

Report of Head of People Services

Subject: People Services Report

1. Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Group met on 13 January 2026, and the next meeting is scheduled for 14 April 2026.

Whilst the number of incidents in Quarter 3 show a significant increase compared to previous reporting periods we are aware that there had been under reporting. The strengthened management structure in the higher risk areas of the Authority and a better understanding by all staff of the importance and value of reporting all incidents and near misses is reflected in these figures. People Services continue to monitor this closely and to evaluate the quality of the reporting and supporting paperwork.

The Health and Safety Group are working on 2026/27 Health and Safety Action Plan.

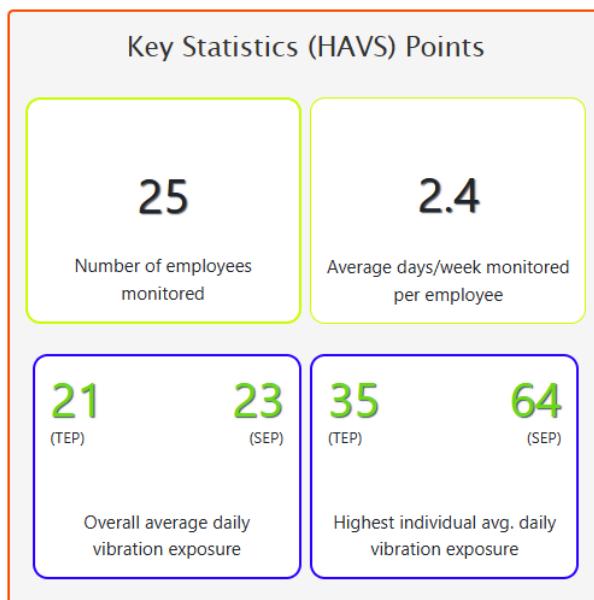
The Countryside Management Health and Safety Group held a 6 monthly review meeting of HAVS/Reactec on 4 February 2026. The key findings from this meeting are included below.

HAVS

The vibration exposure data provides robust reassurance that our existing control measures are performing highly effectively. Analysis of both *Tool Exposure Points (TEP) and **Sense Exposure Points (SEP) readings shows that exposure levels consistently remain well below our established ELV thresholds, of 150 points even among our highest-use operators. This demonstrates that day to day practices, equipment selection, and task planning are successfully minimising risk across the workforce.

***Tool Exposure Points (TEP)** is the HSE recognised level of vibration that staff have been exposed to, determined by testing machines and then recording how long those tools are being used for. The Park TEP limit is 150 (the legal HSE limit is 400).

****Sense Exposure Points (SEP)** is the sensor data the watches are picking up in real time, giving us an indication of on the ground vibration levels at the end of every working day. This is not legally recognised by HSE but allows us to see if individual machines have higher vibration because they are deteriorating, or if particular operators might need some retraining.



Further, the incident analysis reinforces this positive picture. Only three TEP ELV exceedances were recorded during the reporting period, two of which were confirmed as false positives caused by users not logging out of their Reactec devices. With only a single genuine exceedance identified, the data evidence both strong user compliance and the effectiveness of the safeguards we have in place.

In addition to its monitoring function, the Reactec system continues to be a vital tool for proactive risk management. Its real time analytics enable us to identify emerging trends such as increases in vibration exposure linked to specific tools, tasks, or work patterns well before they develop into significant issues. This early visibility allows us to rapidly introduce new control measures or adjust existing ones, ensuring we stay ahead of potential risk escalations rather than reacting after the fact.

This positive performance is also echoed by feedback from Reactec themselves. They have confirmed that the Authority is among the best performing organisations using their system in terms of embedding effective control measures and achieving sustained risk mitigation. This external validation further strengthens confidence that our approach is industry leading and delivering meaningful protection for our teams.

Overall, the findings from our first full years' worth of data demonstrate that our control strategy is effective, well implemented, and achieving measurable results in reducing vibration exposure risk.

Accidents and Incidents October - December 2025

Date of incident	Location	Type of Incident	Injury	Treatment/Action	Category (for report)	Job Title
6/10/25	Oriel Y Parc	Broken Window in Office			Building & Infrastructure	Visitor Centre Manager West

Date of incident	Location	Type of Incident	Injury	Treatment/Action	Category (for report)	Job Title
13/10/25	Llanion	Security Alarm Activation		All Rooms to be checked prior to lock up	Building & Infrastructure	Caretaker
14/10/25	West Warden Team	HAVS - Exceeded SEP points in Reactec		Power Barrow to be tested / recalibrated	Near Miss	Warden
16/10/25	South Warden Team	HAVS - Exceeded SEP points in Reactec		Chainsaw to be tested / recalibrated	Near Miss	Warden
24/10/25	Oriel Y Parc	Wooden Bridge condition query		Survey & treads tightened	Near Miss	Member of Public
28/10/25	Ratford Bridge, B4327	Driving near miss			Near Miss	Community Archaeologist
3/11/25	St Justinians Coast Path	Trip on Bristol Gate	Injury to nose resulting in bleed plus cuts and bruises.	Condition check and painting of crossbar / latch	Personal Injury	Member of Public
4/11/25	Porthgain	Trip on Rock	Bump to back of head	Hazard removed	Personal Injury	Warden
7/11/25	Carew	Bump into cast iron fire box	Bruising to leg	Fire basket moved	Personal Injury	Visitor Services Manager South
8/11/25	Llanion	Security Alarm Activation			Building & Infrastructure	Caretaker
8/11/25	Llanion	Security Alarm Activation		Contractor investigation / repair	Building & Infrastructure	Caretaker
14/11/25	South Warden Team	Lost Reactec Watch			Vehicle & Machinery	Warden
21/11/25	West Warden Team	HAVS - Exceeded SEP points in Reactec			Near Miss	Warden
21/11/25	South Warden Team	Cracked Windscreen			Vehicle & Machinery	Warden
25/11/25	South Warden Team	Broken Light Cluster on Trailer			Vehicle & Machinery	Warden
26/11/25	North Warden Team	Fire Extinguisher activation in Truck			Vehicle & Machinery	Warden

Date of incident	Location	Type of Incident	Injury	Treatment/Action	Category (for report)	Job Title
12/12/25	Coast Path north of Whitesands	Fall	Bump to head and shoulder, twisted ankle	X Ray on 15.12 no brake. Splint provided.	Personal Injury	National Trail Officer
12/12/25	Llanion	Fire Alarm Activation		Engineer Repair	Building & Infrastructure	Caretaker
12/12/25	West Wales Trailers	Broken Rear Window of Truck			Vehicle & Machinery	Warden
15/12/25	Freshwater East Nature Reserve	Gate left open and tyre tracks in reserve		Gate checked and padlock upgraded	Near Miss	Member of Public
16/12/25	Llanion	Unauthorised access to building			Near Miss	Ex Employee

Year To Date (1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025)

Building & Infrastructure	17
Vehicle & Machinery	22
Personal Injury	22
Other	2
Near Miss	32
RIDDOR	1
TOTAL	96

Staff member	73
Volunteer	6
Member of Public	15
Other	0
Contractor	2
Total	96



Health and Safety Group

The Health and Safety Group met on 13th January 2026.

Health and Safety Policies

The Health and Safety policy is reviewed annually by the Health and Safety Group. Members of this group have completed this task, and any changes will be reported at their next meeting on 14 April 2026

The Bad Weather and Travel Disruption Policy has also been reviewed in light of the recent bad weather experienced in January 2025.

The Lone Working Policy is scheduled to go back to the Management team in February 2026

The Principle of Visitor Safety – Standards was deferred to the next meeting in April

2. Human Resources

Staffing as at 5 February 2026

Headcount 213

FTE 131.5

Average age 47.5

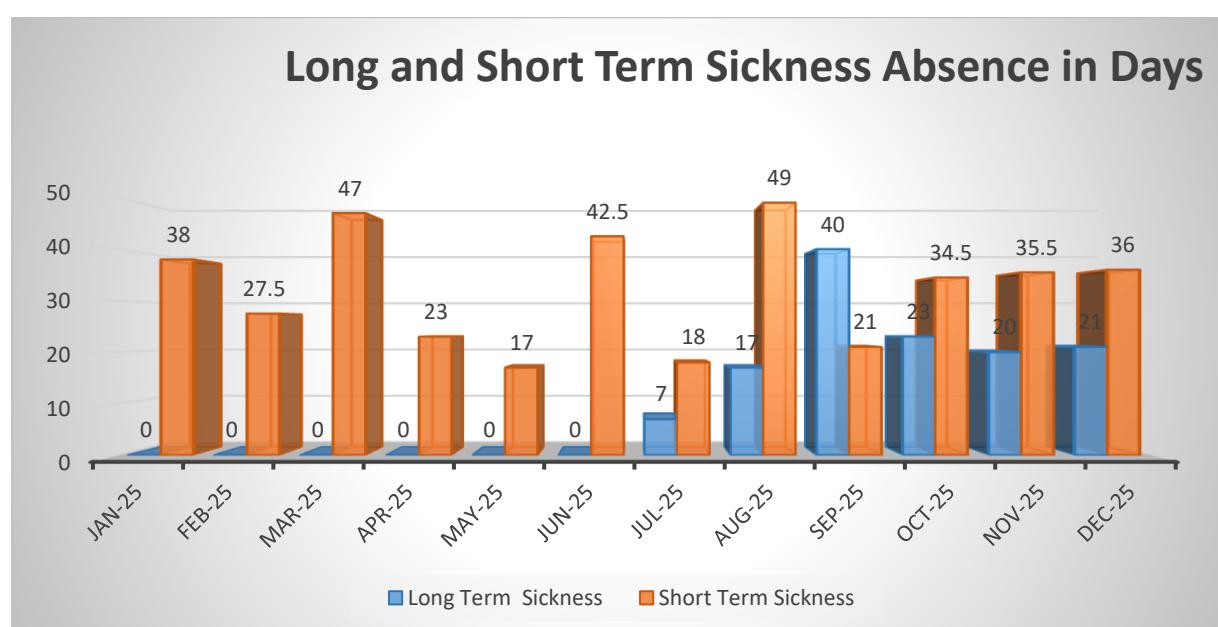
55.9% female 44.1% male

88.3% permanent employees

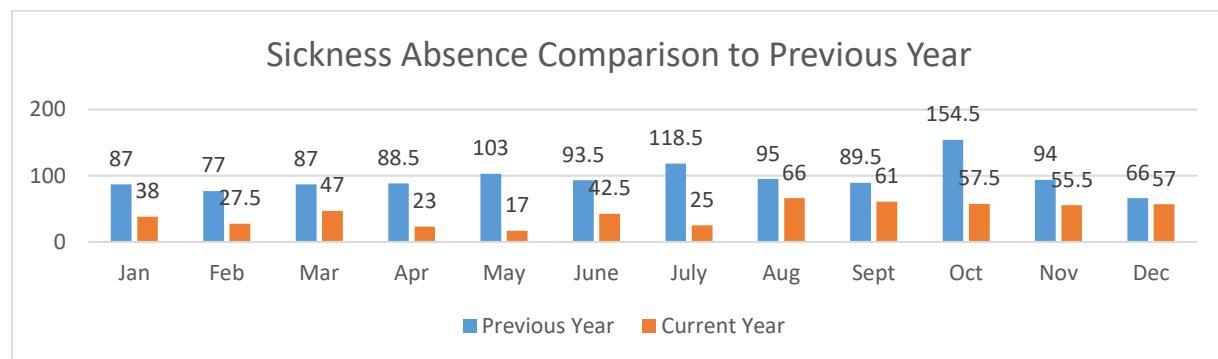
34 Leavers last 12 months

36 Hires in last 12 months

Staff Health and Sickness



Long-term sickness is a consecutive period of absence of 28 days or more.



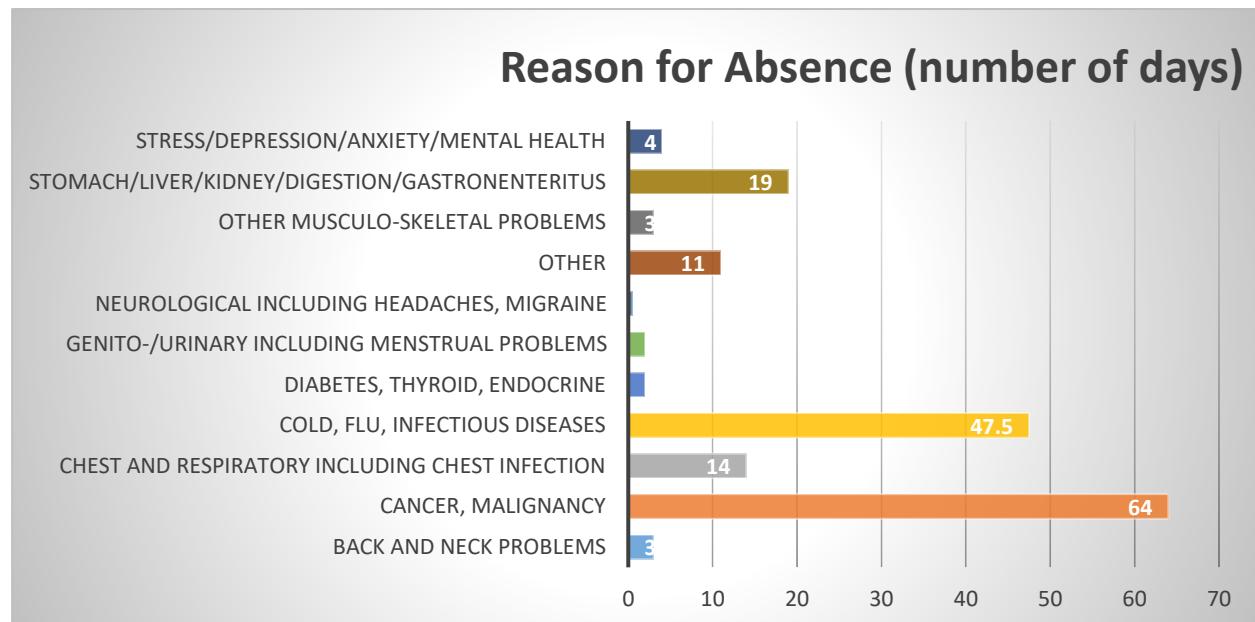
During 2024 we had high levels of long-term sickness absence which were managed under the long-term sickness absence policy and procedure.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has reported that the rate of sickness absence continued to fall in 2024, with employees losing on average 4.4 days of work per year.

According to the Office for National Statistics, the percentage of working hours lost to illness or injury fell by 0.3 percentage points over the year to 2.0% in 2024. This brings it to 0.1 percentage points above the pre-pandemic level of 2019, when it was 1.9%.

Monthly Cost of 2025 Absence (based on average salary)

October	6514.90
November	6489.46
December	6664.85



The ONS found that minor illnesses accounted for almost a third of absences (30%), followed by musculoskeletal issues (15.5%), mental health conditions (9.8%) and respiratory conditions (7.3%).

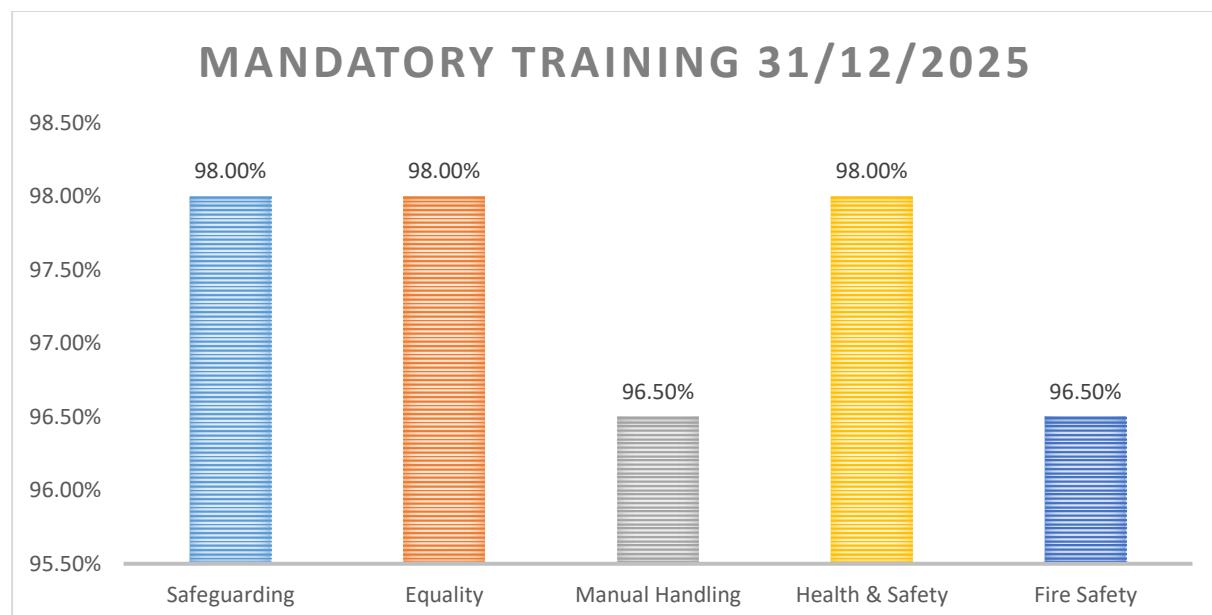
Given the age profile of the workforce and the physical nature of some of the work then absence management and health surveillance are factors that are monitored and managed by HR.

Whilst there were some short-term absences attributable to mental health, none of this absence was due to work-related issues. We continue to monitor absence and support individuals and line managers in the management of sickness absence, stressing the importance of return-to-work interviews. With the opportunity to work from home it is highly likely that where staff can work from home that individuals work when unwell so there may be an under-reporting of short-term sickness absence.

We continue to work with our Occupational Health providers and Employee Assistance Programme providers to support staff health and wellbeing. We recognise the psychological benefits of staff being in work and collaborate with Occupational Health, GPs, Line Managers and individuals to support staff to remain in work on restricted duties, reduced hours, working from home and phased return to work in accordance with our absence management policies and best HR practice. With the opportunity for hybrid working employers recognise that working when unwell is also relevant to sickness absence reporting.

The management of minor injuries and short-term sickness absence is a key element of the Authority's sickness absence strategy and the return-to-work interview play a vital role in managing sickness absence levels and staff wellbeing.

Training and Development



Completion rates for mandatory training are monitored closely. We work with line managers and staff to support compliance. We also monitor the content and

suitability of the programmes to ensure that they remain up-to-date and fit for purpose.

We have expanded mandatory training courses on ELMS e-learning including the Social Care Wales Level A Safeguarding course. This will be mandatory for all staff, members and volunteers.

The Authority's Safeguarding Leads have received Social Care Wales Training Level C in addition to Level A to ensure that the Authority safeguards individuals at risk. This training is part of a national learning framework developed by Social Care Wales to ensure that training in safeguarding is consistent and of a high quality. The training is overseen by the Regional Safeguarding Boards.

We have held in-person Customer Service Training at Llanion Park.

Legionella Awareness Training has also been delivered.

HR staff have attended workshops on the Employment Rights Act and a Wales Regional DBS Barring workshop for Safeguarding Boards

Employment Rights Act 2025

We are preparing for the staged implementation of the above piece of legislation. The first changes come into effect from 1 April 2026. We have reviewed and revised several policies including Sickness Absence, Probation, Family Friendly policies. We are continuing to review all HR and Health and Safety policies in accordance with the agreed review schedule.

The Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Act is also impacted with employers having to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. A training package has been added to ELMS (on-line training platform) and will be mandatory for all staff, members and volunteers. We are also asking the Management Team and Team Leaders to complete Sexual Harassment Risk Assessments for their departments and areas of activity.

Pay and Grading Review

The Review was implemented in November 2025. The Review was largely concerned with job evaluation and the implementation of a new pay and grading structure. The terms of reference included the essential car user allowance and 15% call out allowance. Consultation on these commenced in July-August of 2025 and the essential car user allowance has been discontinued with effect from 1 April 2026 and a new Call-Out Allowance Policy and revised call out allowance of 5% introduced from 1 April 2026.

It was anticipated that a written review report, would be produced in September 2025. Unfortunately, due to long-term sickness absence this report has been postponed until end of March 2026.

Employee Resourcing / Workforce Planning

Due to staff turnover at the end of 2025, we are recruiting a replacement 0.6 FTE Resourcing Officer. This post is funded as part of the Authority's successful Nature Networks Fund (NNF4) delivered by the Heritage Fund on behalf of the Welsh Government and in partnership with Natural Resources Wales.

The recruitment of the first Traineeship as part of the above programme is being progressed by the Head of People Services whilst we recruit to the Resourcing Officer role.

We are also advertising for a full-time Volunteer Development Officer post. This post will work closely with the Resourcing Officer and the Head of People Services. This post will lead on developing and delivering high-quality volunteering opportunities and programmes, working closely with schools, colleges, universities, and charities. The work will help create meaningful volunteering opportunities for local people, including micro-volunteering and opportunities for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, while supporting the Authority's goals for sustainability, inclusion, and biodiversity.

3. Volunteering

A total of 1987 volunteer hours were completed by 92 volunteers between 1st October 2025 and 31st December 2025. This includes 592 hours of Practical Conservation, 428 Hours on Monitoring, Surveying, Recording and Reporting, and 304 Hours spent Supporting others. There were new 2 Volunteer Groups set up for Fungi Monitoring and Footpath Maintenance with external and internal recruitment undertaken to the roles.

We are continuing to develop the Volunteer policies and procedures including the database and system to maximise functionality and engagement pending the appointment of the Volunteer Development Officer.

We are working with the Conservation team to identify specific volunteering roles as part of the Nature Networks project so that we can provide opportunities to a wide cross-section of local people in accordance with the projects aims and objectives.

4. Democratic Services

Arrangements for Evaluating Individual Member Performance in Welsh National Park Authorities – Stage 2 report

Since the last meeting, a report by HDR Consulting entitled "Enhancing Governance and Member Accountability in Wales' National Parks – Stage 2 report" has been received. As noted previously, this work is in response to a recommendation in the Audit Wales report "[Governance of National Park Authorities](#)" considered by the Authority in June 2024.

The report was discussed by the Member Support Task and Finish Group on 14 January 2026 and feedback provided to Welsh Government. A meeting was held between Welsh Government and the three National Park Authorities on 4 February

2026 when feedback on the report was discussed. At that meeting Authorities were asked to submit a pathway for delivery to Welsh Government by 20 March 2026 and the Task and Finish Group will meet before then to discuss the Authority's response. A workshop to brief Members on the process going forward will be held in June and it is anticipated that the new process will be implemented in May 2027.

Member Training

Training activities since the last meeting have consisted of:

- Conservation Areas Workshop
- LDP/Offshore Wind Workshop
- WG Governance Training
- Budget Workshop
- WG Governance Training - Governance of Risk

As can be seen from the above, we have re-shown two of the Welsh Government Governance sessions, and attendance and feedback has been positive. It is therefore intended to re-show the remaining governance sessions before the end of the year. It is hoped that this will result in a good proportion of Members having attended or watched the recording of each of the sessions when we report back to Welsh Government on this indicator in May.

The Workshop Plan for the remainder of the year is provided below.

18 March 2026 am	PCF Workshop
25 March 2026 pm	Income Diversification Working Group
29 April 2026 am	Workshop – WG Training
20 May 2026 pm	LDP – growth/spatial options/second homes
17 June 2026	Study Day – Nevern Castle
24 June 2026 pm	Workshop WG requirements for Member Accountability

Member attendance

As requested at the previous meeting, individual training records have been circulated to each Member. In future this will form the basis of Annual Development Reviews assuming that the Welsh Government model is adopted, and it is suggested that these attendance records are circulated on a six-monthly basis going forwards.

Member attendance in the current financial year at meetings has been 88% (target 75%), while Member attendance at training events has been 71% (target 65%).

Recommendation: Members are asked to NOTE this report.