



**Canal &
River Trust**

Making life better by water

Health & Safety

Annual Report 2021/22

Improving our
Safety Culture



canalrivertrust.org.uk

Introduction

The creation of a new role of Director of Health & Safety marks a renewed commitment to safety standards at the Trust. I have been in post since September 2021 and have been excited to carry on the great work that was already in progress, but also to look afresh at ways to improve the health and safety of our colleagues, volunteers, contractors, customers and visitors.

Unfortunately, 2021/22 saw another rise in the number of colleague and public injuries, but the rate of these incidents was already beginning to slow towards the end of the year. We know we are getting better at carrying out 'stop and think' assessments before starting work, and we have increased the number of safety improvement opportunities we report by over 400% in 3 years – both these things should enable us to spot hazards before they become accidents and improve our overall safety performance.

This year the focus is on continuing to improve our safety culture – enabling

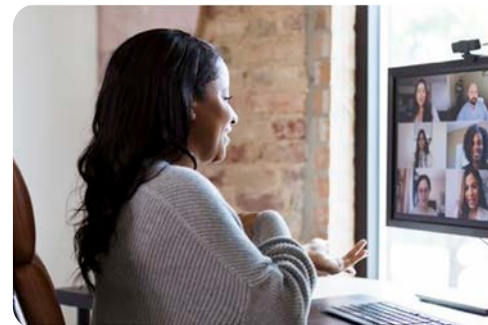


our colleagues to take responsibility for H&S, creating a network of Safety Champions who will help spread the message about good safety practices and equipping our managers to drive improved safety performance.

I look forward to us all working together, continuing to improve everyone's health and safety.



Anne Gardner Aston
Director of Health and Safety



Vital statistics



Accident Frequency Rate (AFR)

0.41

2020/21: 0.25
2019/20: 0.22



RIDDOR Incidents

23

2020/21: 14
2019/20: 12



Fatalities

54

2020/21: 43
2019/20: 50



Infrastructure Related Injuries

56

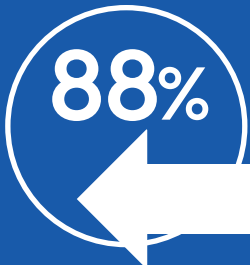
2020/21: 53
2019/20: 17



Employee Engagement Survey

88%

2020/21: 88%
2019/20: 83%



Safety Improvement Opportunities

6,393

2020/21: 1,981
2019/20: 1,775



Dynamic Risk Assessments

69k

2020/21: 50,282



Visitor Risk Assessments

143*

2020/21: 270

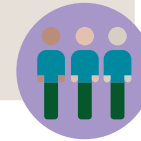


Notable achievements



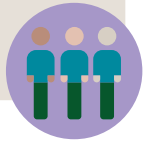
Engagement survey

88% confident to report unsafe acts



Engagement survey

93% understand the compliance responsibilities of their role



New accident/incident reporting system



New digital databases for helmsman training & lifejacket servicing/allocation



New app for 'Stop & Think' dynamic risk assessment



New role of Safety Champion introduced



Kick-off of IT project to transfer H&S info to Sharepoint – clearer, better functionality, compliance reporting and real time dashboards



External reviews of

- H&S training
- Volunteer safety management
- End-to-end risk assessment process



Safety culture improvement



The Trust continued its safety culture journey in 2021/22. Despite the pandemic we still managed some significant achievements along the way.

Once again, in our engagement survey 88% of our colleagues told us that they believe health and safety is taken seriously at the Trust but with our colleagues and our volunteers getting injured whilst at work, 19 of those serious enough to be a RIDDOR (that's an injury which is reportable to the Health and Safety Executive) we know we have more to do.

Activities to improve safety culture during the year are supported by the Trust's Safety Culture Steering Group, which is chaired by the Trust's Finance Director, Steve Dainty and has members from across the Trust at all levels. In 2021/22 the group decided to focus on

a small number of significant actions – to really focus improvement across the organisation.

Safety Fund

This was launched with the aim to remove any barriers to improving safety where colleagues could see improvements needed. Over 30 projects submitted by colleagues were approved (almost all that applied) and by the end of March 2022, almost half a million pounds has been spent on safety improvements – with some really great, local improvements. (Pictures of just some of those improvements are shown at the top of this page).

Safety Walks

These were launched and are a way for everyone to get involved in focusing on the safety of their own and others' working environment. It's in our culture to look out for one another, and this is a great way to do that. We also know that making time to focus on safety and identifying potential hazards means that we have the opportunity to change things before an actual incident occurs

Across the Trust there were 1,568 safety walks which took place during the year (with all parts of the organisation involved) and this certainly contributed to the increase in the identification

of hazards, near misses and positive interventions).

Safety Awards

A judging panel made up of members of the Executive Team and others including Safety Champions were blown away by the quality of the nominations – it was really difficult to find one winner. We were pleased to announce the Battery Powered Tools project from West Midlands Region as a worthy winner. The team had developed the use of battery powered tools owned and controlled by the Trust which meant that greater control over maintenance could be implemented whilst also moving to tools with reduced noise and vibration – with obvious safety benefits.

Looking ahead

We want to continue to build on what we have achieved and to accelerate our performance further, so the Safety Culture Steering Group intends to be more visible, understand better the cultural aspects of safety incidents and thinking about how a "just and fair" culture can best support the Trust in keeping our people safe.

As ever, we will need the whole organisation to support one another to be successful – so please continue to Speak Out, Step Up and Share Ideas!

Steve's Safety Fund

- Over 30 projects approved
- Over £0.5m spent on safety improvements



Safety Walks

- Over 1,074 safety walks carried out
- 7 out of 8 Directorates exceeded their target



Safety Awards

- 46 submissions
- Winner was West Midlands Operations Team – battery powered tools to reduce vibration



Public safety

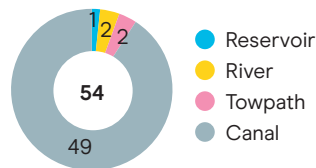
A key priority for the Trust is our stewardship of the network, we continue to prioritise public safety and we have expanded our visitor risk assessment programme to make our waterways safe places to visit and enjoy.



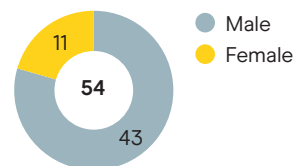
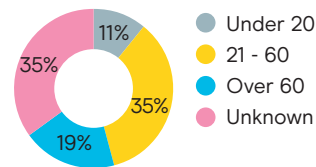
Fatalities

- 54 fatalities compared to 43 in 2020/21 and 50 in 2019/20.
- Male deaths (80%) continue to dominate (77% in 2020/21).

Fatalities by site



Fatalities by age



Stay Kind, Slow Down

Our campaign urges everyone using our canal towpaths, especially those who cycle, to be thoughtful, stay kind and slow down.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/our-campaigns/stay-kind-slow-down>



Overboard – Marianne’s story

Read about Marianne’s experience of falling overboard and her advice to boaters who end up in the water.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/safety-on-our-waterways/water-safety-tips-for-boaters>

Potential infrastructure related injuries

Total number reported (53 in 2020/21)	56
Caused by slips, trips and falls (36 in 2020/21)	30
Injured by vegetation/plants (4 in 2020/21)	1
Went straight to hospital (Riddor) (2 in 2020/21)	3

By user

- 12 boaters
- 34 pedestrians
- 10 cyclists

143 visitor risk assessments completed



24 Active Water Safety Partnerships (15 in 2020/21)



1,629 reports from the public (1,116 in 2020/21)



1 new web page created in conjunction with participation in national water safety campaigns (Water safety tips for parents)



44,085 children engaged in water safety education (12,876 in 2020/21)



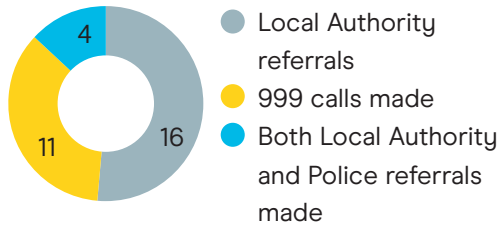
Safeguarding



The Trust's Safeguarding Steering Group includes Sue Wilkinson, our Safeguarding Trustee, in addition to our CEO and two other members of the Executive Team. They ensure oversight of safeguarding strategies and procedures, and input at the highest level.



Safeguarding incidents



Safeguarding training now mandatory for all new starters



95% on Colleague Engagement Survey in relation to understanding of the importance of safeguarding within the Trust



Colleague safety



The Trust is committed to providing a safe workplace for all colleagues. Given the nature of the work we do, we do our utmost to reduce and mitigate any risk.

Unfortunately we have seen a rise in colleague RIDDORs. We continue to consult with our colleagues to improve resources and ensure the training and guidance we offer is relevant to their needs.

- After a spike of incidents in the summer of 2021, the number of RIDDORs reduced, but there is still work to do.
- No colleague RIDDORs were associated with stoppage season.

1,074 Safety Walks were completed – where leaders and managers spent time with colleagues discussing safety



6,393 interventions were reported, increasing our safety improvement opportunities



69,006 dynamic risk assessments were completed before any work took place



Colleague RIDDORs

2021/22 **13**

2020/21 **7**

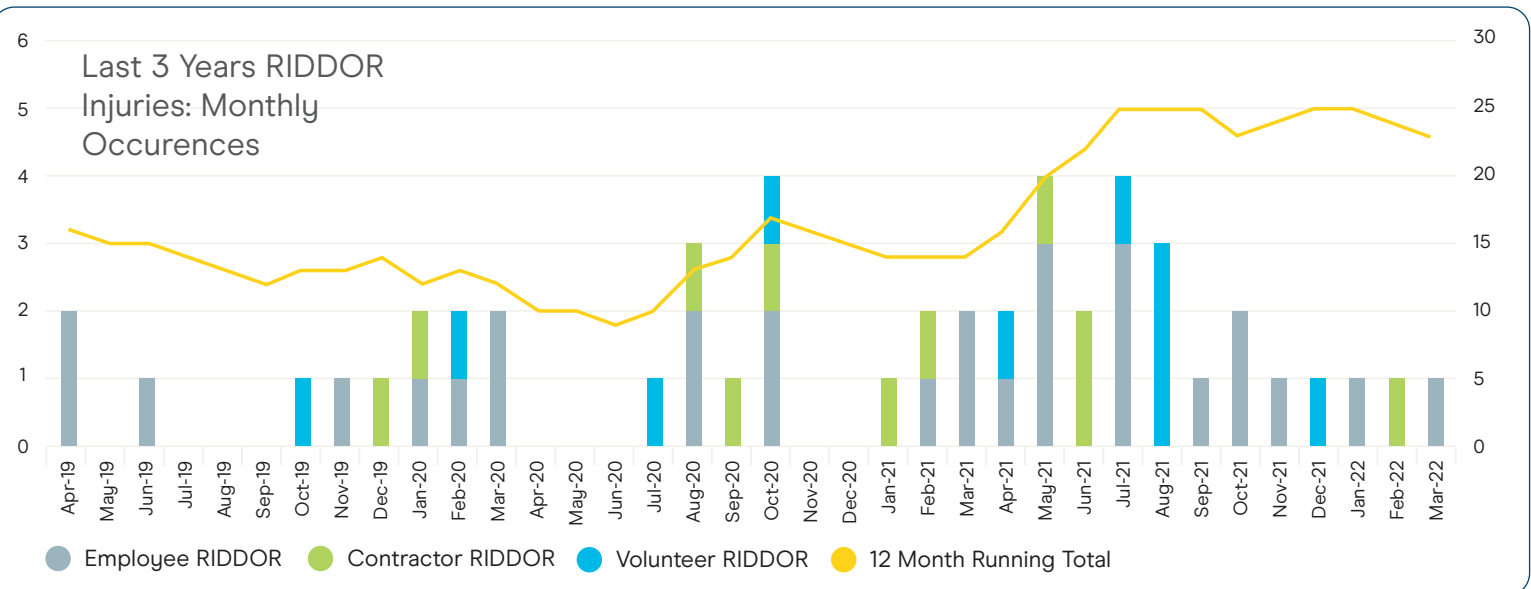
2019/20 **8**

Colleague AFR

2021/22 **0.36**

2020/21 **0.19**

2019/20 **0.23**





Overall incident reporting performance

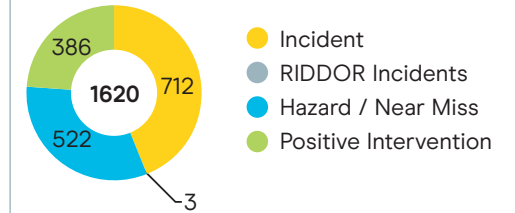


813 individuals have reported at least one safety report in the last 12 months (disregarding anonymous reports).

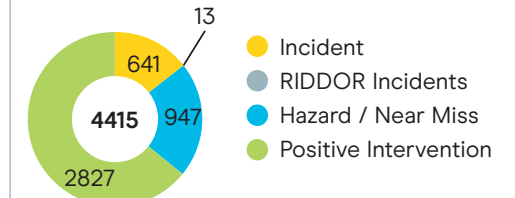


Incident reporting statistics

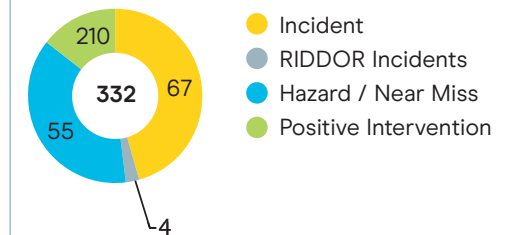
Member of public



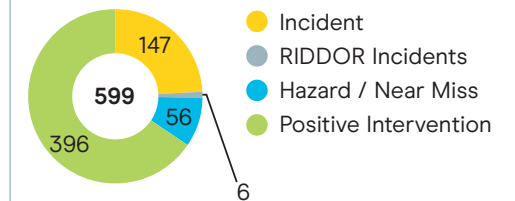
Colleague



Contractor



Volunteer



Statistics above exclude 1,060 reports relating to third party activities, eg arson, which are considered outside the Trust's control. These 1,060 reports are included in the statistics to the left.



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**Canal &
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Making life better by water

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