

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: HR COMMITTEE

Date and Time: THURSDAY, 13 MARCH 2025, AT 10.00 AM

Place: COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA

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PUBLIC INFORMATION:

This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>). It can also be made available on audio tape, in Braille and large print.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. The seating capacity of our Council Chamber public gallery is limited under fire regulations to 22.

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's [public participation scheme](#):

- (a) on items within the HR Committee's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to attend the meeting, or speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme, should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Monday, 10 March 2025.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

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AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2025 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any public participation in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme.

4. HR UPDATE (Pages 3 - 8)

To receive the HR Update.

5. PEOPLE STRATEGY (Pages 9 - 58)

To consider the People Strategy and support its submission to Cabinet for approval.

6. QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (Pages 59 - 128)

To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety report.

7. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 129 - 132)

To note the Committee's Work Programme.

To:

Councillors

Jill Cleary (Chairman)
Steve Davies (Vice-Chairman)
Mark Clark
Kate Crisell
Sean Cullen

Councillors

Jeremy Heron
Colm McCarthy
Alan O'Sullivan
Joe Reilly

HR COMMITTEE – 13 MARCH 2025

HR Update Report

Purpose	For information
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	The report provides an overview of the work undertaken within the HR Service over and above the re-active casework.
Recommendation(s)	That members note the ongoing work within the HR Service
Reasons for recommendation(s)	Much of the work supports the council ambition to be an Employer of Choice and the corporate LEAF values
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jeremy Heron
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Service
Officer Contact	Heleana Aylett Service Manager - Human Resources 02380 285662 Heleana.aylett@nfdc.gov.uk

INTRODUCTION

1. This report gives an update on HR matters since the last HR Committee. These matters are in addition to the reactive caseload which includes job evaluations, restructuring advice, grievances, disciplinaries and sickness absence matters.
2. We also continue to provide Payroll and HR Advisory services to the National Park Authority. From 1st April this has been expanded to include Health and Safety advice.

STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

3. Members of the Leadership team have now been given the results for their own areas and are being asked to discuss these within their teams and provide feedback using a form developed so that the actions can be recorded.
4. Once all the information is collated, we will be considering the best way to feedback to staff the outcomes from the survey.
5. This is likely to include an action plan so that we can demonstrate to staff how we have taken on board their comments and what we have done to address their issues / concerns.
6. The action plan will be shared with all staff, ensuring those at the operational depots are also made fully aware of what is included.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

7. The Local Government National Recruitment Campaign

The official campaign closed at the end of January, and we have provided our statistics to the Local Government Association (LGA). We hope to hear back in March from the LGA in terms of how successful and impactful the campaign was nationally and regionally. Our statistics initially show that we had just over double the number of new visitors to our jobs home page, rising from circa 4,500 to circa 9,000.

8. Teams background 'nfdc jobs'

We have recently identified that we could promote our vacancies with a Teams background and worked with our Communications team to get the design, shown below. The HR team will adopt this as their background, and ICT will also make it available to all to add if they wish to do so and this will be highlighted in a Comms email so that all staff can add it if they wish to.

9. Recruitment process review

Over the past couple of years, we have made some major improvements to our recruitment branding, application process, candidate pack and 'employer of choice' video. This year the focus on the team is to work on improving our processes – the steps our team undertake for each campaign, and the process for managers. We have been looking to undertake this for some years, but now with the skills of our colleagues in the Transformation team, we are able to look at how we can refine our processes but also utilise 'Power Automate', a relatively new tool in the microsoft suite, to automate our very manual and repetitive processes. This is very timely, as our team grow ever busier and find challenges with completing tasks effectively in reasonable timescales. This will take some time over the next year or so to work through, but we aim to make the whole process more efficient and user-friendly for all involved.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

10. We shared an update with EMT on module completion, which is was over 80% at the end of January 2025. We have given a 'shout out' to those that have completed their mandatory modules, as well as encouraging the remaining colleagues to get these completed. We continue to monitor and support those still yet to complete them. consider completion figures as well as the range of eLearning required for different staff groups and how we can enable the most effective route forward to ensure appropriate and suitable learning is provided to the relevant audiences.

EMT also reviewed the mandatory eLearning modules, and gave recommendations of some that could be made optional. These alterations have been made.

Much of our LMS administrator time has been spent on Operational staff records and ensuring these are accurate in terms of training needs and training completed. It is hoped this is concluded by the end of March. The focus will then move to continuing to develop further modules, both bespoke and 'off the shelf' as optional units. EMT have asked to consider any requests for further mandatory modules, and will consider if they could be optional, or if they are mandatory for a smaller section of the organisation – to ensure we are targeting these in the right way.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

11. We are continuing to explore appropriate learning and development opportunities across the organisation to support all employees. The focus moving forward will be more strategic and aligned to the People Strategy action plan. With the additional resources set to be agreed as part of this, it is hoped that we can better support all colleagues to be the best they can be and in turn deliver excellent services to our communities.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

12. We are looking forward to starting Cohort 3, having considered the feedback from the first 2 cohorts. This will run from April to July, and we'll take stock and report back once all are complete. There is also a further 'Senior Leadership' cohort for those new to our senior team, which runs from March – July following a very similar format to the previous leadership training.

LGBT+ EMPLOYEE NETWORK

- 11 The LGBT+ Network continue to meet regularly, hosting drop ins for staff and growing their network and support to the workforce. The group have a chair, vice chair and secretary who support the group to agree discussion topics and focus for any drop in sessions that are organised.
12. The Network contributes directly to the EDI group providing valuable support in this area.

AMENDMENT TO THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

13. As of October 2024 there was an amendment to the Equality Act 2010 resulting in a preventative duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

The HR Advisory Team have recently reviewed our bullying and harassment policy and implemented a simpler, resolution focussed

policy. Since October a risk assessment has been completed to identify any areas where we can support our workforce, and which will be implemented throughout 2025. These include updated employee and manager training, an anonymous reporting tool to report incidents, guidance on personal relationships in the workplace and guidance on work organised social events involving alcohol.

EDI GROUP

14. The EDI group continue to meet regularly, discussing various work issues, commenting on policy and contributing to upcoming initiatives that support our inclusive culture.
The group have recently discussed guidance proposed by the HR team support colleagues observing religious practice which will be published in early 2025.

The next meeting scheduled for early 2025 and will focus on reviewing the staff survey results, particularly how these link to the Councils Corporate Equality Objectives.

BUY AND SELL ANNUAL LEAVE POLICY

15. The new policy has now been launched with applications welcome from those who have a leave year which starts from April. Due to requests from employees whose leave year started from January this year we have now made a concession that they can also be included for this year.

The aim of this policy is to allow all colleagues more flexibility on their amount of leave to support their personal circumstances, whilst encouraging rest and time away from work to support employee wellbeing.

CORPORATE EMPLOYEE EVENTS

16. In the past couple of months, we have been pleased to support the running of the long service awards (celebrating the long service of those colleagues with over 20 years' service) and our recognition awards (celebrating long term training and employee suggestions). Both events were well attended and found really valuable by those colleagues that attended.

Corporate plan priorities

17. Much of the work undertaken by the HR Service supports the council's ambition to be an employer of choice.

Options appraisal

18. Not Applicable

Consultation undertaken

19. Not Applicable

Financial and resource implications

20. None

Legal implications

21. None

Risk assessment

22. There are no risks associated with the recommendation.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

23. None

Equalities implications

24. None arising from the recommendations.

Crime and disorder implications

25. None

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

26. None

Appendices

None

Background Papers:

None

HR Committee – 13 March 2025

People Strategy

Purpose	For review and approval
Classification	External
Executive Summary	<p>We have committed to the development of a people strategy to outline how we attract, retain, and grow talent.</p> <p>This people strategy describes our journey of 'employer of choice: grow connect empower' and a revised action plan following the publication of the Local Government White Paper to focus our work over the next two years.</p>
Recommendation(s)	To approve the people strategy and support submission to cabinet for full approval.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	<p>To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan and achieve a key milestone in the Transformation Strategy aligned to the People and Capabilities theme.</p> <p>Support readiness for change for local government reorganisation.</p> <p>EMT approved for delivery and resourcing.</p>
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	<p>Councillor Jill Cleary – Leader</p> <p>Councillor Jeremy Heron – Finance and Corporate</p>
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director for Corporate Resource and Transformation
Officer Contact	<p>Kate Hardy Organisational Development and Change Specialist 023 8028 5817 Kate.hardy@nfdc.gov.uk</p> <p>Zoe Ormerod Senior HR Advisor 02380285669 zoe.ormerod@nfdc.gov.uk</p>

Introduction

1. New Forest District Council's Corporate Plan and Transformation Strategy commit to the development of a people strategy to outline how we attract, retain, and grow talent.
2. This people strategy describes our approach to its development through discovery, design and delivery, allowing the strategy to evolve through engagement with staff.
3. The strategy aims to take NFDC on a journey towards Employer of Choice through the themes of grow, connect and empower, recognising there need to be strong roots (or foundations) in place, and our culture must be centred on our values of learning, empathy, ambition and fairness.
4. Following publication of the Local Government White Paper, we have taken time to reflect and the principles in the strategy remain relevant. The delivery plan has been refined to include the critical work programmes required over a shorter timeframe to modernise, and best position our staff for future opportunities whilst feeling supported and ready for change in local government reorganisation.
5. The strategy is presented as a metaphor based on the roots, branches and green leaves of a tree to provide an easily understandable visual and conceptual framework to support our journey. We believe a strong visual framework will allow more people to connect to the strategy in a meaningful way.
6. A simplified and more dynamic version of the people strategy has been designed, to ensure it is engaging for our staff as well as applicants as part of our offer to employees.

Corporate plan priorities

7. The people strategy supports delivery of the Corporate Plan and Future New Forest programme.

Consultation undertaken

8. Feedback from the 2024 staff survey and focus groups as well as HR Peer Review recommendations and informal feedback from individuals and groups have all been considered in the design of this strategy. The people strategy has been further developed with feedback from different groups of staff and has evolved through this engagement process. Groups included:
 - a. leadership team
 - b. EDI groups
 - c. HR and comms teams
 - d. change champions
 - e. Employee Side Liaison Panel

Financial and resource implications

9. Delivering the People Strategy has implications for both human and financial resources. Three additional roles have been identified to ensure effective delivery of the plan: organisational development facilitator; learning coordinator; and employee engagement officer.
10. In addition, a modest ringfenced budget for events, training, and other financial costs will be in place to support delivery of the strategy. The existing training budget allocated could be utilised with a percentage held centrally to support a more strategic approach to learning and development.

Risk assessment

11. No formal risk assessment has been completed, however there is a significant risk to the organisation (in terms of retaining existing and recruiting new staff, and being ready for change) if we do not invest in our people.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

12. The people strategy will be in support of the climate change programme, intending to create a sense of responsibility and accountability for our people to make changes aligned to becoming more sustainable. This element is captured implicitly across all four themes of strong roots, grow, connect and empower.

Equalities implications

13. Equity is critical in the delivery of the people strategy and the values of empathy and fairness capture how this will be thread throughout. Equality impact assessments will be part of all deliverables to ensure that activities are fair and inclusive. Regular reviews will be conducted to ensure no unintended consequences/impact on staff become apparent.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

14. Collecting and maintaining quality data about our workforce will be important to enable effective measurement of our success, whilst ensuring data usage complies with UK Regs and NFDC guidance.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – People Strategy

Appendix 2 – Simplified, designed and accessible version of people strategy

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People Strategy

Our journey to employer of choice: grow connect empower

February 2025

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
Final	Kate Hardy / Zoe Ormerod	28 January 2025	Updated content, action plan and shorter timescale to take account of local government reorganisation.
Final V2	Kate Hardy/ Zoe Ormerod	21 st February 2025	Updated points in our employer of choice commitment.

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Introduction

New Forest District Council's Corporate Plan and Transformation Strategy commit to the development of a People Strategy to outline how we attract, retain, and grow talent. The strategy provides the direction towards achieving our ambition as an 'employer of choice' and to guide the organisation in:

- how we engage our people, ensuring that every member of our team feels part of the organisation and feels valued for the contribution they make to the community and our organisational goals.
- investing in our people to ensure we have the skills we need to deliver the changes we must make and the work that makes a difference to our community,
- creating the conditions to enable change through our values, behaviours, and culture.

We know that when our people are at their best, we are most able to achieve our strategic aims. This strategy is a proactive framework, to create enhanced commitment, engagement and motivation, plan for future workforce requirements, and build capacity and competence to deliver for our communities today and in the future.

The likely changes arising from the local government white paper mean that the focus on our people is more important than ever. Through this strategy we will support our employees during significant change and position them with the right skills and behaviours to embrace future opportunities.

A three-phase approach has been taken to creating this strategy: Discover; Design; Deliver. The process of discovery and design has taken place over an 18-month period from the design of the corporate plan and transformation strategy, with new evidence and staff feedback brought together to create an engaging and ambitious plan for our people.

Our three-phase approach

Discover

The 'discovery' phase of the strategy development consisted of a period of evidence collection both internally and externally, from information already available as well as the collection of new evidence, for example from staff feedback. A comprehensive report describes the evidence in detail and the key findings have been extracted and summarised in the **Key Findings** section.

Design

Several key themes and principles emerged from the evidence collected in the discovery phase. These key themes alongside informal research on best practice through networks, people strategies from other similar organisations, webinars, and existing informal knowledge of best practice and experience of what has worked in ours and other organisations have also informed the design of the strategy.

The design process has been iterative, with initial themes and principles presented to a number of staff groups to test out the ideas and gauge reactions and understanding. Feedback supported the design of a simpler, snappier concept that is more accessible and understandable to all. Words that resonated for people were elevated and a visual representation created, to make it more memorable.

The strategy aims to take us on a journey to be an Employer of Choice through the themes of grow, connect and empower, recognising there need to be strong roots (or foundations) in place, and our culture must be centred on our values of learning, empathy, ambition and fairness.

Deliver

An **action plan** to deliver the outcomes in the strategy, aligned to the themes of grow, connect and empower has been designed with flexibility in mind, with implementation in two phases of establishing foundations and building our capabilities. An outline delivery plan is included in this document, with more detailed project plans to be created for the evolving organisational needs.

The delivery of the strategy will have a strong **governance** structure in place, aligned to the transformation programme, to ensure work is completed, unblock any challenges, maintain communication with key stakeholders, monitor outputs and measure success. Measuring the success of a people strategy is complex and there are many interdependent factors. The list of measures used in the delivery plan is extensive and reflects the complexity involved, with the combination creating an overall picture. The individual measures provide opportunity to address issues at a more granular level.

Key Findings

A summary of the key challenges faced, identified from the national and local context, are described below and set out what the people strategy must address. It is appropriate to first highlight the areas where New Forest District Council is already doing well, to ensure we recognise and build on existing good practice and strengths.

What we're doing well

Corporate plan. There is very good awareness and understanding of the corporate plan and the three pillars of place, people and prosperity. This understanding of the vision and purpose of the organisation provides clear direction and an excellent foundation for the people strategy.

Wellbeing support. Health and wellbeing support is appreciated and many have benefited from support when off sick, returning to work, with mental health concerns and from reasonable adjustments when needed.

Teams. Cohesion within small teams is clear, staff feel very connected within their teams and value colleague support.

Line management support. There are a number of excellent line managers across the organisation and those teams with good line manager support clearly benefit. The brief bites sessions support managers to learn best practice. Informal resolution of issues is high when supported by the HR team.

Recruitment. Significant improvements have been made in recruitment in the last 12 months. New employees recently going through the recruitment process are providing high praise for the warmth of the staff, the overall process, and the information provided, specifically the new application packs.

Early careers. A steadily growing number of apprentices and graduate trainees have been recruited and developed across our organisation. The individuals in these roles are usually successful and often stay.

Existing staff. The people who work for us are committed to the organisation and the community it serves and want to do the best job possible. They thrive on being experts in their areas, whilst also showing a keen appetite for change to make things better for the organisation and the community.

Challenges

Recruitment and retention

There are national recruitment and retention issues in local government, with skills shortages in specific areas such as planning and environmental health. These challenges are reflected in the new forest area and across the South East too. With an average age of 48, our workforce is ageing and we have many staff who are moving towards retirement. This ageing workforce reflects a national picture. Worryingly (although the national picture is not dissimilar) 28% of new starters left within 12 months of joining us as an employee. Alongside this, local government is not widely seen as an attractive sector to work in, and nationally the 'Make a Difference, Work for your Local Council' campaign aims to inspire individuals to explore career opportunities in local government that have a direct and lasting impact on the lives of local residents, capitalising on the growing trend for people to seek work that contributes to society. The Devolution White Paper requiring local government reorganisation may impact on our ability to attract and retain talent.

Despite the pay and terms of conditions of employment being determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services, our pay terms remain different than the nationally agreed pay scales and may create additional challenges in recruitment and retention.

Diversity and inclusion

Our staff tell us that we are inclusive. Our workforce data tells us that we lack diversity. Whilst we are attracting increasingly more diverse applicants (diversity of age and ethnicity), these appear to not pull through to hires. It is therefore unclear whether we are truly inclusive to more diverse colleagues.

Our male to female ratio is similar to the majority of local government organisations and our gender pay gap is low. However, there are significant differences in the ratio of men and women in middle management, with fewer women entering into those leadership roles.

4% of our staff have declared a long-term condition or disability. When compared to 16.1% of New Forest residents, and 17.8% in England and Wales, this indicates either low disclosure rates or lower than average numbers of staff employed who have a disability or long term condition.

Learning and careers

The apprenticeship levy is a key source of funding which can be used to support career development and this pot could be utilised more fully. Skills England will take over responsibility for the levy in 2025 and it is expected there will be significant changes in how this levy can be used which could enable us to offer new learning and career opportunities.

Many staff cite better prospects of career progression as a key reason for leaving, and this is reflected in the recent staff survey where only 31% agreed that they saw a career path for them in the organisation. In addition, other benefits and opportunities for training and development showed room for improvement. Our average training spend per employee in 2023-4 was £314. Although this is an important figure, there are many other opportunities to learn and develop, away from traditional paid courses and exploration of how we identify and support these opportunities will be important.

Feedback shows inconsistency in personal development opportunities with 72% completion of performance reviews as well as anecdotal feedback that performance review templates needed modernising and focusing on conversations.

Culture

For people who have worked in our organisation for a longer period, there is some legacy culture that is challenging, where some can feel fearful of making mistakes and therefore feel unable to make decisions, often deferring them upwards, which comes from a previous approach of centralised control. This has now changed positively with a new chief executive, and will take time and demonstrable examples to continue to change towards a more open and innovative organisation.

There have been some concerns raised around unacceptable behaviour and inappropriate language being used, and the feedback from the staff survey indicated that 40% of respondents were not confident that if they reported poor behaviour, it would be dealt with appropriately.

In seeing the first waves of transformational change, there is evidence to suggest that resilience and readiness for change is low, despite there being appetite for change. This is perhaps a result of limited experience of change for many staff who have worked in our organisation for a number of years.

Leadership and management

As described in the areas we are doing well in, we have some excellent managers, however, this is not a consistent view, with variable management practices taking place across the organisation, with a lack of clear expectations of managers.

Leadership development opportunities introduced in 2023/4 have been well received. It is important that leadership development isn't seen as a one off and there are new and ongoing opportunities to develop existing and future leaders, as there is more work to be done to develop the leadership capabilities of the future. One example is the feedback that there is a lack of accountability and autonomy, where 28% of respondents in the staff survey felt people were not held to account. It is a key leadership role to support appropriate accountability, decision making and autonomy.

Communication

There is much evidence and knowledge that there is a culture of silo working within the organisation, with examples of people working in the same office for many years having never met each other. There is a lack of open and collaborative working, with potential for projects and work to happen without key stakeholders involved. This seems to stem from a reluctance to being open and sharing expertise and information with others and is a challenge which can come from close knit small teams who can sometimes become introspective. There are limited opportunities for different groups of people to get together around a common interest or topic.

Although much information is available somewhere, there is a lack of easy to access information, guidance, reports that people need, as well as a lack of consistent messaging across the workforce by appropriate methods, for example the over reliance on e-mail to send messages to all staff, when a percentage of staff don't have any access to e-mails or ForestNet. It is unclear whether these messages get through at all to those people, so there is a need to create engaging and relevant communications which reach all staff. A perception of 'them and us' between the main office at Appletree Court and the depot bases is perhaps an example of the impact of this communication approach.

Employer of choice

Identifying what makes people choose to work for an organisation is complex and unique to individuals, based on personal motivations and values. Using the evidence and research collected in the discovery phase, we have defined our concept of being an employer of choice and therefore the outcomes we are aiming for through this people strategy.

To be considered as an employer of choice, we:

- attract and retain the best people.
- learn and develop in our roles and our careers, performing to our best ability.
- are recognised and rewarded for the contributions we make.
- have the confidence to put forward ideas, try out new concepts and take actions within clear boundaries and expectations.
- work together with our colleagues across the organisation, partners and community.
- include everyone and encourage a strong sense of belonging.
- know how our work makes a difference to the community we serve.
- are open, sharing our experiences, and learning from each other.
- fairly and consistently apply our processes and practices.

Our journey to employer of choice

Employer of Choice: grow connect empower

Our people strategy provides the direction needed, to take our organisation on a journey towards our ambition to be an Employer of Choice.

This work is important to our people and it is vital to ensure our approach is recognised and understood by everyone.

Our strategy of 'Employer of choice: grow connect empower' is presented as a metaphor based on the roots, branches and green leaves of a tree, and is relevant to the New Forest, the area we serve. We believe a strong visual framework will allow more people to connect to the strategy in a meaningful way to support our journey and enable existing staff and potential recruits to see how we are transforming our offer for people.



The branches of grow, connect and empower, capture the focus of our work, recognising there also need to be strong roots (or foundations) in place. Our culture, the way we do things which enable us to achieve our desired outcomes, must be centred on our values of learning, empathy, ambition and fairness.

Each of these elements are described in more detail below.

Grow

We believe that everyone should have opportunities to grow. We will all be able to learn, develop and contribute to our organisation in ways wider than our core roles and see career opportunities that excite us.

We will ensure everyone has access to protected time for learning and development activities, support people to move internally where relevant, and provide open access to a menu of learning activities, including core transferable skills, as well as offer targeted development for specific groups. This will include ongoing leadership and management development offers, ways for people to obtain skills fit for the future, and building personal development plans to support this, with regular and meaningful development conversations.

Our learning and development offer includes early career or entry opportunities, professional qualifications where appropriate and continuing professional development at all career stages.

We will identify future skills needs, opportunities for sharing of knowledge and best practice and support for people to move forward in their careers. We know that some people will move on during this period of significant change, and we aim to support people to leave well, with a positive experience and skills to benefit the New Forest and wider community going forward.

Connect

Whilst recognising individual, team and role differences, it's important to us that we are all connected. No matter where we work or our job role, we will feel part of a team, have opportunities to get involved, feedback our thoughts and ideas, and find out about what's happening in the organisation and in the wider geography.

We must be transparent in our approach, ensuring everyone has access the information and advice they need to do their job and to spark their interests.

To do this, we will enhance our engagement and internal communication methods across the organisation, promoting our successes, collaborating internally and externally, and generally find ways to better connect.

We will support both functional and matrix teams to connect and develop together through focused activities, and create more opportunity for individuals to connect with others who they affiliate with, by increasing our staff networks and peer support. This could include young people, those in early careers, people living with disabilities, women in leadership, and/or the global majority.

We will look outward and align our activities with local government partner organisations where it makes sense to, better connecting with our members, other partners and community too. We will enhance our reputation as a great employer as well as an ambitious and effective organisation through our connections with partners and the public. Our focus on putting customers at the heart of all we do will require us to be more proactive and engaging and our staff will be supported to develop these skills.

Empower

People will be supported to make the decisions, undertake the learning, and test out the things that truly matter to them and are appropriate, giving people autonomy over their work. We want people to want to come to work, know they are doing meaningful work, and have a clear purpose. All our staff will feel safe, both physically and psychologically, and therefore able to bring their best selves to work.

Through our 'grow' branch, our programme of transformational learning opportunities will empower people to use digital technology, manage change effectively, focus on customers and take an active role in reversing climate change. Making more use of digital technology with enhanced access and skills to enable automated decision making where relevant, will empower people to focus on those interactions and decisions which are complex and sensitive and where humanity is key. We will also continue to review our processes to ensure we complete our work in the most effective and efficient ways.

Support and development of our various 'champions' networks are key to empowering those who are most engaged to make the impact that is important to them, enhancing their roles in the organisation.

We will enable people to feel empowered to find their own learning and solutions which will help unlock individual potential and maximise performance. This will be supported through access to coaching, mentoring and peer learning.

Strong roots

Our roots are centred on our values which flow through the branches of our organisation and create the culture we are aiming for.

With employees as our most important asset, all employees should feel this is the best place for them to work. To achieve this, we must have clear processes and expectations which are applied fairly and consistently, providing the stability that holds up the organisation.

Our behaviours framework, once developed, will set out the expectations for how we all want to be treated and treat others at work, as well as ensure a customer and community focus across all of our work, and create the conditions for effective change management.

We must also review the language and approaches in our critical workforce and other policies and procedures, to create a safe environment for people to be able to join us and thrive.

Our recognition scheme will seek out and celebrate individual and team contributions aligned to our values and organisational aims.

We proactively support wellbeing and resilience, with effective and compassionate support when people most need it, knowing that this approach pays back in effort and contributions at other times.

Culture

Culture describes how we go about our day-to-day work, the elements that you can't see, the norms, beliefs, systems and rules that influence our behaviour at work.

Our LEAF values are strong and recognisable, and coupled with our ambition for strong roots, growth, connection, and empowerment, these describe the influences we want people to listen to and the culture we want to see throughout our organisation.

We will embark on a culture development programme to thread our values through everything we do and put us on the front foot in readiness for local government reorganisation. Culture change is not a quick fix, it takes time and energy, and we are committed to the journey.

The overall picture that our measures provide, will be used to assess the impact of our cultural change programme which runs through all the deliverables featured under the themes of grow, connect, empower, and strong roots. We will also assess whether staff would recommend our organisation as a place to work as a key benchmark internally and against similar organisations.

Delivery plan

Our delivery plan is broken down by our themes of grow, connect, empower and strong roots, each of which has two parts to the timeline: establishing foundations (year 1); and building our capabilities (year 2).

Strong Roots

Theme	Purpose	Activity	Year 1				Year 2			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
strong roots	Fit for future	Improve transactional HR processes, including recruitment and internal job moves. Create more guidance and information to support people to self serve to reduce HR contacts for highest volume enquiries.	Review	Review	Amend	Amend				
strong roots	Culture and behaviours	Develop and launch a behaviours framework and tools to support implementation, including develop and launch a refreshed staff recognition scheme aligned to our values and behaviours.	develop	launch	embed	embed	BAU	BAU	BAU	BAU
strong roots	Fit for future	Develop an organisational change management approach and toolkit to include tools, templates, guidance.	develop	develop and launch	embed	embed				
strong roots	Fit for future	Research and create staff personas to support targeted interventions across all aspects of the people strategy, e.g. internal comms, learning opportunities, ways to connect, wellbeing.								
strong roots	Fit for future	Establish core transformation competencies and create learning opportunities to upskill where needed. May include self awareness, managing change, customer service, systems thinking, co-production.	research	develop framework	launch learning	learning	learning	learning		

Theme	Purpose	Activity	Year 1				Year 2			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
strong roots	Culture and behaviours Learning and development	Create leadership and management competency framework and develop learning opportunities to support leaders and managers to reflect upon and achieve competencies and bring our values and behaviours to life.			develop	develop and launch	learning	learning	learning	learning
strong roots	Fit for future	Identify and review key people policies where essential to reflect employment law and organisational changes.	Review and plan	review and update key policies as per plan						
strong roots	Fit for future	Improve workforce data quality and create service dashboards to support baseline measurement and empowerment of managers, as well as be devolution ready.	develop	develop	develop	develop	implement	implement	implement	implement

Grow

Theme	Purpose	Activity	Year 1				Year 2				
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
grow	Learning and development	Review and develop mandatory course matrix by staff groups.									
grow	Recruitment and retention. Learning and Development	Continue to utilise, and enhance coordination and management for successful apprenticeships and other development opportunities for existing staff, new recruits and hard to fill roles. E.g. young authority of the year, DCN management programme, projects.									
grow	Learning and development	Review and update appraisals and 1:1 processes to include behaviours framework and better support personal development planning, allowing for a flexible approach as we navigate change. To include clear guidance, training, and recording expectations.			review and plan	implement	implement				

Connect

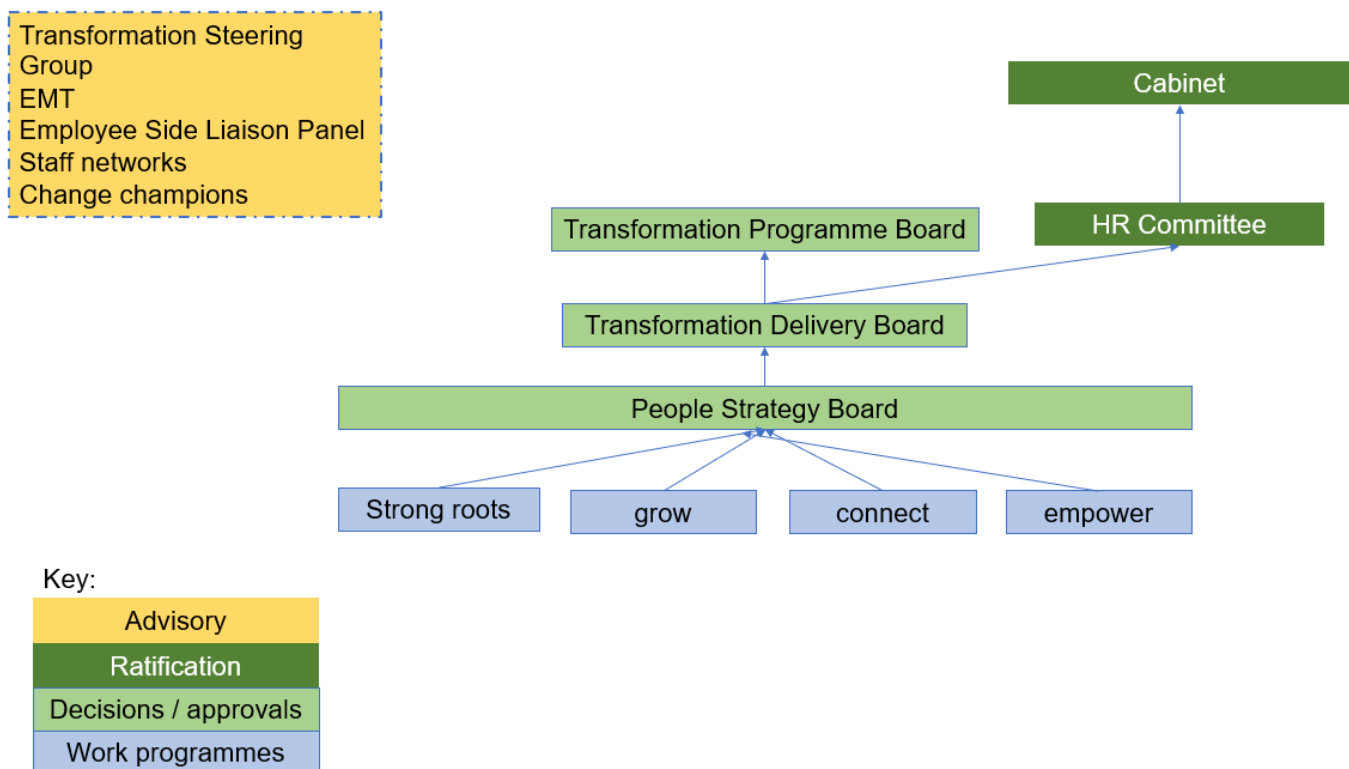
Theme	Purpose	Activity	Year 1				Year 2			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
connect	Engagement and Communications	Review, enhance and measure internal communication and engagement channels, media, purpose and messaging. To include content creation (corporate presentations, written briefings etc), a clear plan of campaigns which run aligned to the people strategy, with appropriate staff surveys to test engagement and identify new actions. To include a regular campaign to raise awareness of wellbeing resources.	Review	Review	launch new approach					
connect	Engagement and Communications	Enhance staff intranet with accessible and engaging content.		Design approach	Content review and creation with services	Content review and creation with services	Content review and creation with services	Content review and creation with services		
Connect	Engagement and Communications Culture and behaviours	Create new and develop existing peer forums / staff networks / learning circles / collaboration cafes (both diversity and role related).								

Empower

Theme	Purpose	Activity	Year 1				Year 2				
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
empower	Fit for future Learning and development	Implement a 'Digital Skills for All' programme.	plan	plan	Implement						
empower	Engagement and Communications Learning and Development	Create a learning hub. To include a menu of opportunities, detailed guidance for staff on learning and development opportunities and process to access and record.									
empower	Learning and development Culture and behaviours	Provide coaching, mentoring, buddy and shadowing opportunities. To include training in coaching and mentoring, guidance for buddying and shadowing, a hub of information on sharepoint to show opportunities available and contact details.									
empower	Learning and development	Develop a menu of targeted learning opportunities for different staff groups, for example a people managers essentials programme for first line chargehands and supervisors. Learning needs to be identified via skills audits and identification of staff personas.	Dependent on need. People management for chargehands and supervisors required Year 1, Q1								

Monitoring and governance

It is critical that the programme of work in support of our journey to create strong roots, grow, connect, and empower, is monitored, measured and governed appropriately. This strategy forms an important part of the Future New Forest transformation programme and will align with the governance structures already defined as the diagram shows below.



A full programme plan, and individual project plans will be developed and maintained to keep track of actions, and create accountability. The People Strategy Board will meet monthly and report to transformation delivery and programme boards as required, with reports to HR Committee ad hoc as and when ratification is required for specific initiatives or changes.

Measuring our ambition to be an employer of choice

A set of measures will be collected annually to review progress year on year towards our ambition to become employer of choice, against each outcome. The Local Government ‘employee engagement index’ (LGEEI) is a set of core questions that will enable us to benchmark ourselves against other similar organisations in the sector and are included within these measures.

Outcome	Key Measures
Are included and have a strong sense of belonging.	% of staff would recommend the council as a great place to work
	% staff satisfied with the amount of information they receive about what is going on at the council
	% staff receive the information they need to do their job well
	% staff feel well informed about things that affect them at work
	% staff agree they have the freedom to work in a way which suits them
	% staff believe the council has sufficient wellbeing support in place for staff
	% staff agree they can strike the right balance between work and home life
	% staff feel well supported by their line manager
	% of staff subjected to bullying and harassment at work
	% of working time lost due to sickness absence
	% of staff agree the Council is open minded, accepting of differences, and everyone is made to feel included
	% of staff agree they can be themselves at work
	% of staff feel treated with fairness and respect at work
Are open, sharing our experiences, and learning from each other.	% staff feel confident to freely share any work issues with their colleagues/team.
	% staff response to staff survey
	% staff agree that any suggestions or comments they make are listened to
	% staff who agree that if they have any problems or concerns, they feel able to discuss them with their line manager / supervisor
	% of staff confident that any reported inappropriate behaviour by colleagues whilst at work, would be dealt with appropriately
	% of staff agree that the leadership team have a good understanding of the challenges staff face
	% of staff agree that in their team, mistakes are seen as learning opportunities
	Analytics of sharepoint usage
Are recognised and rewarded for the contributions we make.	% staff agree that their manager gives them regular feedback on performance
	% staff agree they are praised and recognised for good work
	% staff feel valued and rewarded fairly for the work they do

Outcome	Key Measures
Attract and retain the best people.	% turnover
	Agency use
	Diversity of our workforce (gender, age, ethnicity, disability)
	% of staff who leave within 12 months
	Number of workplace issues / employee relations cases (to include conduct, capability, grievance, disciplinary)
	Gender pay gap (and Race, Disability pay gap if feasible)
	% vacancies filled first time
	Diversity of job applicants
	Number of job applications per campaign
Have the confidence to put forward ideas, try out new concepts and take actions within clear boundaries and expectations.	% of managers agree they are empowered to manage resources to deliver their target outcomes.
	% staff feel able to contribute to improvements in their area of work
	% staff encouraged to try new tasks to develop and improve
	% staff feel able to approach the leadership team if needed
	% staff agree they clearly understand what is expected of them
	% of staff feel trusted to do their work in the way they think is best
	% staff agree that all employees are held accountable for their personal performance and contribution
Learn and develop in our roles and our careers, performing to our best ability.	% of staff with a personal development plan in place
	% who agree they have had the training and development needed to perform current duties
	% staff agree there are training and development opportunities to support them to achieve their ambitions / progress their career
	Number of apprenticeships and other early career placements
	Average learning / development activity per head
	Training spend per head
	% of roles filled by internal candidates
	% completion of mandatory training
	% staff agree they have the skills and equipment to do their jobs
Work together with our colleagues across the Council, partners and community.	% staff feel that in their team, they help and support each other
	% staff agree that their manager / supervisor encourages them to work collaboratively with other colleagues and departments to achieve own / organisational objectives
	% staff feel that they work well across teams on shared objectives
	% staff who agree that we put our community and service users at the heart of what we do
	% of staff who believe their work makes a difference to the organisation / community
	% of staff who agree that we deliver a great service to residents and the community

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People Strategy



Our journey to employer of choice





Foreword



Cllr Jill Cleary
Leader of the Council



Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

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As part of the council’s ongoing transformation programme, ‘Future New Forest, transforming tomorrow together’, we are committed to being an employer of choice. A fundamental part of this is developing and delivering a people strategy that outlines how we attract, retain, and grow our talent, giving us direction to deliver for our employees as well as for our community.

The strategy is based on a wealth of evidence from a wide range of sources: from data and feedback from our current workforce; to external reviews and best practice from both within and outside local government. We aim to be agile to enable us to react to current trends and be fit for future changes.

Underpinning the strategy is the development of our positive work culture, through our LEAF values, with a new behaviours framework to show how we live our values and foster a strong sense of belonging at work.

Our journey to employer of choice: Grow Connect, Empower, is represented visually as a tree with people at the heart, where we start with strong roots, build on these through the branches of Grow, Connect, and Empower, culminating in our LEAF culture which flows through all we do.

Our strategy document describes our strong roots and branches with why they are important, what we do well, what we aim to

achieve and how each will be measured and reviewed. These will continually evolve as new opportunities and challenges emerge.

We firmly believe that having the best staff, who are well-supported, is key to delivering the best outcomes for our residents.

We are committed to developing our people to be fit for the future, and this strategy enables us to achieve this in a context of significant change, as well as deliver our corporate plan priorities for the communities we serve.



The purpose of our people strategy

42 Our Corporate Plan and Transformation Strategy commit to the development of a people strategy to outline how we attract, retain, and grow talent.

The people strategy provides the direction to guide the organisation in how we:

- engage our people
- invest in our people
- create the conditions to enable change

Engaging our people

It is important that every member of our team feels part of the organisation and feels valued for the contribution they make to the community and our corporate plan objectives.

Investing in our people

This is about ensuring we have the skills we need to deliver the changes we must enable and the work that makes a difference to our community.

Creating the conditions to enable change

Continuously applying our values, behaviours, and culture.

The focus on our people is more important than ever. Through this strategy we will support our employees during significant change and position them with the right skills and behaviours to embrace future opportunities.

We know that when our people are at their best, we will be best placed to meet our strategic aims.

It is a proactive framework, to enable enhanced commitment, engagement and motivation, plan for future workforce requirements, build capacity and competence to deliver current and future requirements for our communities.

How our people strategy fits within our council

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Our people strategy aligns with our overarching corporate plan and fits with the 'people and capabilities' theme in our transformation strategy.

The people strategy links closely to the other themes within the transformation strategy; 'customer and digital', 'assets and accommodation', and 'finances & delivery' ensuring all our colleagues are working towards shared goals, with clear expectations and the resources they need to succeed.



Read our corporate plan at:

[link to document](#)



Read our transformation strategy at:

[link to document](#)

The process of creating our people strategy

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Discovery

During this phase, we collected data, research, and feedback. Our sources included:

- our corporate and HR peer reviews
- staff feedback, including leadership team, staff groups, and staff survey
- our corporate plan, transformation plan, and LEAF values
- external sources and best practice



Design

At this phase, we developed initial themes and principles using our findings from stage 1 with the inclusion of our corporate values.

Through an iterative process, the initial themes and principles were presented to multiple staff groups to gain insight into their understandings and reactions.

Feedback supported the design of a simpler and concise concept that is more accessible and understandable to all.



Delivery

Using the core themes of grow, connect, and empower, a 2-year action plan has been created.

We will ensure outputs are monitored, communication with key stakeholders is maintained, and progress and successes are measured.

What we're doing well as a council

Staff support

When asked, our staff say we care about their wellbeing, they have positive relationships with their managers, and that they enjoy working in our organisation. We know that there is strong cohesion within small teams and many agree that they help and support each other.

Early careers

We have been growing our early career roles to develop new skills in some of our hard to recruit areas. At the launch of this strategy we had the highest ever number of apprenticeships and our first graduate trainees across our services.

Commitment to our purpose

Our staff have a good awareness and understanding of the corporate plan and values and a strong sense that their work makes a difference to the organisation and community.

Recruitment

New employees are providing positive feedback on the overall recruitment process, the warmth of the staff, and the information provided, specifically our improved application packs.



We actively collaborate with local learning providers to build relationships with young talent and promote ourselves as a key local employer.

This includes attending careers fairs and supporting apprenticeships, providing students with insight into council roles and career paths.

In 2024, we were recognised as Brockenhurst College's "Employer of the Year" recognising our commitment to developing our brand and networks.

What challenges we need to address

Engagement and collaboration

The challenge: connection between individuals and teams, access to information, and the ability for corporate communications to reach all parts of the organisation is limited in some areas, holding back our people from sharing information, ideas and best practice, and learning from each other.

Skills

The challenge: national recruitment issues, an ageing workforce, fast moving technology, and skills gaps in some professional areas, mean we must grow and develop both our new and existing staff.

Learning and careers

The challenge: opportunities for career progression and a lack of clear personal development opportunities and career pathways are a particular challenge presented by our staff survey feedback.

Management practices

The challenge: a lack of clear expectations of managers has led to variable practices across the organisation, with an additional need to further develop our leaders and managers to face the challenges of change over the next few years.

Defining what employer of choice means to us

Using the evidence collected in the discovery phase, we have defined our concept of being an employer of choice.

To us this means we will:

- attract and retain the best people
 - learn and develop in our roles and our careers, performing to our best ability
 - be recognised and rewarded for the contributions we make
 - work together with our colleagues across the council, partners and community
 - include everyone and encourage a strong sense of belonging
- have the confidence to put forward ideas, try out new concepts and take actions within clear boundaries and expectations
 - know how our work makes a difference to the community we serve
 - be open, sharing our experiences, and learning from each other
 - fairly and consistently apply our processes and practices



Our corporate values are already established. Collectively known as 'LEAF', our values underpin the culture and behaviours we are aiming for, to achieve our commitment to becoming an employer of choice.

Learning

Empathy

Ambition

Fairness

Our journey to employer of choice

This journey will be led by our 4 themes,
and they are:

Strong roots

Grow

Connect

Empower



The 4 themes:

1. Strong roots

Strong roots

Our roots are centred on our values which flow through the branches of our organisation and create the culture we are aiming for.

With employees as our most important asset, all employees should feel this is the best place for them to work. We will achieve this through clear processes and expectations which are applied fairly and consistently, by proactively supporting wellbeing and resilience, by promoting our behaviours framework which sets out the expectations for how we all want to be treated and treat others at work, and by recognising and celebrating when individuals and teams align with our values.



Spotlight: Strong roots

Meet 4 of our colleagues who have shared how they recognise themselves or their work in our values.

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Learning

Andy Rowe, waste & recycling supervisor:

"I am embracing all learning opportunities. Since joining the Waste & Recycling team, I have moved from Refuse Loader through to HGV Driver, then Senior Chargehand and I have just been successful in a promotion to Supervisor. Without the learning opportunities both formal and on the job I would not have been able to reach this potential".



Empathy

Christina Morgan, housing allocations officer:

"In my role I feel empathy is essential, many people have had difficult and complicated lives and, as a result of this, can be difficult to engage with or have difficulties understanding the processes we need to go through in order to re-house them.

I make sure I take time to be patient and listen to people when they talk which enables me to get a better understanding of them and their situation. I am always mindful that I do my job every day, but the person I am dealing with, is going through the process of being housed potentially for the first time and does not know what to expect".



Ambition

Kasia Lewis, homelessness prevention officer:

"I still feel there is more to give and achieve in my role. I am keen to take on more responsibility and I feel well supported by my managers to expand my role and responsibilities. I believe NFDC are an employer that nurtures ambition and provides support to move and change within the organisation."



Fairness

Phil Thompson, environmental health officer:

"The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme helps our residents choose where to eat out or shop for good food by giving them clear information about a business's hygiene standards. As a national standard, businesses and customers alike can have confidence in its openness and fairness".

The 4 themes:

2. Grow

Grow

We believe that everyone should have the opportunities to develop, with protected time for learning and development activities for current and future skills needs.

This will include core transferable skills as well as targeted development, early career opportunities, qualifications and continuing professional development at all career stages.

We will create positive learning experiences to benefit our people and the wider community.



Spotlight: Grow



Here's Ned, who joined us as an apprentice in 2022, he has now completed his Accounting Level 3 apprenticeship and has been successful in securing a further training contract to complete the Level 4. Ned said "Completing my level 3 AAT apprenticeship has allowed me to gain a professional qualification whilst also working alternate weeks for the Sundry Income Team and the Service Accountancy Team." He continues, "Upon completion of my level 3 apprenticeship, I have taken up the Junior Finance Assistant role and I am now working towards my level 4 AAT qualification. Overall, I have grown in confidence throughout my time at New Forest District Council and enjoy the varied job role having the opportunity to work for two separate departments".

Pam and Ned's line managers both agree that they are developing into important members of the team, helping to ensure our services are delivered in a professional and timely way. They have the time and opportunity to learn and develop, but they also bring new ideas and learning back to help evolve how both teams move forward.



Meet Pam Zuva, currently undertaking a degree apprenticeship with us in Environmental Health. Pam is mid-way in year two, and loving the development opportunity with us. She was key to the NFDC stand at the New Forest Show, helping educate visitors on food safety with her new knowledge. Pam said "It was an honour to share my newly acquired knowledge and instil awareness of the importance of food hygiene." She continues, "The simple practical activity of identifying hazards in the fridge enabled me to encourage the children and their guardians to reconsider how this could positively impact their health. The activity became popular at the NFDC stand and I am grateful to have contributed to our community in such a meaningful way".

Colleagues out on one of our regular wellbeing walks

The 4 themes:

3. Connect

Connect

Whilst recognising individual, team and role differences, it's important that we are all connected. No matter where we work or our job role, we will feel part of a team, have opportunities to get involved, feedback our thoughts and ideas, find out about what's happening in the organisation and in the wider geography, and have access to the information and advice we need to do our jobs well.

We will enhance engagement across the organisation, promoting our successes, collaborating internally and externally with all stakeholders, increasing our staff networks and peer support, and generally find ways to better connect in an open and transparent way.





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Spotlight: Connect

We celebrated with over 50 colleagues who have worked here for 20 years or more; our longest serving colleague having 44 years of service! We have a brilliant mix of long serving employees as well as those who have joined us more recently with their external experience to bring to the mix.


The 4 themes:

4. Empower

Empower

People will be supported to make decisions, test out new ideas, and find their own learning and solutions. We want people to feel empowered, have autonomy and enjoy their work, therefore bringing their best selves to work, unlocking individual potential and maximising performance.

With appropriate training we will make better use of digital technology to ensure we complete our work in the most effective and efficient ways. We will support and develop our various 'champions' networks as well as providing access to coaching, mentoring and peer learning.



Here's Sophie presenting at the Young Authority of the Year competition, an empowering opportunity to develop and showcase her skills, as well as network with others. Sophie has recently been promoted to a Service Manager role in our Housing service.

Spotlight: Empower



Amy joined us as our new fire safety manager in 2024, and has just started a level 4 Fire Safety two-year apprenticeship to help her develop further in this field and ensure we're on top of our game in terms of looking after our residents' safety. Amy says,

"Developing my skills means I am confident that I have the skills and knowledge to undertake my role effectively now, but also I feel empowered to lead my team effectively and be ahead of the curve with industry changes".



Julie, part of our homeless support team as an accommodation support worker, explains she feels supported by her colleagues and empowered in her role, which involves supporting our most complex and challenging tenants to maintain their tenancies, as well as encouraging them that their lives can change and that they can, at the end of their journey, secure permanent accommodation. Julie says,

"In our homelessness team, I work with a great bunch of people and we are all here at the end of the phone to listen to each other when needed. I have the opportunity to shape my role, supported by my managers when I have an idea and can see this through to implementation".



Stewart, our senior streetscene supervisor oversees a wide range of matters, from the operational leadership of the wide ranging seven-day streetscene service, to researching and project managing related building developments. Stewart is also an incident liaison officer in emergency planning and a mental health first aider.

Stewart feels empowered to use his extensive skills and knowledge as well strong stakeholder contacts built up over his career to confidently take on new and innovative projects that make a real difference to our community. Stewart says,

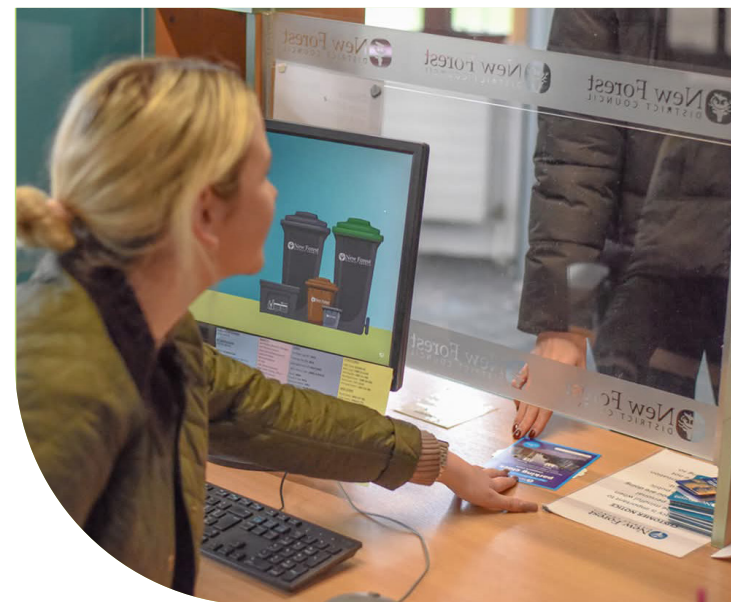
"As part of our building development activities I have worked with local charities to deliver 'changing places' (specialised toilet and changing facilities for people with severe disabilities) in key locations across the district. I feel proud that disabled individuals and their families now have access to the New Forest".

How will we deliver this strategy

Our delivery plan is focused on creating the most impact possible over two years, establishing foundations in year one and building on these in year two to increase our capabilities.

We are committed to delivering a far-reaching action plan over the two year period under the themes of strong roots, grow, connect, and empower, aligned to our purpose of engaging and investing in our people and creating the conditions for change.

Our delivery plan includes development of new ideas and review and improvement of existing activities, all of which will be embedded into our day-to-day work to ensure the benefits are sustained long term. We are committed to learning and remaining flexible, meaning we can adapt our plan as needed in this changing environment.



Our delivery plan

Strong roots

Improve recruitment and other HR processes.

Create a behaviours framework aligned to our LEAF values.

Develop a toolkit of resources to support change management.

Identify different audiences across our teams to enable tailored communications, training, and other opportunities.

Identify and develop core skills across the organisation.

Create a leadership and management competency framework and establish learning opportunities to support high performance.

Review and amend key people policies.

Improve quality and usability of our workforce data.

Grow

Review and clarify mandatory training requirements.

Enhance opportunities for career development including apprenticeships and other opportunities for new and existing staff.

Review and improve personal development processes.

Connect

Review and improve internal communications and enhance employee engagement.

Enhance our staff intranet.

Create new and support existing peer networks.

Empower

Implement a programme to develop 'digital skills for all'.

Create a learning hub.

Grow opportunities for coaching, mentoring, buddying and shadowing.

Develop targeted learning opportunities based on need of different staff audiences.

HR Committee – 14 March 2025

Corporate Health and Safety Quarter 3 Report

Purpose	For Review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This Report highlights the significant work undertaken by the Corporate Health and Safety Team in quarter 3 2024 – 2025. This report also includes key feedback from the service safety panels and working groups, which are the Councils primary function for health and safety cooperation and consultation. The quarterly accident/incident report provides statistics from the financial year 2024 – 2025 and any key significant incidents which occurred in quarter 3.
Recommendation(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To acknowledge the findings identified from service safety panels and working groups. • To acknowledge the findings from the Q3 2024 – 2025 accident/incident form.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	Support the legal requirement of the Council as outlined within the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated legislation and guidance.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jill Cleary – Leader of the Council
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Resources & Transformation – Section 151 Officer
Officer Contact	James Loring Corporate Health and Safety Manager 02380 285 332 James.loring@NFDC.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. This report highlights the significant work undertaken within the Corporate Health and Safety Team and throughout the Council from 1st October – 31st December 2024 (quarter 3).

COSHH Risk Assessor Training

2. The Corporate Health and Safety team have provided COSHH risk assessor training to all Streetscene Supervisors in Q3. This training provides Supervisors with the knowledge to undertake COSHH risk assessment and COSHH risk assessments using our online COSHH management system Eco Online Chemical Manager. Following the face to face training all delegates were asked to undertake a COSHH assessment on the system. 2 delegates have now passed. Due to workload pressure within the service the other 2 delegates have not submitted their assessments. The Health and Safety team will continue to work with these supervisors to ensure their assessments are submitted within a reasonable timeframe.
3. As identified within the COSHH Policy, this training will also be provided to supervisors within Housing Maintenance, Open Spaces, Workshops and Transport, Engineering Works and Facilities. Additional training sessions will be held in Q4 2024 – 2025.

Health and Safety Task Inspections

4. Workplace inspections were undertaken with the Waste and Recycling team this quarter. Antony Whittle (Corporate Health and Safety Advisor) attended a rural waste round, the following findings were identified:
 - Overall, the working practises were very positive
 - The condition of the roads were very poor, and the waste vehicle being used was not suitable. No road risk assessment has been seen or reviewed by a member of the Health and Safety team.
 - Due to the type of road, the phone signal is very poor and could affect a response in an emergency situation when lone working.

5. Additional workplace inspections within the Waste and Recycling team will be undertaken within Q4, this includes:
 - Curb side glass round
 - Clinical waste collection
 - Commercial waste collection

6. A Streetscene void workplace health and safety inspection is also scheduled to be undertaken in Q4.

Health and Safety Management Audits

7. The team have been undertaking a management Health and Safety audit with the Electrical team in Housing Maintenance. The audit questions set is based off [HSG65](#) and reviews the services health and safety management systems. An overall score of 82.64% was achieved. The following actions have been identified:
 - Review use of service safety plans.
 - Active monitoring of health and safety performance to be reviewed.
 - Review all risk assessments and ensure that all hazards faced by employees are identified and that adequate control measures are in place.
 - Record minutes from team meetings, including where health and safety concerns are raised by employees.
 - Review the requirement for occupational health and health surveillance monitoring.
 - Review the risks of hand arm vibration for all tools used within the service.
 - Implement a formal health and safety induction process.
 - Implement processes for the hiring of plant ensuring adequate controls are in place.

8. In summary, this highlights that satisfactory health and safety management processes are in place within the team. Electrical hazards are well managed and considered for all tasks. The actions identified are required for many teams within Housing Maintenance, therefore it is recommended that many of the actions identified are made a priority for the next financial year.

9. Health and Safety Management audits will be undertaken with the Gas team and Streetscene in Q4.

Fire Safety Review Corporate Buildings

10. Following a fire alarm activation on 23/12/2024, the fire evacuation procedures for Appletree Court are currently under review by the Health and Safety team, CCTV and Facilities. The false alarm on the 23/12/2024 identified a number of issues with the current evacuation strategy, this includes:
 - Incorrect mapping and zoning of the fire alarm panel. The smoke alarm in the boiler room (east wing) was activated on 23/12/2024 due to a significant amount of dust being produced by the contractors working on site, however when the CCTV team reviewed the fire alarm panel it indicated "canteen", this is clearly incorrect and likely has not been appropriately updated since pre-2017. In addition, the building plans, which should include the location of all fire safety equipment within the building were found to be incorrect following the ATC refurbishment works. The Councils fire risk assessment contractor has been engaged to update all maps and update the fire detection and zoning on the fire panel.
 - Lack of SIO, fire warden and management presence. Due to hybrid working and the time of the year there was minimal fire warden, senior incident officer (SIO) and management on site. In order to ensure the fire can be confirmed and all areas of the building can be swept a minimum of 6 fire wardens/SIOs will need to be on site at all times. There are currently 24 paid fire wardens at Appletree Court, it is has been recommended that a roster is made and managed by the Facilities team to ensure adequate cover is provided.
 - Poor communication of works being undertaken. At the time of the false activation, it was unclear who was responsible for the works being undertaken on site and no contact information had been communicated to the CCTV control room. This has been addressed by Sam Wills who has now shared the key contact list with the CCTV control room. This has also been identified and actioned as part of the Control of Contractors Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Corporate Resources and Transformation by the means of a Clients brief.

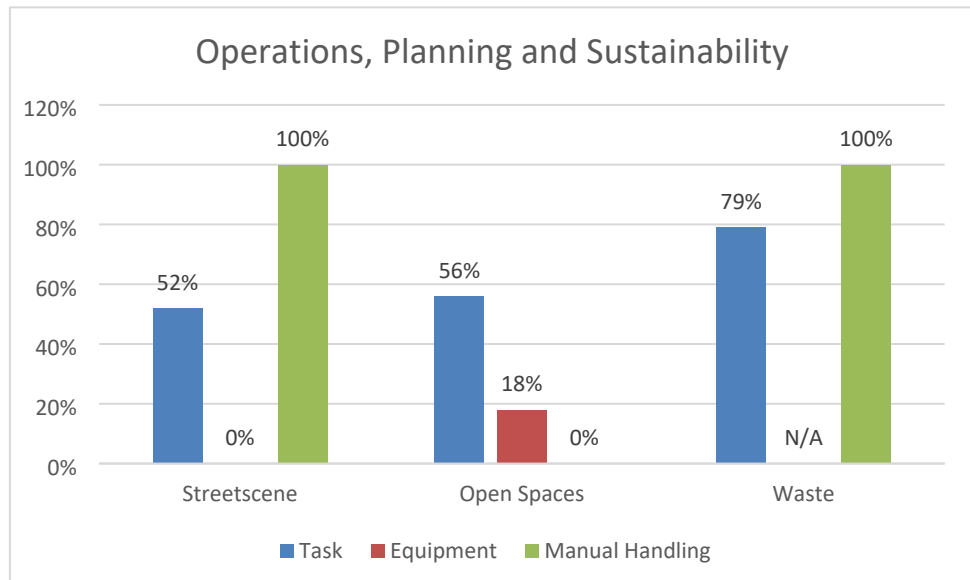
- Inappropriate radios used by fire wardens and site officers. During the activation it was identified that the site officers and CCTV control room are on different radio frequencies to the fire wardens, and therefore resulted in poor communication. It has now been agreed that all members of an evacuation team should be on the same frequency. It was also identified that the Site Officers do not always keep their radio on them, which was previously agreed. This has also now been actioned.
11. A fire evacuation drill was undertaken at Marsh Lane Depot (MLD) on 16/01/2025). The main concerns identified were a lack of ownership/fire wardens leading on their duties shown by fire wardens on site and concerns around the ability of workshop employees to hear the alarm when they are working. All actions are the responsibility of Facilities, the Health and Safety team will continue to support.
 12. The Health and Safety team have also been asked to undertake the fire evacuation procedure for Hardley Depot.

Orbis Protect Procurement and Implementation

13. Contracts have now been signed with Orbis Protect and user information has been shared. Implementation of the Orbis Red-alert badges within Housing Options & Tenancy Accounts and Housing Resident Services will be undertaken within Q4 2024 – 2025.

Service Safety Panels

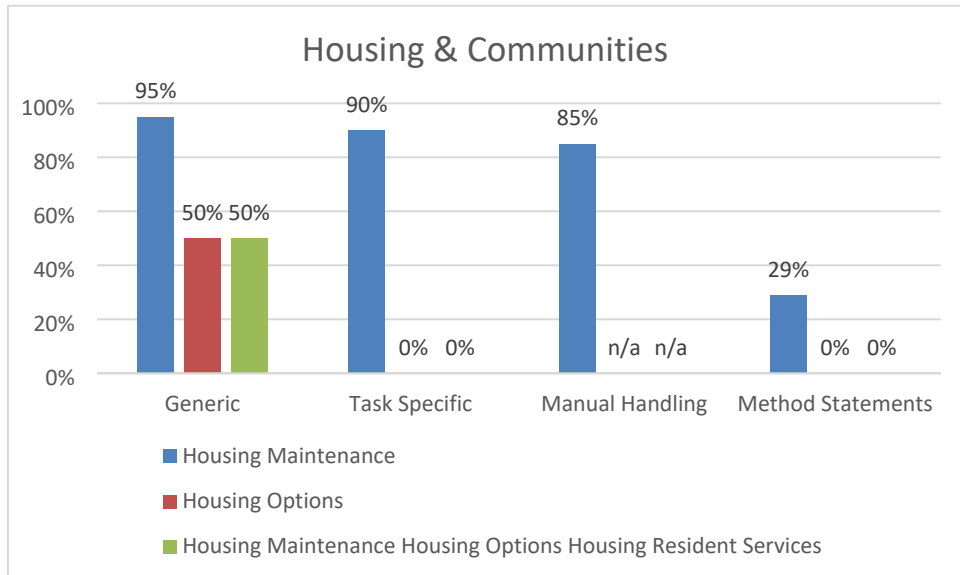
14. **Operational Service Safety Panel** – all H&S panel documentation, including minutes is added to the [Service Safety Panel SharePoint pages](#). Below I have outlined the main feedback raised at the Operational Service Safety panel.
 - Progress is continuing to be made on updating risk assessments across the directorate, the graph below outline the current progress. The Health and Safety team are now providing additional support to Engineering Works, Transport and Enforcement. Open Spaces Supervisors have struggled to undertake these risk assessment reviews due to the current workload and confidence in completing the template document. A project approach should be considered to ensure this critical work is completed within a realistic timeframe.



- No progress has been made on moving the current health and safety monitoring process onto MS forms. The current process of monitoring all operatives over a 2-month period is on-going however no data has been sent to the health and safety team this quarter. It has been recommended that this action is pushed back until all risk assessments have been reviewed within the service. This will allow the service to identify its high-risk tasks, these tasks should be prioritised for health and safety performance monitoring. Chris Noble has agreed that we need to move this forward due to the lack of progress this financial year.

15. **Housing Service Safety Panel** – all H&S panel documentation, including minutes is added to the Service Safety Panel SharePoint pages. The Housing Safety Panel was undertaken on 15th January 2025. Below I have outlined the main points raised at the Housing Safety Panel:

- Progress is continuing to be made on reviewing all risk assessments within the directorate, the following graph outline the current progress. Housing Strategy and Development do have risk assessments in place however the Health and Safety team are reviewing the scope of the current risk assessments in place.



- Employees within Homelessness identified that their ID cards did not work when trying to use interview room 1 at ATC. This has previously been raised with IT and HR and was actioned. All staff were asked to check their access and report back to the Health and Safety team. The Health and Safety team will raise with IT and HR again to ensure appropriate access is provided to all employees.
- The Housing Health and Safety Handbook has now been completed, [See appendix 1](#).

16. **Office Service Safety Panel** – all H&S panel documentation, including minutes is added to the [Service Safety Panel SharePoint pages](#). The office Safety Panel was undertaken on 21st January 2025. Below I have outlined the main points raised at the panel:

- Workplace inspections will be undertaken at all Council Offices during Q4. The Health and Safety team will be moving the current workplace inspection form onto MS forms.

Working Groups

17. **Control of Contractors Working Group** - all working group documentation, including minutes is added to the [Working Groups SharePoint pages](#). The Control of Contractors Working Group was held on 24th January 2025. Below I have outlined the main points raised at the working group:
 - The Health and Safety team provided an overview of the changes made to the Contractor Incident Notification Protocol (CINP) TEAM channel. 6 incidents have now been logged; 2 contractors has active control measures.
 - Progress is being made on all Control of Contractor Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Additional consultation is required with relevant supervisors and managers in each directorate prior to sign off. The deadline for a final draft to be presented is April 2025.

18. **Asbestos Working Group** - all working group documentation, including minutes is added to the [Working Groups SharePoint pages](#). The Asbestos Working group was undertaken on 28th January 2025. Below I have outlined the main points raised at the working group:
 - **Asbestos Working Group KPIs** – Peter Whetman (Corporate Asbestos Manager) provided a statistical update on the KPI's agreed at the start of the financial year. All reports are available on the [working group SharePoint page](#).
 - **Corporate Buildings Re-Inspections** – it was noted that the scope of this KPI needs to be extended following the updates to the asset register for Estates and Valuations.
 - **Asbestos Task Operations Inspections** – Dan Bull (Corporate Asbestos Management Officer) has now undertaken 6 onsite inspections within Housing. The main issue identified across all inspection is that Housing Operatives have been using the incorrect Van when collecting asbestos waste. Additional communications will be provided to all trade operatives and supervisors.

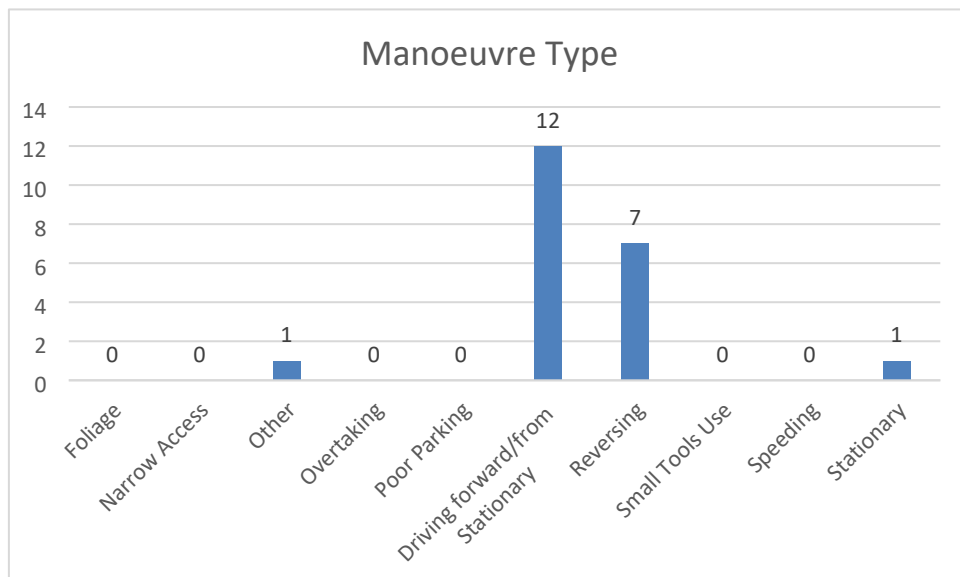
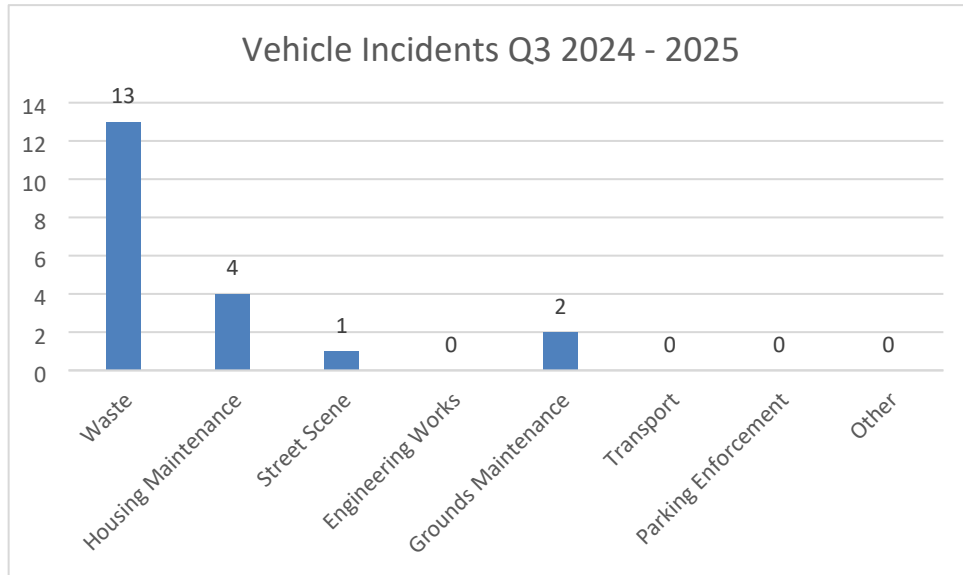
19. **Housing Operational Working Group** – the [Housing Operational working group](#) was undertaken on 22nd January 2025. The main discussion point was the Maintenance and Repair System (MARS).

Accident/Incident Report Q3 2024 – 2025

20. See [appendix 2](#) for the full accident/incident report.
21. A total of 65 reports were made in quarter 3. Although this is a decrease from the previous quarter at Q3 2023 – 2024, there is an increase in the number of non-reportable accidents (injuries) and a reduction in the number of near misses reported. The reduction of near miss reports is due to a reduction of reports from Streetscene in relation to damage in public toilets.
22. A total of 5 RIDDOR reports were made to the HSE this quarter, 2 of which were contractor related. This is a significant increase when compared to the previous quarter.
23. At the time of this report a total of 185 days has been lost this quarter. 123 in Housing & Communities, 65 in Place, Operations & Sustainability. 91 days in Housing & Communities were due to one employee.
24. A downward trend has been identified for all employee reports.
25. Verbal abuse incidents continue to be the top reported cause for the financial year however we did see an increase in slip, trip and fall incidents in Q3. This is mainly due to the poor weather experienced over the winter period. Contact with sharp objects has had a significant decrease this financial year.
26. The top reporting team this quarter was Housing Maintenance (19 reports). A downward trend of reported injuries has been identified within Waste and Recycling this financial year.
27. A downward trend of member of the public reports has been identified this financial year. Although when compared to the previous financial year, there has been a significant increase in the number of reports. This is primarily due to the increased reporting from managers/supervisors in housing and customer services also reporting incidents to the health and safety team.
28. A total of 5 incidents/accidents were reported by contractors, 2 of which were RIDDOR reportable.

Vehicle Incidents

29. Simon Cooper (Transport and Depot Manager) and James Clarke (Insurance & Risk Officer) present a vehicle incident report at the Operational Service Safety Panel. The following graph is a summary of the findings presented.



Q3 2024 - 2025 RIDDOR Reportable Incidents

30. **3770 – Housing Maintenance, Slip, Trip and Fall** – employee was stepping out of the back of their van when their right leg gave way. They went to grab the door to try and hold themselves up but was too late and fell. Call made to their supervisors for support. This injury resulted in an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury, and a total of 91 days lost. Reported to the HSE as a 7 or more days lost incident. The new vehicles provided to Housing maintenance do not have handles on the inside of the rear doors to support employees when entering and exiting the vehicle. This is currently being reviewed by Transport.
31. **3767 – Waste & Recycling, contact with flying object** – employee was working on a garden waste round, while loading a wheelie bin on the back of the lorry something from the bottom of the bin struck the employee's eye. CCTV footage from the round was reviewed and no injury or event could be identified. This incident was reported to the HSE as a 7 or more-day lost incident. A full accident investigation of the incident was undertaken by a member of the Health and Safety team, 2 actions were identified this includes review task specific risk assessment and provide toolbox talks to all staff on the safe working procedures for bin lifts for both automatic and manual operation. This incident resulted in 34 days lost.
32. **3800 – Housing Maintenance, Slip, trip and Fall** – while getting materials out of their van the employee fell landing on both feet. This action jolted the employee's back resulting in time lost. As part of the investigation, it was identified that no handle was fitted on the inside of the door to support employees accessing and exiting the van. This incident has resulted in more than 7 days lost and therefore was reported to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013.
33. **3782 & 3783 – Housing Maintenance Contractor, Unsafe Gas Appliances** – Disable Facilities Grant (DFG) works were being undertaken at 28 and 89 Beech Crescent. Following a call from the tenant at 89 Beech Crescent (leaking boiler) an NFDC Gas Engineer attended site. They discovered an unsafe boiler which had been fitted by the on-site contractor outside the scope of the manufacturer's instructions. The Gas Supervisor (Jason Green) also attended 28 Beech Crescent as the contractor was also undertaking works on this property. He also discovered another unsafe boiler. Due to both boilers being classed as immediately dangerous, each appliance was reported to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013 as a dangerous gas appliance. A full accident investigation has been undertaken by the health and safety team. A total of 21 actions have been identified. All gas works have been suspended until a further audit of gas works undertaken.

Other Significant Incidents Q3 2024 – 2025

34. **3779 – Housing Maintenance, discovery of asbestos, 8 Manor Close** – Following the review of an asbestos refurbishment & management survey by a member of the Corporate Asbestos team, it was identified that AIB debris was present in the loft space of 8 Manor Close. Decarbonisation refurbishment works were being undertaken at the time by a contractor. The property was secured and the loft space locked. The Councils asbestos removals framework contractor was instructed to remove all materials and debris. The contractor was recommended to report this incident to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013. The contractor has confirmed they have not completed a RIDDOR report form. A full accident investigation is currently on-going with the health and safety team. The on-going investigation has highlighted a number of health and safety management failings, this includes:
- Poor historic record keeping of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and management data on keystone.
 - Poor communication between client, contractor and between services in order to ensure health and safety risks are reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.
 - Poor processes to ensure asbestos data is recorded and accessible to all employees via keystone.
 - Lack of project specific health and safety documentation, including specific risks highlighted at the pre-construction phase.
35. **Waste & Recycling – Vehicle recovery, Dangerous Occurrence** – An agency driver veered off a road which resulted in the vehicle becoming stuck in a ditch, causing damage to fencing and hedgerows. A call was made to the Supervisor. The Supervisor attended site and could see that the road was unsuitable to drive down (extremely narrow and flooded at the time of the event). A call was made to our vehicle recovery contractor. The vehicle was inappropriately recovered by the contractor causing additional damage to nearby trees which angered residents. A resident was extremely abusive to the waste Supervisor onsite and over the phone. Once the vehicle was recovered from the ditch, it was clear there was a significant amount of damage to the vehicle. It has been reported the recovery company stated they did not have the equipment to fully recover the vehicle as if they lifted it additional damage would be caused. The Waste Supervisor made the decision to drive the vehicle back to the depot. Workshops reviewed the condition of the vehicle when it was returned, they confirmed it was not in a safe condition to drive. This incident is currently being

investigated by the Health and Safety team. It identifies a number of key health and safety failings, this includes:

- Suitable and sufficient vehicle recovery procedures.
- Inappropriate vehicle recovery methods used at the scene.
- Lack of management support and incident management procedures.
- Poor decision making which putting themselves and others at risk.
- Lack of suitable and sufficient route risk assessments.

Accident/Incident Investigation Actions Report

36. As identified within H&S04 – Corporate Accident, Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy, the Health and Safety team record and follow up on all required actions identified within full accident investigations undertaken by the team. [See appendix 3.](#)

Health and Safety Training

37. [See appendix 4.](#)

Corporate plan priorities

38. All recommendations fall under the Corporate values (LEAF), specifically within the Learning and Ambition categories.

Options appraisal

39. All recommendations have been made to ensure the Council complies with its legal duties as set out in the relevant legislation.

Consultation undertaken

40. Not identified as part of this report.

Financial and resource implications

41. Not identified as part of this report.

Legal implications

42. None Identified

Risk assessment

43. A formal risk assessment is not required at this level. All significant risks are identified as part of this report.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

44. None identified.

Equalities implications

45. None identified.

Crime and disorder implications

46. None identified.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

47. None identified.

EMT Comments

48. It was agreed that James Carpenter and Richard Knott would discuss on-going challenges and risks within their directorate with James Loring (Corporate Health and Safety Manager). All parties are to agree an on-going workplan to ensure appropriate resources are assigned to high-risk priorities.
49. Directors were asked to consider opportunities to discuss outstanding actions from health and safety investigations with their wider management team.
50. EMT supported the approach to managing fire wardens at Appletree Court. Additional detail should be supplied from facilities once a detailed approach has been considered.

Appendices

List appendices here:-

Appendix 1 – Housing Health and Safety Handbook

Appendix 2 – Accident/Incident Report Q3 2024 – 2025

Appendix 3 – Accident Investigation Action Stats Q3 2024 – 2025

Appendix 4 – health and Safety E-Learning Training Report

Background Papers:

None identified

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HOUSING MAINTENANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Employee handbook

SECOND EDITION, 2025

Issued to: _____ Date: _____

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Introduction

New Forest District Council (NFDC) is committed to on-going improvements to its health, safety and welfare arrangements and to prevent accidents, injury, and ill health, as far as is reasonably practicable. As part of this commitment, you have been issued this handbook to help you carry out your day-to-day duties in a safe manner.

The housing department provides a valuable and highly regarded service to the housing tenants of the New Forest. It is important that, as you are in the public eye, that you do not become complacent or careless as this may place yourself, your colleagues, or members of the public at risk.

77 If you have any questions or are unsure of anything contained in this handbook, please speak to your supervisor, manager, safety representative, or a member of the corporate health and safety team.

Richard Knott

Strategic Director, Housing and Communities

Employee standards

Every employee must aim to:

- take responsibility for own workload
- identify and take opportunities to learn and develop
- adapt and be flexible to new ways of working
- raise work related concerns with supervisor or manager
- commit to producing accurate and high-quality outcomes within appropriate time frame
- have adequate technical or professional skills to fulfil the requirements of the role
- use relevant forms of communication effectively
- maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality
- plan time and manage workload effectively
- make decisions appropriate to the requirements of the role
- commit to achieving full attendance at work
- understand health and safety issues and safe working practices for self and others
- make every effort to be aware of and promote sustainability in all aspects of their work
- have a good understanding and application of equal opportunity and diversity
- work towards continuous improvement
- challenge current procedures and processes in a positive manner
- understand and promote New Forest District Council values
- take on feedback to develop in their role

General housing do's and dont's

To ensure that all staff are safe at work, these simple "golden rules" have been put in place. Please be aware that failure to adhere to these rules may result in disciplinary actions being taken.

Do:

always use good manual handling techniques

keep your PPE in good condition and always use it correctly

report all accident and near misses

ask if you have any doubts

check the risk assessment, does it apply, is it up to date, what do the method statements say

discuss changes in a job, especially if it adds a hazard that may not have been expected

check the asbestos register when required

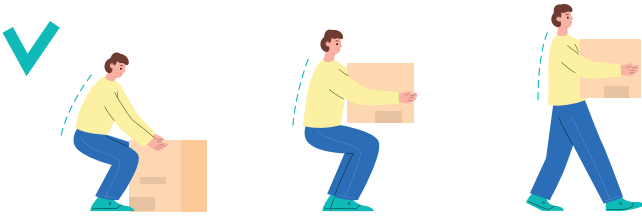
Don't:

use your personal mobile phone during working hours unless it is an emergency

use equipment unless you have been trained or authorised to do so

smoke in the cab of a council fleet vehicle

carry out work unless trained or authorised to do so



Manual Handling

Poor manual handling techniques are responsible for several very painful injuries which in many cases can affect you for years or even result in permanent damage.

This may include:

- a slipped disc
- muscle damage
- hernias
- torn ligaments and tendons

The discs in your spine do not have any nerves so you may be unaware of the damage that you are causing to your back until it is too late.

It is important to not try to carry or move anything outside of your physical capability as this will often be what leads to an injury occurring. If you will struggle, then ask for help.

TILE

Before lifting anything, stop and think about TILE.

TILE = task, individual, load, environment

Task: What am I going to lift and how far?

Individual: Everyone is different. What are my limits? Do I need assistance?

Load: Is it bulky or awkward to hold? Does it have sharp edges?

Environment: Do I have to move it up or down steps or over uneven surfaces?

Do's and dont's

When lifting:

- place one foot forward
- unlock your knees
- turn by moving your feet
- keep the load close to you
- ask for help when needed
- do not lift with your feet in-line
- do not use your back to start the lift
- do not twist your body
- do not reach above your head
- do not lift more than you are able to

Several manual handling tasks that are completed are identified as two persons required to lift. All housing staff must follow the control measures outlined within the relevant task specific manual handling risk assessment. If it states that it is two persons required lift, then do not try to do it alone as it will most likely result in an injury to yourselves.

When undertaking a dynamic risk assessment of your working environment you may identify several hazards which could pose a significant risk of injury, you should report these to your supervisor and request assistance, when required.

All task specific manual handling risk assessment are available on [your service's Directorate H&S Hub](#). If you are unable to access this resource, please contact your supervisor for further assistance.



2-person lift request

A key element of many risk assessments within the council is for staff to undertake a continual dynamic risk assessment of their working environment.

What is a dynamic risk assessment?

A dynamic risk assessment is the process of identifying, measuring, and evaluating risk in real time. This is something you will be doing every day in your normal life; a basic example is crossing the road or driving to work.

When arriving on site you should be undertaking a dynamic risk assessment, this does not have to be recorded. If you identify any hazards which cannot be controlled, such as undertaking a manual handling activity which could result in an injury and could require a 2-person lift, you must contact your supervisor for assistance from another colleague. Staff must not undertake risky behaviour or working practices to complete their task.

Infectious diseases

Tetanus

Tetanus is an acute disease caused by bacteria normally found in soil, dust and animal faeces. But it can be found in any dirty environment.

How do people get tetanus?

Commonly called 'lockjaw', the bacteria enters the body through cuts and grazes releasing a poison which causes the Tetanus symptoms. The bacteria spreads through the bloodstream blocking the nerve signals to the muscles. This causes muscle spasms and muscle stiffness throughout the body, the neck and jaw.

Normally the incubation period (the time from being affected to when the symptoms occur) is approximately 10 days.

Am I at risk?

Tetanus is a particular threat to employees working in housing. Potential contamination in properties is a risk to staff while carrying out work and those who may also be involved in associated tasks. However, any contamination to damaged skin by extraneous organic matter such as earth, debris, or material contamination in or outside properties could result in infection.

Avoiding tetanus

To avoid tetanus, always:

- wear gloves and other suitable PPE
- clean and cover cuts and grazes
- clean hands before eating, drinking, and smoking

Is there a vaccine available for tetanus?

Employees can be protected from tetanus by vaccination, and you are encouraged to take this up at all times.

Your GP surgery should offer a free service to all patients who request the treatment.

Hepatitis B and C

Hepatitis is a bacterial disease caused by contact with infected body fluids.

How do people get hepatitis B and C?

The bacteria are transmitted through cuts, puncture wounds or damaged areas of the skin.

The bacteria can live for at least seven days on contaminated surfaces. The incubation period (from contact to the first symptoms) is normally between 6 weeks to 6 months.

In some cases, people can be infected but show little, if any symptoms. Where symptoms are experienced, they can range from flu like symptoms, weakness, aches, fever, loss of appetite, diarrhoea to liver failure, liver cancer and jaundice.

Hepatitis is infectious, and contact with a small amount of contaminated fluid can pass on the disease.

Am I at risk?

Cases of hepatitis in the UK are low. However, it is still important not to be complacent and take the following precaution.

Avoiding hepatitis B and C

To avoid hepatitis B and C, always:

- wear your gloves when handling refuse
- clean and cover all cuts and grazes quickly
- follow the procedures for collecting refuse and dealing with needles and other sharp objects

Is there a vaccine available for hepatitis B and C?

There is a vaccination available for hepatitis B, but currently there is not a vaccination for hepatitis C.

Where the risk assessment indicates a high risk of infection, then employees are encouraged to get a vaccination from their doctor.

Any costs involved with the above will be reimbursed by the council.

Weil's disease

Weil's disease (Leptospirosis) is a disease from a bacteria found in contaminated rat urine. In some cases, the disease can be fatal.

There is no vaccination against Weil's disease.

What are the symptoms?

From infection, approximately 9 to 14 days, flu like symptoms will occur. Further symptoms vary but can include liver damage, kidney failure, meningitis, and conjunctivitis.

How people get Weil's disease

People can get Weil's disease from:

- touching their mouth and eyes with contaminated hands. For example, smoking, putting glasses on, taking glasses off, or eating
- uncovered cuts and grazes

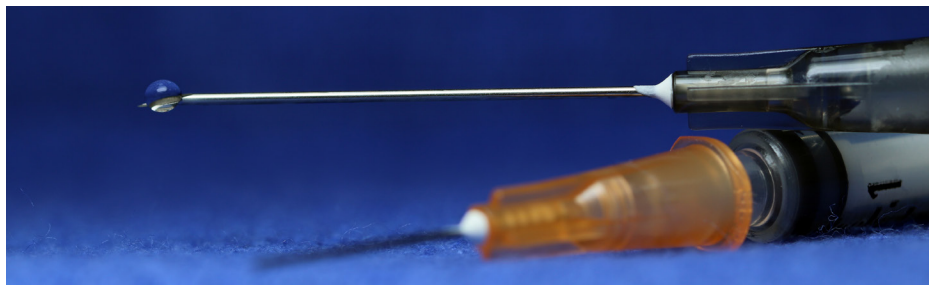
Am I at risk?

Sewer workers, maintenance and engineering operational staff, housing and property services inspectors, and those working on associated tasks are considered most at risk.

Avoiding Weils's disease

To avoid Weil's disease, always:

- wear your gloves when handling refuse
- clean and cover all cuts and grazes quickly
- wash your hands before eating, smoking, and touching your mouth



Needles (sharps)

Why are needles a problem?

Discarded hypodermic needles can carry viruses and bacteria that can cause very serious health problems and diseases.

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The main problem with needles is needle-stick injuries, where the needle punctures the skin. The main illnesses associated with needle-stick injuries are hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV.

Where can needles be found?

Needles can be found anywhere within or outside (within the curtilage of) a property. Employees must take care when placing their hands where they cannot see, or when handling clothes and other tenant items.

If you find a needle, you should:

- make the area safe
- always assume that there are other needles in the same area
- only collect the needle if:
 - » you are trained to do so. Contact your supervisor to arrange training if required
 - » you have the correct sharps equipment, including PPE
 - » you are in no danger and can clearly see the area where the needle is

What should I do if I have a needle stick injury?

If you have a needle-stick injury, you should:

1. Encourage the wound to bleed by gently squeezing the area around the wound.
2. Wash and clean the wound with soap and water.
3. Report the accident immediately to your supervisor or manager.
4. Go to the nearest hospital with A&E department.
5. Take the needle with you to hospital, if safe to do so, in a sharps container.
6. Complete an accident report form with your manager.

If you have a needle-stick injury, you should never suck the wound.

Display screen equipment (DSE) and home working

DSE training

DSE applies to any computer, laptop, or screened items that are used as part of your working day. As part of your health and safety induction, all employees who are considered DSE users* must complete the DSE e-learning.

| For more information, please visit our [DSE page](#).

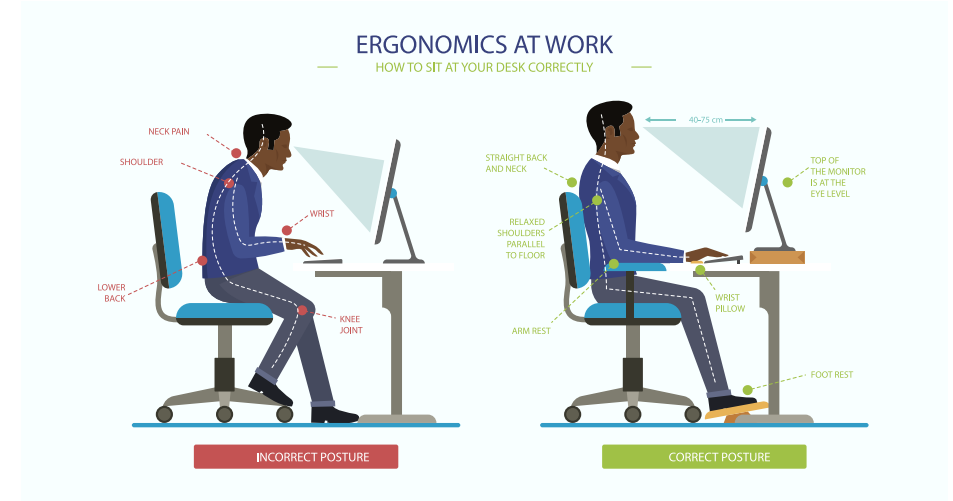
*Workers who use DSE daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more.

DSE self-assessment

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As part of the e-learning training, you will also have to complete a DSE self-assessment e-form. This is legally required for all DSE users. All employees are required to undertake a DSE self-assessment every 3 years, or if there has been a significant change in their workstation, working practices, or health concerns. If you have any concerns about your workstation, please contact your line manager and a member of the corporate health and safety team.

| To complete the DSE self-assessment e-form, visit: [DSE - Self-assessment](#).



Setting up your workstation

How should I set up my workstation?

- Top of screen level with eyes, about an arm's length away
- Relax your shoulders - try to position yourself high enough so you don't need to shrug your shoulders
- Computer and screen directly in front of you on desk or other surface
- Keyboard just below elbow height
- Back of the seat provides good lower back support (or use cushion, to provide additional back support)
- Seat height equally supports front and back of thighs (or use cushion to raise seated position)
- Gap of 2-3 cm between front of seat bottom and back of knee
- Screen and keyboard central - don't twist your back
- Mouse in line with elbow

Do I need to follow good HSE practices when working from home?

Yes, the Display Screen Equipment Work: Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 also applies when home working.

When setting up your home workstation, you should copy the set up you have in the office. When needed, you can request a mouse, keyboard, and monitor from IT. This can be done via council laptops, phones, and tablets.

To request any of these items, visit the ICT Portal and [log a request](#).

DSE top tips

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If you are using an adjustable chair place your feet firmly on floor, sit right back into the chair, adjust to the correct height to ensure forearms are level on table surface in front of you, avoid leaning forward or twisting so bring your keyboard central and do not over reach when using your mouse, use a stable pile of books that will not slip off each other or a box to place your feet on if they are not flat on the floor.

Your screen should be about arm's length away and the top of screen height should be eye level.

If you are using a non-adjustable chair sit right back into the chair and bring equipment towards you, use a cushion to sit at the correct height for forearms to be level on the table surface and use a cushion or a rolled-up towel to support your back, try to relax your neck and shoulders.

You can even work from the sofa by using cushions to support your back, you can also use a cushion and a book to support your tablet on your lap, you can even use your height adjustable ironing board

to place your tablet on in front of you whilst sitting on the sofa.

Keep adjusting your work posture and vary your positions throughout the day. For example, use your work top in the kitchen or your height adjustable ironing board for some stand up working keeping shoulders and neck relaxed and take plenty of breaks from this position.

Take regular breaks throughout the day of at least 5 minutes every hour.

Employee support line

All NFDC employees can access a support line run by an external and independent organisation. This is called the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

The service is confidential, free, and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service offers help and assistance on a wide range of topics, both at work and personally.

The number to call is: 0800 1116 387

Examples of the topics that you could contact them about are:

- work or career advice
- financial advice
- marital and family matters
- drug and alcohol issues
- emotional and personal issues or counselling
- stress

You can access support online by visiting my-eap.com, the invite code is 'newforestwell'. This online service is also confidential.

If you have any questions about support at work, please contact the HR advisory team by email: hradvisory@nfdc.gov.uk

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The council is required by law to provide staff PPE where a risk assessment indicates that it is required, and the hazard cannot be controlled by other methods. Visit the [PPE H&S SharePoint](#) page.

The employee is required by law to always ensure that:

- you have all your PPE before you start work
- your PPE is in good condition, if not then it must be replaced
- you know how to correctly use your PPE, if you have any doubts then speak to your supervisor
- always use your PPE



The PPE provided to staff includes:

- a hard hat
- safety glasses
- safety goggles
- ear defenders
- ear plugs
- a dust mask (FFP3)
- a face shield
- a hi vis top (Class 1, 2, and 3)
- a hi vis coat (Class 1, 2, and 3)
- a hi vis trousers
- safety boots (S3)
- nitrile gloves
- gloves (x.x.x.x)

Working in rural areas

While working at New Forest District Council you will likely be working in rural areas.

Working in rural environments brings several hazards, including:

- poor phone signal
- poor lighting
- unstable or unmaintained footpaths
- falling trees
- contact with wild animals

While working in rural environments it is important to follow your local arrangements, as identified on your team's risk assessments.

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Additionally, you must ensure:

- your outlook calendar is kept up to date with meetings and visits. Include any visit information, location, and time frame of your visit if using this process for workday planning.
- you follow your local lone working procedures
- when working outside of day light hours, you avoid areas of poor lighting
- you walk on well-maintained well-lit pathways
- you have suitable footwear for the task
- you keep in regular contact with your colleagues and line manager or supervisor
- you give yourself plenty of time when travelling to and from appointments
- you keep your distance and reduce your speed when encountering animals in the district

Alcohol, medication, and drugs

Alcohol, medication, and drugs can affect both your own, your colleagues and other people such as members of the public or client's health and safety while you are at work. It is important to come to work in a condition that is safe for you to carry out your duties. Furthermore, in addition to the risk to others coming to work while under the influence may also be illegal.

Not only recreational drugs can impact your ability to work safely at work, but prescription drugs may also affect your ability to drive or operate machinery, if you are prescribed medication (drugs) by your doctor that may affect you then you must discuss this with your line manager.

This also applies to some non-prescribed over the counter drugs which can also affect you, for example some hay-fever medication can cause drowsiness.



Remember:

- if you are taking medication as directed and your driving is not impaired then you are not breaking the law. Keep taking medication as described.
- do not drive if you feel drowsy, dizzy, are unable to concentrate, or if you have blurred vision
- if you're driving is impaired, then you are guilty of breaking the law

Alcohol remains in your systems for a considerable amount of time. As an approximate guide, it takes the liver one hour to remove one unit of alcohol from the body.

Drinking alcohol in the evening may result in you being unfit for work the next day. You may also be over the legal driving limit.

The council has the ability to undertake drug screening and alcohol tests where there is reason to suspect that an employee is under the influence, and that the employee or other people's safety could be affected. Please speak to your supervisor if you need more information on this.

The council operates a with cause testing policy. Should any line manager have concerns they are to raise this to their line manager to go through the for-cause testing process.

Driving on council business

When driving on council business as part of your role you are representing the council, so it is important to remember to do the following:

- drive safely and at a suitable speed for the environment you are in while obeying all speed limits
- drive conscientiously and take care of other road users including vehicles, cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians
- obey road width and height restrictions
- take extra care and consider river depth markers, prior to attempting to pass through Forest Fords. Fords may be impassable during periods of high water
- drive with due care and attention to wild roaming animals that may be in or near the road. We work in the New Forest so there is the risk of animals wandering into roads in certain areas, so it is important that you think and look at the way you drive when passing so as not to injure or startle them.

When planning your route, it is important to consider traffic, road closures, weather conditions and to make sure you have a sufficient time and fuel to complete your journey.

If you are driving a council van, these are insured by the council for you to drive in fulfilling your official council business duties. You may take your van home, and in these instances, it is important to remember that any time you are in your vehicle you must obey the Highway Code, not just during work hours. You are not insured to carry private passengers nor for private use.

To ensure your safety while driving should an accident occur all tools and materials are to be stored in the rear of the vehicle and not on

the front seat. This is to prevent them from becoming “missiles” in the event of an accident.

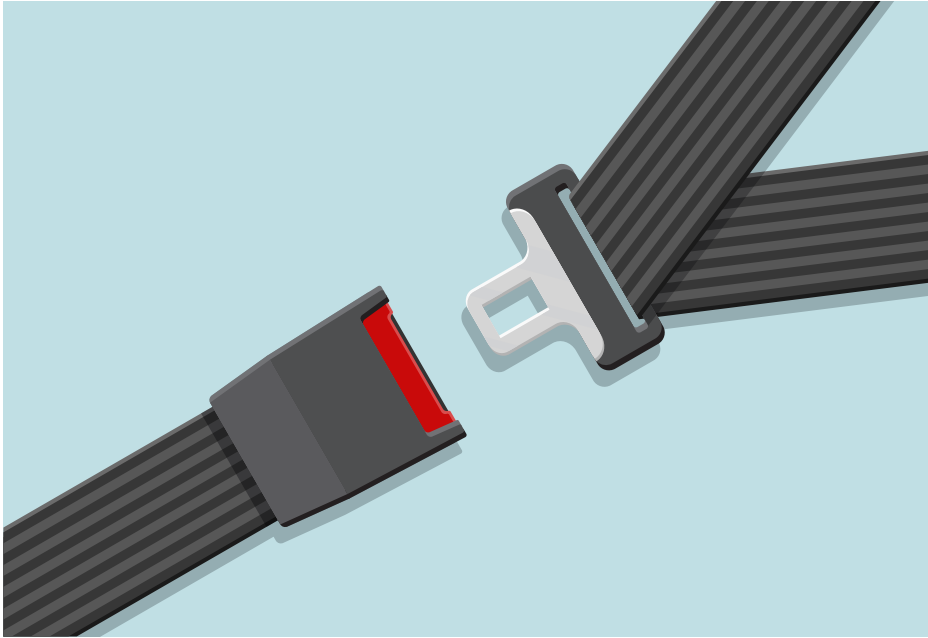
All vans are expected to be kept in a clean and tidy condition in particular the cab areas where you may take breaks or complete paperwork and a power wash station is available at Marsh Lane Depot for fleet drivers use. Vehicles will be inspected on a regular basis and should any vehicles be in poor condition management will undertake more regular checks to ensure it is kept in a good and clean state.

Council fleet driving staff will be provided with a separate NFDC Driver’s Handbook.

If you are driving your personal vehicle, this vehicle must be insured by yourself for business use for you to drive it as part of your duties. The council expects all staff who drive for council business to obey the Highway Code.

[For more information on driving at work, please visit information page.](#)

Drivers of fleet vehicles are responsible for all driving offences and payment of intended driving prosecutions received by the council.



06 Seat belts

Always wear your seat belt when travelling in a vehicle, it is the law. The council expects all its staff to comply with the rules of the road. If the police, see anyone in a vehicle not wearing their seat belt they will issue the driver with a fixed penalty fine and points on their license.



Mobile phones

It is against the law to use handheld mobile phones while driving or being in charge of any vehicle.

Using a mobile phone while driving may result in you being prosecuted for driving without due care and attention and/or dangerous driving.

If you need to make a phone call, find a safe place to stop and turn the engine off while making the call.

There have been changes to the highway code relating to hands-free and the use of mobile phones while driving. Please ensure you are fully aware of these rules.

Smoking

It is against the law to smoke in any public building and workspace. This includes any residents' properties, Voids, communal areas, council vehicles and includes the use of e-cigarettes (or equivalents). All employees who smoke must do so within the designated smoking areas on site. Employees must not smoke in their fleet vehicle or when within residents' properties, when smoking away from a council office or depot, this must be done out of site from the public.

It is important to be safe when smoking, when smoking in an allowed area it is important to do so safely and to dispose of your cigarette ends correctly. It is important to ensure any waste is fully extinguished before disposal.

16 Residents smoking in their properties

While visiting residents in their properties you may come across those who choose to smoke. The council does not ban residents from smoking in their home, however, they do have to respect council staff rights to a smoke free workplace and not to smoke within the immediate vicinity or room where work is being carried out.

Where it is evident that a resident smokes within their home and prior to work commencing, residents are to be politely asked to refrain from smoking within the immediate vicinity or room where work is to take place for the duration of the visit.

Should a staff member not feel comfortable to work in a resident's property due to ongoing smoking they are allowed to leave the property and call their line manager to discuss finding a resolution to the issue. Should the resident refuse to stop smoking in the work area then the employee has the right to refuse to carry out the work.

Safeguarding

All members of staff have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns they have or come across during their working day.

If you do identify any safeguarding concerns, please refer to the safeguarding policy and follow this guidance:

Observe: What is the concern?

Discuss: Discuss with a line manager or the safeguarding team.

Decide: Decide an action. Such as monitor it, refer to appropriate agency, or no further action needed.

Report: Report it. For example to the police, adult services, or children's services.

If it is an emergency and someone is at immediate risk, please dial 999.

For concerns relating to a child, young person or adult please contact a member of the safeguarding team: safernewforest@nfdc.gov.uk

Further information can be found the [safeguarding page](#) on New Forestnet, just search safeguarding in the search field.



Safe use of ladders and step ladders

Ladders and stepladders are not banned under health and safety law.

The law calls for a sensible, proportionate approach to managing risk, and ladders can be a sensible and practical option for low-risk, short-duration tasks.

Prior to using a ladder or step ladder, employees must undertake a visual inspection of the equipment prior to use.

Employees must consider if:

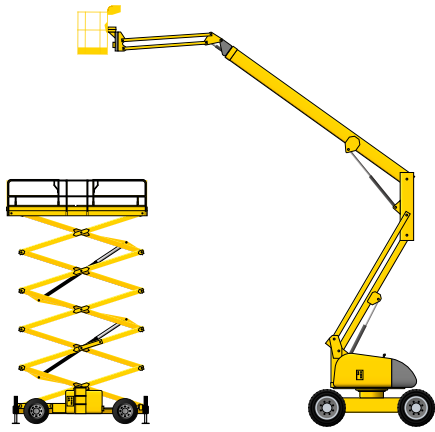
- the feet are damaged or worn
- the stiles are dented, bent, and cracked
- any of the rungs are loose, bent, worn, or cracked
- any tie rods are missing or damaged
- there are any cracked or damaged welded joints, loose rivets, or damaged stays

Pre-use checks and inspections of ladder stability devices and other accessories should be performed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

If any defects are found during your inspection, you must not use the equipment and contact your supervisor.

All ladders must be formally inspected by a competent person, every 6 months. All formal ladder inspections will be undertaken by our warehousing staff at Marsh Lane Depot Stores. Operatives must only use ladders or step ladder which have been inspected and tagged by a competent person.

If there is no ladder tag or it is out of date, then the ladder is not to be used. Raise this with your line manager and arrange to visit Marsh Lane Depot Stores to get your ladder re-inspected.



Mobile elevated work platform

93 (MEWP)

During your employment, you may be required to use or work from a MEWP. MEWPs are useful pieces of plant when used properly. However, they combine height with mobility and can be extremely dangerous if misused.

Only persons who have had adequate formal training are allowed to operate MEWPs, this is specific to either a 3a (boom) or 3b (scissor lift). IPAF (International Powered Access Federation) is one example of adequate accreditation. If you are trained in one, it does not mean you can use the other.

If you are not trained and your work requires the use of a MEWP, you must report this to your manager and are not to attempt to use a MEWP until you have received formal training.

When working from a MEWP if you are not operating it, then harness training may be all that is required for the work. This needs to be discussed with your line manager and risk assessed before any work is carried out.

The main hazards when working from a MEWP are:

- falls from height.
While working from the platform you must stay within the basket and not lean outside of it in an unsafe manner and wear a secured harness at all times.
- falling object.
While working from the platform you need to be aware of what is going on below you, for type 3a (boom) MEWPs you can often move above items and others while getting into position. It is important to consider what is below you and keep the area clear of individuals. All tools being used should be secured so they cannot fall to the ground from the basket, materials should also be secured where possible.
- pinch and crush injuries.
When carrying out maintenance or when the MEWPs in elevating, lowering or retracting it is important to keep clear of the mechanism and ensure others are not in close proximity. Should someone be in close proximity they are to be asked to move away from the MEWPs during its operation or movement.
- increased movement due to extension while travelling.
When needing to move the MEWP to a new location it is important to do so while fully retracted to the minimum setting to avoid instability, fall over or the operator being thrown from the basket.

For all MEWPs users it is important to remember that both prior and after use it must be inspected to ensure that it is safe and there are no obvious defects. These must be recorded on an inspection sheet and retained for council records. All inspections must be carried out in line with manufacturer's instructions.

Should you have any questions please do talk to your line manager for more information.



94 Verbal abusive behaviour and dangerous animals

During your employment, you may come up against tenants who display aggressive and abusive behaviour towards you. In these circumstances you must remain calm, and where suitable remove yourself from the premises.

All incidents of violence and abuse must be reported to your supervisor and the corporate health and safety team.

Reports can be made using our online report form or via paper copy or reported to your supervisor via telephone. All report forms can be accessed via [Sharepoint](#) via your mobile device.

When attending visits, you may also encounter potentially dangerous animals. All residents have been asked to lock away any pets in another room prior to you visiting the property. If when knocking on a door you can hear a dog barking, you must politely ask for the resident to put the animal in another room. You should not enter the property until the resident has done this. All aggressive animals should be reported to your supervisor and the corporate health and safety team.

When booking in a job, if you do not have direct access to the [Warning Marker Register \(WMR\)](#), the planners will check the council WMR on your behalf. If you have direct access you are expected to check yourself prior to the visit occurring. The WMR is the council central register which holds information on individuals and animal who may present a risk to employees and third parties. You must follow the control measures identified on the WMR when attending a visit with an individual who is placed on it. Employees can make requests to add someone to the WMR, following an incident of verbal or physical abuse. As identified in the section above, all requests should be made to your supervisor or a member of the corporate health and safety team.

Reporting accidents and incidents

As per the section above, all accident and incidents must be reported to your supervisor and a member of the corporate health and safety team.

What is the difference between an accident and incident?

An incident (or near miss) is an event not causing harm but has the potential to cause injury or ill health or damage. This also includes verbal abuse.

An accident is an event that results in injury or ill health.

As well as reporting any incidents or accident you have been involved in, you must also report any incident or accident suffered by a tenant or member of the public.

Member of the public incident and accidents must be reported via the [member of the public accident or incident report form](#).

All accident and incident forms can be found on Sharepoint, on the [operative accidents, incidents, and near-misses page](#).

In some circumstances the health and safety team need to report certain incidents and accidents to the Health and Safety Executive, known as [HSE](#). This includes any incident which result in an employee missing more than 7 days of work.

It is extremely important all accidents and incidents are reported to your supervisor and the health and safety team as soon as possible.

Office and depot fire safety

Employers have a legal duty to ensure adequate provisions are in place for fire safety. This is done through fire risk assessments of council buildings and depots, the provision of fire evacuation strategies, training and fire wardens.

When visiting any council depot or premises it is important that you are aware of the assembly points in the instance of a fire and the evacuation procedures. If you are not aware, please ask your line manager for information.

It is important that should you discover a fire in any of the council depots or premises that this is reported immediately. This can be done by directly triggering the fire alarm and informing any staff in the local vicinity of the fire as you leave the building. It is important that you do not attempt to fight a fire or put yourself at risk trying to control it.

If your emergency escape is blocked by a fire and you have no alternative escape routes, then please use the fire extinguishers at key points throughout the buildings.

For any other council properties including social housing, extra care and other areas local arrangements apply. These arrangements can be found by talking to your line manager and by observing local signage.



Warning marker register

The council has a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees.

Where an individual, this may be a member of the public, resident, tenant, or animal displays behaviour which leads the council to believe that they may pose a risk to employees that encounter them, the council must take action to reduce the risk to its employees as far as is reasonably practicable.

The council, therefore, keeps a central Warning Marker Register (WMR) which records information relating to individuals who pose, or could potentially pose, a risk to employees who come into contact with them.

The WMR is a secure database, only accessible with a username and password. Access will be provided to all employees who may be at risk or have cause to attend residential or business addresses in the course of their employment.

To request access to the WMR, your line manager must complete a request form, this can be done via [the WMR site](#).

Employees can also request an individual is added to the WMR, this can be done by reporting a new incident, as above.

Should I report third party incidents?

Where an employee of the council knows that a third party (including contractors of the council) through their dealings with the council is likely to come into contact with someone who appears on the WMR, the senior manager should consider if the information on the WMR should be passed to the relevant third parties.

This information will only be passed to a third party where:

- failure to share information may place staff at the other agency or organisation at risk of harm
or
- the council is required by the law to pass such information to the other agency or organisation if any of the above circumstances apply. The service should disclose the third-party manager only such information they consider necessary for the manager to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees.

For further information please contact a WMR administrator on WarningMarkerRegisterAdmin@nfdc.gov.uk



Working out of hours

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As part of their duty employees may need to carry out work outside of usual working hours. When working out of hours employers have a legal duty of care to ensure that employees are safe and that this work is carried out in the correct manner, with adequate supervision, risk assessment, controls and training.

This is done through the induction and training processes for all staff who will undertake these duties.

The lone working and out of hours working process is to log the work that is occurring within a system to keep track and notify management should an issue occur aids in ensuring that staff are protected.

For more information on lone working see the Lone Working section that discusses the systems in place.

For people working outside of usual hours it is important to know the controls, limitations and risks associated with doing so. Please speak to your line manager for more information and to make sure you are fully aware of the processes, risk assessments and method statements you may be required to follow.

Lone working

Health and safety law requires employers to consider and address any health and safety risks its employees and those effected by their work are faced with, this includes the risk associated with lone working.

What is a Lone Worker?

A lone worker is defined as someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision.

The Appello Lone Worker app

The Appello Lone Worker System must be used by all lone workers who have been identified as medium risk. In the housing service, this includes all employees who undertake lone working visits with residents or members of the public. As part of an employees health and safety induction, where they have been identified as a medium risk lone worker, they must be provided with a username (usually your work mobile number) and PIN for the system.

To gain access to a username and PIN please complete the lone worker [pre-registration form](#) available on Sharepoint. If you have any issues accessing this, please raise to your line manager.

The Appello Lone Worker System is available on any NFDC device and can be downloaded via the NFDC Play Store. The corporate health and safety team have put together a useful [user guide for employees](#).



Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibre that was widely used in construction and other industries until the late 1990s. The 3 types of asbestos fibres most used in the UK were blue (crocidolite), brown (amosite), and white (chrysotile).

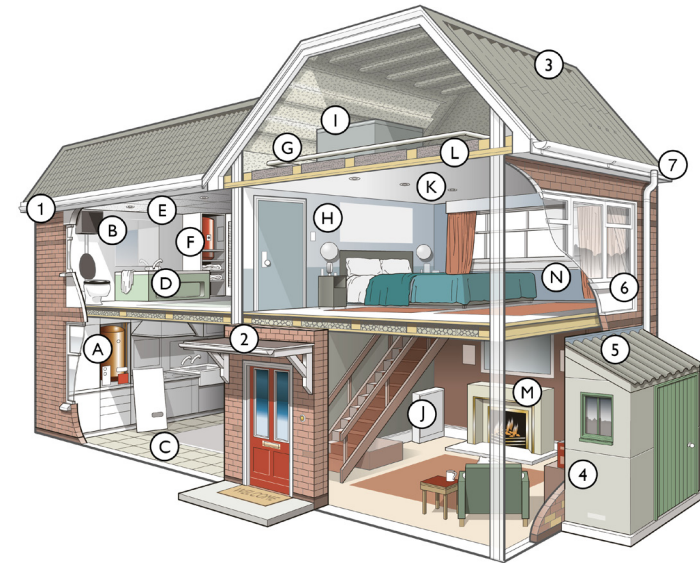
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If asbestos inside buildings remains intact, it poses very little risk. Its only when it is damaged or disturbed those asbestos fibres can be released into the air and enter your lungs when breathing. The symptoms of asbestos-related conditions take many years, even decades to appear after the original exposure to asbestos.

The council holds all its asbestos information on a system called Keystone. Staff working in the field can view the information on Keystone by accessing an app on their mobile devices called Keystone Mini.

Prior to undertaking any work which could result in the potential disturbance of an asbestos containing material, staff must check the council's asbestos register via Keystone or Keystone Mini.

Only trained competent persons are to undertake any work on non-licensed asbestos, as outlined with the HSE's asbestos essentials task sheets. Staff are not to undertake any notifiable non-license work.



Inside

- A. asbestos insulating board (AIB) around boiler
- B. toilet cistern
- C. vinyl floor tiles backed with asbestos paper and bitumen adhesive
- D. AIB or asbestos cement bath panels
- E. AIB ceiling tiles
- F. AIB airing cupboard and/or sprayed insulation coating boiler
- G. pipe lagging
- H. AIB partition wall
- I. asbestos cement water tank
- J. AIB behind fuse box
- K. textured decorative coating, for example Artex

L. loose fill insulation

- M. AIB behind fire
- N. AIB or asbestos cement interior window panel

Outside

- 1. AIB or asbestos cement soffits and fascias
- 2. roofing felt
- 3. asbestos cement roof tiles/slates
- 4. asbestos cement panels
- 5. profiled asbestos cement sheeting
- 6. AIB or asbestos cement exterior window panel
- 7. gutters and asbestos cement downpipes

Waste disposal of construction and demolition waste

When disposing of construction and demolition waste, it is important that this is done in line with the waste disposal process on site. For much of the work that is undertaken by staff for the council, this will result in staff bringing waste back to Marsh Lane Depot and disposing of the waste into the skips on site. For larger projects, a skip may be present in the location where work is occurring and disposal of waste into this skip may then occur.

If a skip is on site where the work is occurring, it is important to secure the lid if a lid is fitted to prevent members of the public from also using the skip to dispose of waste. This is to ensure we are aware of what waste is being disposed of and to minimise costs to enable efficient use of the skip.

The skips on site must be used to correctly, sort the different waste types being brought back into the depot. Should the wrong material get put in skip do not remove it unless it is easy to do so without leaning into the skip. Contact stores to ask for assistance in removing the incorrect material if it is not able to be able to be easily removed.

Do not leave waste on the ground in the yard or in vehicles. Dispose of waste fully and correctly.

For paint, chemical waste depending on the type there is a covered container for storage. If you are not sure where this is, please speak to stores who can show its location.

If dealing with asbestos, only authorised and trained individuals are to carry out the work. To dispose of asbestos waste the sealed asbestos skip at Marsh Lane Depot must be used. All bags of waste are to be double bagged with a red bag inside a clear to clearly

show the content. If you are not authorised to carry out asbestos work and think you have disturbed some asbestos containing material, please contact your line manager immediately.



Dust control

Dust can be a problem in almost any industry. The hazards from dusts like silica and wood are well recognised.

Many work activities can create dust, for example:

- filling bags or emptying them into skips or other containers
- weighing loose powders
- cutting
- sieving and screening operations
- crushing grading
- clearing up spillages
- grinding sanding down, or other similar operations

How am I at risk from dust?

Breathing dust in

Dusts can be inhaled as you breathe, depending on what it is this may have health risks associated with it. Dust can be:

- Inhalable
Classed as any dust that can be breathed into your mouth or nose.

- Respirable
Classed as very fine dust that can be breathed deep into your lungs where the gasses are exchanged. This can lead to shortness of breath, lung disease and scarring, cancer, fibrosis and more.

Dust in the eye

Eye Contact with dust can lead to eye damage or irritation, some dusts may also cause harm to eyes due to their chemical nature.

Dust on the skin

Skin contact with dust can lead to ulceration of the skin and irritation.

How to control the risks from dust

When undertaking tasks which may produce dust, it is important to following all control measures outlined within the relevant generic and task specific risk assessments.

Where required staff must use suitable FFP3 rated respiratory protective equipment. This may be either a tight fitting mask or powered unit. In order to use a tight fitting mask, you must be face fit tested and clean shaven while wearing it, failure to do so will result in the mask not providing adequate protection. While using powered units these must be charged and pass the pre-use flow rate tests, if these fail then the unit cannot be used and management must be contacted.

If using a powered tool, the use of on tool dust extraction must be considered to minimise the amount of dust released into the air as part of the process.

All risk assessment are available to staff via the Directorate H&S Hub.



Tools and equipment

Powered tools

The council issues powered tools to staff, these tools are inspected and maintained by the stores team. Should any defect occur then this is to be reported immediately to your line manager and the tool taken to the stores team to inspect and replaced where required.

Powered tools are usually battery powered. When charging, if batteries show signs of a defect, such as swelling or overheating, they should be disconnected immediately and replaced.

Items such as drill bits and other similar items are consumable and can be replaced via purchasing at one of the 5 New Forest district Travis Perkins branches via your issued TP Trade Purchasing Card.

When using powered tools, it is important to make sure they are operated in line with the risk assessment and safe system of work, this includes wearing of the correct PPE and considering the impact of any dust or waste produced.

Trade hand tools

The council does not issue trade specific hand tools to operational trade staff, but instead provides a monthly tool allowance to staff for the ongoing supply and replacement.

If a defect occurs with a hand tool owned by operational trade staff, the staff member is expected to replace the tool funded by their tool allowance. If an operational trade staff member is found to be using defective hand tools knowingly to avoid expenditure this could lead to an investigation and disciplinary action being taken.

When using tools, it is important to make sure they are operated in line with the risk assessment and safe system of work, this includes wearing of the correct PPE and considering any dust or waste produced.

Other equipment

The council may issue other equipment on an as needed basis, such as props, these items are the responsibility of the staff to maintain. If a staff member find an item defective they are to stop using it and report it to their line manager.

First aid in the office

If you require first aid assistance

All first aiders are included in a location-based first aid response group on Teams. If you require first aid assistance, then a call to the response group in Teams will dial all first aid qualified staff logged in.

Using Teams to call for first aid

1. Open the Teams app.
1. Click 'Calls' on the left hand side bar.
1. In search bar, above the keypad, type 'first aiders'.
1. Click the appropriate group option for your location.
For example, 'First Aiders ATC CQ'.
1. Ensure you select the option ending with 'CQ'.
1. Click 'Call', the purple button below the keypad.
1. Your call will be answered by the first available first aider at your location.

All first aid qualified staff will log in to this system when they are at their designated place of work and your call will simultaneously call all those logged in.

Once your call is answered by a first aider, please give them the following information as clearly as possible:

- What the incident is.
Describe briefly what the incident is. For example, casualty has cut themselves, collapsed, or fainted.
- Where the incident is.
For example, ground floor in reception, first floor by the Council Chamber.

What if there is no response when I call?

For Appletree Court and Lymington Town Hall:

If a first aider is required (more than a plaster or ice pack) and there is no answer when you call the appropriate first aid response group then employees should contact the site officer in the first instance.

Site officers are qualified first aiders and are in the building for the majority of the day, also the site office represents the best place to attend with first aid requirements as a first aid kit and the defibrillators are situated there.

Other locations:

| [View the up-to-date list of first aiders on](#)

If you are still unable to locate a first aider and you feel that the level of first aid required requires trained medical assistance, then call 999 from any available device.

During an incident

If someone is injured, you should:

- first check that you and the casualty aren't in any danger, and, if possible, make the situation safe
- if you feel it is necessary, dial 999 for an ambulance when it's safe to do so.

Possible reasons for calling an ambulance could include:

- if somebody is unconscious and not breathing
- if you think that somebody is suffering with anaphylactic shock (allergic reaction)
- heavy bleeding
- burns or scalds
- if you think somebody is suffering a heart attack
- if you think somebody has swallowed a poisonous substance
- if you believe somebody has suffered or is suffering a stroke

When you call 999, you'll be asked what service you need, as well as:

- your telephone number
- the address you're calling from
- a brief description of what's wrong with the casualty and whether they're bleeding, unconscious, or not breathing.

The call handler may advise you on how to assist the casualty until further help arrives

Risk assessments

Employers have a legal requirement to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst at work. The council has undertaken various generic, task and manual handling risk assessments of the activities you will undertake as part of your work.

All risk assessments are available on the Directorate H&S Hub. To access the hub on your mobile device, the hub will be visible via the libraries section on your OneDrive app.

As well as following all control measures identified within the relevant risk assessments, all staff must ensure to undertake a continual dynamic risk assessment of their working environment. Staff must not place themselves, other employees, or member of the public at harm. Staff should contact their supervisor if they are undertaking a task outside of the scope of a risk assessment for further advice and guidance.

Any new tasks that do not have a risk assessment in place for them should be risk assessed with your line manager prior the task starting. It is important that any control measures that are implemented are done so in a practical way that can be maintained and followed. If you are unable to follow a control, please raise it with your line manager immediately and discuss it.

Method Statements

Employers have a legal requirement to provide adequate guidance and instruction following risk assessment, Method Statements are generated to provide this instruction and guidance. The council has undertaken various generic method statements, task specific method statements and will as needed make situation specific method statements.

All Method Statements are available on the [Directorate H&S Hub](#).

To access the hub on your mobile device, the hub will be visible via the libraries section on your OneDrive app.

As well as following all control measures identified within the relevant risk assessments and method statements, all staff are to follow the step-by-step process as laid out in the Method Statements. If a staff member is unable to follow the method statement, they are to contact their line manager for further advice and guidance.

Corporate health and safety team

The corporate health and safety team provides all services within the council with competent advice and guidance. The team is available via email, teams, and telephone at all times during weekday working hours (9am to 5pm).

When required please do not hesitate to contact the team via Email at healthandsafety@nfdc.gov.uk or direct to any individual member of the team.

Before going direct to the health and safety team please ensure you have discussed any issues with your line manager to see if there is an existing solution to the issue.

Housing health and safety representatives

Under health and safety law, the council has a duty to consult and communicate with employees regarding health, safety, and welfare in the workplace. This is achieved through a variety of methods of which employee health and safety representatives are an integral part. Employee health and safety reps are volunteers or elected reps of employee safety in the workplace (where there is no trade union representing the workforce) as detailed in the "Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996".

There is separate legislation regarding the role and function of Safety Reps detailed within 'Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977' for Trade Union elected representatives. The council considers both Trade Union health and safety reps and employee health and safety reps to be the same in their role, responsibilities, and rights. It is also important to highlight that employee health and safety reps are independent from management and have not been appointed by a manager to fulfil these duties.

Perhaps the most important role that a health and safety rep plays is simply being available for employees to talk to them about any workplace health, safety or welfare concerns they may have and, if not able to provide a solution themselves, ensure it is raised through the appropriate channels.

Responsibilities can include:

- representing employees
- attend relevant safety panel meetings.
- taking up general matters and concerns about potential hazards and dangerous events in the workplace.
- being a contact for the corporate health and safety team
- assisting with workplace inspections
- assisting with accident investigations and complaints

As well as the corporate health and safety team, housing maintenance and compliance have access to 2 health and safety employee reps. The role of the employee health and safety rep is to represent the work force at the Housing Health and Safety Panel. The Housing Health and Safety Panel is a quarterly meeting held between senior management, supervisors, health and safety reps, and a member of the corporate health and safety team. The purpose of the meeting is to allow all members of the work force to consult and raise any health and safety concerns they may have.

All meeting minutes, action table and accident statistics are available to all employees via [Sharepoint](#).

If you would like to raise any question or concerns, please contact your health and safety rep. You can also contact a member of the health and safety team by phone, email, teams, or in person.

Housing Health and Safety Panel

Consultation and communication regarding health and safety management takes place during regular team meetings and at service specific quarterly safety panel meetings.

Safety panels are chaired by assistant directors or service managers, attended by senior managers, health & safety advisors and the relevant employee health and safety representatives. A report from these Safety Panel meetings is taken to the Executive Management Team (EMT) by the Corporate Health and Safety Manager, James Loring, who also presents this report to the HR Committee.

Effective consultation involves the council, as employer, not only giving information to employees but also listening to and taking account of what employees say before making significant health and safety decisions or changes in safe working procedures.

If a decision involving work equipment, processes or organisation could affect the health and safety of employees, NFDC must allow adequate time to give the employees or their safety representatives information about what is proposed.

Individual service managers maintain the responsibility for the management of health and safety within their service; however, as part of their role, health and safety representatives are required to carry out duties in agreement with their line manager and in accordance with council policy.

Useful emails

Corporate health and safety team: healthandsafety@nfdc.gov.uk

Human resources: hradvisory@nfdc.gov.uk

Safety representatives: handsreps@nfdc.gov.uk



HOUSING MAINTENANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Health and safety handbook

SECOND EDITION, 2025

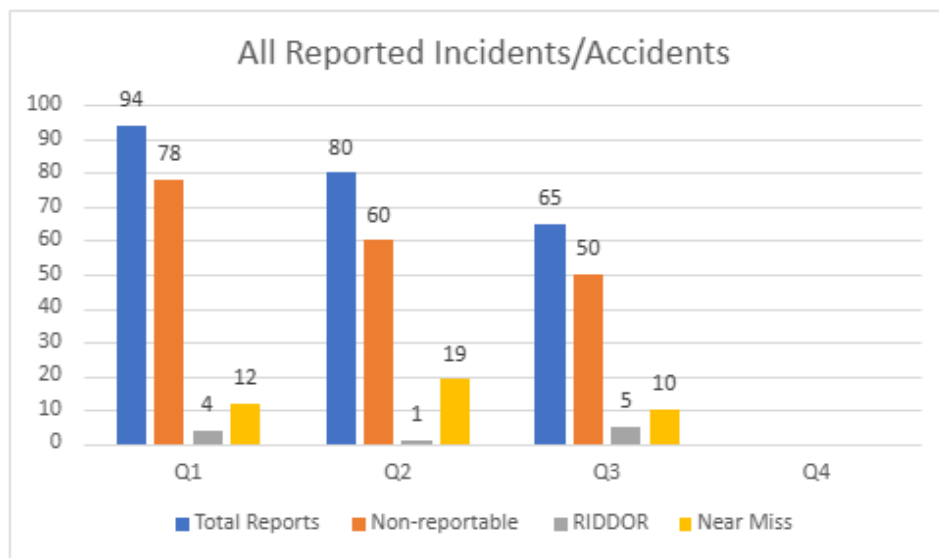
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Corporate Accident Incident Report Q3 2024 – 2025

This report was taken on Monday 06/01/2025.

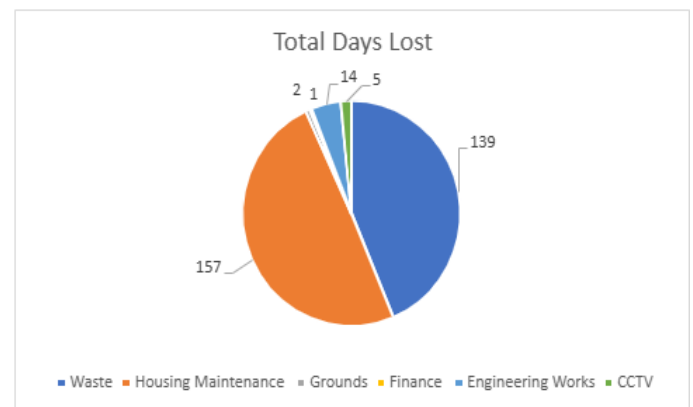
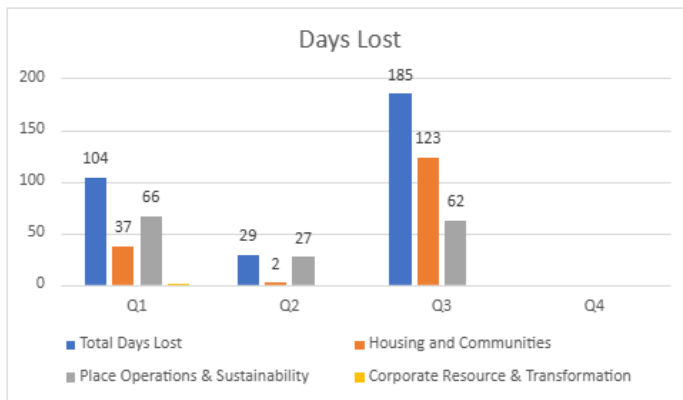
1.0. Overall Report 2024 - 2025

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	94 (67)	80 (70)	65 (79)	(99)
Non-reportable	78 (34)	60 (36)	50 (40)	(43)
RIDDOR	4 (2)	1 (2)	5 (5)	(3)
Near Miss	12 (31)	19 (32)	10 (34)	(53)

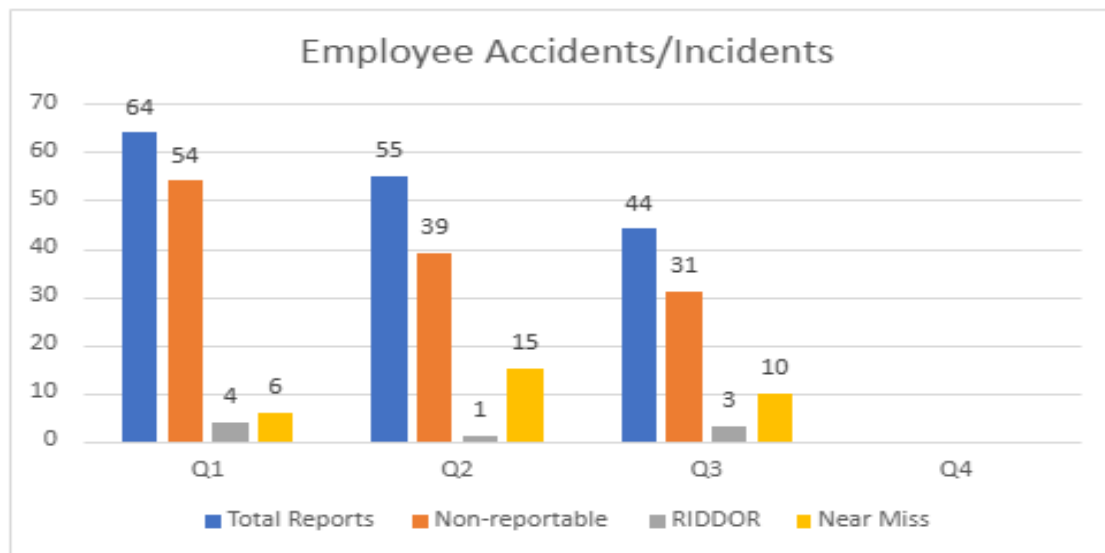


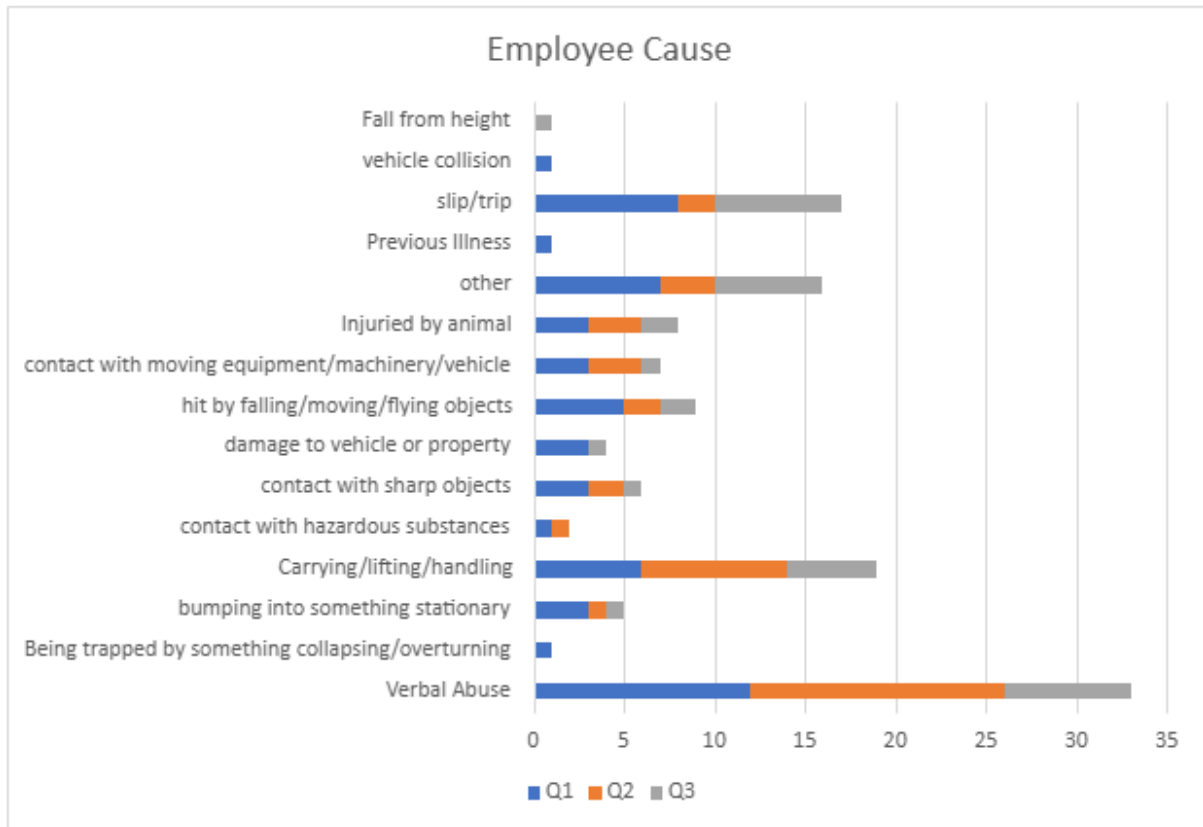
2.0. Days Lost

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Days Lost	104 (95)	29 (49)	185 (210)	(95)
Housing and Communities	37 (0)	2 (0)	123 (65)	(29)
Place Operations & Sustainability	66 (95)	27 (49)	65 (145)	(66)
Corporate Resource & Transformation	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	(0)

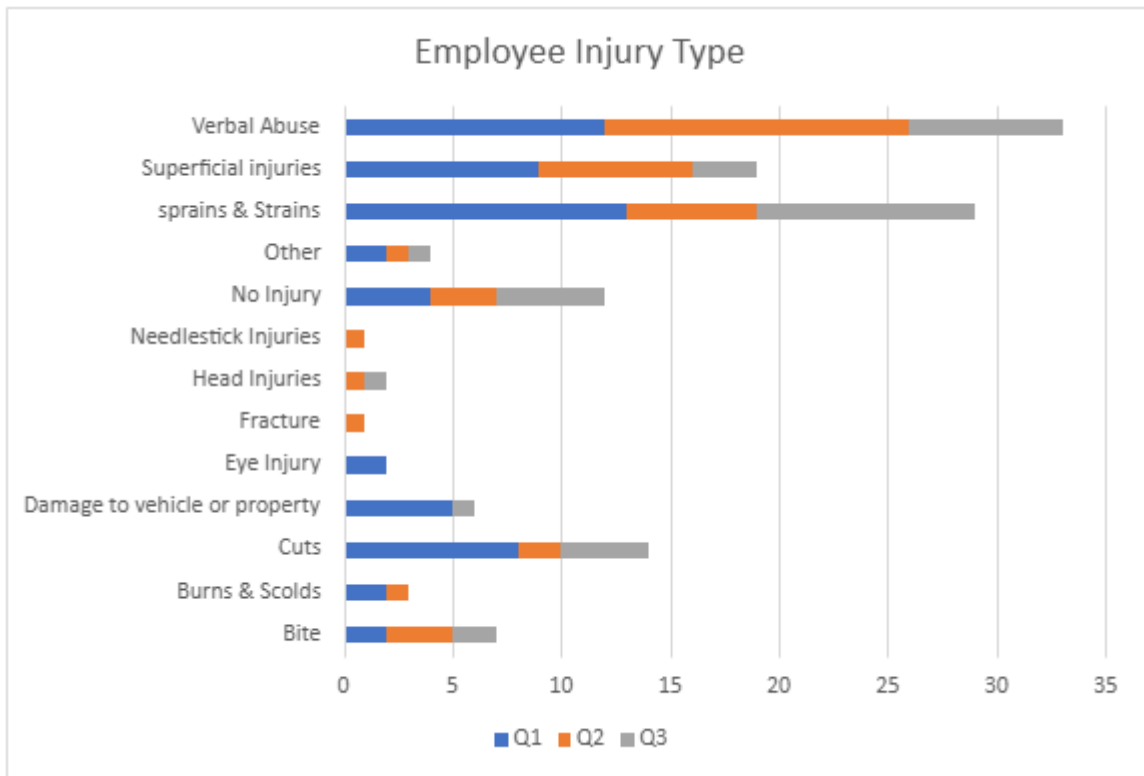


3.0. Employee Reports

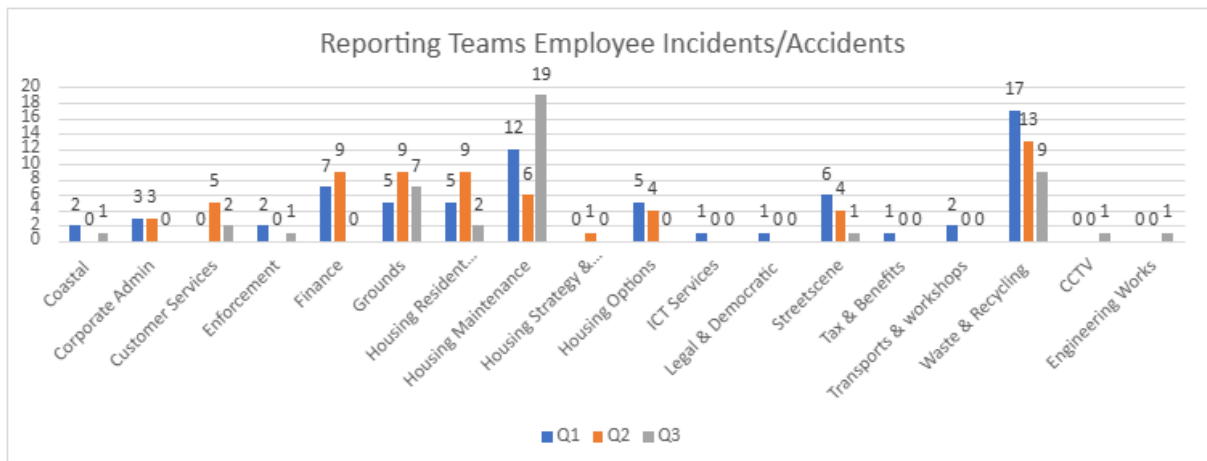




Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3
Verbal Abuse	12	14	7
Being trapped by something collapsing/overturning	1	0	0
bumping into something stationary	3	1	1
Carrying/lifting/handling	6	8	5
contact with hazardous substances	1	1	0
contact with sharp objects	3	2	1
damage to vehicle or property	3	0	1
hit by falling/moving/flying objects	5	2	2
contact with moving equipment/machinery/vehicle	3	3	1
Injured by animal	3	3	2
other	7	3	6
Previous Illness	1	0	0
slip/trip	8	2	7
vehicle collision	1	0	0
Fall from height	0	0	1



Injury Type	Q1	Q2	Q3
Bite	2	3	2
Burns & Scolds	2	1	0
Cuts	8	2	4
Damage to vehicle or property	5	0	1
Eye Injury	2	0	0
Fracture	0	1	0
Head Injuries	0	1	1
Needlestick Injuries	0	1	0
No Injury	4	3	5
Other	2	1	1
sprains & Strains	13	6	10
Superficial injuries	9	7	3
Verbal Abuse	12	14	7

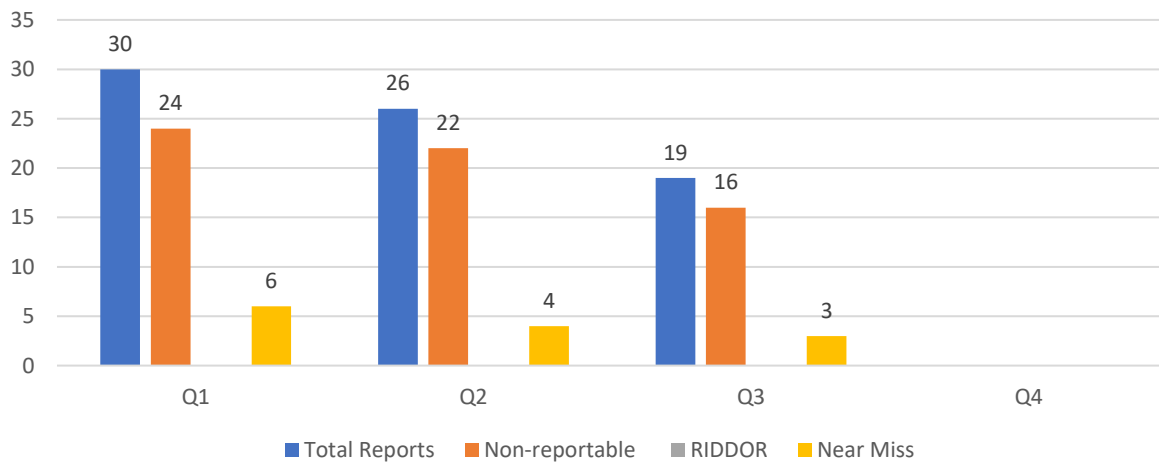


Team	Q1	Q2	Q3
Coastal	2	0	1
Corporate Admin	3	3	0
Customer Services	0	5	2
Enforcement	2	0	1
Finance	7	9	0
Grounds	5	9	7
Housing Resident Services	5	9	2
Housing Maintenance	12	6	19
Housing Strategy & Development	0	1	0
Housing Options	5	4	0
ICT Services	1	0	0
Legal & Democratic	1	0	0
Streetscene	6	4	1
Tax & Benefits	1	0	0
Transports & workshops	2	0	0
Waste & Recycling	17	13	9
CCTV	0	0	1
Engineering Works	0	0	1

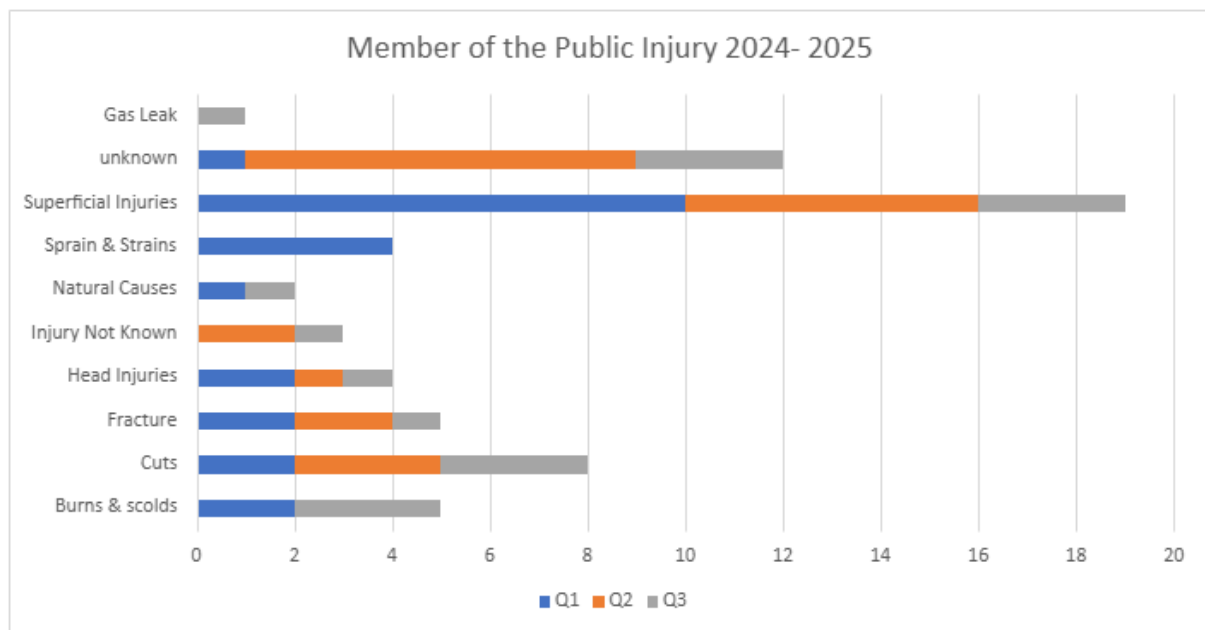
4.0. Member of the Public Reports 2024 - 2025

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	30 (8)	26 (9)	19 (15)	(16)
Non-reportable	24 (5)	22 (5)	16 (9)	(7)
RIDDOR	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	(0)
Near Miss	6 (3)	4 (4)	3 (6)	(9)

Member of the Public All Reports 2024 - 2025



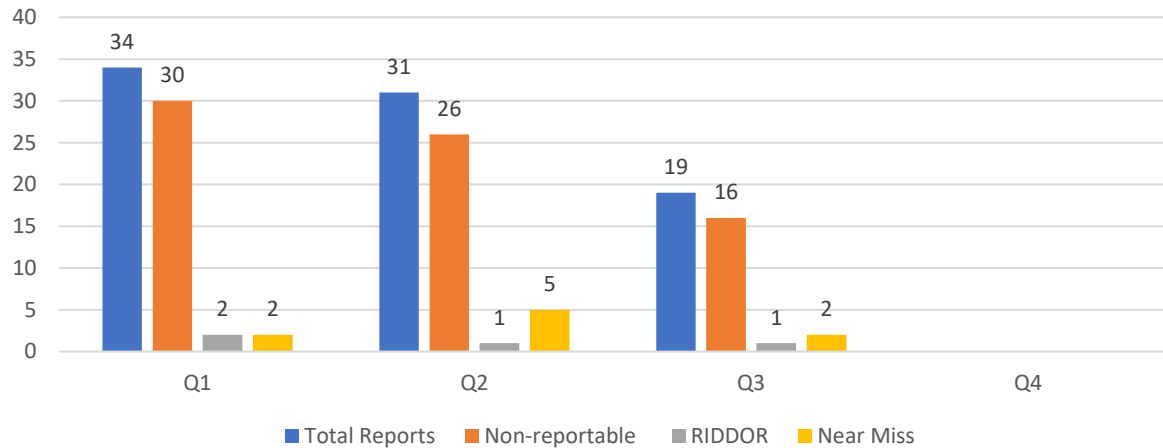
Injury	Q1	Q2	Q3
Burns & scolds	2	0	3
Cuts	2	3	3
Fracture	2	2	1
Head Injuries	2	1	1
Injury Not Known	0	2	1
Natural Causes	1	0	1
Sprain & Strains	4	0	0
Superficial Injuries	10	6	3
unknown	1	8	3
Gas Leak	0	0	1



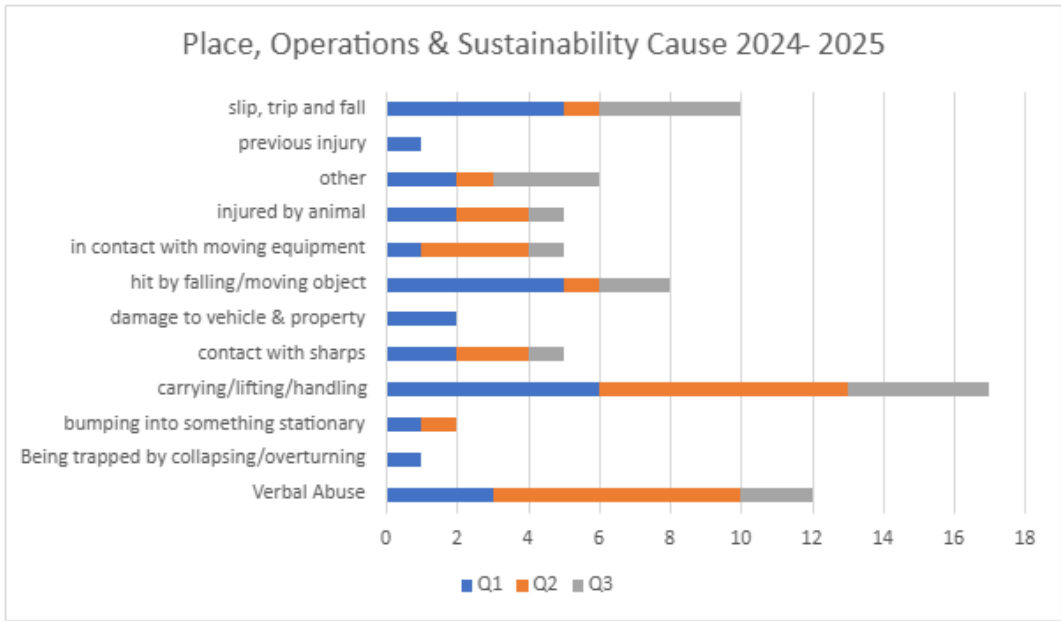
5.0. Place, Operations & Sustainability 2024 - 2025

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	34 (49)	31 (46)	19 (51)	(64)
Non-reportable	30 (21)	26 (20)	16 (22)	(27)
RIDDOR	2 (2)	1 (2)	1 (4)	(2)
Near Miss	2 (26)	5 (24)	2 (25)	(35)

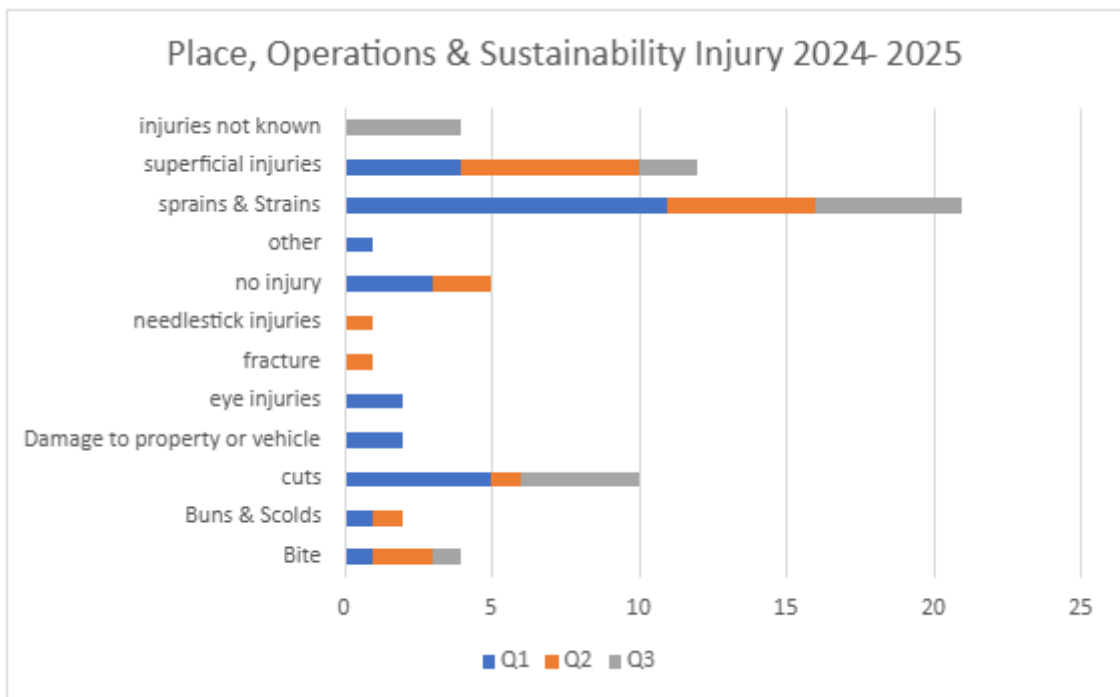
Place, Operations & Sustainability All Reports 2024 - 2025



Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3
Verbal Abuse	3	7	2
Being trapped by collapsing/overturning	1	0	0
bumping into something stationary	1	1	0
carrying/lifting/handling	6	7	4
contact with sharps	2	2	1
damage to vehicle & property	2	0	0
hit by falling/moving object	5	1	2
in contact with moving equipment	1	3	1
injured by animal	2	2	1
other	2	1	3
previous injury	1	0	0
slip, trip and fall	5	1	4

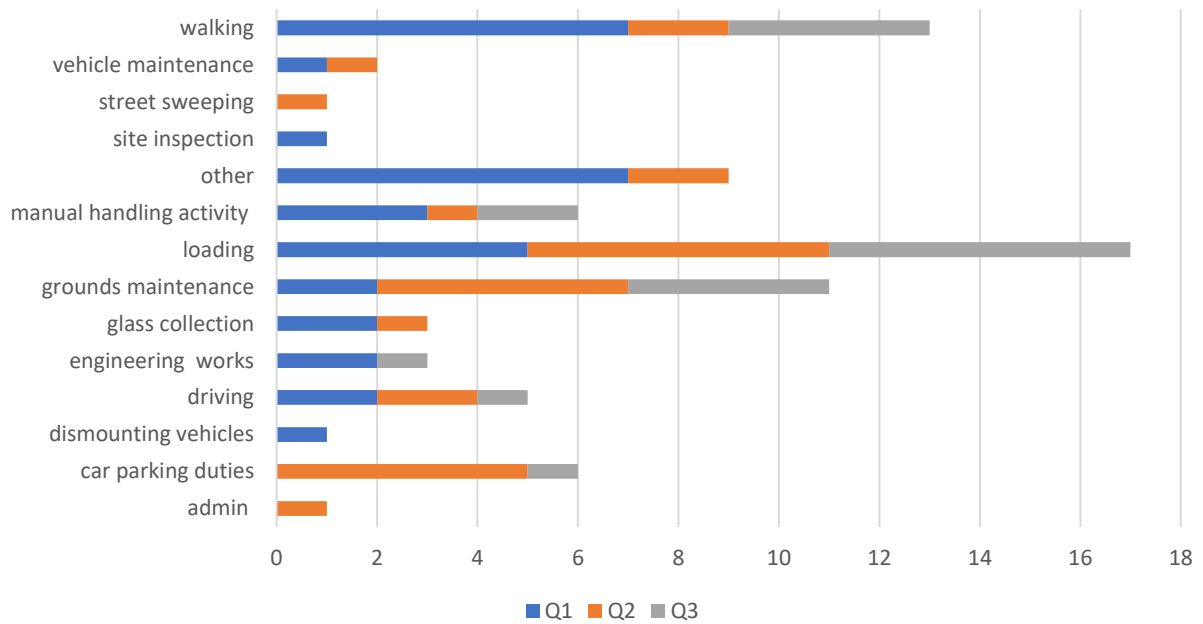


Injury	Q1	Q2	Q3
Bite	1	2	1
Buns & Scolds	1	1	0
cuts	5	1	4
Damage to property or vehicle	2	0	0
eye injuries	2	0	0
fracture	0	1	0
needlestick injuries	0	1	0
no injury	3	2	0
other	1	0	0
sprains & Strains	11	5	5
superficial injuries	4	6	2
injuries not known	0	0	4



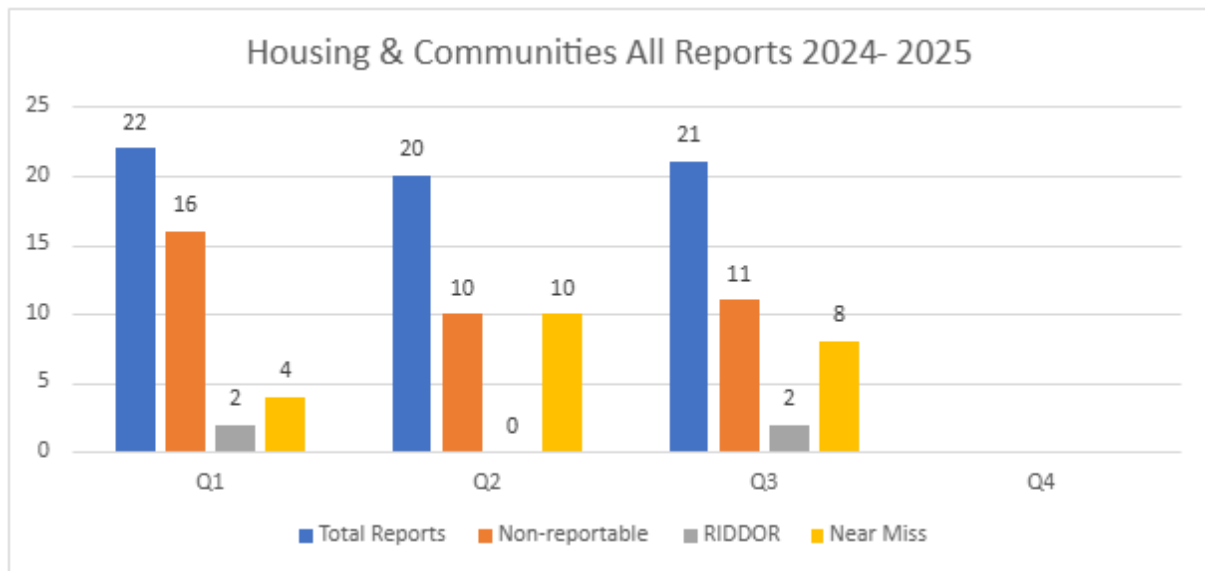
Activity	Q1	Q2	Q3
admin	0	1	0
car parking duties	0	5	1
dismounting vehicles	1	0	0
driving	2	2	1
engineering works	2	0	1
glass collection	2	1	0
grounds maintenance	2	5	4
loading	5	6	6
manual handling activity	3	1	2
other	7	2	0
site inspection	1	0	0
street sweeping	0	1	0
vehicle maintenance	1	1	0
walking	7	2	4

Place, Operations & Sustainability Activity 2024 - 2025



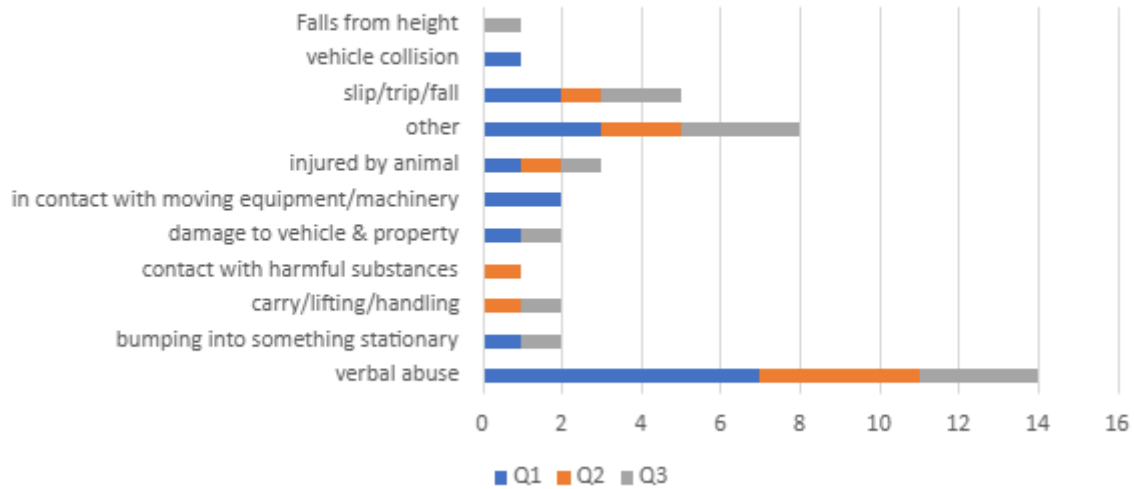
6.0. Housing & Communities 2024 – 2025

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	22 (9)	20 (13)	21 (10)	(16)
Non-reportable	16 (6)	10 (11)	11 (6)	(7)
RIDDOR	1 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1)	(0)
Near Miss	4 (3)	10 (2)	8 (3)	(9)



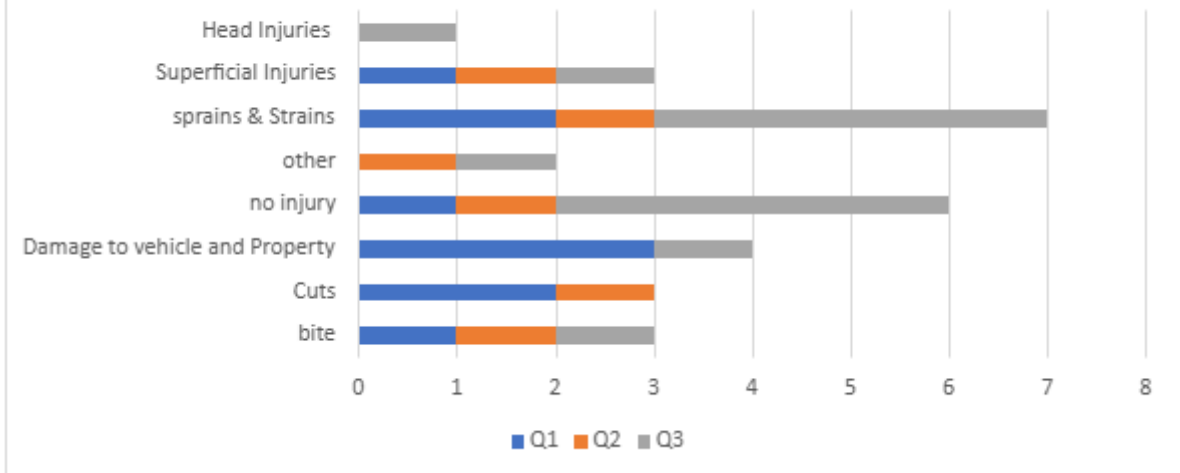
Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3
verbal abuse	7	4	3
bumping into something stationary	1	0	1
carry/lifting/handling	0	1	1
contact with harmful substances	0	1	0
damage to vehicle & property	1	0	1
in contact with moving equipment/machinery	2	0	0
injured by animal	1	1	1
other	3	2	3
slip/trip/fall	2	1	2
vehicle collision	1	0	0
Falls from height	0	0	1

Housing & Communities Cause 2024- 2025

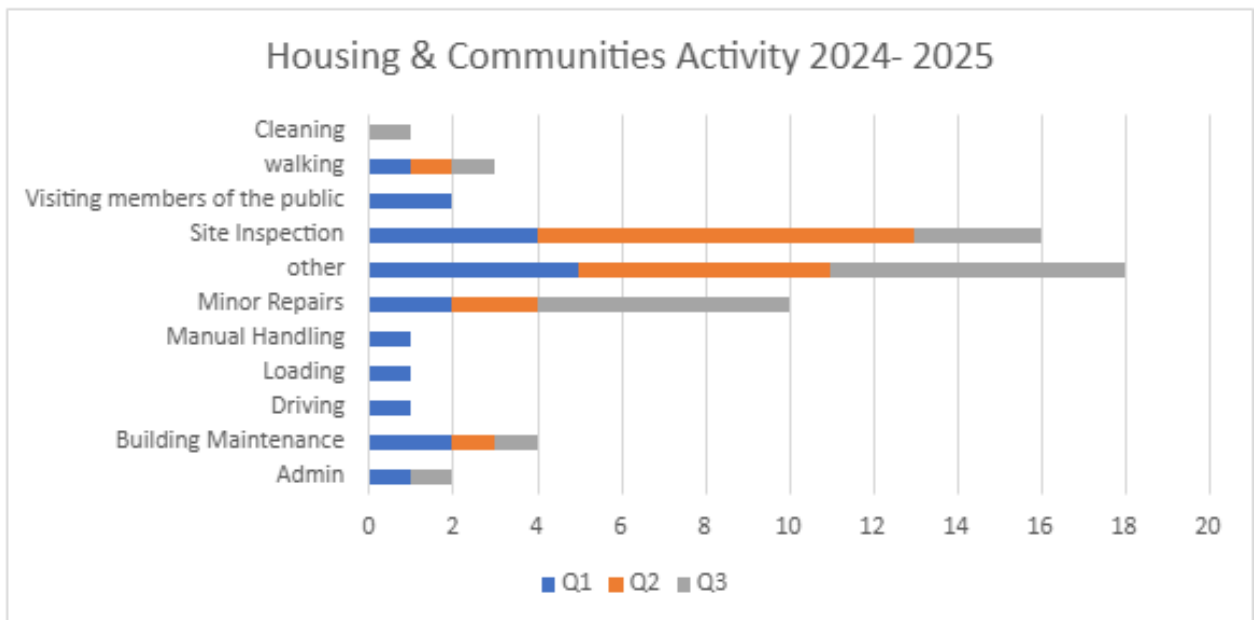


Injury Type	Q1	Q2	Q3
bite	1	1	1
Cuts	2	1	0
Damage to vehicle and Property	3	0	1
no injury	1	1	4
other	0	1	1
sprains & Strains	2	1	4
Superficial Injuries	1	1	1
Head Injuries	0	0	1

Housing & Communities Injury 2024- 2025



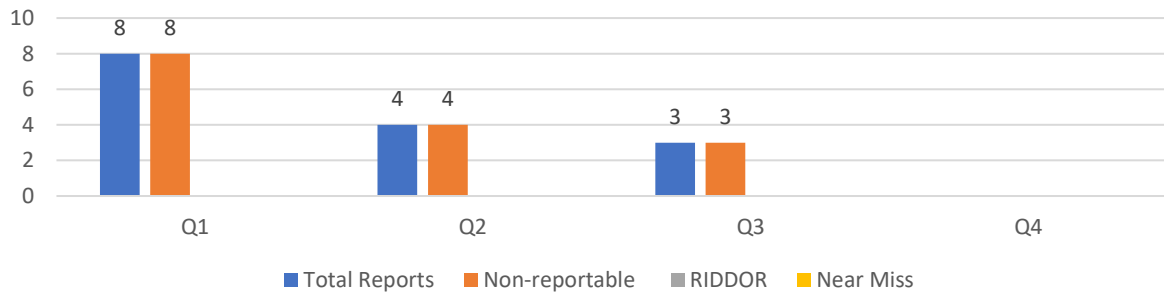
Activity	Q1	Q2	Q3
Admin	1	0	1
Building Maintenance	2	1	1
Driving	1	0	0
Loading	1	0	0
Manual Handling	1	0	0
Minor Repairs	2	2	6
other	5	6	7
Site Inspection	4	9	3
Visiting members of the public	2	0	0
walking	1	1	1
Cleaning	0	0	1



7.0. Corporate Resource & Transformation (including Governance) 2024 - 2025

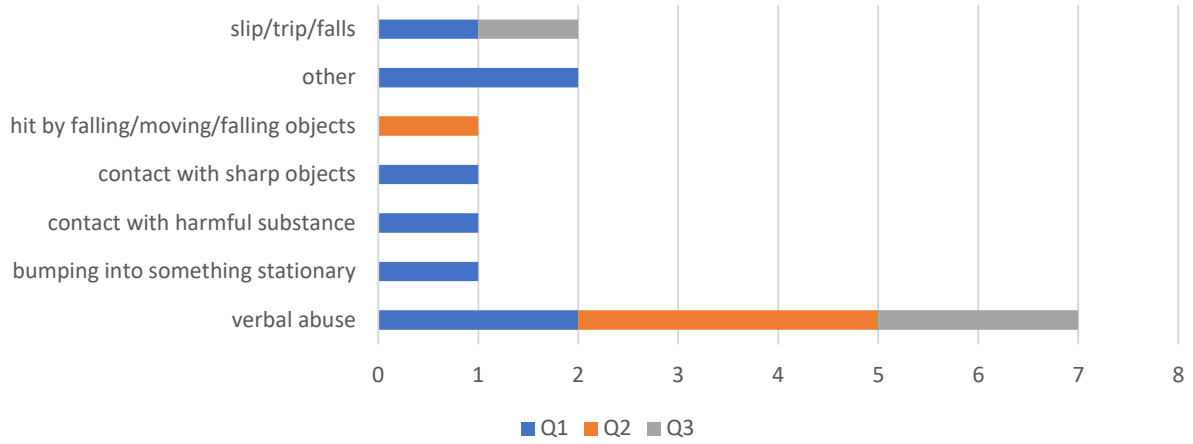
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	8	4	3	
Non-reportable	8	4	3	
RIDDOR	0	0	0	
Near Miss	0	0	0	

Corporate Resources & Transformation All Reports 2024 - 2025



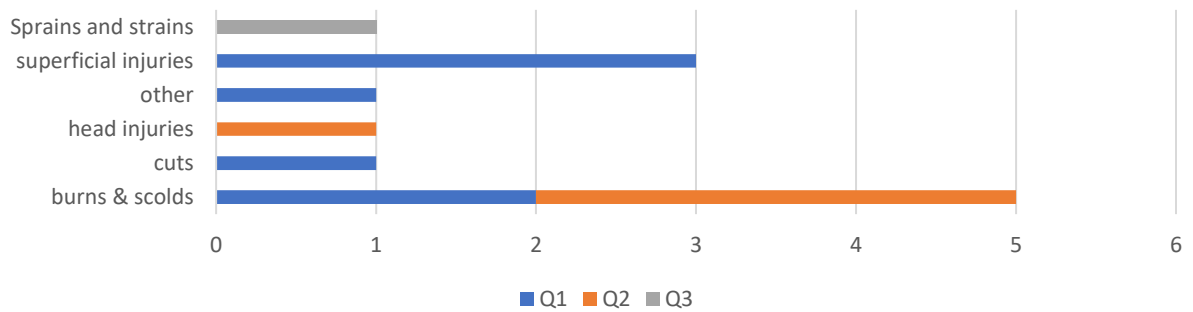
Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3
verbal abuse	2	3	2
bumping into something stationary	1	0	0
contact with harmful substance	1	0	0
contact with sharp objects	1	0	0
hit by falling/moving/falling objects	0	1	0
other	2	0	0
slip/trip/falls	1	0	1

Corporate Resources & Transformation Cause 2024 - 2025

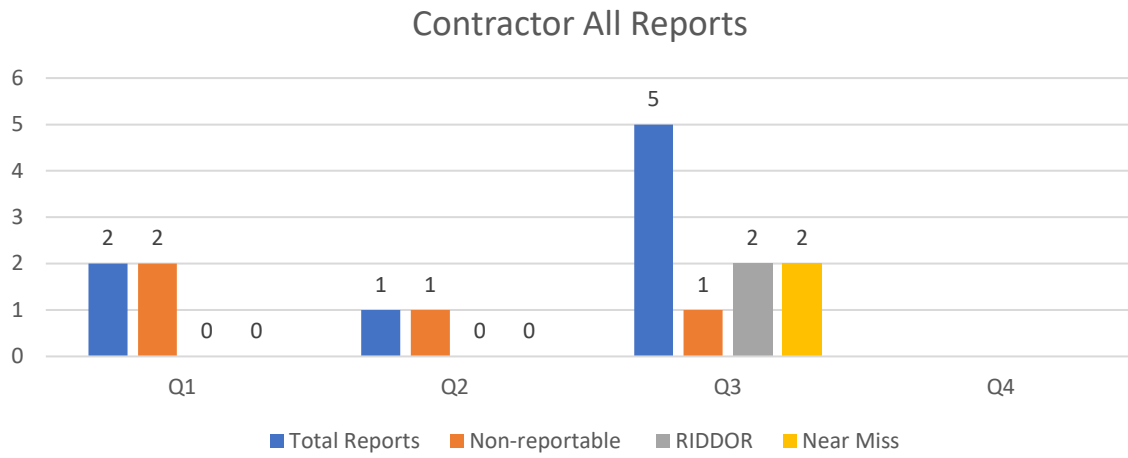


Injury	Q1	Q2	Q3
burns & scolds	2	3	0
cuts	1	0	0
head injuries	0	1	0
other	1	0	0
superficial injuries	3	0	0
Sprains and strains	0	0	1

Corporate Resources & Transformation Injury 2024 - 2025



8.0. Contractor Incidents & Accidents



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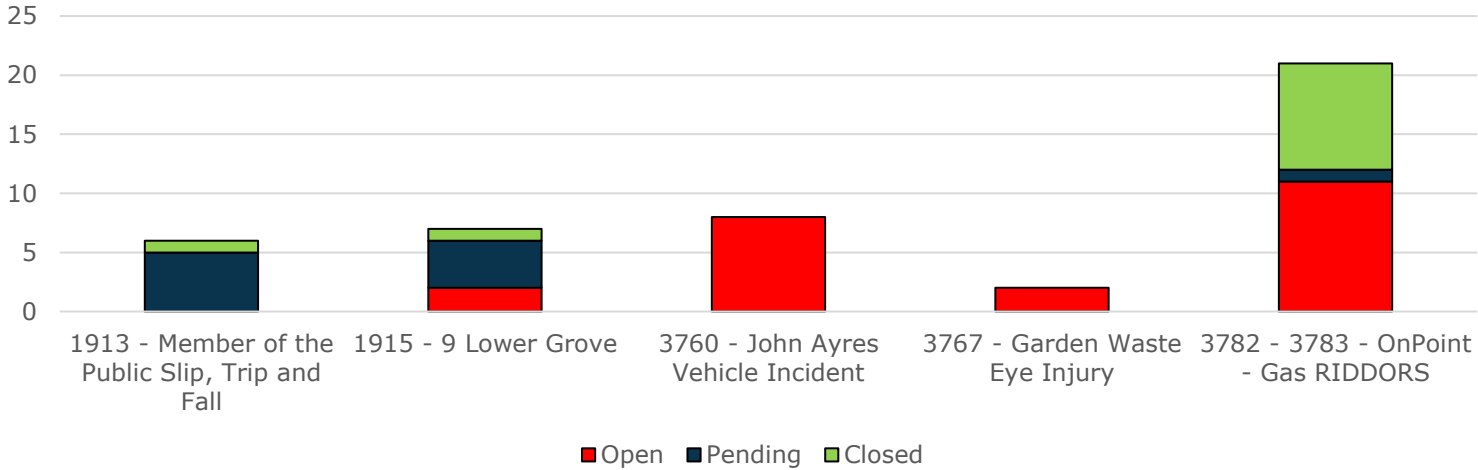
Accident Investigation Action Stats Q3 2024 - 2025



125

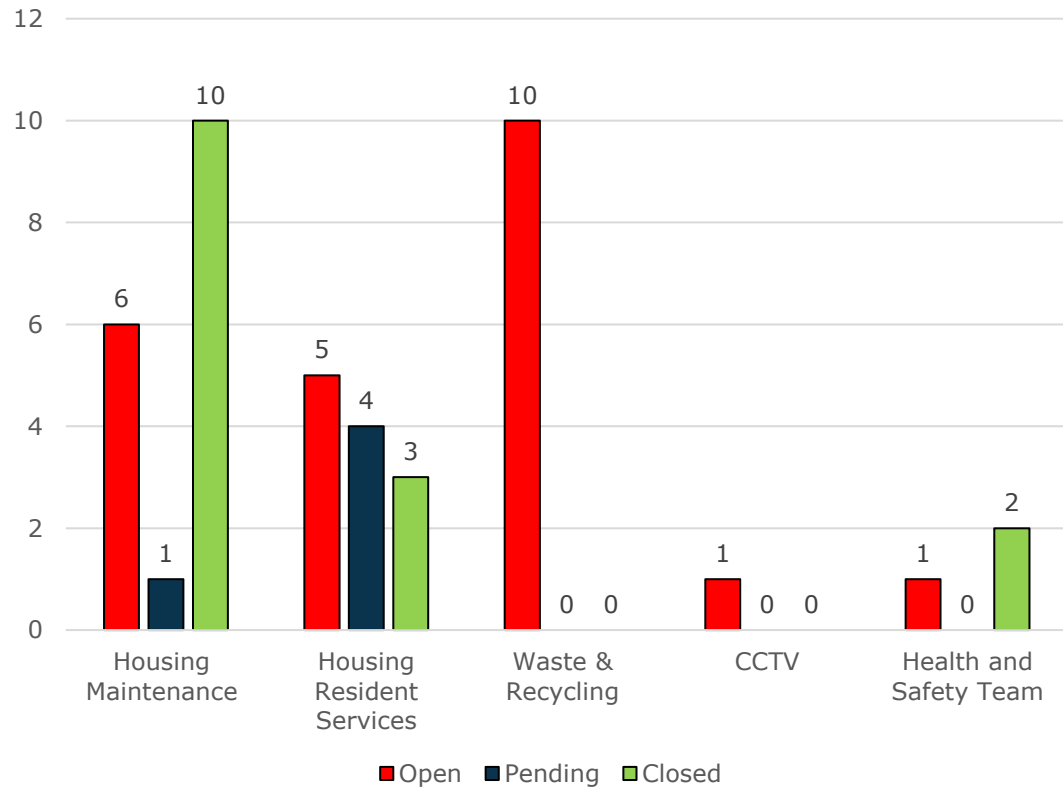
	Open	Pending	Closed
1913 - Member of the Public Slip, Trip and Fall	0	5	1
1915 - 9 Lower Grove	2	4	1
3760 - John Ayres Vehicle Incident	8	0	0
3767 - Garden Waste Eye Injury	2	0	0
3782 - 3783 - OnPoint - Gas RIDDORS	11	1	9

All Actions

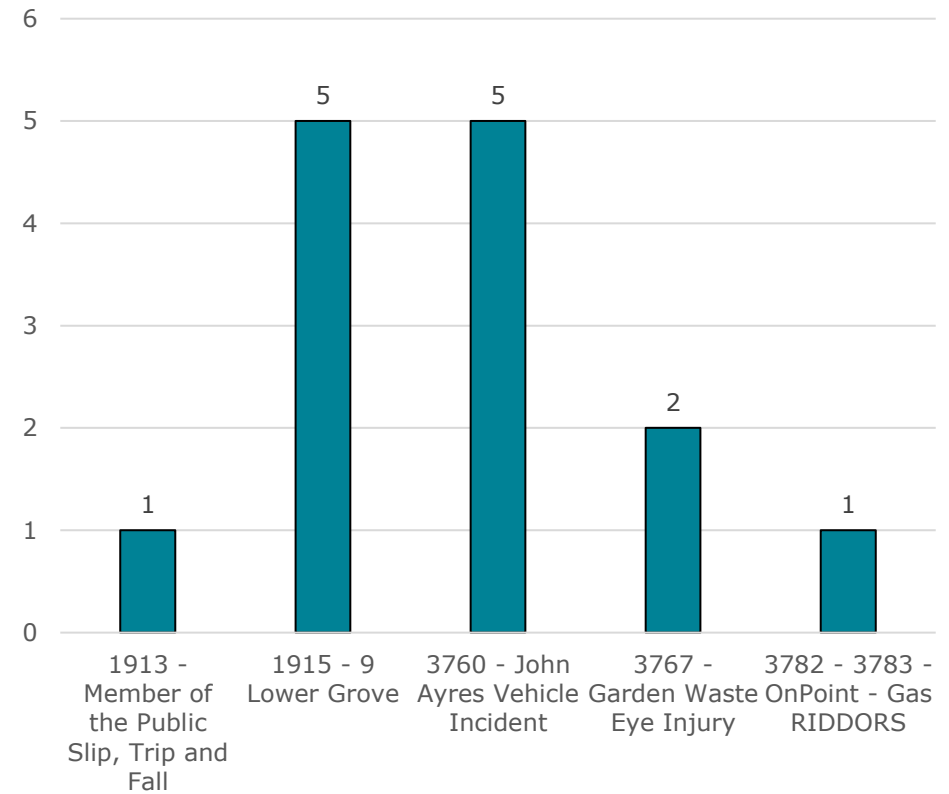




Actions per team



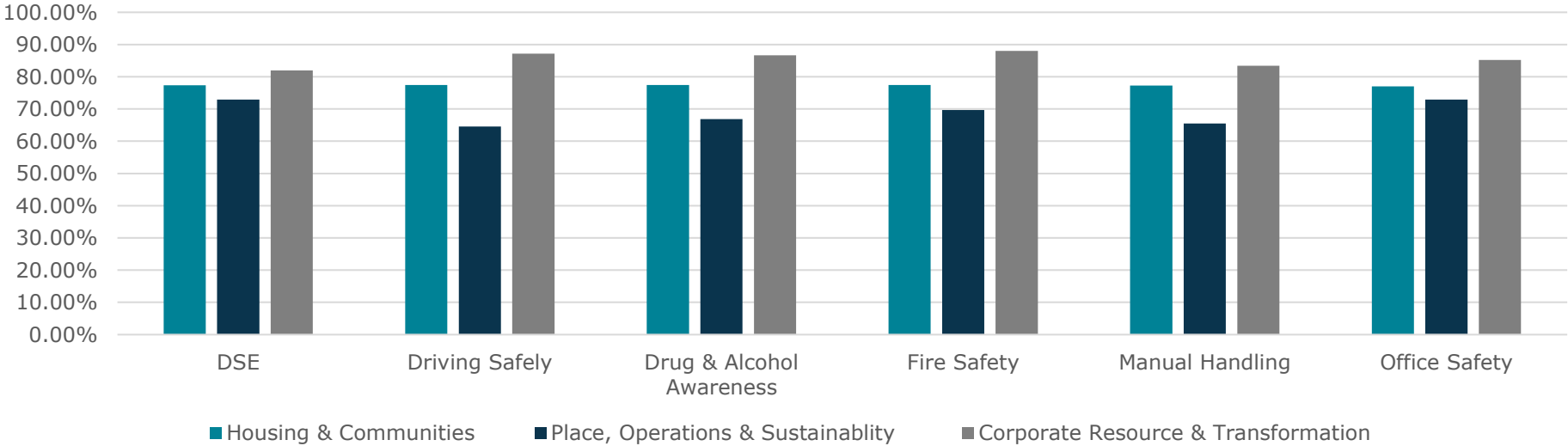
Overdue Actions





Health and Safety LMS Training Report

	Housing & Communities	Place, Operations & Sustainability	Corporate Resource & Transformation
DSE	77.38%	72.96%	82%
Driving Safely	77.41%	64.56%	87.19%
Drug & Alcohol Awareness	77.45%	66.86%	86.67%
Fire Safety	77.48%	69.67%	88.05%
Manual Handling	77.30%	65.54%	83.46%
Office Safety	77%	72.93%	85.25%



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HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2025/2026

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
13 MARCH 2025			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring
People Strategy	To receive the People Strategy Report	Written Report	Kate Hardy
19 JUNE 2025			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Annual Reviews & Market Supplements	To receive an update on the current position with market supplements across the Council	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring
Health & Wellbeing Attendance Management	To receive a summary of the Council's sickness absence rate in the previous 12 months and actions taken to manage attendance.	Written Report	Heleana Aylett / Sophie Taylor
11 SEPTEMBER 2025			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring
Employee Workforce Report	To receive an overview of key workforce data and the relevant trends in the Council's workforce priorities, as well as initiatives in place to support employees over the past 12 months	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
8 JANUARY 2026			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Gender Pay Gap	To receive data Gender Pay Gap data for the previous year.	Written Report	Jade Carter
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring
Bullying and Harassment Policy – 2 year Review	To receive a review of the Bullying and Harassment Policy	Written Report	Heleana Aylett / Sophie Taylor
Pay Policy Statement	To consider the Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
12 MARCH 2026			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
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DATES TO BE ALLOCATED			
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