Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority **Item 11**

Finance and Resources Committee

19 May 2026

Annual Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report

Purpose of the Report

1. This report is a statement of the Authority's health, safety and wellbeing performance during the year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. It provides an update for Members on the progress that the Authority has made in relation to meeting its commitments towards managing health and safety.

Recommendation

2. That the report be noted.

Strategic Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and support the strategic planning framework:

    - Corporate Plan Objective 33:
      Ensure that we have HR policies, procedures, terms and conditions to attract and support the right people with the right skills to deliver the Authority's work effectively, as evidenced by accreditation under the Investors in People standard.

Background

4. The Authority employs 167 members of staff (133.2 full time equivalent) and is responsible for approximately 320 active volunteers in varied roles across the Authority, all exposed to hazards to varying degrees.

5. Health, safety and wellbeing within the Authority is managed through an internal, officer-led Health, Safety and Wellbeing Working Group (HSWWG), and chaired by the Director of Park Services. This is supported by a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with North Yorkshire Council (NYC), which provides access to a qualified Health and Safety practitioner for ongoing advice and support, and their attendance at HSWWG meetings.

6. The terms of reference for the HSWWG are as follows:

   a) Review and develop the Authority's Health & Safety policies, procedures, and processes in order to advise SMT and Directors.

   b) Consider Health, Safety and Wellbeing at work as it affects those undertaking the work of the National Park Authority, including:

   - Individual employees
   - Specific groups of employees
   - Dales Volunteers and other volunteers including work experience
   - Members

   Consideration is also given to those whom the National Park Authority has a responsibility under Health & Safety legislation – e.g. contractors working on Authority premises and the general public.

   c) Monitoring of performance indicators, incident and near miss statistics, safety audit reports, trends and other incident reporting (e.g. sexual harassment), with the intention that reports are made to SMT or Directors on potentially unsafe, and unhealthy conditions and practices, together with recommendations for corrective action.

   d) Assist in the development of working practices and rules for Health and Safety and safe systems of work.

   e) Consider Health & Safety training, particularly with regard to the effectiveness of such training, together with advice to SMT on organisational training needs.

   f) Consider the adequacy of Health & Safety communication and publicity within the Authority.

   g) Promote mental health initiatives within and outside the Authority, looking at ways in which the Authority can promote and maintain good mental health.

7. Health and Safety Action Plans are in place to establish and maintain a safe and healthy working environment. Progress against these actions is monitored by the HSWWG. This is a dynamic process that is continuously reviewed to ensure effectiveness. Actions are regularly added to the plans, each with a defined target completion date. Risks are assessed for every action, allowing for appropriate prioritisation. Actions may arise from a range of sources, including incident reporting, health and safety spot checks, internal audits, changes in legislation or guidance, and property risk assessments.

8. The promotion of the wellbeing element of Health and Safety, including physical and mental health, is undertaken by the HSWWG, Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) and HR team.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Activities undertaken in 2024/25

9. General activities undertaken included:

- A H&S audit and fire risk assessment of the Yoredale office and Grassington National Park Visitor Centre.
- Audit of Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessments (annual review).
- Review of health, safety and wellbeing policy statement (annual review).
- Health and Safety Handbook reviewed and updated (annual review).
- Codes of Practice and COSHH assessments updated (annual review).
- Risk assessment forms and process reviewed and updated (annual review).
- Generic Risk Assessments reviewed and updated (annual review).
- First aid boxes updated (monthly checks).
- Regular fire alarm tests and fire drills undertaken at all premises.
- The Health and Safety Competency Framework is used during the annual staff appraisals to determine training requirements.
- H&S ‘Toolbox Talks’ in place for staff and volunteers.
- Accidents and incidents forms collated and shared as a standing item on HSWWG agenda, and appropriate learning is identified (ongoing).
- Sickness absence statistics as a standing item on HSWWG agenda.
- Promotion of national and international events related to wellbeing, i.e. stress awareness month, mental health awareness week etc.

10. Specific activities undertaken included:

- Audit of proximity of defibrillators to National Park Authority premises (offices, workshops and National Park Visitor Centres)
- Comprehensive review of YDNPA Group Activities Code of Practice
- Summer and Winter ‘Tea and Talk’ days held – an opportunity for all staff to talk to MHFAs in a relaxed environment about wellbeing.
- Update of First Aids Needs Assessments to include non-emergency medical treatment
- Ongoing work with NYC advisor on CDM documents and training
- PPE face mask fitting – all relevant officers fitted for face masks
- Health surveillance carried out to identify anyone exposed or about to be exposed to a risk, i.e. hand-arm vibration (HAVS), noise, COSHH etc.
- Review of use of telescopic ladders in the Authority
- HSWWG Terms of Reference review
- Audit of operations for the hire/use of trampers from our National Park Visitor Centres

- New safeguarding policy introduced and standing item added to the HSWWG agenda
- Audit and testing of all Personal Locator Beacons allocated to officers and teams in the Authority.

Training

11. A list of training courses that have been undertaken by staff during the last 12 months is available at **Appendix A.** These courses help to raise and reaffirm Health, Safety and Wellbeing awareness and ensure mandatory training for tasks (where relevant) is up to date**.**

12. An e-learning training platform (ELMS) is available for staff, which includes several mandatory and role specific health, safety and wellbeing courses, including COSHH, manual handling etc. These are undertaken at set, regular frequencies determined by the relevant section head.

Incident reporting

13. **Appendix B** summarises incidents reported by staff or volunteer over the past 12 months, from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

14. It can be seen from the table in **Appendix B** that most accidents in 2025/26 involved staff in the Park Services Directorate. This is expected given the nature of work and number of people undertaking practical roles within that Directorate.

15. A comparison of the number of incidents over the last 5 years is shown in the table below.

Year	Park Services	Cons & Community	Corporate Services	Volunteers	RIDDOR reportable	Total
2021/22	6	2	0	1	1	9
2022/23	4	2	2	2	0	10
2023/24	4	2	0	2	1	8
2024/25	6	3	2	1	0	12
2025/26	11	6	4	3	0	24

The incident reporting procedure emphasises the importance of line managers' involvement in investigating incident within their teams. Staff complete an electronic form which is forwarded initially to the line manager and/or Section Head, who will investigate. Depending on the findings the risk assessment and/or code of practice may be amended, as appropriate. Accident and incident reporting is a standing item on the HSWWG.

16. It is noted that the number of incidents reported is higher than in previous years. This is attributed to several factors: including an increase in staff and volunteer numbers;

the rollout and familiarisation to the new pool cars; larger more complex capital projects; and an increase in reporting. We have promoted the incident reporting procedure throughout the year to encourage officers to report all accidents, incidents and near misses. We will continue to promote near misses as they appear to remain underreported.

17. 3 incidents of sexual harassment were reported in 2025/26. All incidents have been investigated in accordance with the Authority's policies and procedures. Appropriate actions have been taken, and support has been offered to all individuals involved.

Health and Safety Actions for 2026/27

18. The delivery of the Health and Safety Action Plans will continue and will be monitored by the HSWWG on an on-going basis.

19. The HSWWG, HR and the trained Mental Health First Aiders will continue to raise awareness of mental health and the wide provision of support available to staff.

Financial Implications

20. None. The health, safety and wellbeing activities were delivered within the allocated budget.

Legal Implications

21. Health and safety law and legislation changes are applied to all of the Authority policies processes and practices, to ensure the Authority is compliant. Regular updates are shared at the HSWWG meetings.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

22. None.

Conclusion

23. Health, safety and wellbeing continues to be a priority at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. The Authority is committed to promoting a positive and proactive health, safety and wellbeing culture that supports high standards and continuous improvement. SMT and the HSWWG have led a wide range of activities over the last 12 months and similar delivery will continue and develop over the coming year.

Elliott Lorimer
Director of Park Services

Appendix A - Health, Safety and Wellbeing Training Courses during 25/26

- CDM Regulations
- De-escalation and conflict management
- Emergency First Aid at Work
- Fire Warden Training
- IOSH Leading Safely
- IOSH Managing Safely
- Manual Handling
- Mental Health Awareness
- Mental Health First Aid
- Outdoor First Aid
- Risk Assessment and Management
- Working at Height
- Managing Mental Health at Work
- Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
- Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Confined spaces

APPENDIX B – INCIDENT CAUSES ANALYSIS: 2025-2026

167 Number of staff
320 Number of volunteers

Cause of incident	Non RIDDOR				RIDDOR				Totals
	Park Services	Cons. & Community	Corporate Services	Vols	Park Services	Cons. & Community	Corporate Services	Vols	
Contact with moving machinery or material being machined				1					1
Hit by moving, flying or falling object	1								1
Hit by moving vehicle									0
Hit something fixed or stationary				1					1
Injured while handling, lifting or carrying	1								1
Slipped, tripped or fell on the same level			1						1
Fell from height	1								1
Trapped by something collapsing									0
Drowned or asphyxiated									0
Exposed or in contact with a harmful substance									0
Exposed to fire									0
Exposed to explosion									0
Contact with electricity or an electrical charge									0
Injured by an animal	4	1							5
Physically assaulted by a person									0
Verbally assaulted by a person	3	1		1					5
Another kind of incident	1	4	3						8
TOTAL	11	6	4	3	0	0	0	0	24

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