences at our 2021/22 festivals are around 70% of previous figures. This is due to a combination of customer caution about returning, and restrictions put in place to create COVID-19 secure events, for example, limiting numbers to lighting installations within the peninsula as part of the Lumiere festival. However, the appetite to return to events seems to be building and we are confident of a full return in 2022/23.

30 Theatre audiences for 2021/22 show a reduction on 2019/20 figures due to the venues being closed for the first quarter of the year, and a slow post-COVID recovery in the second quarter. Gala figures for quarter four have shown a move towards pre-COVID levels, with the majority of performances now hitting sales targets, a greater number of sell out performances and an increasingly busy café/bar trade. Empire experienced slow sales in the opening months; however, the latest two quarters have seen attendances steadily increase.

	Ticket Sales		
	July 21 - March 22	Compared to 2019/20	
Gala	83,230	- 54%	↓
Empire	56,399	- 51%	↓

31 Durham Town Hall re-opened May 2021 and delivery of a Heritage Tour offer increased from one to six days until December to encourage the return of patronage. Due to COVID-19 restrictions for large gatherings, many events were cancelled but the Lunar New Year celebration in February saw more than 2,000 visitors over one weekend. The overall visitor number for the last financial year was 12,528. Large scale bookings are now picking up including weddings and festivals such as the week-long Durham Fringe event to be held in July and Mayor Making on 9 June.

32 Visitor figures to Bishop Auckland Town Hall have increased significantly since the building fully re-opened in May 2021, following the refurbishment during the first COVID-19 lockdown. In that time, the town hall had 18,800 visitors to the new gallery and café attendances have increased by 100% due to a new menu and the ground floor location. Cinema screenings have increased from one per week (pre-refurbishment) to six, with audience numbers now gradually building. Library visitors are slowly increasing. Our new arts engagement sessions attract an average of 15 participants in the weekly art group, 10 participants for the weekly creative writing group and 10+ participants each for the monthly family singing group and veterans drop-in sessions.

- 33 Visitors to Hardwick and Wharton Parks continue to be at higher levels than pre-COVID with approximately 600,000 in the last 12 months. Planning for future events and activities in the parks is underway.
- 34 There was a small increase in the number of registered members in our libraries during 2021, and we have maintained this small growth to the end of the year. Visitors to libraries pre-COVID were around 1.1 million, this dropped to just over 38,000 during 2020/21 due to closures or reduced hours, because of lockdowns and the pandemic response. Since April 2021 the number of people visiting libraries in person has increased, with 339,639 visits during 2021/22. Library events have started to resume albeit on a smaller scale at present.

Fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation within the county

- 35 During quarter four, 3,594 households contacted Housing Solutions, an increase on the previous quarter and last year; this was mainly in relation to energy advice linked to the current energy crises. During 2021/22, 13,493 customers contacted the service which represents a 10% increase from the previous year, mainly due to an increase in presentations earlier in the year as a result of the eviction ban being lifted, private sector properties becoming less sustainable and fuel poverty issues.
- 36 During 2021/22, 649 households were assisted via the Managing Money Better (MMB) initiative, achieving an average saving per households of £135.36. It is anticipated that requests for assistance will increase over the coming months as fuel tariffs continue to rise. The Citizens Advice Bureau is also on standby to assist if numbers become too high for the MMB service to manage at any one time.
- 37 Homeless cases may also increase as renting privately may become unaffordable for tenants in the longer term and private sector properties become less sustainable for landlords. We will be closely monitoring the position going forward and a priority-based system is currently being developed where applicants will be managed on a first come first served basis and dependent on vulnerability.
- 38 Eviction levels have now returned to pre-pandemic levels with a further increase expected as the case backlog in courts is addressed. However, difficulty remains in finding alternative properties to house homeless cases. The shortage of available property in the private rented sector means landlords can find other tenants more quickly than we can carry out an inspection and discharge our duty.
- 39 The government's Early Intervention Funding (£157,000) to address COVID-related rent arrears in the private rented sector and outstanding COVID Outbreak Management funding (COMF) monies, has been used to help avoid seven

families becoming homeless and/or being housed in temporary accommodation since the start of 2022.

- 40 The number of households placed in temporary accommodation (TA) and the average length of time household are placed in TA have both increased this quarter driven by family no longer willing or able to accommodate, domestic violence cases and the end to private rented tenancies. Placements are monitored closely to ensure they are not staying for longer than is necessary, with all accommodation options considered. However, there is an issue around finding permanent accommodation in high demand areas that is affordable, therefore we are working with clients to consider widening their areas of preference.
- 41 Over the year, both the number of new households in TA and the average length of time placed in TA have reduced compared to 2020/21 by 11% and 1.5 days respectively.
- 42 We continue to see high levels of rough sleepers, with 255 reported during the quarter and 67 found and assisted. During 2021/22, the team have responded to 764 reports of rough sleeping (individuals could be reported more than once) and verified 250 rough sleepers. This is a large increase on last year's 175 total. As well as complex rough sleepers, the team are encountering more 'man in a van' cases where men are rough sleeping in vehicles following a relationship breakdown. Many of these have no previous tenancy history and/or no identification or belongings, therefore, finding suitable long-term accommodation can take time.
- 43 We have also supported more rough sleepers into long term accommodation this financial year through the County Durham Lettings Agency (CDLA) which has achieved its Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP), COMF and Buy to Lease targets, purchasing 30 properties with the majority refurbished. There are five that did not achieve practical completion, and Homes England has granted an extension to September 2022, however we envisage all works will be complete by end of April 2022.
- 44 In December 2021 Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced the Protect & Vaccinate (P&V) initiative, requesting where possible all rough sleepers are accommodated for at least five months and supported through the COVID-19 vaccination programme. Durham supported 40 rough sleepers through accommodation as part of this scheme, with many previously housed, taking up the vaccine for the first time due to incentive packages, including TVs, mobile phone, bus passes, additional clothing. Also, as part of moving rough sleepers into longer term accommodation through P&V we have provided an enhanced household start pack including items not currently

provided through welfare assistance packs such as kitchen bins, basic food and cleaning starter packs.

- 45 Following £300,000 funding from RSAP and Homeless Support Grant, planning permission has been granted to convert Shildon People's Centre into four self-contained flats. Work has commenced and is scheduled for completion in September 2022.
- 46 CDLA is currently bidding for RSAP5 monies and is looking to purchase and repair 10 properties in 2020/23 and lease and repair a further 10 in 2023/24. This will be a joint bid with Karbon Homes who are looking to develop a Husk model for converting a former garage block into six one-bedroom bungalows. North Star are looking to develop 8-10 units in the south of the county. Further details will be provided in quarter one.
- 47 Durham County Council's bid on behalf of the Durham (joint North East Region) to the Rough Sleeping Initiative 2022-2025 (RSI5) has been successful with the eight north east regions being allocated £3,777,842 over a three year period. Durham has been allocated £1,454,442 from the joint bid. DCC has also been awarded a three-year settlement from RSI5 of £617,462 to fund the County Durham Lettings Agency (CDLA).

MORE AND BETTER JOBS

Housing advice and support

properties improved, adapted or brought back into use

1,230

up 65%

households accessing Housing Solutions

3,594

up 7%

households helped to move to alternative accommodation

239

up 9%

386

households helped to stay in their homes

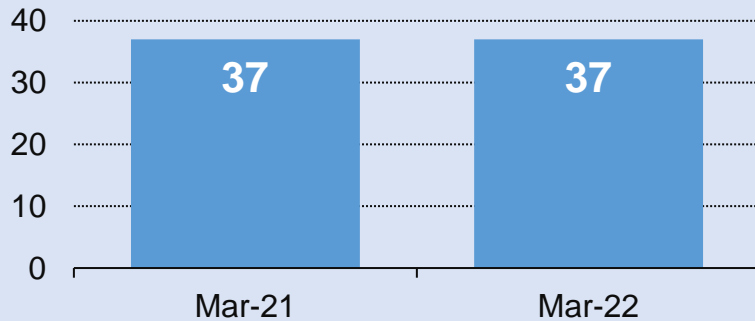
up 47% on last year

141

'new' households placed in temporary accommodation

up 66% on last year

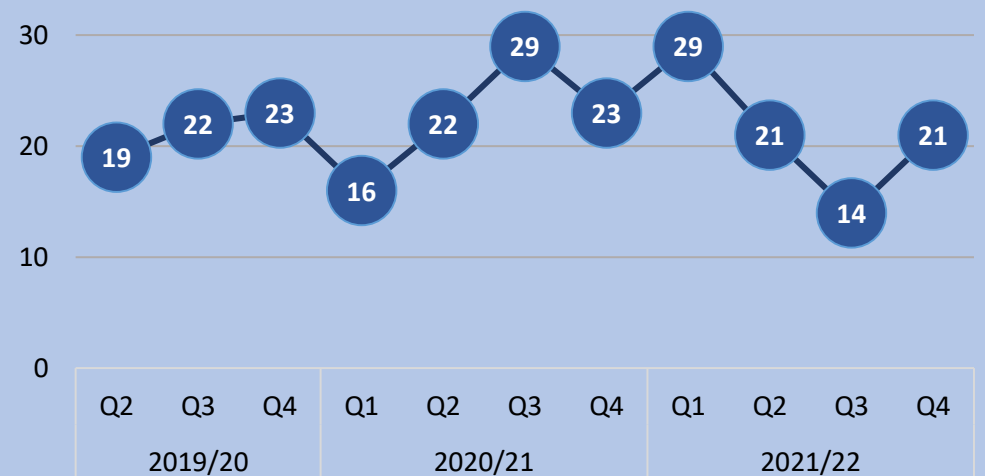
properties brought back into use as a result of LA intervention



Impacted by COVID-19:

- essential visits only
- Staffing levels

average time household spends in temporary accommodation (days)

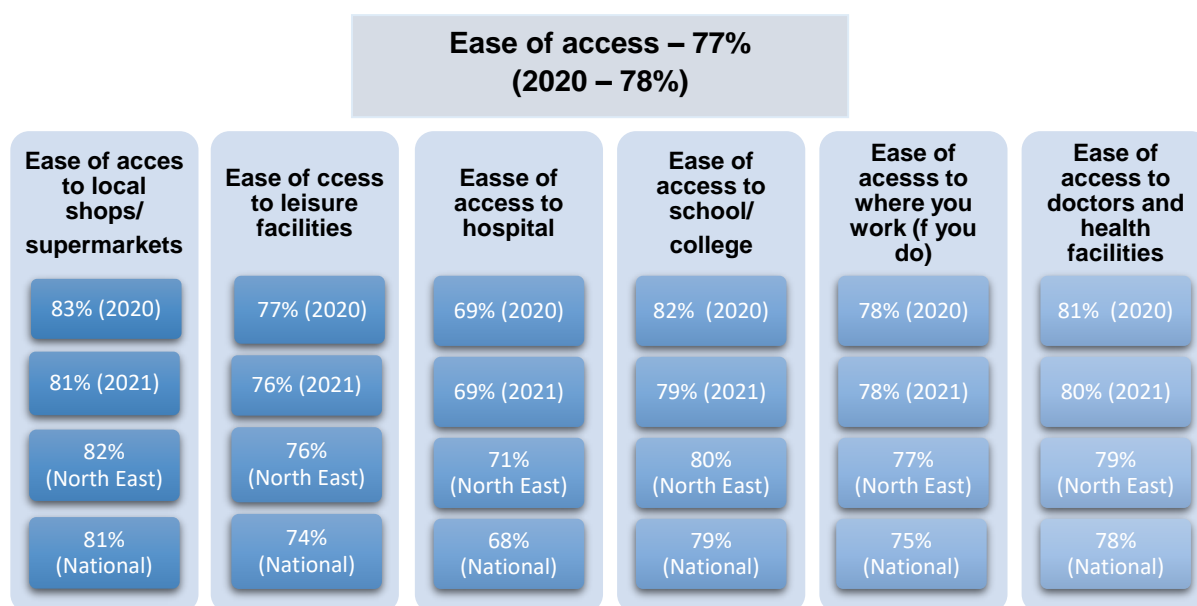


Connected Communities

- 48 The ambition of Connected Communities is linked to the following key objectives:
- (a) Standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham’s housing stock;
 - (b) Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well-used, clean, attractive and safe;
 - (c) People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities;
 - (d) Communities will come together and support each other;
 - (e) Delivery of new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs of our residents.

National, Regional and Local Picture

- 49 The National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey 2021 indicates that ease of access to leisure, shops, work and health facilities in line with regional and national averages and the 2020 survey results¹.



¹NHT Survey, performance is significantly better if performance is 4pp or more above average and significantly worse if performance is 4pp or more below average.

- 50 Results from the 2020 National Highways and Transport Survey (NHT) indicates that satisfaction continues to be in line with national levels¹. Satisfaction with the condition of our highways, was higher than the average.

	2018		2020		2021		
	Durham	NHT Average	Durham	NHT Average	Durham	NHT Average	North East Average
Overall	57%	53%	55%	52%	54%	51%	51%
Condition of highways	38%	31%	41%	36%	37%	32%	33%
Highway maintenance	51%	49%	51%	50%	44%	42%	42%
Highway enforcement/ obstructions	51%	49%	47%	45%	47%	43%	45%
Provision of street lighting	62%	65%	57%	62%	57%	60%	61%
Public rights of way (overall)	58%	57%	58%	57%	58%	56%	57%

¹NHT Survey, performance is significantly better if performance is 4pp or more above average and significantly worse if performance is 4pp or more below average.

Council Services

Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well-used, clean, attractive and safe

- 51 The government announced in April that County Durham has been awarded £33.6 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), which includes £2.8 million Multiply funds. The allocation is for a three-year period (April 2022 to March 2025) and covers three themes, Community and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills. Investment Plans are to be submitted by August 2022 with the first payments expected from October 2022. Meetings have taken place with partners to start planning programme of activity to engage stakeholders and develop UKSPF Investment Plan.
- 52 An approximate calculation based on an average 3 year ESIF allocation, suggests that the SPF allocation is estimated to be roughly half of previous European Union (EU) funding. It is worth noting that had the UK remained within the EU we would now be classed as a 'less developed' region benefitting from a greater share of funding, greater flexibilities and intervention rate; and therefore has also lost this opportunity of increased investment.
- 53 The government has launched its second round of Levelling Up Funding, a £4.8 billion pot that will support transport, town centre regeneration and cultural investment. We are developing five proposals for County Durham covering five parliamentary constituency areas worth £117 million, with up to £20 million per area being sought from the Levelling Up Fund and the remaining from match funding. Business cases will consider the best opportunity for investment in line with the fund criteria and local priorities. Timescales are tight with proposals to be

considered by Cabinet in June 2022 ahead of submission by 6 July. If successful, the bids will be awarded funds as part of the 2022 Autumn Statement.

- 54 Sixteen physical improvements have been completed across the county during the year; five from the Town Centre Capital Programme, seven from Towns & Villages Programme and four from the Seaham Townscape Heritage Programme. Schemes include a new town centre car park in Spennymoor that complements the wider Festival Walk Retail Site, memorial project and community centre project in Wingate, widening of footway at North Terrace, Seaham to help improve the café culture and the reprovision of car parking bays at Terrace Green, Seaham.
- 55 The installation of free w-fi in Crook, Spennymoor and Consett has been delayed due a global shortage of hardware. Expected delivery date for hardware is November 2022, with implementation scheduled for December 2022. Installation of free wi-fi in Durham City has also been delayed, with implementation date to be confirmed, as part of the network is being re-designed due to an issue with third party licence agreements that need to be in place prior to installation. The scheme is to encourage people to spend more time in our town centres and boost the local economy as well as providing valuable information through the anonymous footfall data to identify trends and monitor the impact of changes to the high street, which can then be used to shape future regeneration projects.

Communities will come together to support each other

- 56 In response to the crisis in Ukraine, the council has established a multi-agency humanitarian support working group and an operational team focussing on safeguarding and accommodation inspections, wrap around support and translation services, health, education and welfare benefits for individuals and families arriving under the government's schemes to assist Ukrainians to come to the UK, the Ukraine Family Visa Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. In relation to the latter, as at the end of April there were over 130 residents who had put themselves forward and work is taking place to support both the sponsor and the refugees coming to County Durham.

Delivery of new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs of our residents

- 57 Phase 1 of the Council Housing Building Programme to deliver 155 homes across seven sites has been delayed pending approval to proceed to RIBA Stage 3 (Detailed and Technical Design), once received the programme will be updated. Soft market testing is currently underway, and the outcome will inform the next steps in developing tender stage documents.

- 58 Viability assessments have been undertaken for each scheme within Phase 2, apart from the sites which have been brought in to replace sites withdrawn from the Programme. Once instructions are received on brief and sites, a programme will be developed to Stage 3.
- 59 Work continues to deliver the Chapter Homes business plan. Following the construction of 67 new homes located at Oakerside Drive in Peterlee, 64 properties have now been sold, with the remaining three properties scheduled for completion in April. Construction of 60 new homes at Gilesgate site is on track for completion December 2022, and at the end of March, 18 reservations have been received.
- 60 Work continues to deliver the Seaham Garden Village project and a further £135,000 has been secured from Homes England, however ongoing issues with s73 planning application around the Wellbeing Hub, alongside the Innovation Hub, means a further s73 application has been submitted and is being considered.
- 61 Delays in determining s73 planning application for the Seaham Garden Village Scheme has had an impact on the delivery of the Geothermal Minewater Heat Scheme in Seaham with completion of negotiations on land acquisition, easements and non-statutory rights over highway; and the land purchase from the Coal Authority to build the Energy Centre being delayed to August 2022 from March 2022.
- 62 Lunson Mitchenall has been appointed as commercial agent for the redevelopment of Milburngate. However, appointment of a Residential Manager is delayed pending the developer entering into a pre-construction services agreement with LIV, the housing management company. Completion of legals for tenants has also been delayed due to complexities in relation to the fire ventilation and extractions system, however, side letters are in the process of being agreed with tenants to allow the leases to be entered into. Work is ongoing to establish the Housing Company with marketing of the residual units expected to commence in May.

Standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock

- 63 The Selective Licensing Scheme that will cover 42% of the private sector rented sector in County Durham went live on 1 April. The application process opened 1 February and 1,500 applications have been received, however it is anticipated that this will increase dramatically as the early bird discount draws to a close in July. An inspection programme will commence in August with all licensed areas being visited on a monthly programme in the first two years. A form is available on

our website for the public to report landlords without a licence or who breach their conditions.

- 64 Additionally, promotional work continues on the implementation of the hybrid accreditation scheme, 'The Durham Rental Standard' and it is anticipated the scheme will go live before the end of May.
- 65 A Council Tenancy Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February that sets out the Council's expectations to the registered providers of social housing operating within the County regarding the types of tenancy they should offer to their tenants. Cabinet also approved the adoption of an Introductory Tenancy Scheme for all new council tenancies, that provides a probationary tenancy for the 12 months for all new tenants, and a Council House Secure and Introductory Tenancy Agreements that sets out contractual relationships between the Council as landlord and the tenant.
- 66 During the quarter, 37 empty properties were brought back into use, bringing the total for 2021/22 to 155, below the target of 200. The challenges throughout the year in response to ongoing Government restrictions around COVID-19 has impacted on delivery, especially during quarter one and again in quarter three due to the Omicron variant. However, the main challenges have been the complexities involved and the nature of the work required due to the length of time properties have been empty or in identifying ownership.

People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities

- 67 Construction of the new Durham Bus Station recommenced in March/April 2022 following a temporary pause at the end of 2021 due to unforeseen structural works being required to the gable end of the Grade 2 Listed Manse, which were identified following demolition of the bus station. The bus station is now still likely to become operational to passengers in July 2023.
- 68 In March 2022, Cabinet agreed to redirect £2 million of savings from the Concessionary Fares budget to support bus services across the County to maintain access to employment, education and essential services, give passenger numbers more time to recover and allow time for clarification of future Government support and for the true state of a post-COVID transport system to emerge.
- 69 In April 2022 the Department for Transport (DfT) awarded £163.5 million to the north east region for its Bus Service Improvement Plan. While the allocation is among the highest in the country it is lower than the original £804 million funding bid submitted in October last year. Improvements under the areas' bus service

improvement plans include making services more frequent, better reliability, cheaper fares, and greener vehicles.

- 70 The 2021/22 winter maintenance plan has been successfully delivered with in-house driver shortages covered by sub-contractors which has resulted in extra costs, salt and fuel costs have also increased. The overall cost of the provision has exceeded the base budget, and this has been covered by an existing reserve.
- 71 The review of the Winter Maintenance Plan and Policy for the winter season 2021/22 was complete and published in March 2022.

Key Performance Indicators – Data Tables

There are two types of performance indicators throughout this document:

- (a) Key target indicators – targets are set as improvements can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
- (b) Key tracker indicators – performance is tracked but no targets are set as they are long-term and/or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners.

A guide is available which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources for the 2020/21 corporate indicator set. This is available to view either internally from the intranet or can be requested from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

KEY TO SYMBOLS

	Direction of travel	Benchmarking	Performance against target
GREEN	Same or better than comparable period	Same or better than comparable group	Meeting or exceeding target
AMBER	Worse than comparable period (within 2% tolerance)	Worse than comparable group (within 2% tolerance)	Performance within 2% of target
RED	Worse than comparable period (greater than 2%)	Worse than comparable group (greater than 2%)	Performance >2% behind target

National Benchmarking

We compare our performance to all English authorities. The number of authorities varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils, for example educational attainment is compared to county and unitary councils however waste disposal is compared to district and unitary councils.

North East Benchmarking

The north east figure is the average performance from the authorities within the north east region, i.e., County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-On-Tees, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

More detail is available from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

MORE AND BETTER JOBS

Do residents have good job prospects?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
1	% of working age population in employment	71.2	2021	Tracker	71.4 (amber)	75.1 (red)	70.2 (green)			Yes
2	Per capita household disposable income (£)	16,617	2019	Tracker	16,315 (green)	21,978 (red)	17,096 (red)			No
3	Gross jobs created / safeguarded as a result of Business Durham activity	507	Oct-Dec 2021	Tracker	361 (green)					No
4	% of 16 to 17 year olds in an apprenticeship	8.5	as at Feb 2022	Tracker	5.1 (green)	4.3 (green)	7.1 (green)	6.5 (green)		Yes

Is County Durham a good place to do business?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
5	Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita in County Durham (£)	16,925	2019	Tracker	16,501 (green)	30,239 (red)	20,727 (red)			No
6	No. of registered businesses in County Durham	14,565	Mar 2021	Tracker	14,105 (green)					No
7	Value (£ million) of new contracts secured	8,173,215	2020/21		8 (green)	907,439 (green)				No
8	Value (£ million) of GVA growth from jobs created	37,103,456	Jan-Mar 2022		18,000,000 (green)	45,880,302 (red)				Yes
9	No. of Inward Investments secured	7	Jan-Mar 2022		6 (green)	3 (green)				Yes
10	% of Business Durham business floor space that is occupied	98.5	Jan-Mar 2022		85 (green)	83.0 (green)				Yes

How well do tourism and cultural events contribute to our local economy?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
11	No. visitors to County Durham (million)	11.39	2020	Tracker	20.13 (red)					No
12	No. jobs supported by the visitor economy	6,794	2020	Tracker	12,133 (red)					No
13	Amount (£ million) generated by the visitor economy	506.75	2020	Tracker	980.72 (red)					No

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

Do residents have access to decent and affordable housing?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
103	Number of properties improved, adapted or brought back into use	1,230	Jan-Mar 2022	Tracker	747 (green)					Yes
104	Number of empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention	37	Jan-Mar 2022	50 (red)	37 (green)					Yes
105	Number of net homes completed	289	Jan-Mar 2022	327 (red)	437 (red)					Yes
106	Number of affordable homes delivered	466	2020/21	300 (green)	628 (red)					No
107	Number of households accessing the Housing Solutions Service	3,594	Jan-Mar 2022	Tracker	3,366 (green)					Yes
108	Number of households helped to stay in their home	386	Jan-Mar 2022	Tracker	263 (green)					Yes
109	Number of households helped to move to alternative accommodation	239	Jan-Mar 2022	Tracker	219 (green)					Yes

Is it easy to travel around the county?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
110	% of A roads where maintenance is recommended	3.1	2020	Tracker	3.0 (red)	4.0 (green)	3.0 (red)		2020/21	No
111	% of B roads where maintenance is recommended	3.0	2020	Tracker	3.3 (green)	6.0 (green)	4.0 (green)		2020/21	No
112	% of C roads where maintenance is recommended	2.6	2020	Tracker	2.3 (red)	6.0 (green)	4.0 (green)		2020/21	No
113	% of unclassified roads where maintenance is recommended	22.5	2020	Tracker	21.3 (red)	17.0 (red)	17.0 (red)		2020/21	No
114	Highways maintenance backlog (£millions)	171.2	2020	Tracker	172.6 (green)					No
115	Bridge Stock Condition – Principal Roads*	82.0	2020	Tracker	81.1 (red)					No
116	Bridge Stock Condition – Non-Principal Roads*	81.0	2020	Tracker	80.1 (red)					No

* Bridge stock condition (>=90 very good condition / >=80 good condition / >=65 fair condition / >=40 poor condition / <40 very poor condition)

Other additional relevant indicators

MORE AND BETTER JOBS

Do our young people have access to good quality education and training?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
15	Average point score per A level entry of state-funded school students	41.2	2020/21 (academic year)	Tracker	39.9 (green)	41.6 (amber)	40.0 (green)			No
17	% of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training	4.4	Feb 2022	Tracker	5.6 (green)	2.6 (red)	4.4 (green)			Yes

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SAFER

Are we being a good corporate parent to Children Looked After (CLA)?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
73	% of care leavers aged 17-18 in education, employment or training	65	As at 31 Mar 2022	Tracker	76 (red)	65 (green)	63 (green)	63 (green)	2020/21	Yes
74	% of care leavers aged 19-21 in education, employment or training	59	As at 31 Mar 2022	Tracker	56 (green)	52 (green)	50 (green)	54 (green)	2020/21	Yes