



Occupational safety & health annual report 2024-25

1. Context

This report is primarily concerned with Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) performance during the period April 2024 – March 2025.

This is the first full performance year without a designated in-house OSH Adviser. An external OSH consultant has been engaged from 1 April 2024 for a three-year period to provide strategic OSH advice as necessary, which substantially supports the Authority in complying with its statutory health and safety obligations.

The routine safety management of the activities of the Authority and employees is the responsibility of the Authority, management and employees. This includes:

- Regular inspection and audit of Authority premises/workplaces and workforce
- Routine consideration of incident reports and any further investigation/follow up action
- Routine production and review of specific risk assessments

2. Governance

It is a legal requirement to have a suitable occupational safety and health policy setting out an organisation's intentions, administration and arrangements to deliver occupational safety and health. The policy is reviewed annually and the current version was ratified at the meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee on 24 January 2025.

From 1 April, the Chief Executive Officer assumed chair of the renamed Health Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Committee. Quarterly meetings were held on:

11 April 2024	8 October 2024
9 July 2024	11 January 2025

The representation of all services at the HSW Committee together with Trade Union and Staff Committee representation continued. Including the chair and Head of People Management, there are eighteen safety representatives.

3. Site inspection/audit

After the disestablishment of the OSH Adviser, the Corporate Property Facilities Manager was identified as the most appropriate person to co-ordinate and facilitate Authority property inspections in conjunction with the Duty Holder at each site. The Facilities Manager provides an update on site inspections at each HSW Committee quarterly meeting.

Each site inspection follows the same format looking for evidence on the following:

- Legislation (insurance policies, risk assessments, Occupational Safety and Health policy, Health & Safety poster)
- Gas (if applicable)
- Lifting & WAH (working at height)
- Compressed air & Pressure Systems (if applicable)
- Water quality management
- Fire/risk assessment & emergency procedures
- Auditing & monitoring (previous evidence of OSH / Site Manager audits)
- Electrical, heating & ventilation
- Hazardous substances (COSHH – control of substances hazardous to health)

Where required health and safety items were either missing or out of date, the Facilities Manager introduced measures to put the item in place, or have it updated.

The Site Inspection Audit 2024-25 PowerPoint provides a more detailed summary on sites inspected, findings, and recommendations to the HSW Committee (Appendix 2).

4. Workforce survey

Staff and volunteers are normally surveyed annually during March to seek feedback on a number of key functions including health and safety. The survey is anonymous. This year, the survey was delayed and opened on 21 March. The survey will close on 22 April. An update will be brought to the P&R committee meeting.

In the survey, staff have been asked to respond from strongly disagree to strongly agree on three statements relating to safety and wellbeing:

- I feel safe in my work environment
- I know the relevant H&S policies and procedures relating to my work
- I feel my wellbeing at work is considered a priority

Volunteers have been asked to respond from strongly disagree to strongly agree on three statements relating to safety and wellbeing:

- I feel safe when volunteering
- I know the relevant H&S policies and procedures relating to my work
- I feel that my wellbeing while volunteering is considered a priority

5. Accidents and incidents 2024-25

The Authority incident reporting process was reviewed in quarter 1 and an improved process implemented on 1 July. New forms were created and introduced:

- OSH-AIR 1 – for accident, incident, near miss report
- OSH-AIR 2 – for follow up incident investigation, if required.

These forms are easily accessible to staff from the noticeboard on the HUB. Completed forms are emailed to the newly created email address OSH@peakdistrict.gov.uk where they are logged and acknowledged with a reference number. The form is assessed if any further investigation is needed

and if the incident is reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). The HR team and Property team have access to this inbox to manage the log spreadsheet. Relevant parties to the type of incident or people involved, are also advised on receipt of the incident form.

Type of incident	Who advised	Why
Volunteer involved	Volunteering Manager	Welfare check on volunteer
Employee involved	Relevant HR Adviser	Welfare check on employee
PDNPA vehicle	Finance	Insurance purposes
Cycle hire	Legal	Preparedness for future claims
Trees	Woodland Manager	Intervention/inspection

Logged incidents are reviewed monthly at a meeting of key staff in Property and HR. Any incomplete forms are returned, and any follow up must be actioned before the next monthly review. The aim of the monthly review is to ensure sufficient information is reported and follow up actions are completed in a timely manner.

Incidents reported in 2024-25:

People affected	No.
Visitor/Member of the public	42
Staff/Member	25
Volunteer	14
Contractor	1
No-one (near miss)	3
Total reported	85

Classification of incident	No.
Near Miss	15
Fall from cycle	15
Slipped tripped or fell on the same Level	10
Another kind of incident	10
Vehicle incident (Staff)	8
Another kind of incident not H&S related	5
Public car park / vehicle incident	4
Hit something fixed or stationery	3
Hit by moving flying or falling object	3
Stings or bites	2
Static (electrical)	2
Injury whilst lifting, handling or carrying	2
Environmental incident	2

Cut/Stabbed by something	2
Hit by moving vehicle	1
Fall from a height (specify height)	1
Total Reported	85

There has been a significant increase in the number of incidents reported, up from 36 reported last year. Although the figures still suggest there is under reporting, the new forms and process have raised the safety profile and generated an increase in reporting.

6. Risk assessments

The Authority has identified 19 generic risk assessments most commonly used in our work activities. These generic risk assessments, when incorporated into specific risk assessments, support a consistent approach to managing hazards in our workplace and activities.

The HSW Committee has created a scheduled programme throughout the year to review the generic risk assessments. Each generic risk assessment is reviewed by a team closely associated with the identified risk. The team manager is required to ensure it is updated on good practice.

The reviewer provides an update on the review at the relevant the HSW Committee meeting. The generic risk assessments are published on the HUB.

Quarter	Generic Risk Assessment	Reviewer
1	Animals	Ranger Team
2	COSHH	Corporate Property
3	Driving at Work	Ranger Team
4	DSE	People Management
1	Fire Safety	Corporate Property
2	Lone Working	MFFP
3	Manual Handling	People Management
4	New & Expectant Mothers	People Management
1	Occupational Stress	People Management
2	Outdoor working	CMPT
3	Personal Safety (violence/aggression)	Planning
4	Tools and equipment	CMPT
1	Trees	Rural Estates
2	Underground and overhead services	CMPT
3	Work at height	CMPT
4	Work on or near highways	CMPT
1	Working on or near water	Engagement Team
2	Young Person & students	People Management
3	First Aid at Work	People Management

In October an audit of specific risk assessments commenced with members of the Wider Management Team asked to report back on what risk assessments their teams use, when they were created and last reviewed, and by who, where they are saved and whether hard copies are available.

In December a sub-group of the HSW committee met to review the findings of the audit, in summary there were:

- Some teams with no specific risk assessments
- Some teams with dated risk assessments
- A wide range of competence in carrying out assessments
- Specific risk assessments stored in different locations with accessibility a concern

The sub-group made a number of recommendations which were approved at the HSW Committee meeting in January, namely:

- Sub group to review current process and map out flowchart of best practice to be followed
- Implement risk assessment training for WMT and Safety representatives to ensure competence
- The sub-group to map out creation of specific risk assessment flowchart to bring about change
- Identify best location to file risk assessments in order to share learning and good practice

7. OSH management system - training

Day to day, routine management of OSH matters is the responsibility of all employees. All new starters are required to complete two online courses as part of their induction:

- Introduction to Health and Safety
- Fire Safety

All line managers have particular responsibility for ensuring that OSH requirements detailed in policy, procedures and risk assessments, are properly understood and complied with. A significant component of this responsibility is ensuring that suitable and sufficient levels of information, training, qualification and supervision are provided and maintained.

Globally recognised Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) accredited management training was introduced in 2019 and it was made available to all managers and key post holders. Post organisational restructure, the Senior Management Team reviewed the OSH skills profile for the management and identified the posts where IOSH Managing Safely training is essential.

IOSH Managing Safely training planned for quarter 4 was postponed and rescheduled for quarter 1, due to the impact of organisational change on managers' capacity and availability.

8. Health and wellbeing

Since April 2022, wellbeing and sickness reporting has been a standing item on the committee agenda when we achieved Silver level of the 'We invest in wellbeing' accreditation. From 1 April the Health and Safety Committee became known as the Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee to recognise the significance of this agenda.

Our performance target is to have on average no more than 9 days lost to sickness absence per year, per full time equivalent (fte). The total amount of days lost to sickness per fte for 2024/25 was 7.91 (2.08 in Q1, 2.5 in Q2, 1.57 in Q3 and 1.76 in Q4).

In 2024/25 there were 363 occurrences of sickness absence. The top reasons for absence occurrences were:

Reason	Number of occurrences
Cough/cold	84
Vomiting, Diarrhoea, Nausea	39
Other	37

In total, 10,736 hours were lost to sickness absence. The top loss of hours was due to:

Reason	Number of occurrences
Operations/recovery	16
Stress	10
Other	37

There were 16 staff with long terms absences in this year, 7 of which involved recovery from a planned operation.

In total, an average of 1.84 days was lost per fte as a result of a mental health related illness. This equates to 23.26% of time lost overall, a similar level to that of the previous year. There were 14 staff absent due to mental health in 2024/25, an increase from 8 in the previous 2 years, and 4 of those developed into becoming long term absences.

Staff continue to have access to an Employee Assistance Programme which includes free confidential counselling and a 24/7 Virtual GP Service. During the year we held a *Health & Wellbeing Day*, providing access to NHS Health Checks, massage chairs and stretch sessions targeted to both those who work in the field and desk-based roles. We have continued to promote national events such as Mental Health Awareness Week and Financial Awareness Day. We renewed our Mindful Employer commitment for the 11th year in January and we continue to support the provision of social activities through staff groups.

9. Objectives for 2025-26

In January, members of both the HSW and SMT were asked to identify the priorities for safety management in 2025-26, and have been consulted on the subsequently drafted objectives:

1. Management has sufficient health and safety knowledge and competence to ensure compliance with our legal obligations
2. To raise the profile of occupational safety and enhance staff competence to undertake their work in safety

3. The Authority has a robust process assessing and managing risk
4. To ensure appropriate generic and specific risk assessments are in place and accessible

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Objectives 2025-26 document sets out more details on the activities and measures (Appendix 3).

10. Recommendations

1. The work summarised in the annual report, to deliver good and continuously improving OSH management here at the Authority throughout 2024-25, is recognised and noted.
2. Proposals for specific matters to be addressed, as set out in the draft Health Safety and Wellbeing objectives for 2025-26, are approved.

Theresa Reid – Head of People Management – 31 March 2025