

# DYNAMIC SMART CITY

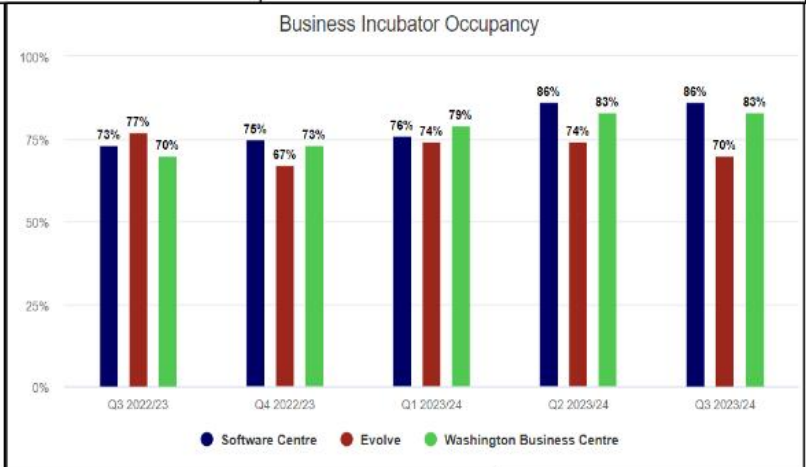
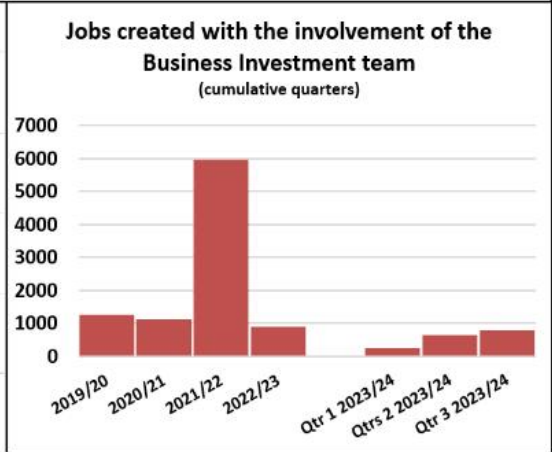
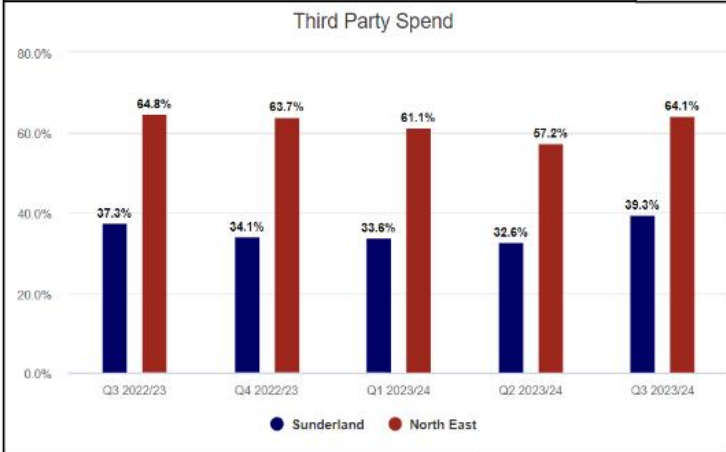
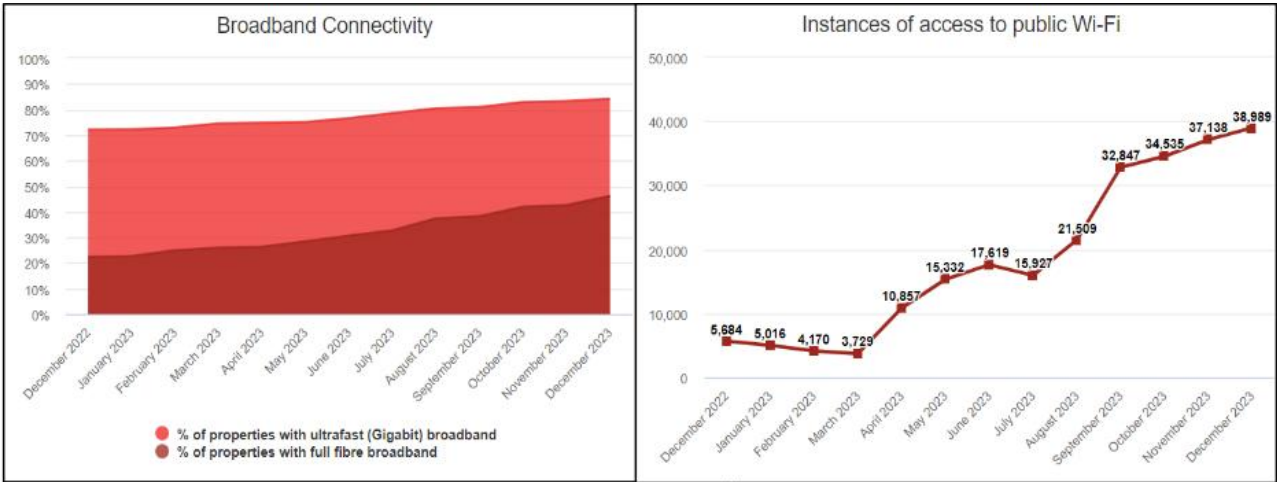
A lower carbon city with greater digital connectivity for all – more and better jobs – more local people with better qualifications and skills – a stronger city centre with more businesses, housing, and cultural opportunities – more and better housing.



## CITY CONTEXT

CURRENT DATA (LATEST AVAILABLE)	COMPARATIVE DATA	SUNDERLAND TREND
<b>Broadband - % of properties with Ultrafast December 2023: 84.2%</b>	UK 79.8%	Improving (Dec 2022: 72.1%)
<b>Full fibre December 2023: 46.2%</b>	UK 60.5%	Improving (Dec 2022: 22.4%)
<b>CO2 emissions estimates for Sunderland (per capita) 2021: 4 tonnes</b>	NE 4.4, England 3.9	Improving (2017: 4.5 tonnes)
<b>Employment rate Oct 2022 – Sept 2023: 73.1%</b>	NE 71.6%, GB 75.8%	Improving (Oct 2021 – Sept 2022: 71%)
<b>Proportion of workers earning below Living Wage Foundation rates 2022/23: 17.6% (provisional estimate).</b>	NE 15.9%, GB 13%	Improving (2018/19: 19.5%)
<b>Median wage workers Apr 2023: £594</b>	NE £608 GB £683	Improving (2019: £527)
<b>% Population NVQ Level 4 qualification 2021: 24.7%</b>	NE 34.4% GB 43.5%	Declining (2017: 27.3%)
<b>GCSE - % achieving a grade 4-9 in Maths &amp; English 2022/23: 58.3%</b>	NE 62.4%, England 65.4%	Declining (2018/19* 58.6%) <i>(2018/19 most meaningful comparator year due to impact of Covid)</i>
<b>Level 3 (A level &amp; equivalent) attainment by age of 19 in 2021/22: 49.7%</b>	NE 53.9% England 60.7%	N/A <i>(Exams &amp; Teacher Assessed not comparable)</i>
<b>City Centre new homes Qtr. 3 2023/24: 0</b>	N/A	No change (Qtr. 3 2022/23: 0)
<b>People employed in the City Centre 2022: 12,300</b>	N/A	Improving (2018: 11,890)
<b>Population of the City 2021 mid-year estimate 2022: 277,354</b>	N/A	Improving (2021 Census: 274,200)
<b>Net Internal Migration 2020: -403</b>	N/A	Declining (2016: -381)
<b>New homes-built Qtr.3 2023/24: 193</b>	N/A	Declining (Qtr.3 2022/23: 282)
<b>Completed affordable homes Apr-Dec 2023: 118</b>	N/A	Declining (Apr-Dec 2022: 137)

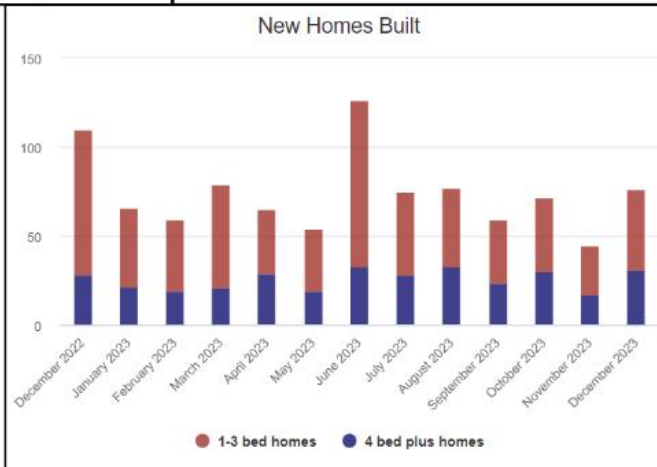
# COUNCIL LED PROGRESS & ACTION



**Multiply Skills Scheme**

**416**  
Learners Reached

Apr-Dec 2023



**Empty properties back in use**

**24**

Quarter 3

2023/24 Timeline
Launch of the first phase of the Wi-Fi Messaging Platform/City-wide App
Increase in the number and strength of creative and cultural businesses
Increase in economic activity in the Port
Continue to deliver the Community Wealth Building Strategy building on the Community Wealth Charter and Real Living Wage City accreditation
More local people benefitting from a stronger economy
Continued delivery of the Multiply Adult Numeracy Programme
Sunderland Station South Entrance Open
Stables development opens
Sunniside Masterplan produced
Riverside Multi-Storey Car Park Opens
Holmeside Multi-Storey Car Park Opens
Pre-opening programme activity for Culture House begins
Potters Hill Housing Phases 1 & 2 complete

**A lower carbon city with greater digital connectivity for all**

Our ambition is to lead the way on digital transformation to make Sunderland a Smart City, and through our Smart Cities Strategy we will deliver a range of use cases for smart working and living - with high speed and resilient digital connectivity central to our plans. In 2023/24 there have been continued advances in digital infrastructure.

At the end of Quarter 3, the proportion of Sunderland properties with ultrafast broadband has increased to 84.2% (from 80.9% at the end of Quarter 2). There are now an increasing proportion of properties in Sunderland that have even faster and more reliable connectivity through full fibre broadband at 46.2% at the end of Quarter 3 (up on the 38.3% at the end of Quarter 2).

At 110,662 instances in Quarter 3 of 2023/24, access to Public Wi-Fi in the city was up by 92,367 on the 18,295 instances in the same period in the previous year (Quarter 3 of 2022/23) - following on from considerable expansion of free public Wi-Fi access points. Our City Plan outlines our plans for further expansion of public Wi-Fi, along with 5G networks across the city over forthcoming years. Our plans are to be further enabled with the announcement of an additional 3.7m grant from the Department for Science, Innovation & Technology (DSIT) to support 5G and advanced wireless connectivity projects across the North East region in key sectors (including transport, event production and live broadcasting, port operations and farming). At the start of the year technical development began on the first phase of a City Wide App / Messaging Platform. At the end of Quarter 3, developments are nearing completion and App will move to testing in February prior to deployment in March. Installation of next generation wireless connectivity is being progressed for the 24 Community Health and Digital Hubs facilitated by UKSPF.

The Digital Hubs will tackle the digital divide to enable digital inclusion for all by improving access to digital devices, growing digital skills and bolstering connectivity to boost confidence and provide motivation to get online. Alongside the Digital Hubs, a new Community Esports concept is being introduced at 5 of the Hubs, to raise awareness about the gaming industry and encourage people of all ages into educational and employment pathways. Progress at the end of Quarter 3 includes: 22 Digital Hub sites Wi-Fi tested, 81 access points installed and live, 5 Databanks established providing free SIM cards to eligible people to ensure they stay connected, 48 local people registered and upskilled as Tech Mates to support others in the community and 5 E-sports Hubs in development for roll out by the end of 2023/24. We are further supporting digital inclusion through wider digital events with 60 events this year involving 1,508 participants with 12,552 impressions captured from our Digital Inclusion LinkedIn posts.

The Council, along with partners across the city, is committed to playing its part in tackling the global challenge of climate change and to become a carbon neutral city by 2040. We will monitor progress against a target trajectory to 2040 to achieve our ambition. Latest published figures showed that progress is being made, with the latest CO2 emissions estimate for Sunderland per capita (tonnes per resident) at 4 for 2021 – reduced from 4.5 in 2017 and better than the North-East at 4.4 (England 3,9). Based on the target trajectory to 2040, set on the latest available figures, we aimed to reduce CO2 per Capita to 3.1 in the next outturn (for the year 2022).

The Council is committed to becoming net zero as an organisation by 2030, across all greenhouse gases, in addition to becoming carbon neutral. Latest data published in the 2022/23 Low Carbon Annual Report shows tonnes of CO2 emissions from LA operations for 2022/23 at 7,867 tonnes, reduced on the revised 2021/22 figure of 8,681 (\*figures revised annually). Over the longer term, the figure has been significantly reduced from the 22,000 tonnes recorded in 2017/18.

The Council's Low Carbon Action Plan (first published in January 2021) was updated and published in July 2022. The updated Action Plan identifies a series of over-arching objectives under each of the strategic priorities of: Our Behaviour, Policies and Practices, Energy Efficient Built Environment, Renewable Energy Generation and Storage, Low Carbon and Active Transport & Reducing Consumption & Waste. The identified actions are wide ranging and align with the City Plan priorities across Dynamic, Healthy & Vibrant City.

Under the strategic priorities of *Our Behaviour, Policies and Practices* we seek to engage all our residents including our young people and our voluntary and community sector, as well as businesses, partners and employees of the Council in reducing carbon emissions. To do so we will develop communication and engagement assets providing reliable information on climate change causes and impact and opportunities to reduce carbon emission through behaviours. In the last year work has been undertaken, through the Local Climate Engagement Project, to ensure the full engagement of our citizens in the delivery of our low carbon agenda. In 2022/23, 20 Council and TFC employees, in key roles, were trained through the programme on engagement techniques in relation to low carbon and in 2023/24 engagement activities have taken place across the three project themes of cycleway design, SEND transport and social prescribing. In Quarter 3, there were 66 pro-active communications via social media, and we have had 12 Green Champions actively engaged in promoting low carbon policies and behaviours within our workforce including specific events such as Ecofest. We continue to ensure that Carbon reduction is embedded in programme and project planning through our Integrated Impact Assessment Tool.

Under our Low Carbon Action Plan strategic priority of an *Energy Efficient Built Environment* we will embed carbon reduction in Council assets and maximise energy efficiency improvements to homes with key projects and programmes aligned under more and better homes (see Pg. 6/7)

Through our Low Carbon Action Plan strategic priority of *Renewable Energy Generation and Storage* we will deliver new opportunities in the city that will support growth in the green economy linked with our City Plan commitment to more and better jobs (see below).

A range of initiatives will encourage and enable *Low Carbon and Active Transport* aligned with our City Plan commitment to great transport links with low carbon and active travel opportunities for all (see Pg. 15/16).

Under our Low Carbon Action Plan strategic priority of *Reducing Consumption and Waste* we will increase the level of recycling through household waste and engage individuals, businesses and communities to increase wider re-use and recycling and reduce overall waste. This priority is aligned with our City Plan commitment to cleaner, greener and more attractive city for all.

## **More and better jobs**

Our vision in our City Plan is that Sunderland will be a well-connected, international city with opportunities for all. We aim to increase the number of well-paid jobs in the city by promoting growth in key sectors including automotive and advanced manufacturing, financial and customer services, digital and software, as well as increasing professional services in the city centre, and port related activity. The employment rate for Sunderland, at 73.1% (129,000 aged 16+) for October 2022 to Sept 2023, has continued to rise compared with the same period in the previous year (at 71%). The rate remains above the North-East (at 71.6%). The rate for Great Britain in the same period was (75.8%).

Through our Low Carbon Action Plan strategic priority of Renewable Energy Generation and Storage we will deliver new opportunities in the city to support growth in the green economy. Figures for 2022/23 show 9,800 jobs in 41 businesses engaged in the green sector in the city - a 26.5% increase on 2021/22 (at 7,750 jobs and 37 businesses).

The Port continues to focus on increasing its economic activity, with a turnover of £2.295m and 133,139 tonnage processed in Quarter 3. At the end of December, the Port is forecast to generate a net trading profit of £1.344m for 2023/24.

We continue seek to enable more office jobs in the city. At the end of Quarter 1 a property search tool was launched to enable businesses to locate office and commercial workspaces to buy or for rent – including new modern purpose-built spaces such as that on Riverside. From the launch of the tool to the end of Quarter 3, there have been 2,837 views of commercial properties.

We continue to ensure that our Council activity supports the local economy where possible. In Quarter 3, 64.1% (£74.8m) of all Council third party spend was within the regional economy, and £245,077 of social value was secured through our procurement projects.

## **More local people with better qualifications and skills**

Through the City Plan, the aim is to ensure that residents' skills and qualifications enable them to secure good jobs that match the needs of employers in key sectors thereby reducing the gap in the median wage between Sunderland residents and Sunderland workers.

Previously released provisional data shows that the median weekly wage was £11.90 more for Sunderland workers, than Sunderland residents, in April 2023 - up on the £4.30 gap in 2022, though improved on the long-term trend figure for 2019 of a difference of £29.80. Figures for both (residents and workers) however, remain below the North-East and Great Britain with the median weekly wage for residents at £537 (NE £580, GB £642) and for workers at £594 (NE £608, GB £683).

The proportion of workers earning below the Living Wage Foundation rate, for the tax year ending April 2023, has increased to 17.6% (provisional estimate) from 14.5% (revised and confirmed) in the previous tax year ending April 2022 (having decreased from 17% in the tax year ending April 2021 and from 22.8% in the tax year ending 2018). In Quarter 3, a Living Wage networking event was held at Sunderland's Business and Innovation Centre (BIC) to mark Real Living Wage week and engage further businesses in the city's Living Wage action group (to deliver on our Real Living Wage city action plan). A further event is planned with Sunderland Business Network in Quarter 4. Local data shows that in Quarter 3 there were 41 accredited real Living Wage employers with headquarters in Sunderland (as well as further employers with a branch in Sunderland) and 10,782 employees employed by Living Wage employers with a HQ in Sunderland (an increase on the 8,879 in the same period in the previous year).

Previously published data showed that 24.7% of the Sunderland population had a Level 4 qualification in 2021 (compared with the North-East at 34.4% and Great Britain at 43.5%). These statistics are sourced through the Annual Population Survey to produce an estimate. For the

year of 2022 (the latest expected data release), the sample size has been deemed too small to produce a reliable estimate for Sunderland and therefore figures are not available. Validated GCSE results (published February 2024) for the academic year 2022/23 show that in Sunderland 58.3% of students achieved a grade 4-9 in Maths & English, lower than the North-East at 62.4% and England at 65.4%.

Validated results for summer 2022 showed Level 3 (A-level and equivalent) attainment by the age of 19 at 49.7%, lower than the North-East at 53.9% and England at 60.7%.

The national Multiply scheme, delivered locally through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, aims to improve the numeracy skills of adults across the UK, based on the recognition that those with numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment and have higher wages. Between April and December 2023, the Multiply scheme has reached 416 learners in need of improving their maths skills with a 94% completion rate for learners concluding their courses in Quarter 3. Initial destinations data shows that in Quarter 3, 147 learners have achieved progression into further learning, employment or other progression, with destinations tracking being developed to understand progression over the longer term.

### **A stronger city centre with more business, housing, and cultural opportunities**

As part of our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic our aspiration is that Sunderland city centre will drive transformational economic growth with Riverside Sunderland clearly demonstrating our investment ambition. In the long term there will be more people living and working in the City Centre.

Through Riverside Sunderland we aim to create a vibrant new city centre residential community of 1,000 sustainable new homes, promoting more city centre living. Alongside the delivery of new homes, Expo Sunderland will provide events and experiences to engage visitors in new and sustainable ways of living.

Riverside Sunderland will also comprise of 1 million square feet of modern offices, commercial premises, and other employment space, creating new sites for businesses to grow and with the aim of workspace for 8,000 – 10,000 quality jobs. Figures for 2022 (latest available) showed 12,300 people employed in the city centre, a decrease on the figure of 14,000 in 2021 (a greater level of rounding has been applied in the latest release (with previous 2021 figures adjusted accordingly) and figures should be considered in this context). At the end of Quarter 2, 1,110 new city centre office jobs have been created since April 2019 and the completion of further office space on Riverside Sunderland will bring further office jobs to the city. On 27th November 2023, work began to build a new standalone specialist eye hospital at Riverside Sunderland with leaders, staff and patients gathering to celebrate the breaking of the ground. Construction of the new Eye Hospital is expected to take two years.

The City Centre offer is expanding alongside the Riverside Sunderland developments, with the creation of a Cultural Quarter on Keel Square (directly alongside Riverside Sunderland) with new food and drink offerings. In Quarter 3, the 200 capacity Keel Tavern (decorated to reflect the city's industrial and maritime heritage) opened, and the opening of the Botanist and Muddler in the same location have been announced for the New Year. Alongside this, in Quarter 3 there has been the onsite start for Culture House (also located at Keel Square).

We continue to progress our plans for a range of physical developments in the city centre including the development of the Sunnyside area through the Sunnyside Masterplan and Sunderland Rail Station. The southern entrance of the station which was opened in December 2023 features a large glass wraparound design and includes a new ticket office and reception, public toilets, retail space and cafes, waiting areas and a new mezzanine level that has office space for rail industry staff.

## More and better housing

Through our City Plan we seek to ensure that Sunderland offers the opportunities that families and individuals need to achieve their ambitions – with a housing offer that reflects the homes that people aspire to live in. This includes larger family homes as well as more affordable homes. This will be achieved through the delivery of key housing sites.

Figures previously published for out-migration showed a slowing from a net of -511 in 2019 to -403 in 2020 (latest available data). Whilst the figure is higher than the five-year long-term trend figure of -381 for 2016, the 2016 figure was the lowest figure reached before figures declined substantially in 2017 (to -748) and then began reducing year on year.

There were 193 homes that were newly built in Quarter 3. Over the last three years there has been an increase in the number of completed affordable homes (from 101 in 2020/21 to 150 in 2021/22 and 178 in 2022/23). There were 38 completed affordable homes in Quarter 3 - down on the 62 in the same period in the previous year, however, figures can fluctuate in year due to a range of factors including phasing of housing schemes.

Alongside more homes, we are also committed to ensuring that the housing we have is of quality. 24 empty properties were brought back into use in Quarter 3, and 160 privately rented properties were inspected for hazards.

Under our Low Carbon Action Plan strategic priority of an Energy Efficient Built Environment, we will embed carbon reduction in Council assets and maximise energy efficiency improvements to owner occupied and private, social and affordable rented homes. AN ECO (Energy Company Obligation) scheme delivery model has been established, to help households decarbonise and reduce their energy bills (via grants to fund energy-efficient updates to homes) with the first homes expected to benefit by March 2024. Through the Warm Homes Fund energy efficiency advice was provided to 82 fuel poor residents in Quarter 3, taking the total for the scheme to 481 as at the end of December for 2023 – and on track to achieve the programme aspiration to reach 500 residents across the two years of 2022/23 and 2023/24.

# HEALTHY SMART CITY

Reduce health inequalities enabling more people to live healthier longer lives – equitable opportunities and best life chances for children – high quality support and social care that enables those who need it to live the life they want to live – great transport links with low carbon and active travel opportunities for all – cleaner and more attractive city and neighbourhoods.

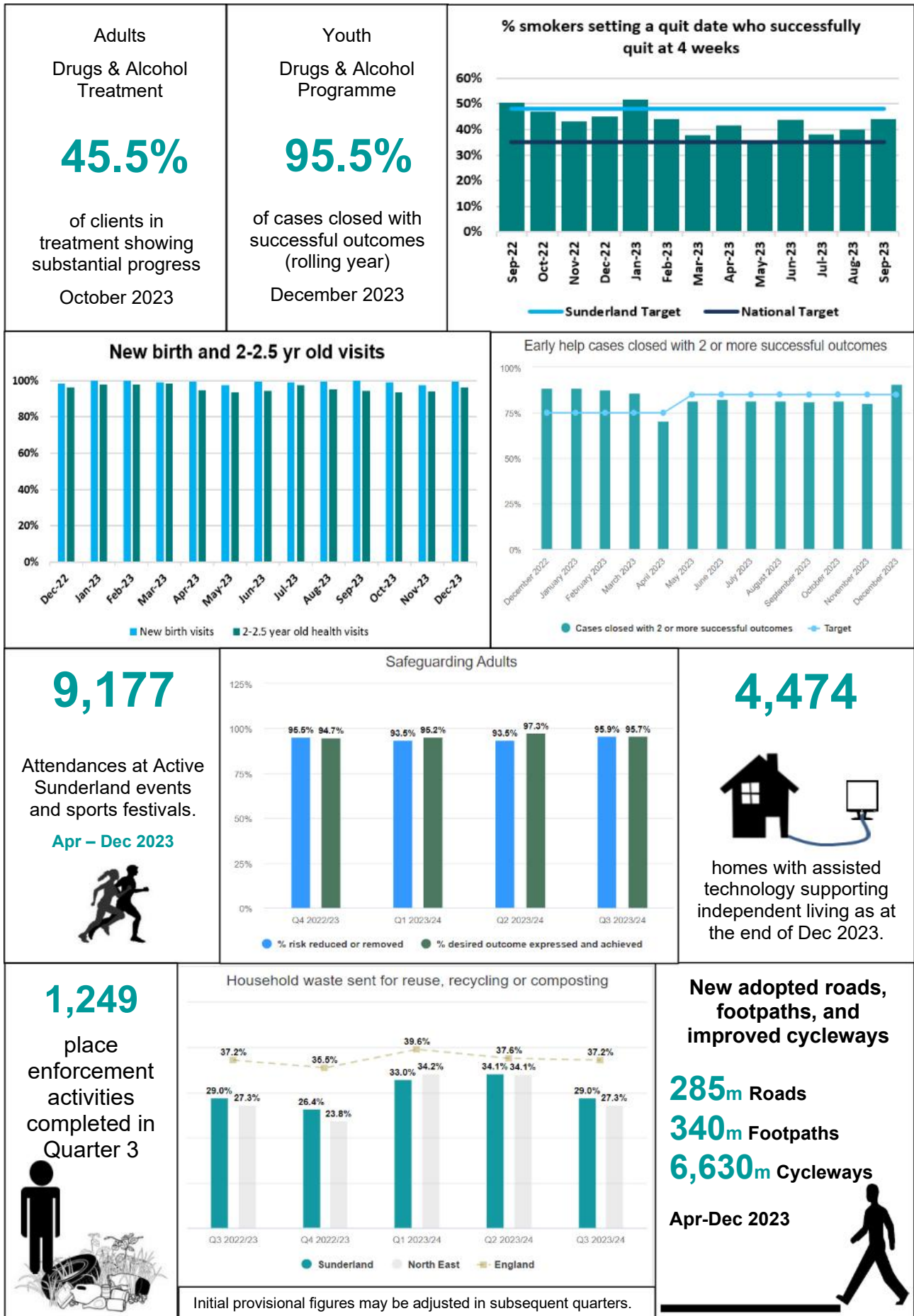


## CITY CONTEXT

CURRENT DATA (LATEST AVAILABLE)	COMPARATIVE DATA	SUNDERLAND TREND
<b>Healthy Life Expectancy at birth 2018-2020 as at 2021/22</b> Female: 56.9 yrs. Male: 56.1 yrs.	England 63.9 yrs. NE 59.7 yrs. England 63.1 yrs. NE 59.1 yrs.	Declining (2014-2016: 59.3 yrs.) Declining (2014-2016: 58.8 yrs.)
<b>Admission episodes alcohol-related 2021/22: 2,668</b> (Broad per 100,000)	England 1,734, NE 2,323	N/A (Not comparable due to change in methodology)
<b>Smoking prevalence 2022: 13.2%</b>	England 12.7%, NE 13.1%	Improving (2018: 22.2%)
<b>The proportion of adults living with overweight or obesity 2021/22: 73.9%</b>	England 63.8%, NE 70.5%	Declining (2017/18: 69.2%)
<b>Prevalence of children living with overweight (Year 6) 2022/23: 41.5%</b> (incl. obese)	England 36.6%, NE 39.9%	Declining (2018/19: 39.2%)
<b>% of people that are fairly active / active (Active Lives – Public Health) 2021/22: 75.5%</b>	England 77.7%, NE 75%	Improving (2017/18: 72%)
<b>Women who smoke at time of delivery Qtr. 2 2023/24: 11.1%</b>	England 7.5% NE 10.1%	Improving (Qtr. 2 2022/23: 11.7%)
<b>EYFSP Good level of development 2022/23: 66%</b>	England 67.2%, NE 66.3%	Declining (2018/19: 72.6%)
<b>Cared for children (rate per 10k) Dec 2023: 94.8</b>	England 71, NE 113 SN 119.4	Declining (Dec 2022: 92.6)
<b>CYP subject to a child protection plan (rate per 10k) Dec 2023: 82.1</b>	England 43.2, NE 64.8 SN 64.4	Declining (Dec 2022: 43.3)
<b>Rate of Children in Need (per 10k) Dec 2023: 412.1</b>	England 342.7, NE 467.4 SN 438.9	Declining (Dec 2022: 344.1)
<b>Teenage Pregnancy (under 18 conception rate): Qtr. 3 2021/22: 26.4</b> (rolling year)	England 13.1, NE 19.8	Declining (Qtr. 3 2020/21: 21.7)
<b>Proportion of people (18+) living independently (without social care services) Qtr. 3 2023/24: 97.2%</b>	N/A	Declining (Qtr.3 2022/23 98.2%)
<b>Litter - % deposits that fall below an acceptable level Qtr. 3. 2023/24: 4.5%</b>	N/A	Improving (Qtr.3 2022/23: 7.5%)



# COUNCIL LED PROGRESS & ACTION



City Plan Timeline 2023/24
Over £1/4m council and Lawn Tennis Association investment in city's tennis courts in parks
Develop five area venues for participation in SWIM BIKE RUN activities
Targeted programmes with new participation opportunities in least active areas
Development of five safe and inclusive area-based sports play zones with investment from the Football Foundation and Sport England
Continue Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant funding
Publish Sunderland City Council Alcohol Strategy: It's Time to Rethink Drink and partner action plan
Publish new Sunderland Smokefree Partnership plan
Develop new Sunderland Workplace Health 3-year strategy and action plan
New Children's Home (Maple Cottage) opening
New Edge of Care Accommodation (Claremont Terrace) opening
Implement a range of Adult Social Care automated telephony apps to support welfare checks, reviews and customer feedback
Partnership working to ensure safe and timely hospital discharge with residents and carers central to discharge planning and receiving quality and timely advice and information
Support the implementation of Dementia and Smart Homes Grants as part of the Disabled Facilities Grant offer
Enhance the Adult Social Care Direct Payment/Personal Budget Offer as a viable alternative to traditional support at home packages
Partnership working to develop and implement a Trusted Assessor model to support Social Care
Bus Rationalisation Route completed
Whitburn Road active travel cycle improvements completed
Electric Vehicle Strategy and Roadmap published
Deliver electric buses and strategic rapid charging facilities
Continue e-Scooter trial

## Equitable opportunities and the best life chances for children

We are taking a life course approach to health and wellbeing starting with the early life stages of preconception to early years and adolescence under this commitment. The latest available quarterly figure (Quarter 2 of 2023/24) for the proportion of women smoking at time of delivery at 11.1% (70 smokers of 633 maternities) is a reduction on the same period in the previous year at 11.7%. The Sunderland figure remains higher than the North-East at 10.1% and England at 7.5%. Quarterly rates may fluctuate based on the number of maternities, however, the latest full-year figure of 13.7% (for 2022/23) also shows a reduction (on the full year of 2021/22 at 14%).

Reducing the rates of tobacco dependency in pregnant women is a high priority for the Sunderland Smokefree Partnership and partners are working closely together on a range of programmes and initiatives to support pregnant women to stop smoking. This includes continuing to embed the Treating Tobacco Dependency in Pregnancy pathway as part of the NHS Long Term Plan, including the provision of an incentive scheme available to all pregnant smokers who sign up to stop smoking support as part of the pathway (scheme includes vouchers throughout the pregnancy, including a partner voucher that also encourages stop smoking). In addition, there is a pilot for Health Visitors to carry out CO monitoring at all mandated visits to pregnant women and families with young children, and the establishment of weekly clinics in all 5 Family Hubs as part of the Treating Tobacco in Pregnancy Pathway, supporting partners and families following the birth of their child.

Latest local (unvalidated) data for Quarter 3 of 2023, indicates that 55.9% of Sunderland women who gave birth, initiated first milk as breast milk, with 48.3% breastfeeding at discharge. The proportion of infants being breastfed at 6-8 weeks was 31.8% for 2022/23 (Child Health Profile, latest available data) below England (49.2%) and the North-East (36.7%). There is a range of ongoing work to support Sunderland being a Breastfeeding Friendly City and to increase the

rates of breastfeeding, including the UNICEF accreditation journey for Growing Healthy Sunderland, STSFT Maternity and Neonatal as well as the Family Hubs.

At the end of Quarter 2, 98.7% of new birth visits and 96.5% of 2.5-year-old checks have been carried out in timescale based on local data, continuing the high levels of performance in previous quarters.

Results for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) for 2022/23 Good Level of Development have been published and showed that in Sunderland 66% of children achieved a good level of development – 0.3% lower than the North-East (at 66.3%) and lower than England (at 67.2%). In Sunderland and across the North-East and England fewer children achieved a Good Level of Development in comparison to the pre pandemic figures. Figures are an improvement on the 2021/22 result of 63.7%, though a decline on the long-term trend figure of 72.6% for 2018/19.

Through support to families with children in need, and intervention in families with children subject to a child protection plan, we seek to increase resilience in families to give children the best life chances, and subsequently we monitor how often worries are raised about children that we have already tried to help. The latest rates of children in need, children subject to a child protection plan and cared for children have increased, however, the Sunderland rates for children in need and cared for children are better than both the statistical neighbour comparator and the North-East. At the end of Quarter 3, 18.7% of referrals to TFC were re-referrals within 12 months (target 23%), a decrease on the same period in the previous year (23.4%). 11% of children subject to a child protection plan had a repeat plan within 2 years (within target of 15%), a decrease on the same period in the previous year (at 14.8%). 80.9% of early help cases closed with successful outcomes (target 85%), 8.2% of Cared for Children have experienced 3+ placements within the last 12 months (target 10% or less) and 98.9% of Cared for Children had an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (target 95%).

The rate of under 18 conceptions (teenage pregnancy rate based on conceptions per 1,000 women aged 15 -17) for Sunderland was 26.4 in Quarter 3 of 2021/22 (latest available data (expected update not yet available)) – up on the same period in the previous year (at 21.7), though a reduction on Quarter 2 of 2021/22 (at 27.4). The Sunderland figure continues to be higher than the England and North-East rates (of 13.1 and 19.8 - for Quarter 3 of 2022/2023). Support in place includes delivery of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), ongoing offer of the C-Card for young people age 13+ (501 issues in Quarter 3) and access to free emergency contraception (EHC) via pharmacies and school nursing (56 instance of supply to ages 19 and under of EHC via pharmacies in Quarter 3). Other support includes sexual health advice, targeted sessions delivered in schools, provision of access to free long-acting contraception with further work ongoing to widen choice for point of access, a young person's contraceptive nurse (specialist sexual health service), providing in clinic and outreach services (including emergency access) and an Options Advisor.

## **Reduced health inequalities enabling more people to live healthier longer lives**

Our City Plan recognises the need to ensure that health and wellbeing outcomes are significantly improved, with previously published healthy life expectancy at birth in Sunderland (at 56.1 years for males and 56.9 for females 2018-2020), lower than the North-East and England and declining (following the England & North-East declining trend). The Healthy City Plan is our Health & Wellbeing Board's joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy through which we will address health inequalities.

Health inequalities are influenced by complex factors known as wider determinants of health such as income, housing, the local environment, education, transport and access to good quality work. These factors interact and lead to poorer life expectancy and longer period in ill-health. Poorer health outcomes are experienced by those who have limited access to health care, experience poorer quality care, and have higher levels of risk i.e., smoking, alcohol misuse, etc. Within Sunderland, the Reducing Inequalities Delivery Group (subgroup of the Living Well Delivery Board) has a delivery plan focused on the four key priorities of the Health and

Wellbeing Board which has been in place since 2021. These are: better understanding of our population, asset-based community development ('residents as participants'), economic activity (skills, aspirations and wealth building) and health in all policies approach.

Alcohol is a complex issue within our society and no single approach will be successful in isolation. Alcohol remains one of the key drivers of health inequalities and one of the key causes of premature death and therefore it requires commitment and contributions from a range of partners across the city. Hospital admissions for alcohol-related conditions (broad) were at 2,668 (episodes per 100,000) for Sunderland for 2021/22 (North-East average 2,323, England 1,734) – an increase on the previous year figure (longer term trend comparison not applicable due to changes in how the statistics have been compiled).

A range of programmes and services are being delivered by the City Council and partners, as part of a long term, 'systems wide approach' to reducing the harm caused by substance misuse. Our published partnership alcohol strategy (Calling Time: It's time to rethink drink) action plan coordinates the ongoing work to reduce alcohol harms. This includes a focus on prevention and the expansion of the Alcohol Care Team within the trust, the review of the Statement of Licensing Policy, the funding of dedicated posts within the treatment and recovery system and the promotion of alcohol harm awareness raising initiatives and campaigns.

Additional 3-year funding through the national substance misuse treatment and recovery grant has been invested across the city with the aim of increasing access into treatment by 20% and reducing drug and alcohol related deaths. Alongside the grant, a new performance framework came into effect for adult substance misuse treatment services from April 2023. For the new key performance indicator of *clients in treatment showing substantial progress*, the figure for Sunderland from the latest available data period of October 2023 was 45.5% (779 clients showing substantial progress of 1,712 in treatment), the England figure for the same period was 47%. Projects and programmes funded through the grant in the current year include dedicated roles within the treatment system for parents and carers, those experiencing homelessness, domestic abuse, and those with complex needs. Alongside these posts there are dedicated criminal justice workers based within the local Police service, and a post within the Hospital Trust's Alcohol Care Team. Other projects include the funding of harm reduction initiatives and awareness raising campaigns.

The rate for the three-year period 2018/19-2020/21 (latest available data) for under 18s alcohol admissions per 100,000 was 76 for Sunderland - an improvement on the previous rate of 82.4, (North-East rate 52, England rate of 55.4). Data from the recent 2023 Health Related Behaviour Survey indicates a reduction in alcohol consumption amongst young people - both Year 8 and Year 10 pupils, when compared to data from 2021.

For young people, needing substance misuse intervention, the key performance measure continues to be successful outcomes for closed cases (rolling year). At the end of December 2023, 95.5% of the Youth Drug & Alcohol Programme cases were closed with successful outcomes.

The previously published figure for smoking prevalence in 2022 confirmed a continued reduction to 13.2% (having previously reduced from 22.7% in 2017 to 15.2% in 2021), with a 1.7 percentage point reduction in the gap between Sunderland and England (with the gap now at 0.5 of a percentage point, having previously reduced from 7.8 to 2.2 percentage points between 2017 and 2021).

In October 2023, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) published its policy paper 'Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation', which includes a key proposal to raise the age of sale of tobacco year on year so anyone born on or after 1 January 2009 will never be able to legally buy tobacco. It also includes proposals to introduce restrictions on vapes to tackle youth vaping and to increase enforcement of illicit sales. The Council support these measures and responded to a government consultation held in December 2023. In addition, a package of measures to help smokers to quit was announced, including a

commitment to increase funding for local stop smoking services over the next five year; the funding allocation for local authorities have been published for 2024-25.

A range of programmes and services are being delivered by the city council and partners, as part of a long term, 'systems wide approach' to supporting the smokefree agenda. These are reflected in the Smokefree Partnership Action Plan which has been agreed for 2023-2026 with the aim to reduce smoking prevalence to 5% by 2031. The plan covers eight key strands of: tobacco control, including building capacity and skills to support smokers to quit; reducing exposure to tobacco smoke; ensuring effective year-round media and comms; and tobacco regulations and enforcement.

In Quarter 2 of 2022/23 (latest available data) 38% of smokers setting a quit date successfully quit at 4 weeks (117 successful quitters of 307 quit attempts). This combines Specialist Stop Smoking Service (SSSS) and Universal NHS Stop Smoking Services data. As smoking prevalence reduces, meeting the target for smoking quits becomes more challenging due to there being a smaller pool of smokers to quit and the Specialist Stop Smoking Service (SSSS) will be targeting the most complex populations, which inevitably leads to lower quit rates. The SSSS continues to provide high-quality, evidence-based specialist support to smokers to quit, but can also refer to a network of universal stop smoking services across the city and can provide self-help tools such as a Smokefree app for a more flexible offer. The provision of *Very Brief Advice* across a wide audience will also build capacity across the system to encourage smokers to attempt to quit.

Latest data for 2021/22 reports 73.9% of adults in Sunderland are living with overweight or obesity, this is higher than the previous figure of 69.1% and above the North-East (70.5%) and England average (63.8%). Latest national data, for the academic year 2022/23, shows that 41.3% of children in Year 6 were living with overweight (including obesity). This is a reduction from 45% in 2021/22 (the highest rate ever been recorded in Sunderland). In 2022/23 the Sunderland figure is higher than the North-East (at 39.9%) and England (at 36.6%).

Impacting on healthy weight requires a system wide approach to the physical and food environment and our healthy weight strategy incorporates a range of plans and actions to change the environment. A range of services are also being delivered by the city council and partners. In 2021 Sunderland secured national funding to deliver a Tier 2 Adult Weight Management Service – commencing August 2021 and funded to December 2022. The programme was evaluated, and local public health funding has been agreed to continue for a further 2 years, targeted at 3 geographical areas each year, where need is greatest (people will be able to access from across the city). There were 112 people starting the programme in Quarter 3. Quarter 1 and 24 in Quarter 2. 50 people completed a 12-week assessment in Quarter 3 (88%) and 8 completed the programme with an evidenced health improvement (100% of completions).

Alongside this, there has been the ongoing delivery of the Active Sunderland Healthy Lifestyles Programme (formerly Change 4 Life) Sunderland Offer. In Quarter 3, 83 school sessions were delivered, engaging 2,220 school children. There were 7 Active Sunderland Healthy Lifestyle programmes delivered with an 89% successful completion rate. In Quarter 3, the programme worked with primary schools with red NCMP data (child obesity prevalence) with bespoke 1-1 support provided to young people and families.

At the end of Quarter 2, 16% of educational settings are accredited at Bronze standard, in the Sunderland Healthy Schools Awards, 1% at Gold standard and 3% at Emerald standard.

Through our Low Carbon Action Plan, we want to ensure that the council's allotment policy maximises opportunities for local food growing by residents and facilitates community growing projects supporting healthy eating. In 2020, an audit was carried out, identifying abandoned allotment plots and subsequently action plans put into place to bring each site up to standard. Since February 2023, 200 allotment sites that were previously vacant and out of use have been cleared & re-let. A wider consultation and review of allotment provision will commence in 2024. Potential new sites have been identified and feasibility proposals are being prepared.

Data for 2021/22 previously published by Public Health England, shows that 75.5% of people in Sunderland were active or fairly active – an increase of 1.5 percentage points on the previous 2020/21 figure of 74% and an increase of 3.5 percentage points on the long-term trend comparison period of 2017/18. Sunderland is now better than the North-East figure of 75% (England 77.7).

There were 532,460 Leisure Centre attendances in Quarter 3, and 664 attendances at Active Sunderland participation events and sports festivals, building on the 8,513 attendances in the first half of the year. Following the successful Sunderland hosting of the British leg of the World Triathlon Championship series in Quarter 2 we have been working with British Triathlon to create new opportunities to participate in Swim, Bike, Run (SBR) events across the city including the development of SBR Hubs. At the end of Quarter 3 there are two established hubs with a further two in development. The BIG Bike Ride took place on 15th October from a new location – the Beacon of Light. Three different routes were available (12, 20 and 38 mile) attracting 359 registrations (194 of which had not taken part before). Feedback from participants was extremely positive with 94% expressing they would take part again. 14 volunteers supported the event.

With funding from the Lawn Tennis Association, we are investing in tennis facilities in the city. In Quarter 2, the refurbishment of 17 tennis courts in all 7 parks was completed and Everyone Active sessions provided to encourage use of the refurbished courts. With the tennis courts now all refurbished, there have been 789 online bookings in Quarter 3 and 44 coached sessions were made available. An October Half Term free tennis programme run by Everyone Active was delivered across the 7 parks and attended by 30 players.

In Quarter 3 there were 130,052 visitors through the turnstiles of Football Hubs and planning has commenced for five safe and inclusive based sports play zones with investment from the Football Foundation and Sports England. 100 families (390 individuals) registered for the October Half Term Family Fun session at Silksworth Community Pool, Tennis and Wellness Centre. Family activity sessions also took place at Hetton Family Hub and Austin House SARA programme with over 200 people accessing health related resources and taking part in fun games and activities.

We are targeting the least active areas for new active participation opportunities including promoting the walking programme, working with family hubs to deliver activities and implementation of the community tennis programme. In Quarter 4 the Coach to 5K will commence and will target inactive residents with a 12-week support programme. We are also developing five safe and inclusive area-based sports play zones with investment from the Football Foundation. The first Play Zone is currently in planning, with works expected to commence in Spring 2024, subject to planning approval.

Validated data for the three-year period of 2020-2022, showed the suicide rate for Sunderland reduced to 14 per 100,000 (age 10+) from 14.3 (for 2019-2021), though it remained above the England rate of 10.3 and Northeast rate of 13.5. The Public Mental Health Concordat for Sunderland was endorsed and signed off by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities in January 2023 - a framework and action plan which has supported work to improve mental health wellbeing, contributing to the suicide prevention agenda. Positive progress has been made against the Public Mental Health Concordat for the 2023/24 period, with an update scheduled for Living Well Delivery Board in February 2024. Suicide prevention training (A Life Worth Living) is available, through Washington Mind, for people who live and work in Sunderland. During the first year of the contract period, 22 training courses have been delivered reaching a total of 304 participants from a range of organisations across the City. Sunderland's Suicide Prevention Action Plan covering the period of 2023-2026 was signed off by the Living Well Delivery Board in November 2023 and is aligned to the 2023 national strategy: 'Suicide prevention in England: 5-year cross-sector strategy'. Progress made against the action plan has been positive and the Suicide Prevention Partnership will continue to drive the action plan forward, with regular updates provided to Living Well Delivery Board for oversight and assurance.

The Council continues to support healthy workplaces through the Better Health at Work Awards. In Quarter 3 businesses submitted their applications for assessment, with awards expected to be made by February 2024. At the end of Quarter 3, there were 53 businesses actively participating in the Better Health at work Awards. Alongside this, regular meetings of the Sunderland Workplace Health Alliance enables businesses to engage on the health, work and wellbeing agenda, supported by the Council. The number of businesses recruited to the Workplace Health Alliance Scheme has continued to increase with 158 businesses signed up as at the end of Quarter 3 (an increase on the 147 in 2022/23, 126 in 2021/22 and 108 in 2019/20.) A three-year Sunderland Workplace Health Strategy is in development, and currently being consulted upon with key partners and stakeholders for finalisation by the end of March 2024 – following which the action plan will be developed.

### **High quality support and social care that enables those who need it to live the life they want to live.**

The Adult Social Care Strategy 2022-2024 sets out the vision for Adult Social Care in Sunderland and the three key priorities of: supporting people to live independently, supporting people to regain independence and helping people to live with support. 97.2% of people aged 18+ in the city live independently (without social care services) and we remain committed to ensuring people in the city can enjoy independent lives.

To achieve our vision, and deliver on our priorities, we aim to be a leader on the developing of technology enabled care and deployment of smart technology to work alongside other models of care. The Adult Social Care Digital Strategy is currently being finalised for publication in Quarter 4.

At the end of Quarter 3, 4,474 homes had assisted technology to support their care / independent living. Products such as Google, Alexa & Siri, smart lightbulbs and heating, home sensors and GPS trackers have many benefits that can be used to support people's care, health and wellbeing and help people to remain independent in their homes. Our 'Smart Home', located in Leechmere, was opened in Quarter 3 - providing a showcase for technology enable care. For those with dementia, this now being supported through the Home Safety Grant, with the first grants issued in Quarter 3, focusing on funding smart thermostat systems. Alongside this, we have commenced a pilot with health care professionals working in therapy, to support the dementia journey as early as possible with assisted technology and to enable early intervention with this user group.

As part of the digital offer, in 2023 we have implemented a range of Adult Social Care automated telephony Apps. Our Community Loan Equipment App and Wheelchair Apps, enable automated check-ins on how equipment is working, and swift identification of the need for repairs, replacements or returns. Our Reablement App checks in with customers every two weeks following an exit from the reablement service, supporting quick identification of customers who require further support or interventions to prevent an admission or readmission to hospital. Alongside these, we also have an App to seek customer feedback about our services.

Partnership work is progressing to ensure safe and timely hospital discharge with residents and carers central to discharge planning and receiving quality and timely advice and information. Following on from scoping work in Quarter 2, a new way of working was commenced in Quarter 3, with the implementation of the Transfer of Care Hub and related processes. In 2022/23 (latest available data) 78.9% of older people (65 and over) were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into rehabilitation services.

Work has been completed on two pilot programmes aimed at increasing the direct payment / personal budget offer with a view to increasing choice in care and enabling those who need social care to live the life they want to lead with support. The pilots, which provided targeted support to social work teams to increase direct payments, has seen the rates increase by 10%

since April 2023. Work is now progressing on the implementation of the new model of delivery following the completion of the pilots.

Latest available published data on the rate of emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65+ (per 100,000), showed a decrease from 3,164 in 2020/21, to 2,710 for 2021/22 for Sunderland though figures remain above the North-East (at 2,531) and England (at 2,023). Although the Sunderland figure decreased over the last year, the North-East and England figures increased in the same period.

80.5% of people who use services have control over their daily lives based on confirmed figures (North-East 80.2%) - an improvement on the previous year (at 76.4%). In the same period 73.6% of people who used services in Sunderland felt safe (North-East 74.3%) an improvement on the previous year (at 72.5%). In Quarter 3, 95.9% of Adult Safeguarding cases were completed with the risk reduced or removed. In 78.6% of completed cases the individual was asked about the desired outcome and for those where this was expressed, in 95.7% of cases the outcome was achieved.

### **Great transport links with low carbon and active travel opportunities for all**

We are committed to ensuring that people can move around the city with ease through improved transport routes (accessible to key employment sites) and enabling low carbon and active travel.

Key to this is having in place the necessary infrastructure. In Quarter 3, there was 182m adopted roads (taking the total for 2023/24 to 285m), 264m of new adopted footpaths (taking the total for 2023/24 to 340m). There were no new or improved cycleways in Quarter 3 (total for 2023/24 remains at 6,630). Three active travel schemes (Whitburn Road, Dame Dorothy Street and European Way) - at various stages of design, engagement and delivery are being progressed subject to funding.

Through our rapid charging station, we continue to support the wider use of electric vehicles in the city. There were 3,538 transactions at electric vehicle rapid charging units in Quarter 3 of 2023/24, up on the 2,565 in Quarter 2 of 2023/24. 2023/24 will see the expansion of the infrastructure to support electric vehicles with new residential community hubs in place by the end of the year and plans in place for future years for further rapid charging stations in the city.

Under the Low Carbon Action Plan strategic priority of Low Carbon and Active Transport we are encouraging take-up of active, sustainable travel options through a range of initiatives including Better Points. The Better Points App rewards users for walking, cycling and other low carbon and active travel through points that can be exchanged for a range of rewards. At the end of Quarter 3 there were 1,546 Sunderland users registered on the Better Points App (up on the 1,401 at the end of Quarter 2).

1,675 children have taken part in cycle training as at the end of December 2023 and 3,443 school children have taken part in pedestrian training.

We are also seeking to ensure that our own behaviours enable and encourage active and low carbon travel by increasing the proportion of the Council's fleet that are electric vehicles (9% in 2022/23), a Cycle to work scheme (32 bike orders in 2022/23) and a salary sacrifice scheme for public transport (used by 41 employees in 2022/23).

### **Cleaner and more attractive city and neighbourhoods**

Our focus here is on promoting environmental responsibility amongst residents to achieve a cleaner and more attractive city.



The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in Quarter 3 was 29% (7,505 tonnes recycled, reused or composted of 25,910 tonnes of total household waste). Comparator figures (%) for the North East and England are shown in the chart. We are working with the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership (STWWMP) to change residents' behaviours around recycling and contamination of recycling. The South of Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership has a joint communications plan in place which includes regular recycling updates. During the festive period towards the end of December 2023, we delivered a campaign of communications to encourage recycling of Christmas waste, including flat packing of cardboard to maximise recycling space in recycle bins and communication correct bin usage for other Christmas waste to avoid contamination. We continue to promote and encourage the use of refill stations in the city to avoid single use plastic waste and as at the end of Quarter 3 Sunderland has approximately 125 refill stations (up by 5 on the end of Quarter 2).

At the end of Quarter 3, the percentage of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level was 4.5%, lower than Quarter 2 (at 5%) and lower than the same period in the previous year (Quarter 3 of 2022/23 at 7.5%). The % of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having levels of dog fouling that fall below an acceptable level was 0% and graffiti was 1.5%. In Quarter 3 service requests within timescale were as follows: litter debris & leaves 98.9%, graffiti & flyposting 89.3%, animal fouling 98.3%, grass cutting 90.9%, shrubs & hedges 90% and fly tipping 98.2%. Performance for all areas was better than the target set for the service.

We are issuing sanctions where appropriate following enforcement investigations. In Quarter 3, 1,249 enforcement activities had been carried out. The enforcement activities included 402 investigations, 310 warning letters, 2 Community Protection Warnings, 4 Section 47 notices (businesses), 457 Section 46 notices (residents) and 74 other notices/activities. Both section 46 and 47 notices relate to the storage, disposal and presentation of waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Sunderland is one of six local authorities in the North-East joining forces with environment organisations to plant trees across the region as part of the North-East Community Forest – improving the natural environment and creating healthier and happier places. The North-East Forest initiative aims to plant up to 500 hectares of trees by 2025, with a long-term goal to increase canopy cover across the North-East to 30% by 2050 – almost double the current national average. Contributing to this, we set out to deliver 13 hectares of new tree planting in Sunderland in the 2022-23 planting season (exceeded with 21.9 hectares planted). New planting sites (that in total exceed the 13-hectare annual target) have been given in-principle funding approval by the NECF and are being finalised for planting in 2023-24. A Tree management strategy is in place, with a 3-year contract ensuring arrangements for inspection regimes, timely identification of hazards, response to complaints and other tree monitoring and management requirements.

An environmental programme in the Coalfields area (Link Together) will deliver an ambitious and varied programme to upgrade 13 greenspaces improving access for residents in the area. Alongside environmental improvements such as woodland management, wetland creation, grassland restoration and other improvements, the programme will engage local communities generating benefits for health and well-being from accessing and connecting with nature.

# VIBRANT SMART CITY

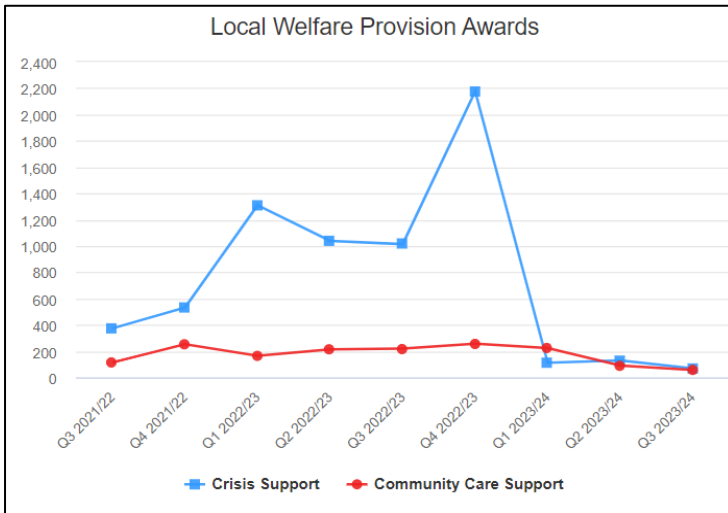
More resilient people – more people feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods – more residents participating in their communities – more people visiting Sunderland and more residents informing participating in cultural events, programmes, and activities.



## CITY CONTEXT

CURRENT DATA (LATEST AVAILABLE)	COMPARATIVE DATA	SUNDERLAND TREND
Proportion of households considered to be fuel poor 2021: 13.8%	England 13.1%, NE 14%	Declining (2017/18: 12%)
Residents supported by food banks: Qtr.3 2023/24: 6,325	N/A	Improving (Qtr. 3 2022/23: 8,151)
Crime (recorded incidents) Apr – Dec 2023: 22,529	N/A	Declining (Apr – Dec 2022: 21,814)
Residents' feelings of safety (local) Jan 2023 – Dec 2023: 95%	Northumbria Force 94%	Improving (Jan 2022 – Dec 2022: 93%)
Recorded incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Dec 2023: 48	N/A	Improving (Dec 2022: 87)
Proportion of residents proud to live in Sunderland (Residents Survey) 2023: 43%	N/A	No change (2022/23 43%)
Number of visitors to the city 2022: 8,512,000	N/A	Declining (2018: 9,180,000)
Overall spend of visitors to the city 2022: £510m	N/A	Improving (2018: £475m)

# COUNCIL LED PROGRESS AND ACTION

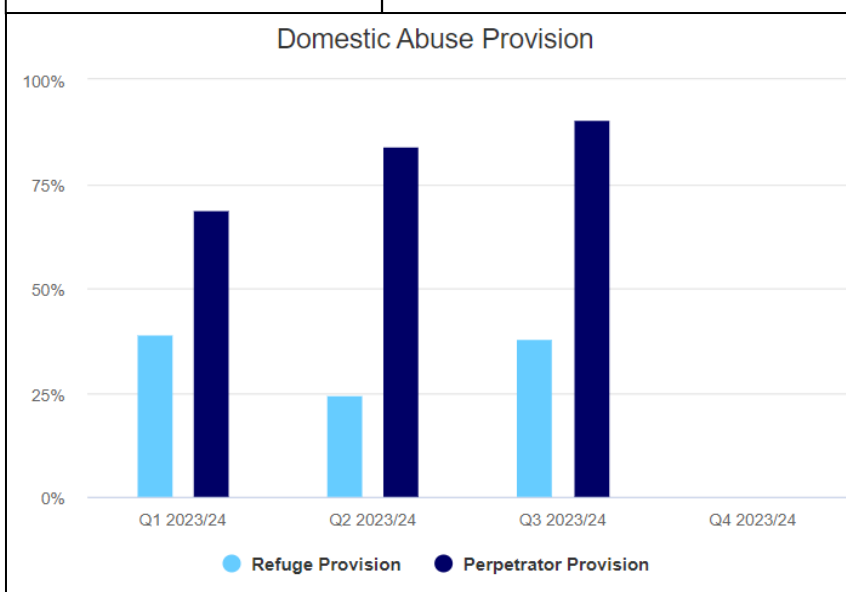
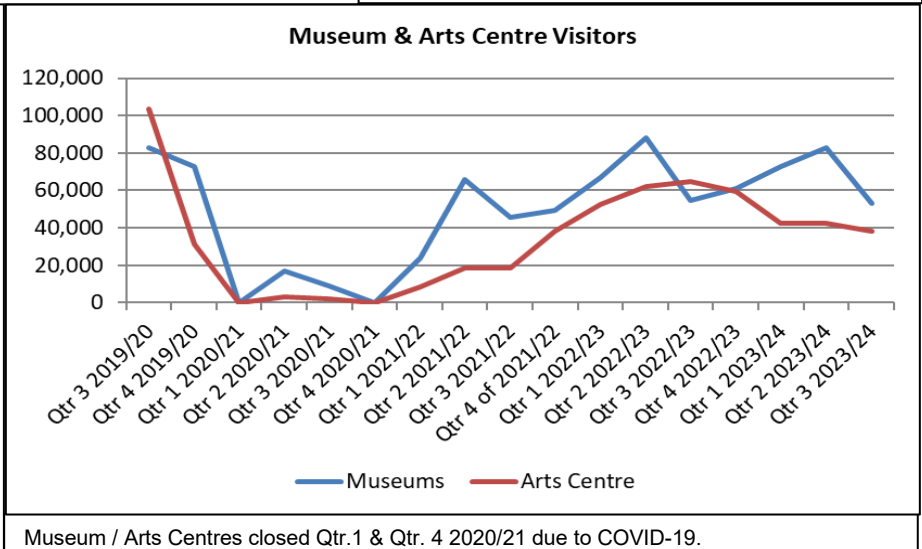


## 14 Events

Events facilitated by the Council  
Quarter 3 of 2023/24

## 40

Activities delivered by the Heritage Partnership  
Quarter 3 2023/24



## 14

retailers signed up to the **Responsible Retailers' Scheme**.

## 6

Test Purchases carried out.  
Quarter 3 2023/24

2023/24 Timeline
More resilient families in Sunderland
Maximise Household Support Grant to vulnerable groups across the city
Develop Fuel Poverty Plan and partnership approach to Cost of Living Crisis support programme
Develop Community Digital and Health Hubs from the Warm Spaces approach
Implement the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Prevention Strategy
Develop the council's first rough sleeper accommodation
Refresh Sunderland's Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2023-2026
Tackle anti-social behaviour and perceptions of crime in the City Centre through the SAIL project
Development of multi-cultural and community events across the city
Open Elemore Park café and garden centre and secure investment for wider park developments
Establish the Sunderland VCS Alliance as an independent Community Interest Organisation
World Class music events staged in the city
Sunderland's Heritage collections, archives and buildings enjoyed by residents
New national/international events - Host British leg of the 2023 World Triathlon Championship series
Seaburn Masterplan reviewed

### Residents who are more resilient to ongoing challenges including the cost-of-living crisis

We know that our communities have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with hardship continuing for some in the face of challenges presented by the rise in the cost of living. The number of residents supported by the 6 food banks that report figures to the Council (Sunderland Foodbank, its Distribution Centres and 5 Independent food banks) rose continually over the two years of 2021/22 and 2022/23 peaking at 9,893 for Quarter 4 of 2022/23. In the first half of 2023/24 figure fell (6,319 in Quarter 2), however, it was anticipated that figures would rise in the latter half of the year reflecting seasonal trends. In Quarter 3, there were 6,325 residents supported by foodbanks.

In Quarter 3 there were 87 Crisis Support Awards (Local Welfare Provision) down on the 112 made in Quarter 2. In Quarter 4 of 2022/23 there were 1,014 awards, however, the figures are not comparable as Crisis Support Awards during 2022/23 included awards made under the Council's Household Support Fund. There were 79 Community Care Support Awards made in Quarter 3 - reduced on the 91 made in previous quarter (Quarter 2 of 2023/24) and reduced on the 220 awards made in the same period in the previous year (Quarter 3 of 2023/24).

Latest figures for Fuel Poverty are for 2021 with 13.8% of households considered to be fuel poor – higher than the England figure (at 13.1%) but lower than the North-East (at 14%). This is a small decrease of 0.8% percentage points compared to the figure for 2020. The 2023/4 timeline activity of develop Fuel Poverty Plan and partnership approach to Cost of Living Crisis support programme, was completed in Quarter 1 with the Financial Wellbeing Strategy agreed by Cabinet in June 2023, and delivery plan in place.

Following on from Warm and Welcoming spaces, funding was secured for continued work alongside the VCS to enhance delivery of essential local support services and activities to meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents - growing the 'Links for Life' social prescribing offer in the city. A call for projects was launched to the VCS in September 2023 with 34 applications approved for delivery involving 46 delivery partners / venues. The Links for Life delivery commences from January 2024 and is funded till the end of the year, with evaluation arrangements in place to assess outcomes. The Links for Life programme is being supported by the delivery of the 24 digital hubs to enable digital inclusion for all.

As at the end of December 2024, the average number of days in temporary accommodation for those presenting as homeless was 141 days. The Homelessness Reduction and Sleeping Rough Strategy, and its action plan have been approved by Cabinet and are being

implemented. Work has been progressed to develop the council's first rough sleeper accommodation. The Housing Service has identified 3 schemes to provide accommodation and support for clients who are homeless or have experienced rough sleeping. These will provide 34 units of accommodation with support, for clients with various levels of support needs and at various places on the journey from the street to independent living. The schemes are now expected to open in mid-2024 or early 2025.

We have been working to maximise the Housing Support Fund for the current year for vulnerable groups, with payments for agreed cohorts confirmed and issued by the end of January 2024.

### **More people feeling safe in their homes and neighbourhoods and businesses benefitting from the city's safe and secure environment**

Crime for April to December 2023 (at 22,529 recorded incidents) has increased when compared with the same period in the previous year (21,814 recorded incidents).

We are committed to disrupting criminal and anti-social behaviour through intervention and enforcement with 26 intelligence led pro-active disruption activities carried out in relation to licensing between April and December 2023. We hope to engage 100% of retailers in the city in our Responsible Retailers Scheme - with a further 15 retailers signing up in Quarter 3. We continue to work to prevent sales of age-restricted products and illicit tobacco / alcohol. Trading standards will carry out a visit following receipt of a complaint and additionally in Quarter 3 we carried out 6 test purchases.

Based in the heart of the city centre, the SAIL Project (Sunderland Altogether Improving Lives) aims to make Sunderland city centre safer, more attractive and more vibrant. At the end of its first year of operating (in December 2023) rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour was down by 82%, Alcohol related ASB down by 69%, Public Disorder down 21%, Burglary down 62%, Vehicle crime down 50%. Partners operating in the project include representatives from Sunderland City Council, Northumbria Police, Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit, Sunderland BID (Business Improvement District) and support services.

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 (latest available data), there were 128 first time entrants (per 100,000 population aged 10-17) to the Criminal Justice System, better than the North-East figure of 146 and the England figure of 172. In Quarter 3, 1,229 young people have attended a prevention bus session. The bus visits schools and communities across the city and is a partnership effort to help ensure young people have healthy, happy lives and are not left behind. Staff on the bus provide support on topics such as bullying, online safety, mental health, sexual health, drug & alcohol issues and careers advice. A key aim of our prevention activity is to prevent young people entering the criminal justice system.

In Quarter 3, the percentage of residents surveyed who felt very or fairly safe was 95% - a 2% improvement on the same period in the previous year, and now above the Northumbria Police Force average (94%).

Sunderland's Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls Strategy is being refreshed for publication on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. A whole system approach to training will be explored with partners to equip those on the frontline to recognise abuse in its varying forms and with a focus around active bystander and how to challenge unacceptable behaviours and language. Improvements in feelings of safety amongst women will be monitored through the annual Residents Survey.

In April 2022, the council successfully launched a holistic Domestic Abuse Services model to meet its statutory obligations under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The service provides safe accommodation with specialist onsite support, specialist outreach support for survivors and children, early intervention, perpetrator intervention and support, a sanctuary scheme and a complex needs dispersed accommodation and support service. In Quarter 3, 38% (14 of 37)

refuge referrals were accommodated. 25 children were in accommodation during Quarter 3, with all receiving support. Refuge referrals may be rejected for a range of reasons including: if the client /survivor does not want support or they decline the accommodation offer, if they are identified as unsafe to work with, have previous convictions for offences such as arson / violence or their needs can be better met elsewhere. Where appropriate they will be signposted to other domestic abuse or housing services. A review of complex needs provision has been undertaken, resulting in a realignment of services for this cohort. In terms of the availability of suitable accommodation, a wider sufficiency review is underway of current provision assessed against the Department of Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) quality standards for safe supported accommodation provision (including refuge). It is anticipated that the review will be concluded by June 2024, and an improvement plan subsequently developed.

90% (28 of 31) eligible referrals to domestic abuse perpetrator services were accepted. Wider work in relation to perpetrators is ongoing with a whole system approach being explored with partners. The training will equip those on the frontline to recognise abuse in its varying forms, with a particular focus around active bystander and how to challenge unacceptable behaviours and language. This is supported by wider arrangements via the strategy priority pillar, Pursuing Perpetrators.

### **Residents feeling proud of the city and the place where they live with more people active and participating in their communities**

This commitment is about residents, including children and young people, being able to engage with and participate in their communities and feeling proud of where they live. Results from the Residents Survey carried out in Autumn 2023 are now available and show that the percentage of respondents that are proud to live in Sunderland is 43% - consistent with the findings of the 2022 survey (also at 43%).

Through our external communications we aim to increase awareness of the activities and opportunities in Sunderland that enable individuals to engage in their communities. Through our *#WeAllMakeSunderland* Civic Pride communication campaign we have been sharing and celebrating the stories of the people and places that make Sunderland. An evaluation will be completed by the end of March. We continue to engage people through Sunderland UK social media channels. Our audience continues to grow with 32,255 Facebook and 42,405 Twitter followers as at the end of Quarter 3.

We continue to seek opportunities to support people in Sunderland to contribute to their communities and the city through volunteering. In Quarter 3 this included: 459 people volunteering on place-based activities, and more on other volunteering opportunities including libraries, chaperones, digital inclusion support, walk leaders and Big Bike Ride volunteers.

Through the Changing Places programme work has progressed to improve facilities (changing places) in eight community locations (including 4 leisure centres and 2 parks) to enable people with complex needs to participate in their communities. All eight new changing places will be completed by the end of March 2024.

### **More people visiting Sunderland with businesses thriving and more residents participating in cultural events and activities**

Prior to 2020, the number of visitors to the city (and associated spend) showed a continued upward trend (visitor numbers increased from 8.24m in 2016 to 9.49m in 2019 and spend from £399m to £500m in the same period). As the Covid-19 pandemic hit the UK in early 2020 however, cultural venues and events were particularly impacted due to the greater challenges of ensuring social distancing and safe delivery. In 2020, visitor numbers reduced to 4.38m and visitor spend to £219m. With Covid continuing to impact across 2021, figures remained low but improved, at 5.73m visitors and £314m visitor spend. Latest available figures, for 2022, show that visitor numbers increased to 8.51m visitors and £510m spend. Following on from the two-

year post-covid Tourism Recovery Plan, a new 10-year Tourism Strategy will take forward tourism for Sunderland. Through our City Plan we have committed to delivering new national and international sporting events and staging world class music events to attract visitors and for residents to enjoy.

Sunderland Empire Theatre re-opened its doors on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021, following Covid-19 restrictions with 212,237 visitors in 2021/2022. In 2022/23 there were 320,649 visitors with figures exceeding the two years prior to Covid (with visitor numbers at 266,440 in 2019/2020 and 304,314 in 2018/19). In Quarter 3 of 2023/24 there have been 97,863 visitors, down on the 126,778 visitors in Quarter 3 of 2022//23. The Museum and Winter Gardens and Washington Arts Centre re-opened mid-way through Quarter 1 of 2021/22 and received 184,979 visitors in the year 2021/22 and 270,954 visits in 2022/23. In Quarter 3 of 2023/24 there have been 208,616, there were 209,992 visits in the same period in the previous year (Quarter 3 of 2022/23). Figures for the Empire Theatre, Museum and Winter Gardens and Washington Arts Centre may vary in year subject to the venue programmes.

In Quarter 3, 48 organisations engaged in the Heritage Partnership Practitioners Network and 40 activities were delivered by the Heritage Partnership.


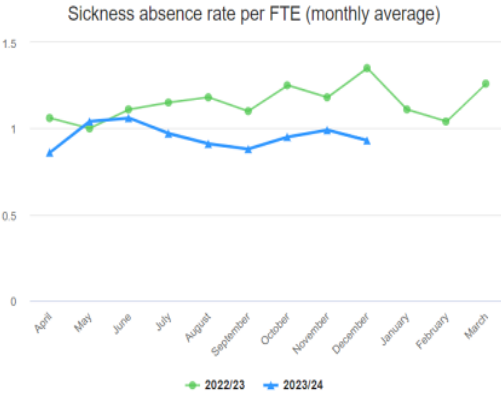
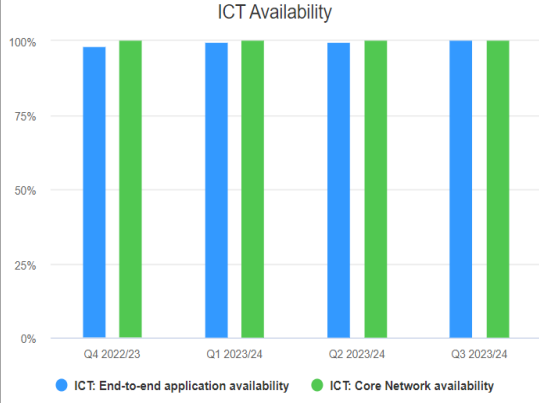


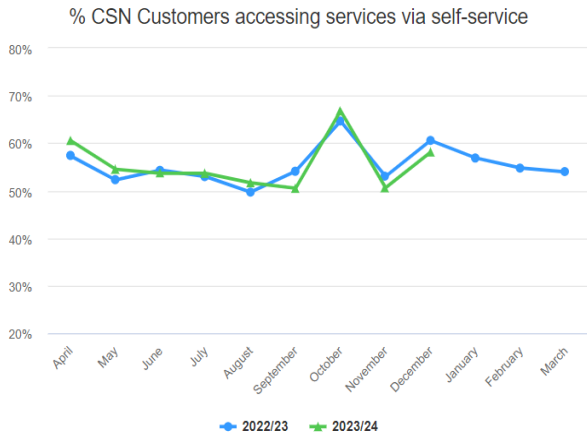
The National Glass Centre received 16,744 visitors in Quarter 3 (taking the total for April to December 2023 to 95,395).

In Quarter 3 there were 28,859 library issues (including physical books, eBooks / e-Audio and e-Magazine), 166 new adult members, 14,741 digital subscriptions and 342 interactions with the Books at Home delivery service.

# ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

Good organisational health – strong financial management – productive and innovative working – a council ready for the future



<p><b>2,702</b></p> <p>directly employed staff</p> <p>Dec 2023</p> 	<p>Sickness absence rate per FTE (monthly average)</p> 	<p>ICT Availability</p> 
<p>Council tax &amp; business rates collection</p>	 <p><b>75.8%</b> Qtr. 3 Target 76.9%</p>	 <p><b>81.5%</b> Qtr. 3 Target 82%</p>
<p>% CSN Customers accessing services via self-service</p> 	<p><b>Current Position</b></p> <p>Forecast overspend of £0.368m</p> <p><b>Quarter 3</b></p>	<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The forecast position takes into account delegated overspends and includes the estimated impact of the proposed national pay award.</p> <p>Further details can be found in the January Cabinet Third Revenue Budget Review report.</p>

## Good organisational health and strong financial management

We will ensure good organisational health through well planned services (set out through service planning arrangements) that are clearly aligned to our overall vision and ambitions, as set out in our City Plan. We will ensure that this is supported through the delivery of effective corporate functions including those relating to governance, health & safety, effective business processes (such as information management), digital adoption and ICT.

Through strong financial management we will ensure we are in a good and sustainable budget position, maximising external funding and financing opportunities aligned to the City Plan. We have in place efficient income collection arrangements ensuring that the council has access to all the maximum available resource to deliver services.

At the end of Quarter 3, there were 2,702 directly employed staff (12 less than in Quarter 2 of 2023/24) with a forecast budget position of a £0.368m overspend.



In previous periods the impact of Covid-19 became evident in Business Rates and Council Tax collection levels. Whilst our targets reflect the high levels of collection we aimed for pre-pandemic, we recognise there are ongoing challenges for our residents and in 2023/24 we seek to achieve a level no lower than within 5% of the target. At the end of Quarter 3, the Business Rates in year collection rate was 81.5% (target 82%) and Council Tax in year collection rate was 75.8% (target 76.9%).

In Quarter 3, £7,057,757 has been secured through funding bids for approved projects and programmes supported by the following funding initiatives: £1,566,000 Supporting Families Programme allocation, £183,000 Family Hubs grant, £3,795,826 for the 5G Innovation Regions project (Department for Science, Innovation & Technology), £1,462,931 for the Breathing Space Year 3 project (Department for Education) and £50,000 capacity funding to support the development of the Long-Term Plan for Towns initiative focused for Washington.

There were no reports to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) by the Council in Quarter 3.

### **Productive and innovative working and a council ready for the future**

As a council we continue to deliver on the organisational changes required to optimise productive and innovative working, and ensure we are a council ready for the future. In pursuit of this we are committed to thinking differently to embrace new ways of working, with our values at the heart of everything we do: *'We innovate, We enable, We respect'*. We want to support our employees to be as healthy and happy as they can be, and therefore able to be their most productive and innovative in delivering services to the communities of Sunderland.

The monthly sickness absence rate per FTE at the end of Quarter 3 is slightly lower than at the end of the same period in the previous year (1.35 December 2022, 0.93 December 2023), however, the current 12 month forecast, at 10.4 days as at the end of September 2023, remains above the target of 9 days absence per FTE per year. Following the reorganisation of the Council's structures, revised management information is in place for monitoring within Directorates. A regional benchmarking exercise was undertaken in 2023 (data for year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023), in relation to sickness absence levels across the seven North-East Local Authorities and with 1 other organisation (ranked from 1 to 8, 1 being lowest (at 11.16 days per FTE) to 8 being highest (at 15.33 days per FTE), Sunderland had a rate of 12.2 days per FTE and was ranked 5<sup>th</sup>).

We continue to promote health and wellbeing for our employees through our three-year Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2025) and annual action plan. A range of advice, support services and workplace-based health and wellbeing activities are available to our employees. In Quarter 3 there were 314 attendances at healthy choice sessions delivered by the Council's Employee Wellness Coordinator. Through the Vivup Portal platform employees can get Health & Wellbeing support via a free to use Employee Assistance Programme as well as access shopping & entertainment vouchers, to make their money go further supporting financial resilience.

We continue to develop a new operating model to ensure that the council is as customer focused and effective as it can be. Alongside this, the adoption and enhancement of digital technologies continues, for smart working focused on efficient and effective customer outcomes.

Work is continuing to support frontline employees to engage and digitally transact, supporting the organisations Self-Serve model. At the end of Quarter 3, 430 frontline workers have access to a kiosk ICT licence which can be accessed on individual corporate devices, personal devices or digital touch down zones. To further widen access laptops in 63 catering locations have been enabled to support kiosk ICT licences. 16 Tech Mates volunteers have been recruited internally with 29 employees registered since November to be buddied by the Tech Mates to receive digital support. A Digitally Ready Toolkit will be launched providing information to managers on resources and support available.

The delivery of automation to enable self-service of personal information, leave and time related payments has increased to 60% of the Council's workforce, with the rollout moving onto to frontline workforce next quarter. Wrap around support and training is being offered to support frontline workers with digital skills and confidence. The Learning and Development team are delivering tailored group training courses and working with Sunderland College to expand the successful pilot of individual training, where frontline workers achieved a Level 1 digital skills qualification.

In Quarter 3, 58% (217,259) of our Customer Service Network customers accessed services through self-serve – exceeding the target of 46%.