Slavery Exploitation Team 2025-26 Review

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SET Team Overview

The Slavery Exploitation Team (SET) was originally established as a pilot to deliver a post-safehouse resettlement programme. However, an emerging gap was identified in relation to suspected cases of slavery and exploitation where no single agency held ownership because statutory duty thresholds were not met. This led to a redesign of the service model.

SET now comprises dedicated officers who work closely with partner agencies to identify and address exploitation, modern slavery, and trafficking, while ensuring survivors are supported by the appropriate services. To strengthen a coordinated multi-agency approach to the identification, prevention, and management of cases, the team established the Slavery Exploitation Risk Assessment Conference (SERAC). SERAC brings together statutory and non-statutory partners to review suspected or confirmed cases, agree a joint response, manage risk, and plan targeted interventions. These discussions also inform National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals and police investigations.

The team operates without a referral threshold; consequently, some individuals discussed may not initially present with care and support needs. In other cases, concerns may not be evident at the point of referral but emerge through subsequent investigation, at which stage Adult Social Care assessments are initiated as appropriate.

The Nottingham model is recognised nationally as an example of good practice and is referenced in the Local Government Association guidance on tackling modern slavery.

The service also addresses secondary factors associated with exploitation that impact individuals, local communities, and public services. These include anti-social behaviour, criminal activity, and physical abuse. SERAC's broad partnership ensures these wider risks and vulnerabilities are addressed through representation from neighbourhood and specialist policing, mental health services, community safety, substance misuse services, charities supporting sex workers, adult social care, children's services, the Department for Work and Pensions, HMRC, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Homes for Ukraine scheme, asylum seeker and refugee services, probation, healthcare professionals, and domestic abuse services.

SET also works closely with community connectors to ensure individuals with unstable or limited support networks can access assistance through relevant community organisations and charities. All partner organisations can refer into the team, benefitting from a coordinated multi-agency response that resolves complex issues more efficiently than would be possible for a single agency acting alone.

Without intervention, secondary impacts persist and vulnerabilities remain unaddressed. Through the SERAC partnership, targeted interventions can result in the cessation of both exploitation and its associated secondary impacts within properties and surrounding areas. In addition, tailored support is provided to address identified vulnerabilities, reducing the risk of further exploitation and longer-term harm.

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SET referrals in numbers

March 2019 – end of March 2026

Referrals received	2276

Between 01/04/2025-31/03/2026:

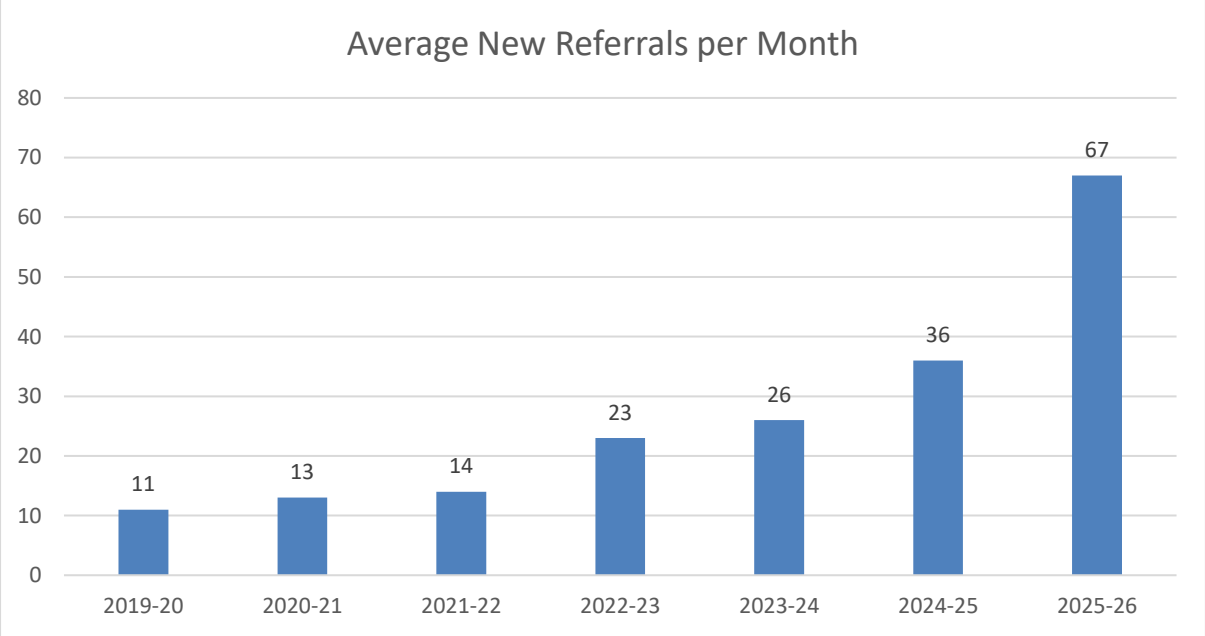
Referrals received	809
Referrals taken to SERAC*	248
Tier 1 cases	287
Tier 2 cases	522
Enquiries	42

**101 cases went to City, 96 to North and 51 to South SERACs.*

This review and analysis cover the referrals from 01/04/2025 – 31/03/2026; a total of 809.

Discrepancies in numbers used for separate data analysis is due to: certain demographics (age, nationality etc) not being known, the referral being for a property not an individual, and referrals where a person's address what was not identified or was from out of the area.

Referrals 2019-2024

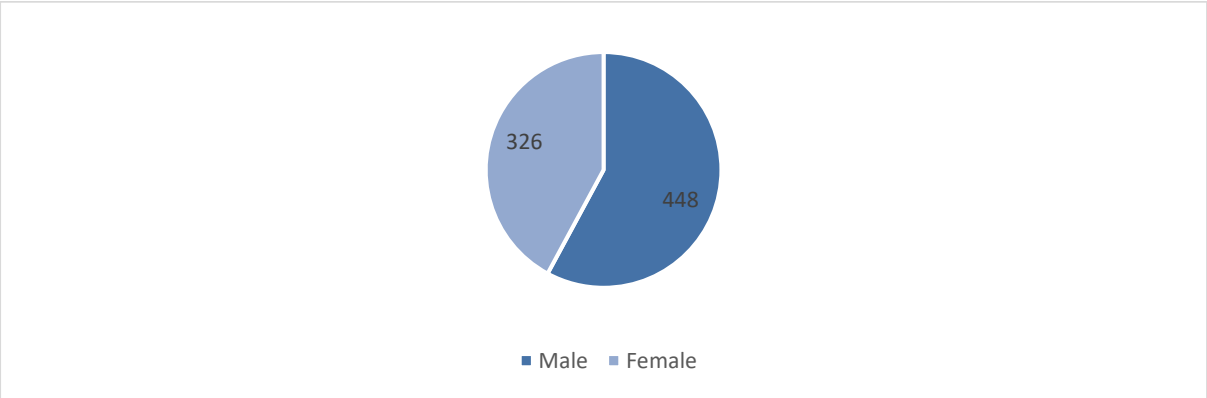


The years are grouped by financial years, with 2019-2020 including March 2019. The data is taken from referral numbers per month in each year. Following the county expansion in 2024, a training drive commenced, initiating an increase in referrals across the county.

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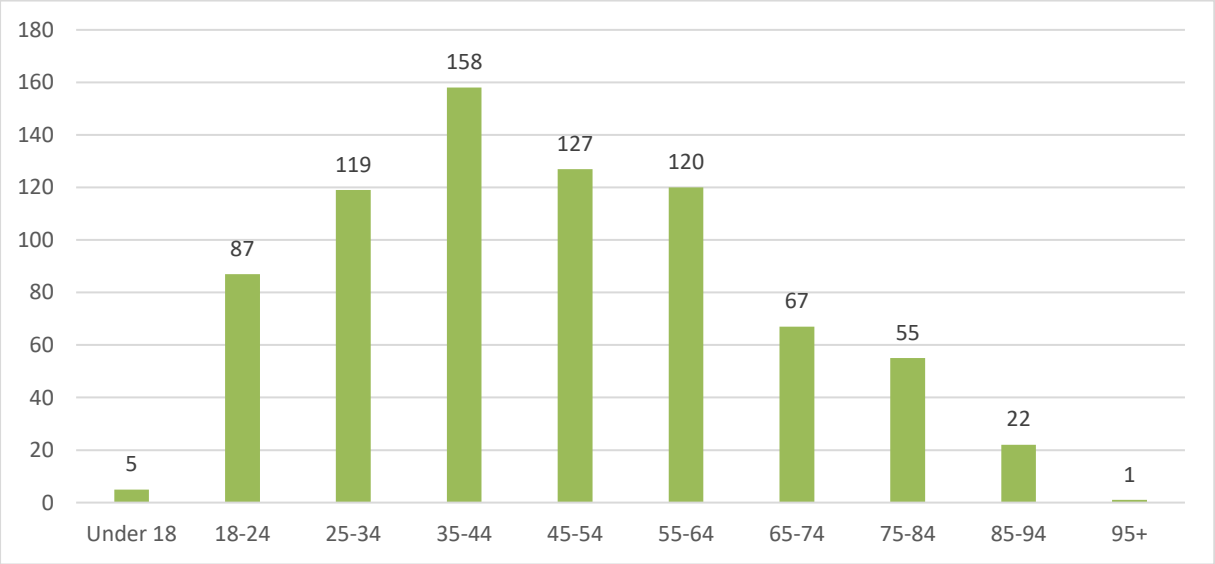
Victim Breakdown

Gender



Gender is recorded as male or female; transgender people are recorded as their identified gender. Women are more likely than men to be targeted for sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. Men are more likely to be targeted for, cuckooing, financial exploitation, and criminal exploitation. There is little difference between gender for human trafficking, labour exploitation or debt bondage.

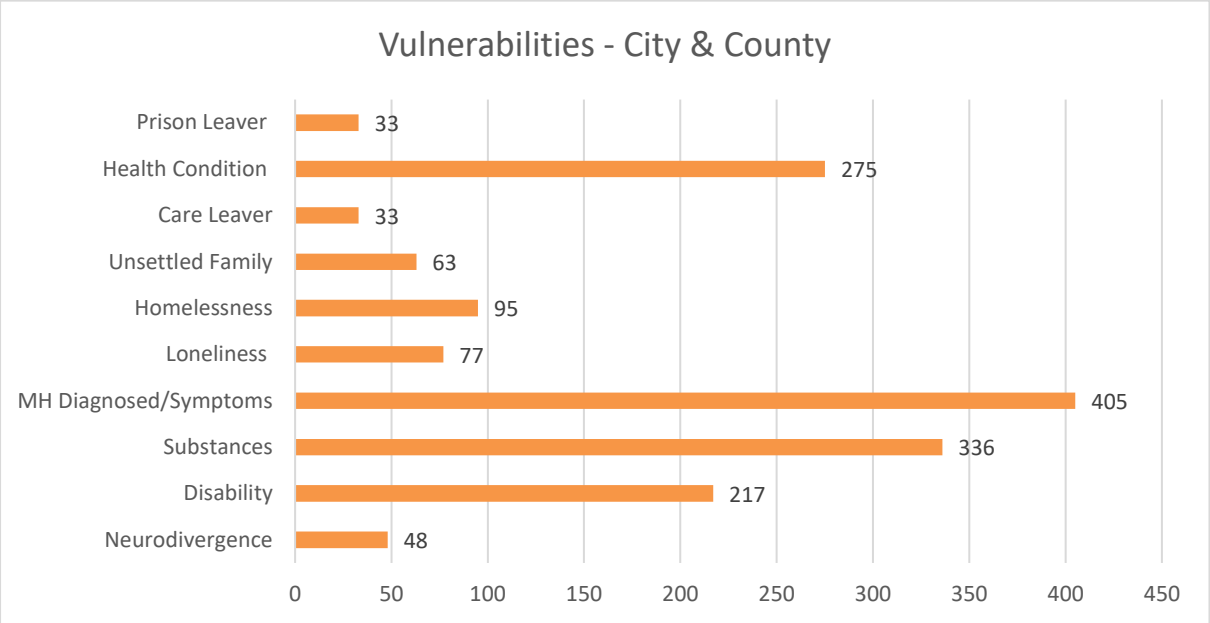
Age



Under 18's are under-represented because there is a clear pathway for exploited children within Children's Services. The most common age group referred to SET is 35-54 making up nearly 20% of cases for people (the rest were for properties), suggesting that this age group may be more likely to be targeted for exploitation and slavery.

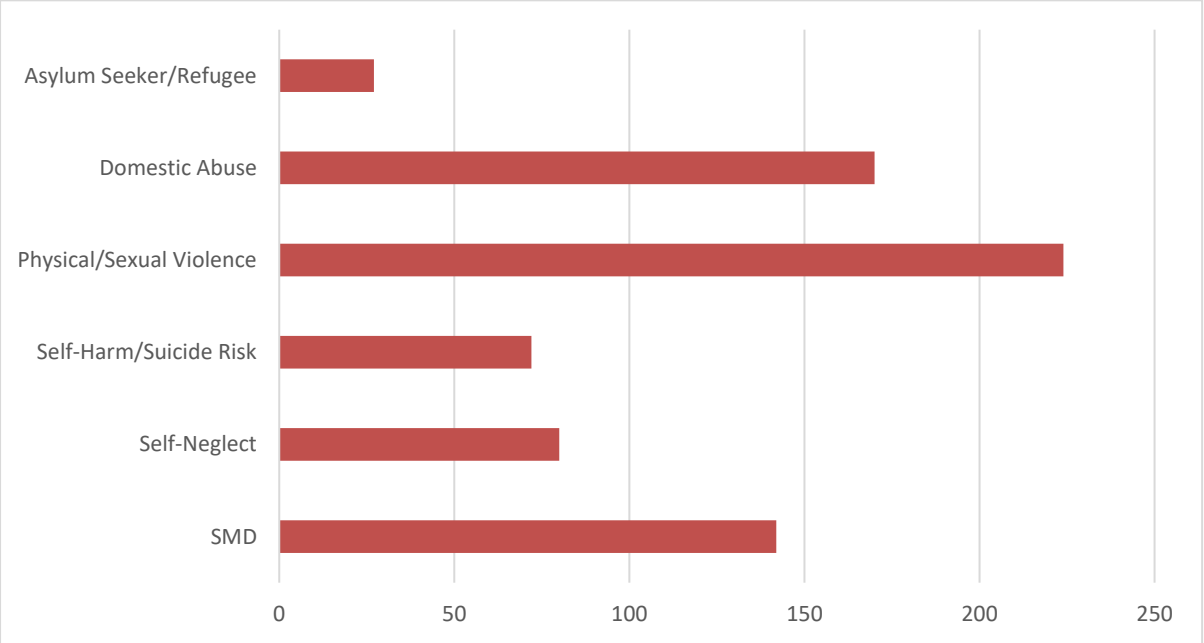
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Vulnerabilities



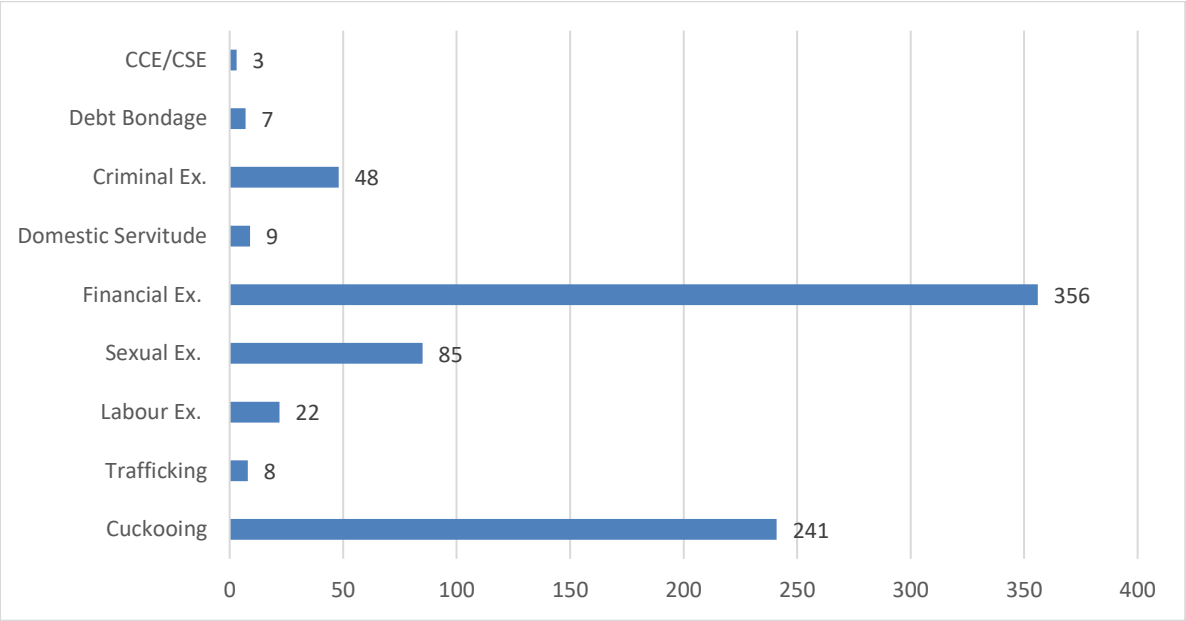
Over half of referrals had the identified vulnerability of Mental Health Issues and in just under half (42%) there was substance use. There were 1582 vulnerabilities identified over 809 referrals. There were 76 cases where vulnerabilities were either unknown or N/A (for example cases where a property of concern is referred).

Secondary Factors



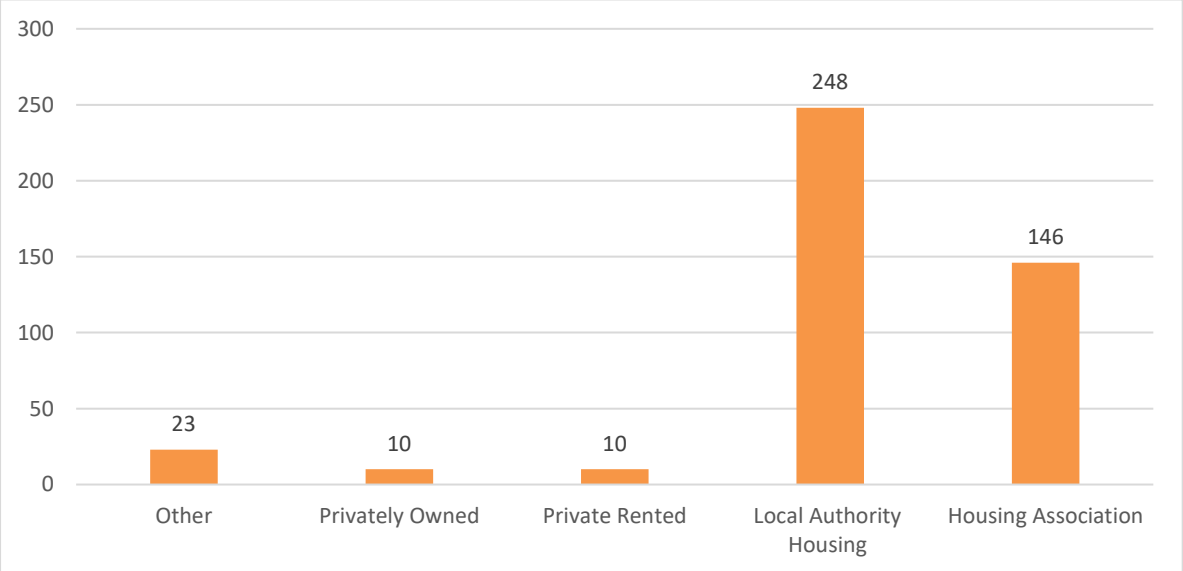
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Types of Exploitation



The most common type of exploitation was financial exploitation (identified in 44% of cases), followed by cuckooing (30%), and then sexual exploitation (11%).

Housing Status



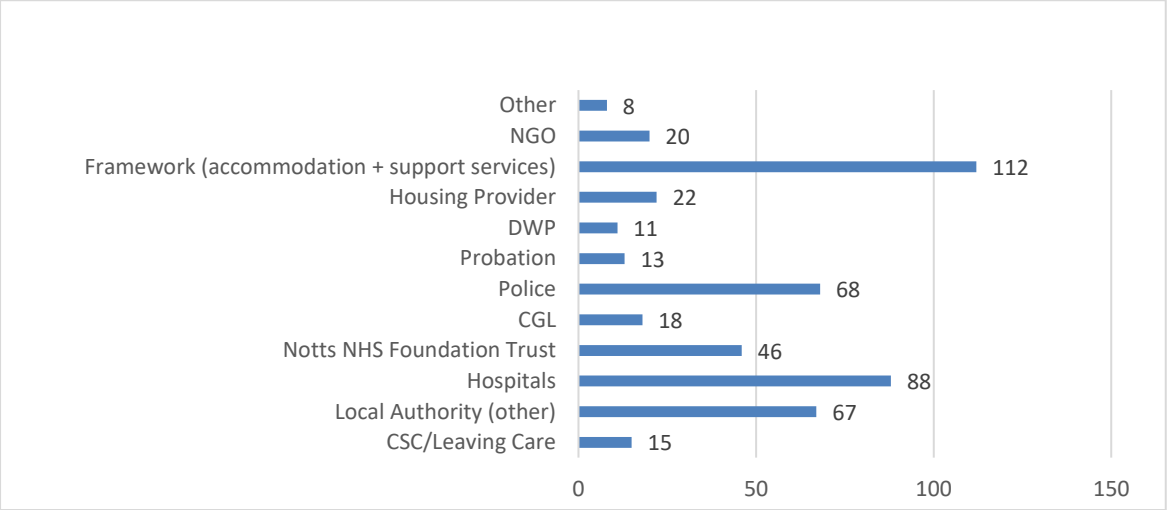
Local Authority Housing Services were the provider in 248 cases, and in the Housing Association category, 58% of referrals were Framework. Both provide accommodation specifically for vulnerable citizens, have managed processes with SET and are likely to identify issues at early opportunity.

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Other accommodation providers were Community Interest Companies, emergency accommodation (refuges, safehouses, hotels) and individuals living with friends or family. Private rented accommodation is unstaffed, and monitoring is less frequent; SET work with Selective Licensing and Safer Housing colleagues across the city and county to support identification of potential victims.

Referring Agencies

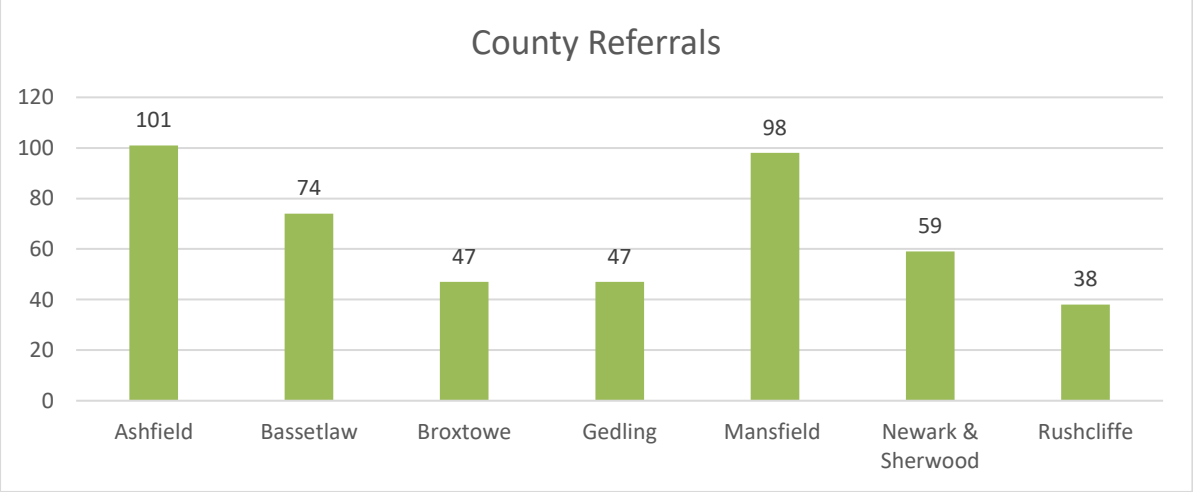
Adult Social Care referred the most cases, sending 321 over the year. The rest of agencies are shown below.



Other includes: Notts Fire& Rescue Service, Another Way Project, Homes for Ukraine
NGOs includes: Emmanuel House, Jericho Road, Juno Women's Aid, POW, The Health Shop, Changing Futures

Referral Locations

There were 322 referrals for City and 487 for County, 23 for individuals residing out of area or unknown unknown. The breakdown of County Local Authorities is shown below.



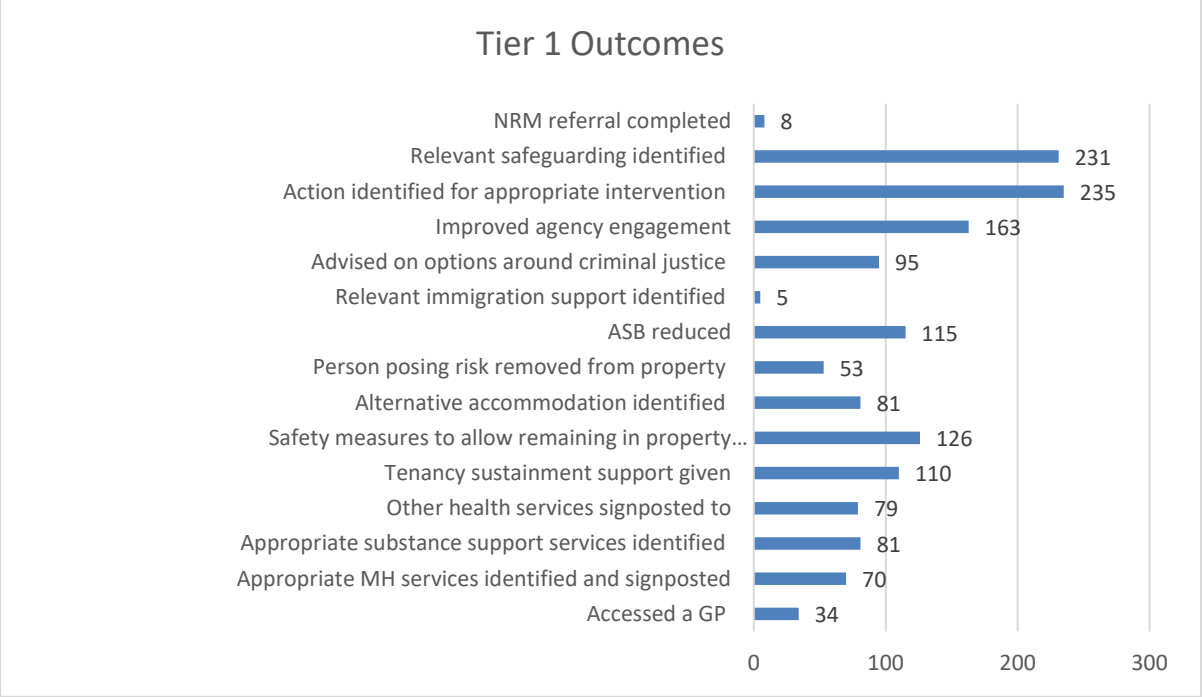
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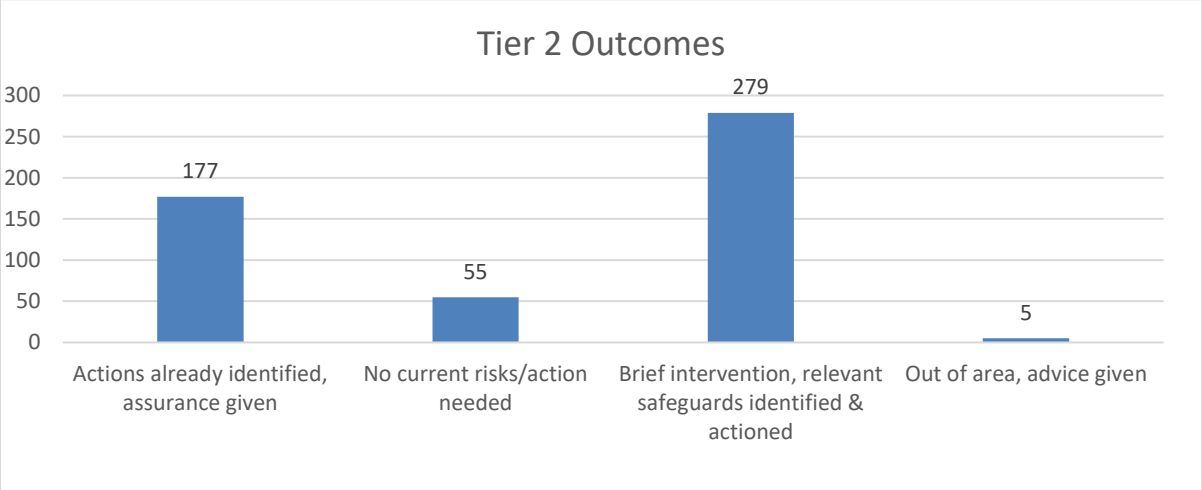
Outcomes

The team have a tiered approach to referrals:

- Tier 1 are cases, where ongoing involvement is needed from the team to continue a driven multi-agency approach; they are RAG Rated and remain open until concerns are resolved. The 287 Tier 1 cases over the year were open for an average of 69 days, ranging from 8 to 438 days (14 months) and some remain open
- Tier 2 are cases, where concerns can be dealt with more swiftly by giving advice to existing involved agencies or making relevant safeguarding referrals. The 522 Tier 2 over the year were open for an average of 17 days, ranging from 0 to 169 days (5 months) and some remain open

Below shows outcomes for both Tiers.

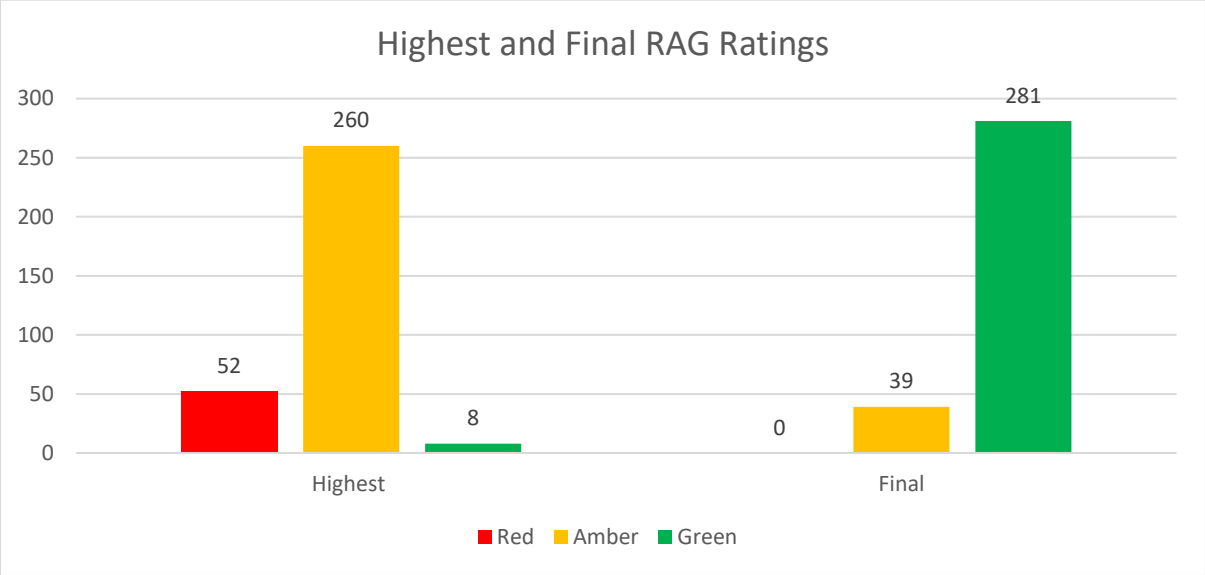




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RAG Ratings

RAG ratings are used to risk assess and more effectively manage cases referred into the team. There are 10 identified areas of risk: housing, disabilities, substance use, mental health, agency involvement, immigration status, risk of going missing/absconding, ability to risk assess/keep safe/access services, police incidents/hospital presentation, slavery/exploitation/trafficking. There were 320 cases from 2025-26 that were RAG rated, the rest were either still open, Tier 2 cases, or cases where a RAG rating wasn't appropriate (for properties).



Interventions by SET reduce risk and by the time the case is closed, most cases will have had the risks reduced to Green. There are various reasons a case might still be assessed as Amber risk at the point of closure, such as: the case being referred to other pathways (such as police); the case individual moving out of area while some risk areas remain high; and no further concerns for exploitation/slavery and no further role for SET despite some risk areas remaining high.

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