

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Open Spaces and City Gardens	10 December 2018
Subject: Health & Safety in the Open Spaces Department	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
<p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>There was a decrease in the number of reported accidents in the Open Spaces Department in 2017, largely due to a significant decrease in the number of employee accidents. Overall there was good incident reporting and investigation. Most incidents were minor in nature but eight of the more serious accidents were reportable to the Health & Safety Executive.</p> <p>Officers continue to seek to reduce accidents through a variety of measures including collaborative working and an annual H&S audit.</p> <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note this report 	

Main Report

Background

1. Health and Safety (H&S) in the Open Spaces Department is managed through the Open Spaces H&S Improvement Group which is chaired by the Director and is attended by senior representatives of all the Divisions. Risk Management of H&S is a key focus for this group and is monitored through an annual audit as well as scrutiny of accident and incident records.
2. In accordance with Health & Safety legislation, all accidents, incidents and near misses in the workplace must be recorded and investigations carried out where necessary.

Accidents and Incidents

3. There were 119 accidents and incidents recorded in the calendar year 2017 of which 57 resulted in injury. The graph at Figure 1 shows this in relation to the three previous years. There was an overall fall in accidents resulting in injury from 61 in 2016 to 57 in 2017.
4. There continues to be good reporting of incidents which did not result in injuries and this points to a positive, open culture around H&S and the reporting of near misses and less serious incidents.

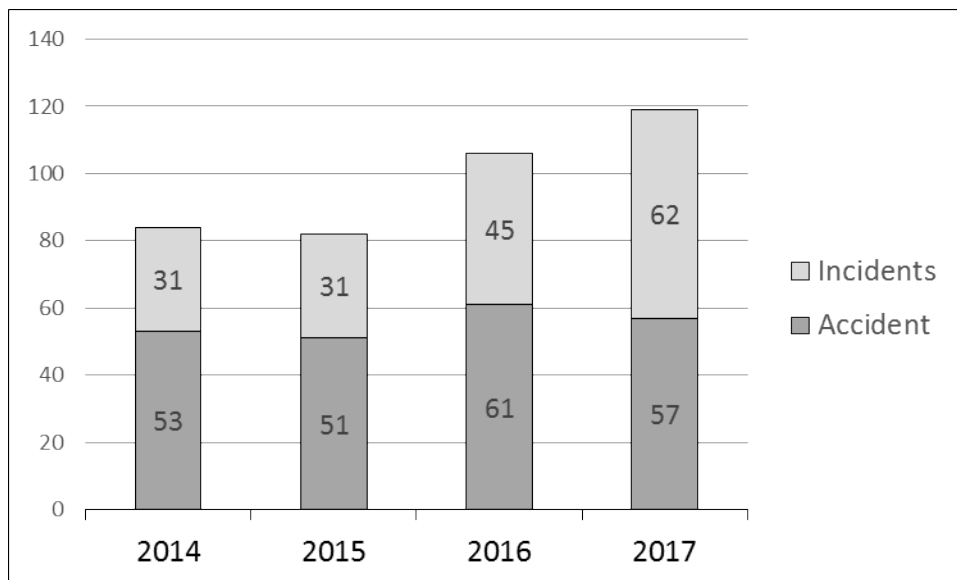


Figure 1 Accidents (resulting in injuries) and Incidents (no personal injury).

5. This decrease in the number of accidents resulting in injuries between 2016 and 2017 occurs significantly among employees rather than other groups (Figure 2) with a fall from 43 accidents in 2016 to 34 staff accidents in 2017. The number of accidents to members of the public is remarkably stable over the last three years at 15 per year. There appears to have been an increase in accidents to contractors working on our sites in 2017. However, this may reflect the better reporting noted generally, as these were all minor injuries.

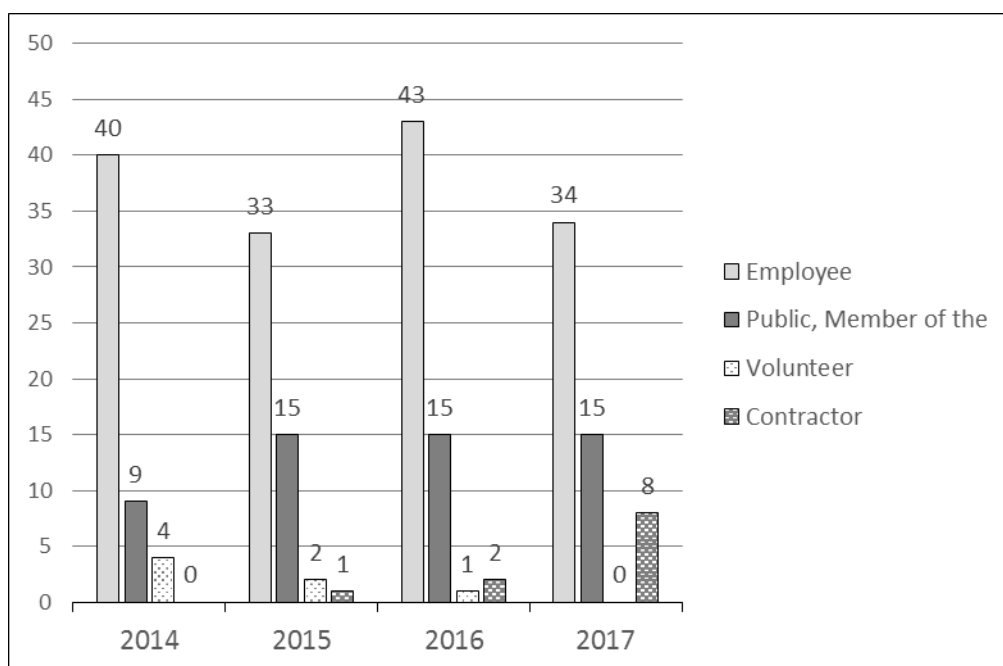


Figure 2 Accidents (resulting in injuries) to Employees, Volunteers, Contractors and Members of the Public.

6. The fall in employee accidents is notable as it occurs despite staff numbers in the department increasing by 87 full-time equivalent employees during 2017, largely due to the addition of Tower Bridge, the Monument and Keats House. The significant fall in the rate of employee accidents is more obvious when expressed as the number of employee accidents per hundred employees (Figure 3) to show the trend between one year and the next.

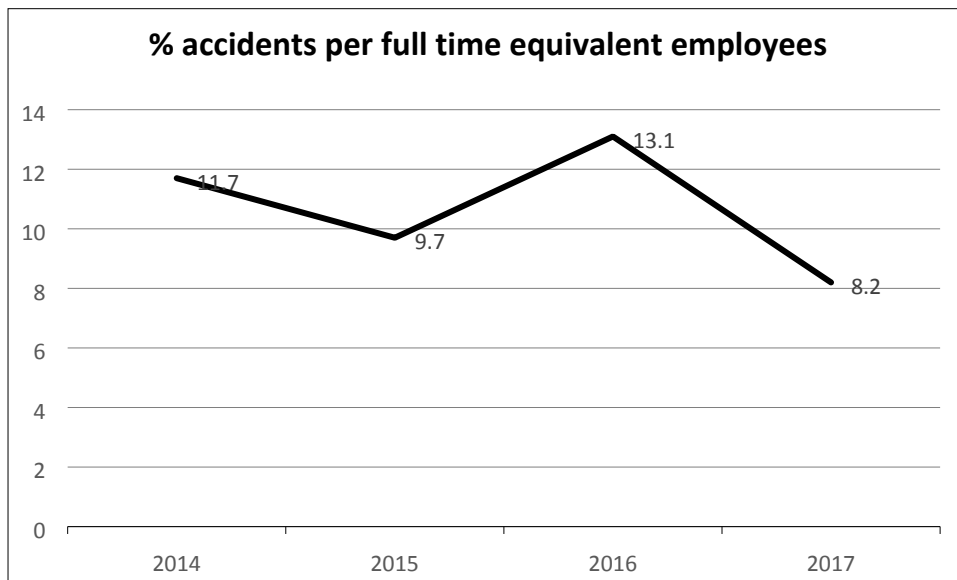


Figure 3 Employee accidents per 100 full time equivalent employees by year.

Severity of accidents (see Tables 1 and 2 of Appendix 1)

7. Most accidents in 2017 involved minor injuries, 47 in total. However, eight were reportable to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).
8. Four staff injuries were reportable under RIDDOR as they necessitated taking more than 7 days off normal work activities:
- a broken finger;
 - a fall resulting in injury to the left shoulder with ligament damage;
 - a severe cut to a hand when lifting a stump;
 - a musculo-skeletal injury to the lower back.
9. One staff injury was reportable under RIDDOR due to a specified/major injury. This involved the member of staff suffering a broken ankle when they walked across an area of rough grass.
10. Five accidents involved members of the public being taken directly from site to a hospital for further treatment of which three were reportable under RIDDOR:
- a suspected broken ankle when a person came off the edge of a path;
 - cuts due to a trip and fall;
 - a fishing hook embedded in a swimmer's hand, which needed surgical removal.

Types of Accidents and Incidents

11. The types of minor accidents vary greatly and the numbers in any one category are low. Table 3 (in Appendix 1) broadly summarises the types of accidents/injuries which occur repeatedly in 2017. The highest frequency were accidents involving slips, trips and falls. Manual handling issues were responsible for many of the minor accidents and this is reflected in the numbers involving either crush or musculo-skeletal injuries.
12. Recording and understanding incidents where injury did not occur is an important part of accident reduction. Incidents which do not result in injury are investigated along with those which do, to determine if there were lessons to be learnt from the event and information to be shared across the department.
13. These incidents (Table 4 in Appendix 1) include outcomes where there was damage to property, near misses and other incidents such as verbal abuse. There were 29 near miss incidents in 2017, the same as in 2016. The number of verbal abuse incidents reported was up from 5 in 2016 to 13 in 2017. The increase in damage to property incidents, from 7 in 2016 to 12 in 2017, is probably due to better reporting of minor vehicle collisions such as damaged wing mirrors.

Accident Investigation Performance Indicator (PI)

14. This PI is based on investigation of accidents within 14 days. For the calendar year 2017 this worked out as 64% compliance, up from 60% in 2016. Although investigations were generally carried out to a high standard, and almost all accident investigations were eventually completed, the promptness of completing investigations fell below the target of 80% of accidents to be investigated within 14 days. Whilst this is lower than the performance in other departments, it is recognised that the accidents in Open Spaces can often be more complex in nature and other factors like shift patterns can influence the response performance for this indicator. In recognition of this, completion of accident reports within 28 days is also to be recorded as a corporate wide performance indicator for subsequent years.

Preventative action

15. There are procedures in place to reduce risk and avoid chronic issues, such as hand arm vibration and noise related conditions. Driver assessment and training are being carried out in line with driver management guidance and the corporate driving policy. Officers in Open Spaces work routinely with colleagues in other departments to provide a safe working environment and safe working procedures, such as H&S teams in the Town Clerk's and Surveyors departments, including Occupation Health, the Fire Officer and other specialist advisors.
16. The CityWell initiative launched in April 2016 continues to promote wellbeing among staff by targeting mental health, physical activity and social wellbeing. There is evidence of a link between poor mental health and higher rates of accidents in the workplace and prolonged absence following an accident may also hide underlying poor mental wellbeing. The initiative has provided practical support such as an Employee Guide to Mental Health, activities such

as organised walks and mobile self-service health assessment kiosks which visited various City of London sites including Epping Forest, West Ham Park, Hampstead Heath and other sites.

17. Although staff are routinely trained and instructed in manual handling, we are developing a programme to focus on prevention of musculo-skeletal injuries in the department which would involve staff developing a culture of awareness and doing warm-up exercises. This programme is supported by the H&S advisory team in the Town Clerks department.
18. The annual audit of H&S procedures and practices across the department provides assurance and an opportunity to share good safety practice and expertise. Self-assessments are carried out in each division and these are validated by peer visits between all divisions on a two-year cycle. A summary of the results of the audit is submitted by the Director in consultation with the unions, to the Town Clerk each year to provide an Annual Certificate of Assurance (ACA). A copy of the 2017 audit summary is attached as Appendix 2. The successful submission of the ACA is a corporate performance indicator.
19. Additional Open Spaces H&S policy and guidance documents were developed during the year for topics including:
 - Water Safety;
 - Volunteering;
 - The Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations;
 - Vibration Control.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

20. Managing Risk and reducing our accident rates is driven by three of our departmental values of 'Quality', 'Inclusion' and 'People' as expressed in the Open Spaces Business Plan. Accident reduction is a key part of the Open Spaces H&S Plan as part of the Corporate H&S Policy.

Conclusion

21. 2017 saw a significant overall decrease in accident numbers in the Open Spaces Department, relative to the (standardised) head count. There is an increase in the reporting of incidents including incidents of minor damage to property and near misses. The majority of accidents across all groups resulted in minor injuries however, eight incidents warranted reporting to the Health & Safety Executive under RIDDOR. Accidents and incidents where no injury has occurred are investigated and the lessons learned are shared across the department.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Tables 1 to 4
- Appendix 2 – 2017 Open Spaces H&S Annual Certificate of Assurance Summary

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