

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.

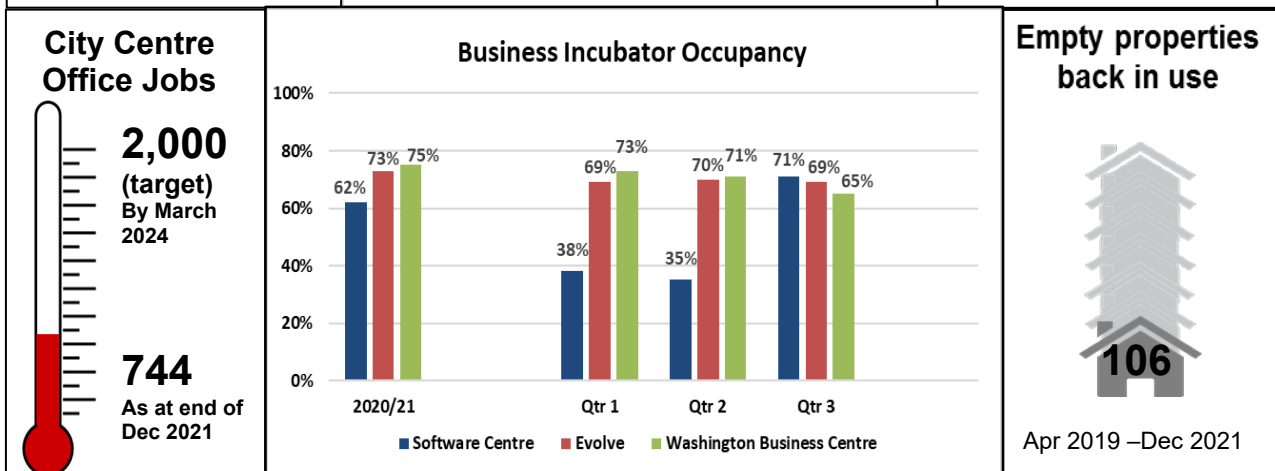
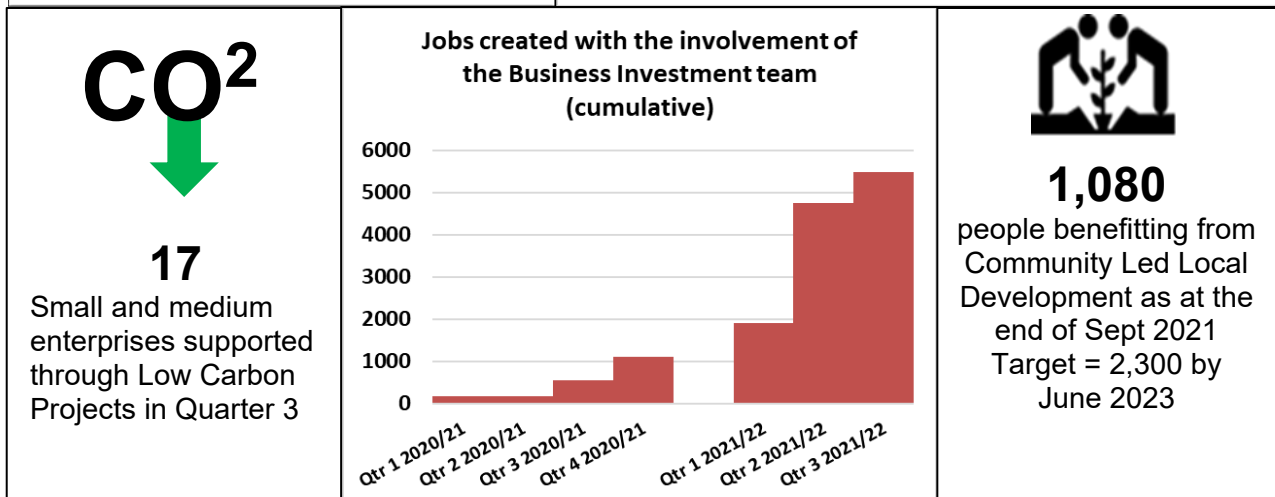
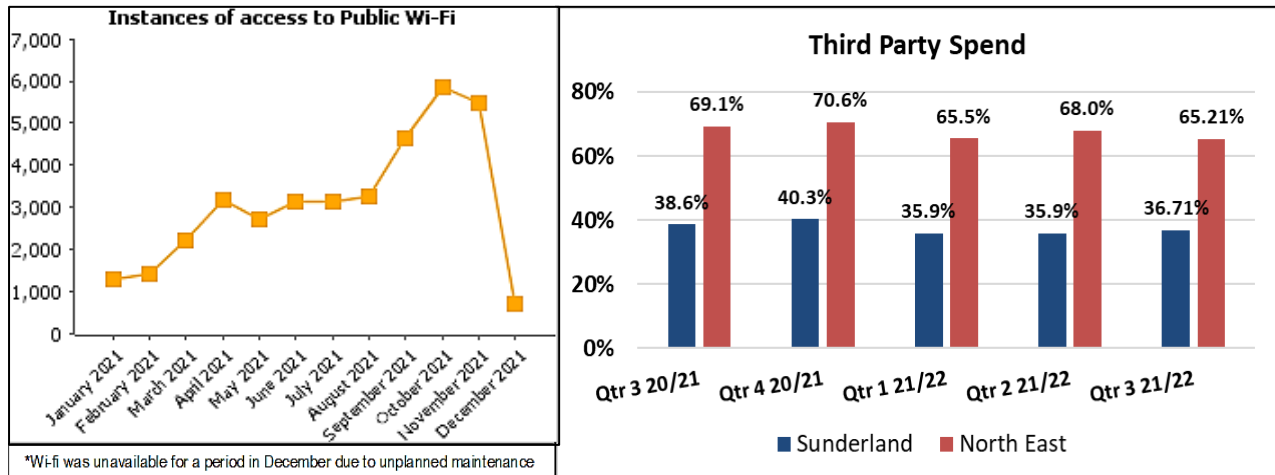


CITY CONTEXT

	COMPARATIVE DATA	SUNDERLAND TREND
% of properties with ultrafast broadband December 2021: 63.5%	UK 67.6%	Declining (December 2020: 63.6)
CO2 emissions estimates for Sunderland (per capita) 2019: 4.2 tonnes)	NE 5.5, England 4.9	Improving (2015: 5 tonnes)
Employment rate Oct 2020 – Sept 2021: 65.9%	NE 70.4%, GB 74.6%	Declining (Oct 2019- Sept 2020: 71.9%)
Proportion of workers earning below Living Wage Foundation rates 2020: 16.1%	NE 22.5%, GB 20.1%	Improving (2016: 26.4%)
Median wage workers 2021: £513.10	NE £539 GB £613	Improving (2017: £493)
% Population NVQ Level 4 qualification 2020: 29%	NE 34.5% GB 43.1%	Improving (2016: 25.9%)
GCSE - % achieving a grade 4-9 in Maths & English 2018/19 (Exams): 58.6% 2020/21 (Teacher Assessed): 69.8% (Exams & Teacher Assessed not comparable)	NE 61.6% England 64.9% NE 70.8%, England 72.2%	Improving (2017/18 57.3%) N/A
Level 3 (A level & equivalent) attainment by age of 19 in 2019/20: 48.5%	NE 50.9% England 57.4%	Declining (2015/16: 52%)
City Centre new homes Qtr. 3 2021/22: 0	N/A	No change (Qtr. 3 2020/21: 0)
People employed in the City Centre 2020: 13,348	N/A	Increasing (2016: 11,882)
Population of the City 2020: 277,846	N/A	Increasing (2016: 277,307)
Net Internal Migration 2020: -403	N/A	Declining (2016: -381)
New homes-built Qtr.3 2021/22: 203	N/A	Declining (Qtr.3 2020/21: 208)
Completed affordable homes Qtr.3 2021/22: 6	N/A	Declining (Qtr.3 2020/21: 24)

COUNCIL LED ACTION & PROGRESS

2021/22 Timeline	Status
Increase in economic activity at the Port	Completed
Onsite development of Sunderland Station	On Track
New City Hall opens on Riverside Sunderland	Completed
Roll out of 5G city-wide (partnership secured)	Completed
Increased business take-up of low carbon initiatives	On Track
Deliver connected, automated logistics project	Extended



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.

The proportion of Sunderland properties with ultrafast broadband had been on a continuous upward trend to the end of Quarter 1, reaching 65.1%. In August 2021, quality checks were undertaken resulting in the figure being reset. The figure is 63.5% as at the end of Quarter 3.

In 2020/21 instances of access to public Wi-Fi in the City Centre showed a variable trend - broadly following the severity of COVID restrictions in place at the time. Since March 2021, figures have been rising, reaching 5,481 in November (more than double the March 2021 position of 2,223 instances). Due to unplanned maintenance full figures for December are unavailable.

With greater digital connectivity there also comes the opportunity to transform our travel patterns, thereby reducing overall emissions. Through our rapid charging station, we continue to support the use of electric vehicles in the city. Transactions were up from 1,094 in Quarter 2 (and from 582 in Quarter 3 of 2019/2020) to 1,572 transactions in Quarter 3.

We are actively working to become Carbon Neutral as a city by reducing our carbon emissions. Previously published data (at 4.2 for the year 2019), showed the CO2 emissions estimate for Sunderland per capita (tonnes per resident) had reduced compared to the previous year (at 4.5) and is lower than both the North East and England.

The Citywide Low Carbon Framework and Council Action Plan were adopted at the end of 2020/21 and is operational. Through the Sunderland element of the North East Low Carbon Support Programme for small and medium-term enterprises (SME's), 17 SME's have been supported in Quarter 3.

Progress has been made on the North East Community Forest with the development of a partnership agreement and identification of sites in Sunderland for planting. The completion of the Connected, Automated Logistics Project (CAL) has been extended to the end of June 2022 due to labour shortages.

More and better jobs

Our focus in our City Plan was on increasing 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.

As the Coronavirus pandemic hit in 2020, and persisted into 2021, businesses and employment were impacted. Latest figures on employment show that the employment rate for Sunderland fell to 65.9% for October 2020 to September 2021, from 71.9% in October 2019 to June 2020. Our aim now is to ensure that the city and its residents emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic in a strong and competitive position.

Through these challenging times for business, we've continued to ensure that our Council activity supports the local economy where possible. 65.9% of all Council third party spend was within the regional economy, and £19,371,089 of social value was secured through our procurement projects in Quarter 3.

Onsite works have commenced at Hillthorn Business Park, with main building works on track to commence in Quarter 4. The site is expected to deliver 620,000sq ft of industrial and advanced

manufacturing space and approx. 1,600 jobs once fully developed. It will complement IAMP in supporting the needs of industrial, advanced manufacturing, storage and distribution business.

The Port has had a very successful year in relation to increasing its economic activity which is demonstrated by increased tonnage which rose from 780,371 tonnes in the calendar year 2020 to 953,482 tonnes in calendar year 2021, representing an increase of 22.18%. The increased tonnage has also led to an increase in turnover which is forecast to rise from £6.049m in 2020/21 to £6.895m in 2021/22 which is an increase of 13.99%. By the end of the next quarter, it is anticipated that 2 clients will have taken an option or signed a lease for Port land.

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 - thus reducing the gap in the median wage between Sunderland residents and Sunderland workers (with the weekly median wage for Sunderland residents being £29.30 lower than that for workers as of April 2021).

Further progress has been made on the delivery of the Community Wealth Strategy, supported by the Community Wealth Charter. Delivery of the Community Wealth Strategy is key to our long-term aspiration of being a real Living Wage city.

Previously published data shows progress has been made with the percentage of workers living below the living wage foundation rate reduced from 26.4% in 2016 to 16.1% in 2020, better than the North East (22.5%) and England (20.4%). New local data shows there are 57 accredited real Living Wage employers in the city and 6,202 workers employed by them.

As the city and its residents emerge from the pandemic, we will seek to ensure residents have the skills to be in a strong and competitive position to access employment. We will continue to focus on tackling the barriers for those least able to access employment through initiatives such as Community Local Led Development.

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

As we recover 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 (previously published annual figures show the City Centre residential population at 3,089). 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 (previously published annual figures show 13,348 people employed in the City Centre), and it is now home to the Council with the opening of City Hall. At the end of Quarter 3, 744 new city centre office jobs have been created since April 2019.

Riverside Sunderland, along with the wider City Centre will benefit from a new heat and power network in the city centre, with funding awarded in Quarter 3. We continue to progress our plans for a range of physical developments in the city such as the onsite development of Sunderland station and new station hotel. In Quarter 3, central construction started on the station site.

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 and high-status 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. Whilst the latest 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. In Quarter 3, there were 246 additional homes in the city (including new and conversions) - of which 151 are in council tax bands C-G.

There have been 6 completed affordable homes in Quarter 3, and in support of our commitment to delivering social housing, we have exceeded our target to deliver 62 affordable homes built to let by the end of December 2021. An affordable Homes Plan is now in place.

Alongside this, we are committed to ensuring that the housing we have is of quality - with 8 empty properties brought back into use in Quarter 3 (taking the total since April 2019 to 106), and 176 privately rented properties inspected for hazards. Action has been taken by officers to work with property owners which has seen 2 Category 1 hazards resolved in the quarter.

HEALTHY SMART CITY

Reduce health inequalities enabling more people to live healthier longer lives – access to equitable opportunities and life chances – people enjoying independent lives – a city with great transport links – cleaner and more attractive city and neighbourhoods.

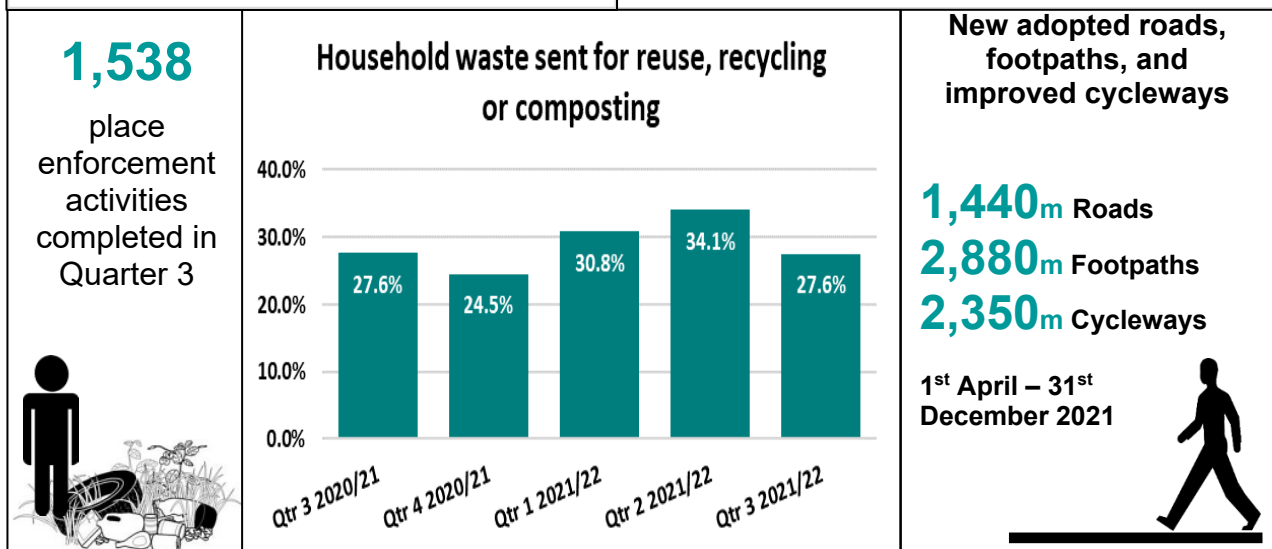
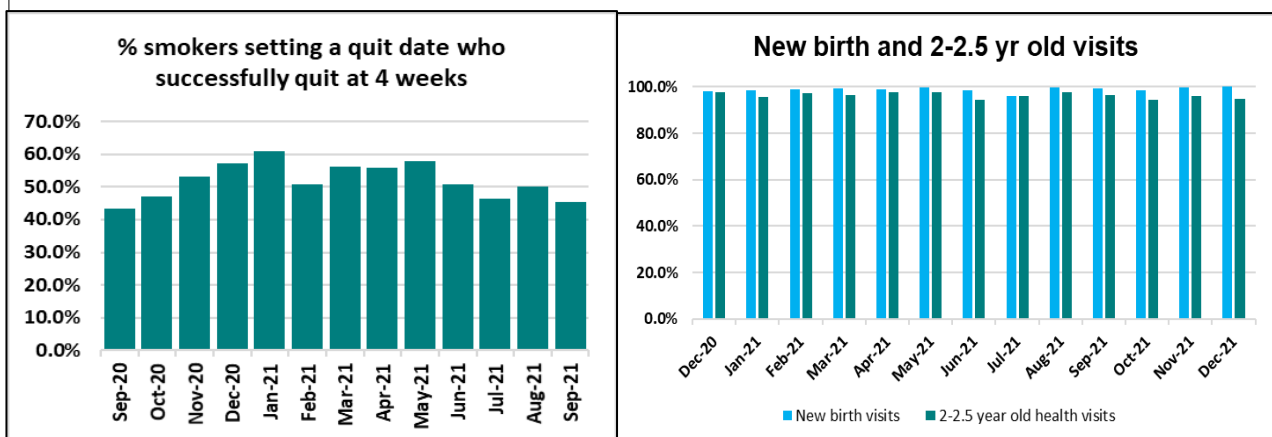
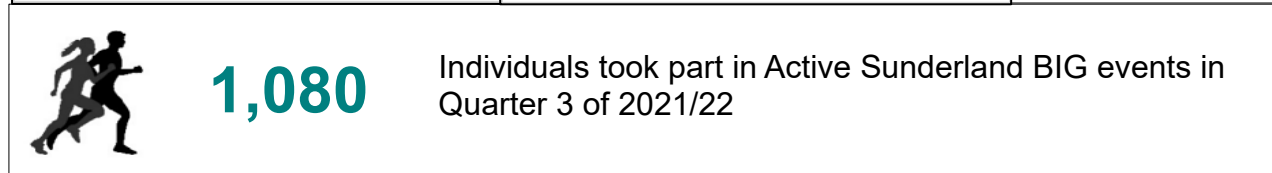
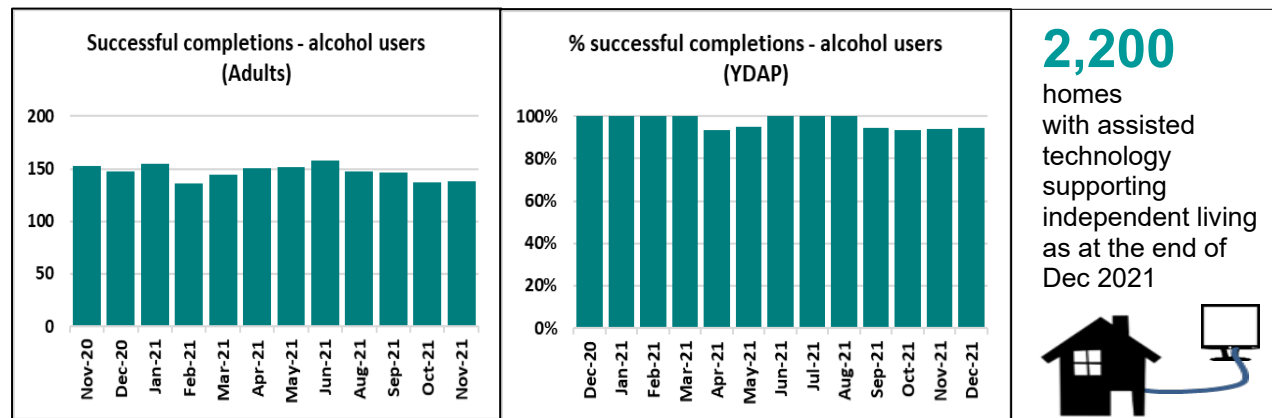


CITY CONTEXT

	COMPARATIVE DATA	SUNDERLAND TREND
Healthy Life Expectancy at birth 2017-2019 as at 2020/21: Female: 57.3 yrs. Male: 57.5 yrs.	England 63.5 yrs. NE 59 yrs. England 63.2 yrs. NE 59.7 yrs.	Declining (2014-2016: 59.3 yrs.) Declining (2014-2016: 58.8 yrs.)
Admission episodes alcohol-related 2019/20: 2,602 (Broad, Persons, per 100,000 pop)	N/A	N/A
Smoking prevalence: 2019/20: 14.6%	England 12.1%, NE 13.6%	Improving (2015/16: 18%)
The proportion of adults who are overweight or obese 2019/20: 73.5%	England 62.8%, NE 67.6%	Declining (2015/16: 70.1%)
Prevalence of overweight (incl. obese) among children in Year 6 2019/20: 36.9% <i>(Local authority data not included in the release for 2020/21)</i>	2019/20 England 35.2%, NE 37.5% 2020/21 England 40.9%. NE 44.2%	Improving (2015/16: 39.8%)
% of people that are fairly active / active (Active Lives – Public Health) 2019/20: 74.4%	England 77.1%, NE 75.4%	Improving (2015/16: 73.3%)
Women who smoke at time of delivery Qtr. 2 2021/22: 14.2%	England 9% NE 11.9%	Improving (Qtr. 2 2020/21: 17.6%)
EYFSP Good level of development 2018/19: 72.6% <i>(2020/21 data release cancelled)</i>	England 71.8%, NE 71.8%	Improving (2014/15: 66%)
Teenage pregnancy (under 18 conception rate) rolling year: Qtr. 2 2020/21: 18.8	England 13.6, NE 19.1	Improving (Qtr. 2 2019/20: 24.6)
Proportion of people (18+) living independently (without social care services) Qtr. 3 2021/22: 98.25%	N/A	Improving (Qtr.3 2020/21 98.2%)
Litter - % of relevant land & highways with deposits that fall below an acceptable level Qtr. 2 2021/22: 10.1%	N/A	Declining (Qtr.2 2020/21: 0.99%)

COUNCIL LED ACTION & PROGRESS

2021/22 Timeline	Status
Deliver Sunderland Covid-19 Health Inequalities Strategy Action Plan	On Track
New Primary School opens	Completed
SSTC3 (Northern Spire to City Centre) opens	Completed



Reduce 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 healthy life expectancy at birth in Sunderland (at 57.5 years for males and 57.3 for females 2017-2019), lower than the North East and England and declining.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, brought a new health challenge to the city. In response, our Public Health team led on managing outbreaks in line with the COVID-19 control plan and worked with environmental health and trading standards to provide advice and guidance on compliance with restrictions.

The council continues to provide local trace arrangements for positive COVID cases and has been tasked with contact tracing 13,979 cases (with an 83% success rate) since the commencement of the local scheme (Local 0) on 22nd March 2021 to the end of December 2021.

Staffing capacity remained at an increased level at the end of December 2021 as very high numbers of cases continued to be detected each day as the Omicron Variant spread. The service continued to operate a hybrid model due to the increases (the council receives positive cases that the national team have been unable to contact after 24 hours).

In addition to the impacts of infection, we know that the pandemic will have had wider health implications in relation to behaviours that can cause harms to health such as smoking, alcohol consumption, inactivity, and poor diet (leading to obesity). We will continue to work, with our partners, on areas where we can support people to make healthy choices and stay active. A full review of our community alcohol treatment services has been completed (through the Alcohol Audit), and the outcomes will inform the wider drug and alcohol strategy and associated action plans.

The Sunderland Weight Management programme commenced in August 2021 and is on track to achieve the aim of supporting 1,500 residents in the first year, having received 578 referrals in Quarter 3. Promotion with schools was also undertaken in relation to the Sunderland Healthy Schools Award Food and Nutrition Charter Mark to improve take-up in the 2021-22 academic year.

There were 389,827 Leisure Centre attendances and 78 new sign-ups to the Sunderland Step up App in Quarter 3 (taking the total for the year to 521). There were 72,907 visitors through the turnstiles of Football Hubs with 285 games played (taking the totals for the year to 174,907 through turnstiles, and 1,998 games. We continue to promote healthy choices by our own people through the Employee Wellness programme.

Latest data published in September 2021, for the three-year period of 2018-2020, shows the suicide rate for Sunderland has increased (in line with the national trend) to 14.4 per 100,000 (age 10+) from 12.4 (for 2017-2019), and is above the England rate of 10.4 and North East rate of 12.4. Local data is monitored through the NE regional real time suicides dashboard and gives a more recent picture across 2020 and 2021.

Although Sunderland previously had the highest rate in the region, the latest publication shows Sunderland has shown the largest decrease since October 2019, demonstrating the positive impact of work in refocusing on the Suicide Prevention Partnership, with a new action plan and work in primary care and a suicide co-ordination arrangement to progress key actions. We will continue to work with our partners to support and enable residents to access mental health services where needed. As a Council we are progressing work towards signing up to the Mental Health Concordat. A working group is in place and a Prevention Action Plan is being developed that will outline key deliverables.

Access to equitable opportunities and life chances

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. Latest data on women who smoke at time of delivery (for Quarter 2 of 2021/22) shows an improvement to 14.2% from 17.6% for the same period in the previous year.

In Quarter 3, 100% of new birth visits and 94.6% of 2.5-year-old checks have been carried out in timescale (target of 95%). There was no update on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) Good Level of Development as the 2020/21 data release was cancelled.

Following the previous update of continuous improvement in the rate of under 18 conceptions (teenage pregnancy) and the Sunderland rate falling below the North East rate, the figure has been maintained below the North East level based on latest data (relating to Quarter 2 of 2020/21 at a rate of 18.8 conceptions per 1,000). The Teenage Pregnancy Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is currently being updated to inform a refreshed action plan to continue the overall downward trajectory.

We have worked closely with Balance North East, to educate, inform and share best practice to reduce alcohol harms, including supporting the regional approach to the alcohol-free childhood vision. Under this commitment we seek to address inequalities in opportunities and life chances that exist across geographical areas through a community asset-based approach, as set out in our Neighbourhood Plans.

People enjoying independent lives

Although 98% of people 18+ in the city live independently (without social care services) based on mid-year population estimates, we remain committed to ensuring people in the city can enjoy independent lives.

In Quarter 3 work has been undertaken to implement an enhanced hospital discharge model within Adult Social Care and in partnership with Health. This has included reviewing support mechanisms under each pathway for discharge

to streamline, whilst ensuring continued swift and safe discharge within national guidelines. With the roll out of the assistive technology in the home offer, 2,200 homes had the technology by the end of December 2021. 83% of people who use services have control over their daily lives based on latest figures for 2019/20 (there is no update expected for 2020/21 as the survey was cancelled due to Covid-19).

The rate of emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65+ (per 100,000), has increased from 2,628 in 2019/20, to 3,164 for 2020/21 and is above both the North East (at 2,311) and England (at 2,023). With a partnership plan in place, agreed through the Aging Well Delivery Board, we are continuing our work of using local intelligence for targeted work, at a ward and locality level, on reducing emergency admissions due to falls. This includes identifying cohorts of residents who have frailty indicators for engagement, prevention and early intervention support.

A City with great transport and travel links

Our emphasis within this City Plan commitment is about ensuring that people can move around the city with ease through improved transport routes - enabling access to key employment sites. Alongside vehicle transport routes, great travel links is also about having the necessary infrastructure to enable active travel. In Quarter 3 there were 0m of adopted roads, 420m of adopted footpaths and 2,100m of new or improved cycleways (taking totals for 1st April to 31st December to 1,440m adopted roads, 2,880m adopted footpaths and 2,350m improved cycleways).

2,397 school children have taken part in pedestrian training in 2021/22, and although cycle training has been impacted by COVID, 1,535 children have taken part in cycle training in the same period. Our aim is to provide better walking and cycling routes linking communities to the riverside and seafront and to green spaces, and in Quarter 3 the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor 3 cycle route opened.

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. In Quarter 3 work has been completed to establish the capacity and direction of constituted groups and volunteers across parks and open spaces in the city (within Area Arrangements).

The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in Quarter 3 was 27.6%, with the total for the year so far at 30.64%, an improvement on the full year rate of 28.09% in 20/21. The new HWRC has opened and is fully operational from 1.2.2022, work is ongoing to decommission Beach Street. At the end of Quarter 2 (latest available data), the percentage of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level was 10.1% (within the target of 20%), though this is a slight decrease in comparison to Quarter 1 (at 10.4%) it is an increase on the same period in the previous year when the figure was at a lower rate of 0.99%.

To encourage communities to take greater responsibility for their environment, we are issuing sanctions where appropriate following enforcement investigations. As at the end of Quarter 3, 1,538 enforcement activities had been carried out. The Quarter 3 enforcement activities included 265 investigations, 554 warning letters, 18 Community Protection Warnings, 10 Section 47 notices (businesses) and 378 Section 46 notices (residents). Both section 46 and 47 notices relate to the storage, disposal and presentation of waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

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

COMPARATIVE DATA

SUNDERLAND TREND

**Rate of cared for children (per 10k)
Dec 2021: 101.3**

England 67
NE 108
SN 105.7

Improving
(Dec 2020: 114.5)

**Rate of CYP subject to a child
protection plan (per 10k) Dec 2021:
59.7**

England 41.4
NE 67.2
SN 56.1

Improving
(Dec 2020: 76)

**Rate of Children in Need (per 10k)
Dec 2021: 390.2**

England 321.2
NE 461.2
SN 415.3

Declining
(Dec 2020: 386.5)

**Residents supported by food banks
Qtr.3 2021: 5,908**

N/A

Declining
(Qtr. 3 2020: 5,459)

**Crime (recorded incidents): (April –
December 2021): 20,842**

N/A

Improving
(April – Dec 2020: 21,147)

**Residents' feelings of safety (local)
Qtr. 2 2021/22: 95%**

N/A

Improving
(Qtr.2 2020/21:94%)

**The proportion of people who use
services who feel safe 2019/20:
79.7% (no survey undertaken in 2020)**

England 70.2%
NE 74.7%
SN 72.8%

Improving
(2015/16: 71.5%)

**Number of visitors to the City 2020:
4,377,000**

N/A

Declining
(2016: 8,240,000)

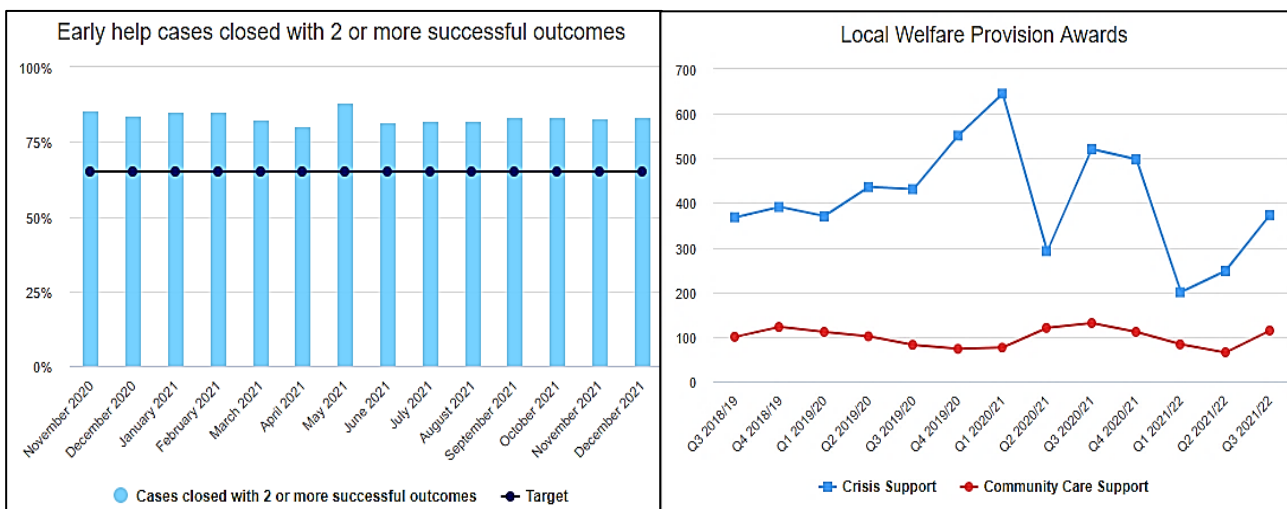
**Overall spend of visitors to the City
2020: £219m**

N/A

Declining
(2016: £399m)

COUNCIL LED ACTION & PROGRESS

2021/22 Timeline	Status
Commission new domestic abuse services model	On track



50 Events facilitated by the Council, on Council land / in council buildings in 2021/22

1,093 children and young people involved in TFC consultation activity that informs the design, delivery, or evaluation of services in Quarter 2

Museum & Arts Centre Visitors

Quarter	Museums	Arts Centre
Qtr 1 2018/19	120,000	40,000
Qtr 2 2018/19	120,000	45,000
Qtr 3 2018/19	80,000	45,000
Qtr 4 2018/19	100,000	40,000
Qtr 1 2019/20	110,000	50,000
Qtr 2 2019/20	120,000	10,000
Qtr 3 2019/20	80,000	100,000
Qtr 4 2019/20	70,000	30,000
Qtr 1 2020/21	10,000	10,000
Qtr 2 2020/21	15,000	10,000
Qtr 3 2020/21	10,000	10,000
Qtr 4 2020/21	10,000	10,000
Qtr 1 2021/22	20,000	10,000
Qtr 2 2021/22	65,000	15,000
Qtr 3 2021/22	45,000	15,000

Figures not available for Arts Centre Qtr.2 2019/20. Museum / Arts Centres closed Qtr.1 & Qtr. 4 2020/21 due to COVID-19.

30 Activities delivered by the Heritage Partnership

Quarter 2 2021/22

Council supported volunteers Qtr 3 2021/22

Category	Count
Libraries	100
Chaperones	100
Place based	100
Events/Active programme	100
Weekly programme	100
Total	439

New Indicator

100% of retailers in the city to be engaged in the responsible retailers' scheme by March 2025.

More resilient people

We will support families to enable them to be resourceful to respond to challenges and achieve the best possible outcomes for their children. Although there is little change in the rate of children in need, in Quarter 3 the rate of children subject to Child Protection Plan, or Cared For, has reduced compared with the same period in the previous year.

The following Children's Service's key delivery targets have been met as at the end of Quarter 3: % of early help cases closed with successful outcomes (at 83.5%), % of all referrals with a decision within 24 hours (at 95.4%), % of children subject to a child protection plan receiving a statutory visit within 20 working days (at 98.2%), % of Cared for Children that have an up to date Personal Education Plan (at 98.7%), % of Cared for Children that have experienced 3+ placements within the last 12 months (at 7.5%) and % of care experienced young people aged 17-21 in touch with the service within 8 weeks of previous contact (at 88%%).

We will support our people to be more resilient. We know that our communities have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with increased hardship experienced by some. During the first few months of the pandemic the use of foodbanks more than trebled and high usage continued throughout 2020/21, and into 2021/22. Since August figures have increased again with the December figure being the highest seen in the last three years and the quarterly figure increasing from 3,919 residents supported in Quarter 2, to 5,908 residents supported in Quarter 3. Foodbanks and crisis food providers are being given additional support to assist with the additional winter pressures.

The number of Crisis Support Awards (at 373 for Quarter 3 of 2021/22) also increased when compared with Quarter 2 (at 248) but was lower than Quarter 3 of 2020/21 (at 521). There were also fewer Community Care Support awards at 114 (when compared with 131 in Quarter 3 of 2020/21). The Council is working with the VCS Alliance and health partners to implement social prescribing including developing a social prescribers' model to identify and remove any barriers to delivery.

More people feeling safe in their homes and neighbourhoods

This commitment relates both to people feeling safe from crime and vulnerable adults who use our services feeling safe.

Overall, our residents feel safe in their local area, with the percentage consistently at 96% or above since 2012/13 to early 2020 based on the Northumbria Police Survey. Latest available data is for Quarter 2 of 2020/21 at 95%. Crime for April 2021 to December 2021 (at 20,842 incidents) has decreased when compared with the same period in the previous year (14,480 incidents).

We are committed to disrupting criminal and anti-social behaviour through intervention and enforcement with 14 intelligence led pro-active disruption activities carried out in relation to licensing in Quarter 3. We hope to engage 100% of retailers in the city in our Responsible Retailers Scheme once it has been possible to launch the scheme, with this having been paused during the pandemic and now expected in 2022.

More residents participating in their communities

This commitment is about residents, including children and young people, being able to engage with and participate in their communities. In 2019/20 we widened our volunteering opportunities to support more people to volunteer in a more diverse range of volunteering activities. In Quarter 3, there were 439 volunteers registered for volunteering across a range of volunteering activities including place-based activities, Libraries, Volunteer Chaperones, Events & Active Sunderland and other weekly programme activities. The greatest proportion was place based.

In Quarter 3 there were 1,093 children and young people involved in Together for Children consultation activities that will inform the design, delivery or evaluation of services.

In January 2020 'Crowdfund Sunderland' was launched enabling people to financially support local projects and causes through an online platform. 2 projects have been supported in Quarter 3, taking the total to 14 in 2021/22 raising £111,587 for Sunderland projects. We continue to engage people through Sunderland UK social media channels, with a continuous increase in followers over the year so far (23,723 Facebook and 39,371 Twitter followers as at the end of December 2021).

More people visiting Sunderland and more residents participating in cultural events, programmes, and activities

In previous years the number of visitors to the city (and associated spend) has shown a continued upward trend (visitor numbers increased from 8,240,000 in 2016 to 9,490,000 in 2019 and spend from £399m to £500m in the same period).

As the Coronavirus 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. Visitor numbers reduced from the 9,490,000 achieved in 2019 to 4,377,000 in 2020 and visitor spend reduced from the £500m in 2019 to £219m in 2020. Many cultural and visitor attractions remained closed / cancelled after other sectors began recovery.

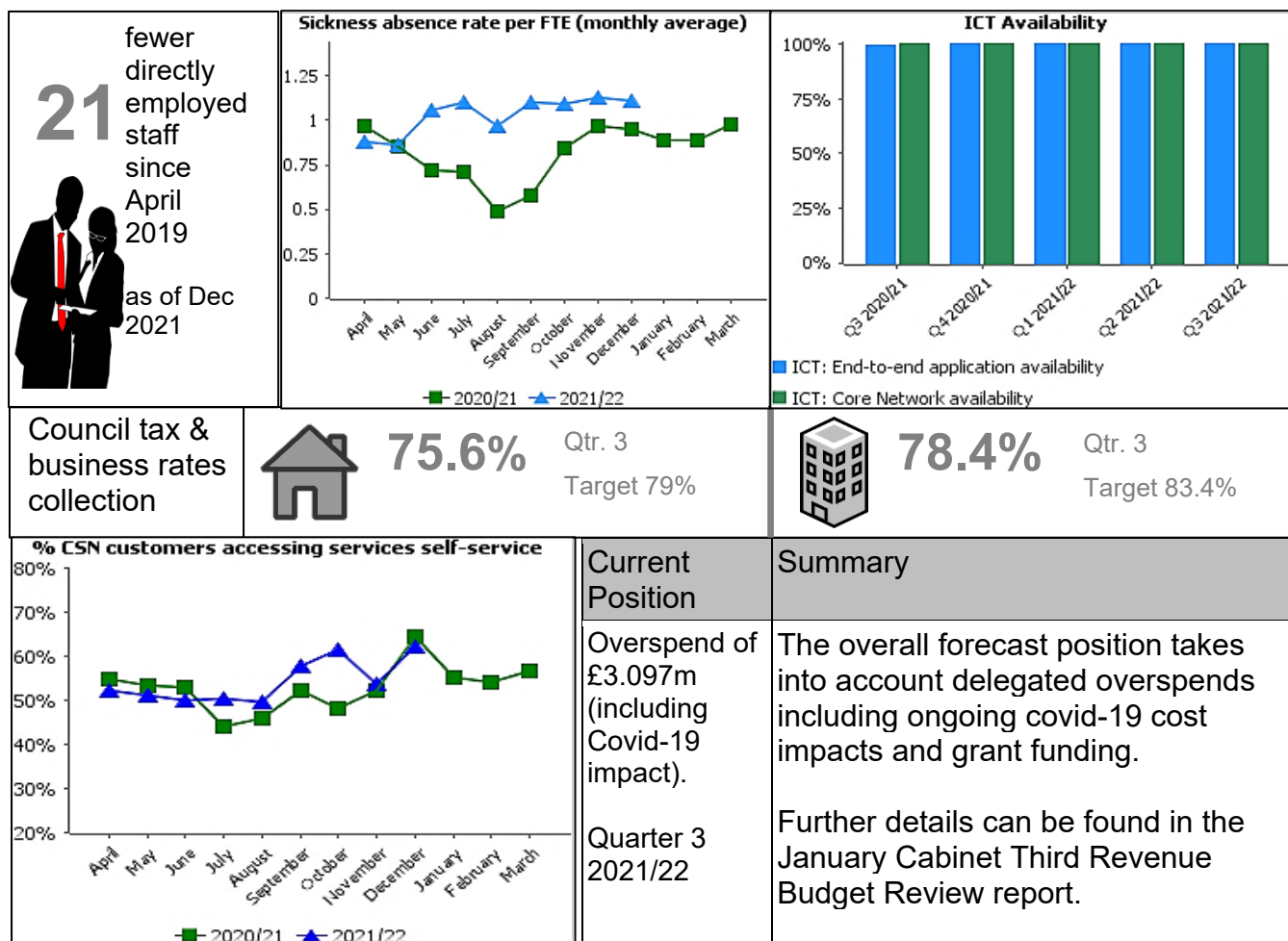
Sunderland Empire Theatre re-opened its doors on 2nd September 2021, attracted 28,556 visitors to the end of September and a further 80,621 visitors in Quarter 3. The Fire Station Auditorium is now open providing a further cultural venue in the city for live performance and music.

The Museum and Winter Gardens and Washington Arts Centre re-opened mid-way through Quarter 1. In Quarter 3 the Museum and Winter Gardens received 45,922 visitors and the Washington Arts Centre received 18,611 visitors. 30 activities were delivered by the Heritage Partnership in Quarter 2 (latest available data) and 26 organisations were engaged in the Heritage Partnership Practitioners Network during the same period.

In Quarter 2, Libraries opened all sites and in Quarter 3 there were 39,403 library issues (including physical books, eBooks / e-Audio and e-Magazine) with 432 new members. There were 10,738 digital subscriptions and the Books at Home delivery service saw 355 interactions. Confirmed figures for visitors to the National Glass Centre are expected to be available from Quarter 4. A Tourism recovery plan is in place to promote and sustain the return of visitors and participation of residents in cultural events, programmes and activities.

ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

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



Good organisational health and strong financial management

At the end of Quarter 3, there were 2,748 directly employed staff, 21 fewer compared with April 2019. We are committed to ensuring that we have a productive and healthy workforce, maintaining lower levels of sickness absence.

In March 2020, we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic swiftly to enable our workforce to work from home wherever possible, along with a wider COVID response. Business Rates Collection (at 78.4%) and Council Tax Collection (at 75.6%) are under the expected levels (of 83.4% and 79%) reflecting the impact of Covid-19 on our businesses and residents.

We are committed to maximising external funding and financing opportunities. In Quarter 3, £26,027,967 has been generated through funding bids approved, providing funding / support for: the City Centre Housing Ecosystem (a package of 3 major city centre projects), Sunderland Home of 2030 Project, the first phase of Sunderland's tree-planting funds (as part of the North East Community Forest partnership), 5 Community Renewal Fund pilot projects (delivering support to business, residents and voluntary/community groups), the Partnerships for People

and Place programme, and initial funding from the Green Heat Network Fund (Transition Scheme) to support borehole drilling and feasibility for a Sunderland Heat Network.

There was 1 report to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) by the Council in Quarter 3, for which the investigation was fully completed and the ICO agreed no further action required.

Productive and innovative working and a council ready for the future

As a Council we continue to deliver on the organisational change required to optimise productive and innovative working, to counteract financial uncertainty and respond to the new challenges brought by the COVID pandemic.

We have been developing a new operating model to ensure that the council is as customer focused and effective as it can be and are currently reviewing all Corporate Support services with improvement activity underway, automating, and digitising processes in respect of ICT, Procurement, Finance, People Management and Business Support.

The adoption and enhancement of digital technologies continues, all our ICT users can connect remotely, the first major upgrade to Windows 10 is nearing completion and an upgrade to our Office 365 suite of products is underway. All users are transitioning to Microsoft Teams and traditional network shares will be decommissioned on 31st January 2022.

We continue to invest in our digital technologies, particularly our website and digital platform to enable more and higher quality digital interaction with our customers, thereby promoting self-serve. During Quarter 3, additional 'report it' functionality was added to the Elected Members Platform and the Customer Account was released on the Council's website with significant take-up to date. Additional services are being implemented including Housing Services and Compliments, Complaints and Customer Feedback. In Quarter 3, 59% of our Customer Service Network customers accessed services through self-serve – exceeding the target of 46%.