Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Item 14

Finance and Resources Committee

20 May 2025

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 2024 to 31 March 2025. It aims to update Members on the progress that the Authority is making in relation to meeting its commitment to 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 approximately 170 members of staff (135 full time equivalent) and is responsible for approximately 270 active volunteers, in varied roles across the Authority and exposed to varied hazards.

5. Health and safety support in the Authority is provided by an internal officer Health, Safety and Wellbeing Working Group (HSWWG) which is chaired by the Director of Park Services; and a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with North Yorkshire Council (NYC). NYC provide a qualified Health and Safety practitioner via the SLA for on-going advice, support and attendance at HSWWG meetings.

6. The purpose of the HSWWG is to:

- Advise the Senior Management Team (SMT) on the Authority's Health, Safety and Wellbeing, including the review and development of appropriate procedures and processes.
- Promote good health, safety and wellbeing working practices.
- Consider Health, Safety and Wellbeing at Work as it affects staff, including specific groups of staff, individual staff, Dales volunteers and other volunteers including work experience placements, Members and others in respect of whom the Authority has a responsibility under Health & Safety legislation, i.e. the general public.
- Study performance indicators, accident and incident statistics, safety audit reports and identify trends, with the intention that these are brought to the attention of SMT or Directors on potentially unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices, together with recommendations for corrective action.
- Assist in the development of working practices and rules for Health, Safety and Wellbeing and safe systems at work, having regard to the Health and Safety Executive's guidance.
- Consider appropriate Health, Safety and Wellbeing training, particularly with regard to the effectiveness of such training, together with advice to SMT on training requirements.
- Consider the adequacy of Health, Safety and Wellbeing communication and publicity within the Authority.

7. Health and Safety Action Plans are in place to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace and progress against actions are monitored by the HSWWG. This is a dynamic process and kept under continuous review. Actions are added regularly to the plans, and each action has a target date for completion, the risk associated having been assessed and the action prioritised accordingly. Actions can arise through the incident reporting process, H&S spot checks and internal audits, changes in legislation and guidance, or 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.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Activities undertaken in 2024/25

9. General Activities undertaken included:

- A safety audit on the Colvend office and associated buildings.
- A fire risk assessment of the Colvend office and associated buildings
- 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).
- Annual audit of personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff completed.
- Review of PPE for volunteers.
- 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, World sleep day etc.
- Leadership team review of responsibilities and actions related to health and safety.

10. Specific activities undertaken included:

- Work to implement water safety equipment and messaging at Aysgarth Falls following an incident.
- Update to CDM (Construction Design and Management) guidance and training for officers.
- Audit and testing of all Personal Locator Beacons allocated to officers and teams in the Authority.
- HAVs monitoring scheme – to measure real 'trigger time' on brushcutters and strimmers which will enable us to safely plan officer work patterns.
- Review of panic alarm systems across the Authority.
- PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) - introduction of face-fit testing for dust masks to ensure full protection is provided.
- A sub working group completed a thorough review of our winter gritting policy.
- In line with the new duty under the Equality Act 2010 which requires employers to take "reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment of their employees, the HSWWG added sexual harassment incident reporting to the agenda as a standing item.

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 and Safety 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.

Accidents and Incidents

13. **Appendix B** summarises accidents reported over the past 12 months, from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, and includes all accidents reported by staff or volunteers.

14. It can be seen from the table in the appendix that most accidents in 2024/25 involved staff in the Park Services Directorate. This is perhaps unsurprising given the nature of work and number of people undertaking practical roles within that Directorate.

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

Year	Park Services	Cons & Community	Corporate Services	Volunteers	RIDDOR reportable	Total
2019/20	6	0	0	1	1	7
2020/21	4	1	0	2	1	7
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

16. The incident reporting procedure emphasises the importance of line managers' involvement in investigating accidents 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.

17. Five incidents were reported during 2024/25 that were considered 'near misses'. It is unlikely that this number is a true reflection of incidents across the Authority as it is an ongoing challenge to encourage staff and volunteers to report near miss incidents. Accident and incident reporting is a standing item on the HSWWG.

18. One incident of sexual harassment reported in 2024/25.

Health and Safety Actions for 2024/25

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

20. 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 for staff to access.

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

22. 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

23. None.

Conclusion

24. In summary, SMT and the HSWWG take the health, safety and wellbeing of the Authority, officers, visitors and members of the public very seriously. A wide range of activities have been undertaken 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 23/24

- 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
- Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- Outdoor First Aid
- Risk Assessment and Management
- Working at Height
- Managing Mental Health at Work

APPENDIX B - ACCIDENT CAUSES ANALYSIS: 2023-2024

Number of staff	170
Number of Volunteers	270

Cause of accident	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									
Hit something fixed or stationary									
Injured while handling, lifting or carrying	2								2
Slipped, tripped or fell on the same level		1		1					2
Fell from height									
Trapped by something collapsing									
Drowned or asphyxiated									
Exposed or in contact with a harmful substance									
Exposed to fire									
Exposed to explosion									
Contact with electricity or an electrical charge									
Injured by an animal									
Physically assaulted by a person									
Verbally assaulted by a person		1							1
Another kind of accident	1								1
TOTAL	3	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	8

* Reason for RIDDOR reporting was due to absence from work over 3 days due to a muscle injury to arm