

Report of Health and Safety Project Manager

Subject: Annual Health and Safety Report 2023-2024

Purpose of Report

To ask Members to note the annual report.

Introduction/Background

The report summarises the information provided to the Audit and Corporate Committee meetings into one overview of the health and safety performance of the Authority from April 2023 to March 2024.

Reports were previously published annually up to 2018. This document simply re-invigorates that previous delivery.

Options

The document demonstrates what has been carried out by the Authority to improve Health and Safety, including incident rates and absences from the workplace. It is not an in-depth analysis but provides a record to be used in annual comparisons, or where there is a need to inform external stakeholders or members of the public.

Financial considerations

None

Risk considerations

No risk as this is a summary of information provided through other ongoing committee meetings.

Compliance

There is no policy or corporate objectives to produce this report.

Human Rights/Equality issues

None

Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

None

Welsh Language statement

This document is currently only in English although if this report is published on the Authority website, a Welsh language version will be made available.

Conclusion

The Annual Report provides a summary of the Health and Safety performance of the Authority in 2023-2024

Recommendation

Members are asked to note of this report.

Background Documents

Previous Audit and Corporate Committee meetings have seen the data and information within this report, albeit in a different format.



**Parc Cenedlaethol
Arfordir Penfro**

**Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park**

HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

Contents	
Purpose	3
Summary	3
Health and Safety Organisational Changes	4
Health and Safety Group	4
Health and Safety Management System (HSMS)	4
Health and Safety Audit	5
Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome	6
Safety Culture Survey 2024	6
Incident Data	6
RIDDOR	7
Risk Assessment Management Plan (RAMP)	7
Absences and Health	7
Significant data	8

DRAFT

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Members and other stakeholders with continued assurance that the processes and systems that are in place for managing health and safety within Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (hereafter referred to as the Authority) remain effective. The Authority is committed to health and safety and has established good processes and procedures in the management of health and safety.

This report follows the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) approach to successful health and safety management (HSG65) which if followed, supports the organisation to meet their legal requirements in respect of health and safety. The key elements defined by the HSE are:

- Plan – commitment at Committee and senior management level, policies to be in place and implemented
- Do – to undertake 'suitable and sufficient' assessment of significant risks, with controls in place to mitigate the risk, including training. Effective communication and consultation with employees to promote a positive, visible approach.
- Check – measuring health and safety performance, effectiveness of controls and developing a positive health and safety culture.
- Act – to measure and review performance, incident investigation and learning

This report focusses on these fundamental requirements and covers the breadth of specialist health and safety topics.

Summary

1. Health and safety continues to be integral to the core business for the Authority, ensuring the safety of our staff and visitors. The focus is on developing a positive safety culture with work started in 2023-2024, primarily using the Culture Survey to establish a baseline for perceptions of safety within the Authority.
2. The Health and Safety Group are the dedicated safety meetings. The Terms of Reference were changed in 2023 to better reflect the Authority's change in organisation after 2022.
3. Incidents, near misses and health and safety risks are reviewed at the safety meetings, with learning shared across the departments where relevant. In 2024, a smaller working group will form to review and conduct reviews to take forward to the Health and Safety Group to assist in prioritising lessons learned.
4. All safety policies have been reviewed and updated in 2023 from historical versions and a new risk assessment template and process, with in-house training as support, has been introduced to standardise the risk management methodology.
5. In support of the new risk management processes, senior managers attended the IOSH Leading Safely course, while middle management attended the IOSH Managing Safely course. A further in-house Risk Assessing course has

been rolled out in 2024, both as support options for middle and senior management and as standalone risk assessors.

6. Wellbeing has remained a key focus for the organisation, with emphasis on physical health and mental wellbeing. The People Services team continue to work collaboratively and in partnership with our Occupational Health provider, ensuring information is reviewed regularly and any emerging trends identified.
7. Finally, there is an aspiration for the three national parks of Wales (Bannau Bryncheiniog, Eryri and Pembrokeshire Coast) to establish a safety forum, both in support of improving health safety within each park, but also to communicate where best practice is shared and to share resources where it is practical to do so, especially in light of budgetary constraints.

Health and Safety Organisational Changes

The introduction of the Health and Safety Project Manager on a 12 month contract has identified areas for improvement across the Authority. The post was introduced in part as mitigation of an Improvement Notice in 2022 for Hand Arm Vibration management, which was successfully lifted in 2023, but did identify the need for a full review of safety across the estate. The role has been extended for another 12 months in February 2024 to February 2025.

Health and Safety Group

Following the Authority organisational changes in 2022, it was felt that Health and Safety meetings were not fully representative of the Authority and attendance by all departments was lower than expected. As a result, the new Health and Safety Group stood up in 2023 with mandatory attendance for all departments and thus all areas of the Authority had representation. The main purpose of the Group is to discuss health and safety matters, assure stakeholders that health and safety is being effectively managed and to raise significant incident cases for discussion. Minutes of the Group are provided to the Audit and Corporate Committee for approval.

Health and Safety Management System (HSMS)

The introduction of the Health and Safety Project Manager had identified several gaps in the HSMS, particularly a lack of review of policies and procedures, a lack of up to date risk assessments that met the "suitable and sufficient" threshold and no inspections or audits carried out in-house.

As a result 95% of the safety policies were reviewed, reformatted and released across the Authority, using the new Parcnet intranet (SharePoint) in co-ordination with the Performance and Compliance Officer.

The risk assessment review process is ongoing and is expected to be completed by September 2024, with all documents moving to the intranet for future management, along with a procedural Risk Assessment Management Plan (RAMP).

The inspection protocols have yet to be established formally but will be in place during 2024 for all sites to conduct proactive inspections and provide assurance to

the Health and Safety Group. In addition, a new site safety inspection will be introduced to monitor their safety equipment and workplaces.

Health and Safety Strategy

In 2023, it was discovered that no current strategy was in place for Health and Safety and that the only Key Performance Indicator was to have no RIDDORs reported in year. This prompted an internal review and alongside the results of an internal audit (second party audit) conducted by Astari. The strategy will act as a standalone document for approval by the Health and Safety Group in 2024.

Health and Safety Audit

Astari conducted an online review with documents and responses provided by the Health and Safety Project Manager and Chief Executive. The following points in the table below were raised as actions and none of them were rated as High priority.

Year	Agreed Action Required in Response to Recommendations	Priority	By Whom
2023/24	Revised Health and Safety Policy to be agreed by NPA	Medium	Health and Safety Project Officer
2023/24	All Risk assessments to be updated into new risk assessment template and saved on SharePoint	Medium	Health and Safety Project Officer
2023/24	Health and Safety Training Matrix for Job Specific Training Needs agreed for 2024/25	Low	Health and Safety Project Officer
2023/24	Formalising of current Health Surveillance arrangements to ensure they align with HSE recommended practice/ legal requirements	Low	Head of People Services
2023/24	Assessing of sample of H&S accident, incident and near miss reports. With lessons learnt document presented to A&C committee.	Medium	Health and Safety Project Officer

Work is ongoing to have these actions completed within their timeframe.

Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome

Following the cessation of the Improvement Notice issued to the Authority in the Autumn of 2022, work has continued to improve the management of HAVS in 2023-2024. Monitoring of exposure to workers with continued management and health surveillance ongoing. The Authority has also purchased battery powered brushcutters and hedgecutters which have a substantially reduced vibration level compared to engine powered versions. No physiological changes to staff were identified as a result of work-related HAVS following their health surveillance at the end of 2023-2024.

Safety Culture Survey 2024

In a first for the Authority, a case was made to understand the safety culture of the organisation and how it can be improved. However, to determine the direction of travel, the Authority has to understand where the safety culture currently stands. In January 2024, the first ever safety culture was started in the Authority, running for a month to end of February. The survey is the Health and Safety Executive based template operated by TSO (formerly The Stationery Office). Not only is this a safety industry recognised standard for a survey, but also provides the opportunity to conduct the survey in Welsh.

Results were made available in March 2024, with all stakeholders, including staff and Committee Members seeing a version of the report in that month.

Incident Data

In 2023-2024, 67 incidents were reported, with 1 of them classified as a RIDDOR (see below).

The following tables break down the incident information accordingly.

Building & Infrastructure	13
Vehicle & Machinery	20
Personal Injury	25
Other	8
RIDDOR	1
TOTAL	67

Notes: Building and Infrastructure incidents include call outs and security alarm activations. The Other category are Near Misses, where an incident could have resulted in an injury, but did not.

Staff member	47
Volunteer	3
Member of Public	6
Other	11
TOTAL	67

Notes: Others category includes incidents where there was no injured party, e.g., water leaks or alarm activation.

In 2022, there were 59 incidents reported and 25 resulted in a Personal Injury. For employees of the Park Authority, human factors and a lack of management oversight

were the principal causes of injury or damage, with human factors being the principal cause for injuries to the public or visitors. Due to a change in the way incident data was collected between years, a further analysis of 2022 data cannot be provided for comparison. In context, approximately 183 000 visitors attended the three National Park Visitor Centres in 2023 and the Authority employs 135 FTE staff, with 102 full-time and 98 part-time employees.

RIDDOR

In October 2023, a member of the public was injured traversing some steps and a RIDDOR report was declared to the Health and Safety Executive. The internal investigation concluded that the Authority had done everything reasonably practicable with regard to maintaining the steps and that it was a slip accident.

Risk Assessment Management Plan (RAMP)

A survey of the stored risk assessments within each department produced a vast array and documents. All of the documents were moved to a single folder to provide better management and oversight. An exercise to review current versus out of date or irrelevant assessments has been conducted and is expected to be completed in Spring 2024. Line managers will then be expected to review and transfer the hazards to the new standard template. Training has been provided to support managers for a final completion date by the end of September 2024.

Absences and Health

The following data has been collated for April 2023-March 2024, with other years added for comparison.

2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
834	1028	731

Table 1 Total number of days absence per year

2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024	
Long	Short	Long	Short	Long	Short
297	537	380	648	269	462

Table 2 Long versus short term absence days per year

Data for the above tables are provided on the next page with a graph highlighting the primary reasons for absence across the Authority over the last three years for comparison.

There are a few changes to the way has been collated in 2023-2024 compared to previous years.

- COVID is now counted as a typical communicable disease, similar to colds and influenza.
- 'Other' has been removed as a non-specific cause in 2023-2024.
- Muscular has been absorbed into the Other musculo-skeletal data.

Significant data

Only 4 days absence in 3 years from one minor accident to a member of staff.

Stress, Anxiety, Depression (SAD) continues to be the top cause of absence from the workplace, in common with other organisations. This will be reviewed in 2024 with a revised policy and procedure to identify the causal factors to try and reduce the SAD absences.

Cold, flu and infectious diseases are the second highest cause of work absences. COVID has been a factor and still continues to be a cause of absence although not to the extent seen in previous years and only where workers cannot work from home.

Non-work related musculoskeletal absences came third.

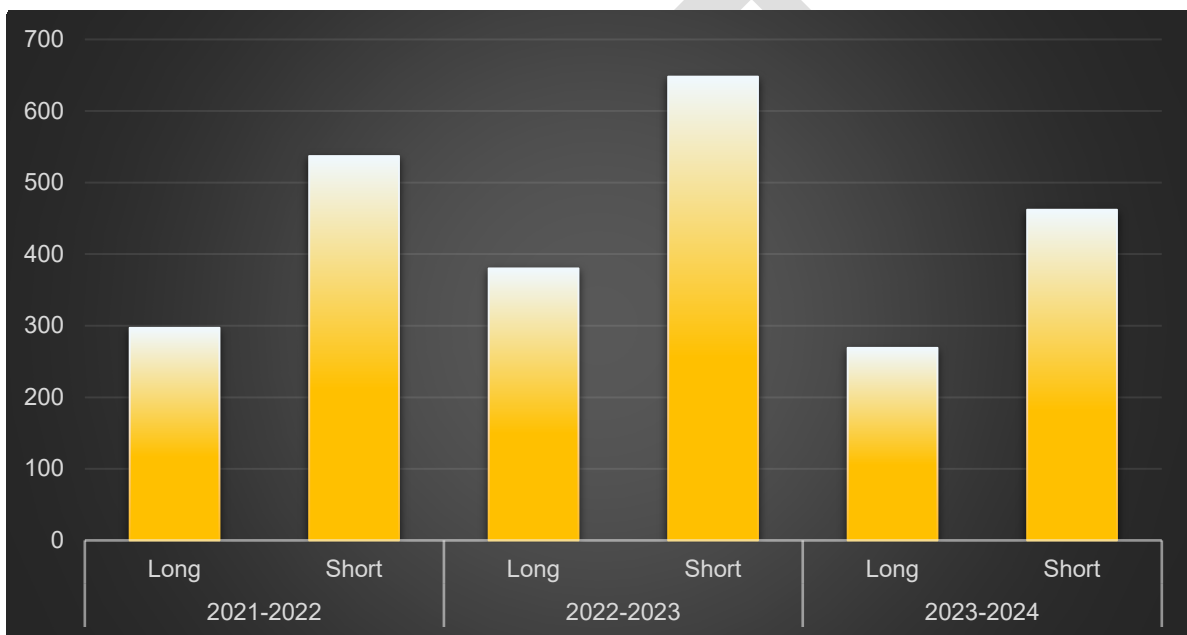


Figure 1 Graph showing long term versus short term absences (by days)

Cause of absence			
Accident at Work	0	0	4
Back & Neck Problems	36	19	38
Cancer, malignancy	0	0	21
Chest & Respiratory including Chest infection	9	21	13
Cold, flu, infectious diseases	125	130	124
COVID	133	203	40
Debility, fatigue	30	42	30
Diabetes, thyroid, endocrine	1	0	0
Eye/ear/nose dental including sinusitis	72	111	54
Genito/urinary including menstrual problems	0	3	5.5
Heart/blood pressure/circulation	1	11	3

Muscular	49	64	0
Neurological including headaches, migraine	13	14	10
Other	37	22	0
Other Musculo-skeletal problems	70	82	105
Pregnancy related	3	27	0
Reaction to Job	3	0	0
Skin, dermatological	9	8	9
Stomach/liver/kidney/digestion	32	95	84.5
Stress/depression/anxiety/mental health	210	177	190

Table 3 Days of absence and their causes 2021-2024

DRAFT

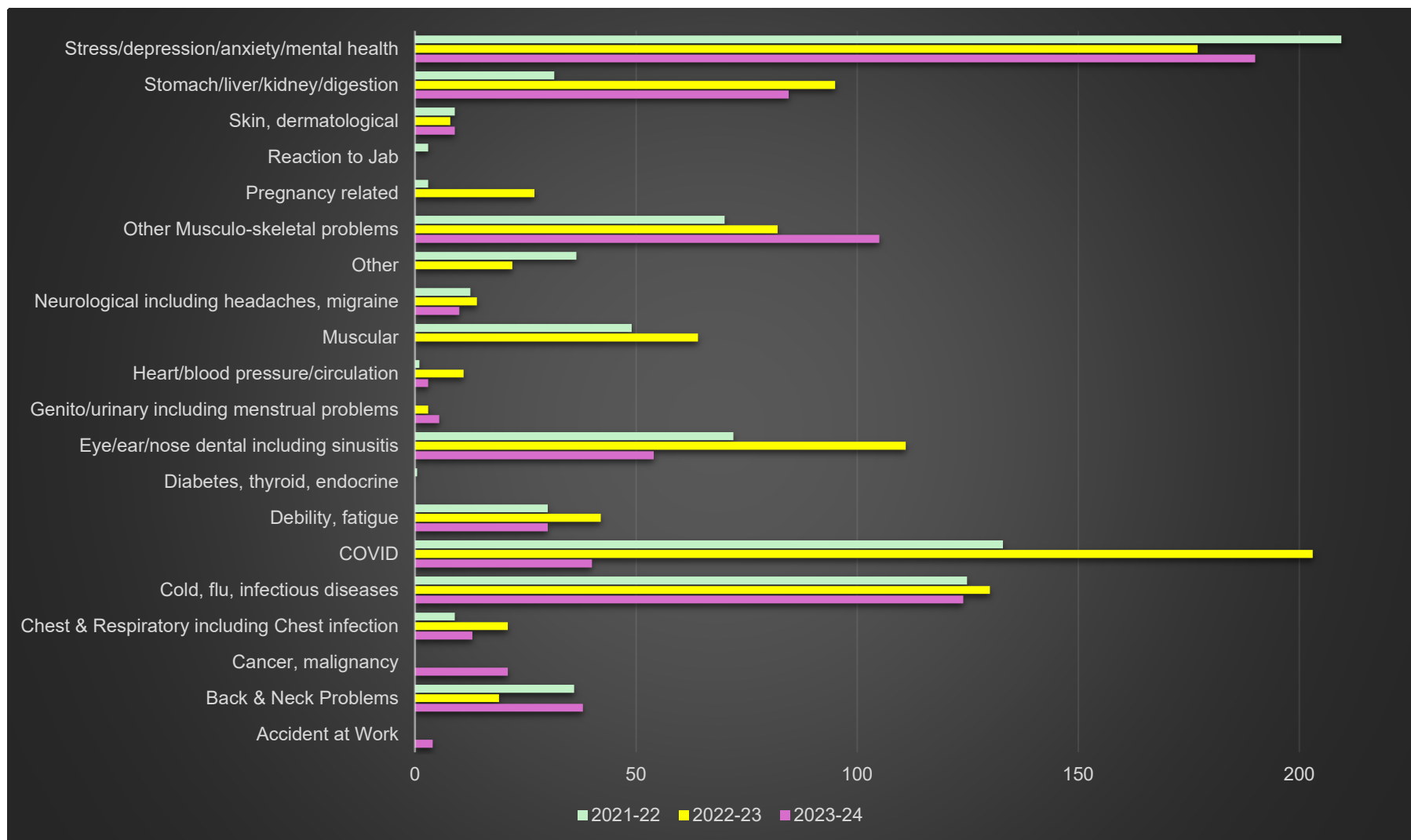


Figure 2 Graph of absence causes (by days)