

Agenda Item No: 8 **Report No:** 73/16
Report Title: Accidents to staff from April 2015 to March 2016
Report To: Employment Committee **Date:** 13 June 2016
Cabinet Member:
Ward(s) Affected: Employees and workers
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Purpose of Report:

To report the statistics on accidents reported between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016.

Officer's Recommendation:

- 1 To note the report.
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Reasons for Recommendations

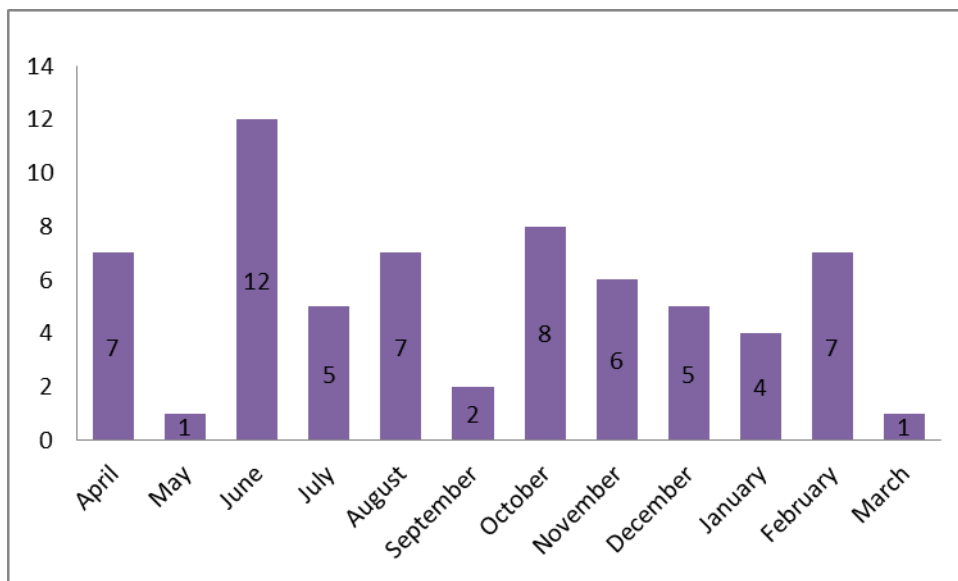
- 1 This regular report to Employment Committee provides accident and near miss information necessary to fulfil items 2.4 (c), and 2.5 (g) and (k) of the Lewes District Council Constitution Section 5 Remit of the Employment Committee.
- 2 **Information**
 - 2.1 The statistics are presented as previously requested – with numbers and percentages, comparisons with the previous year (same period). Insurance has been included as requested.
 - 2.2 Whenever an accident or incident is reported, the individual will have reported it to a supervisor or manager, who will then have discussed the accident or incident with them and completed the second side of the form which looks at the underlying causes, and reports on actions taken. This then comes to the Health and Safety Officer who will follow up any action and ask for updated documents where relevant. For example, the employee who fractured his wrist when falling was litter-picking on a wet grass bank. The updated risk assessment now includes wet grass banks

as areas where litter should not be removed until it is dry. Sweeping a pile of wet leaves causing jarring of the arm where an unexpected kerb was hit with the broom: discussions in team meetings helps encourage people to think about the possible hidden hazards in their work. Where a twisted back was brought on by a pallet truck with broken wheels, the wheels were fixed and the area cleaned; had the individual reported the hazard, the injury would not have happened. The Near Miss campaign is trying to work with staff to prevent precisely this kind of accident. A shin was cut by a key sticking out of a cupboard below the wash basins in the men's WC – and these are now removed from the locks. Where staff try to carry, move, sweep up or push or pull too much – or wrongly, there isn't much we can do except to keep reminding them to make careful judgements, going through safe systems of work and risk assessments with them and ensuring that they have regular manual handling refresher training. We carry out regular inspections. The ultimate sanction is a disciplinary investigation; the ultimate prize is remaining healthy and unhurt.

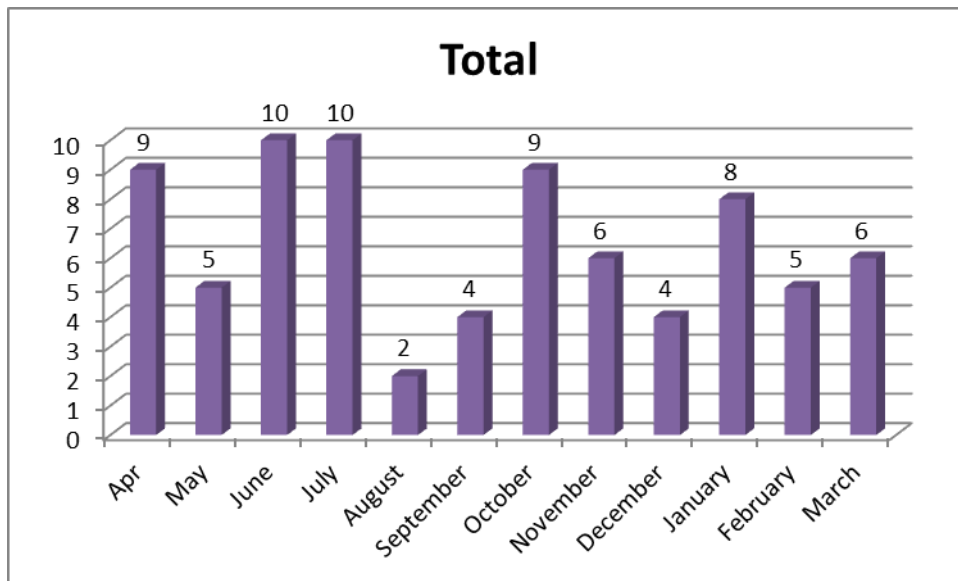
Accident Statistics - Staff

Monthly accidents

During the year April 2015 to March 2016, there were 65 accidents reported (83% of the number reported last year) (16% of mean average of 390 staff – although some had more than one accident). June had the highest monthly accidents, with April, August, October and February close behind; April, June and October were amongst the highest last year too; the year before, however, didn't include these months.

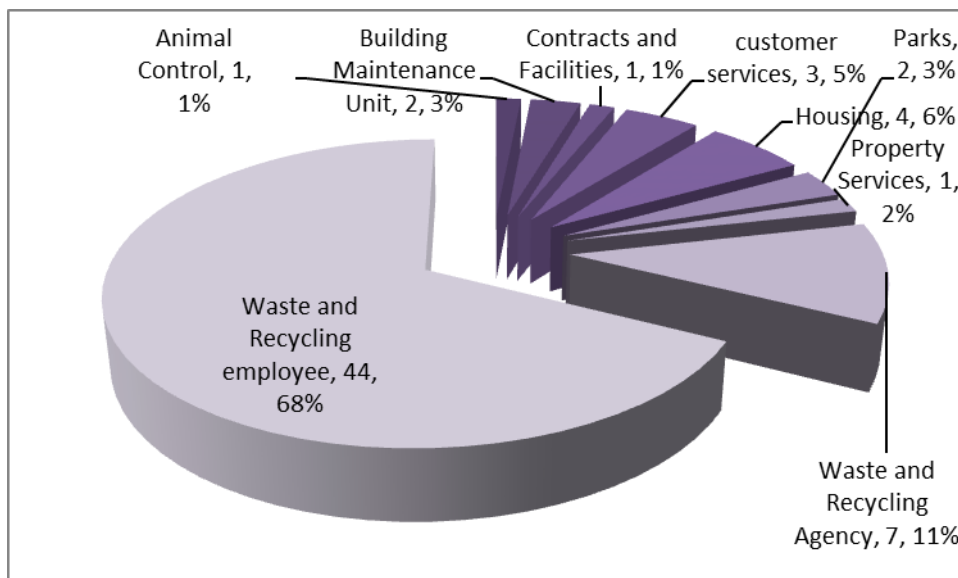


Compared to last year (2014-5) when there were 78 accidents from April 2014 to March 2015, the number of accidents reported has dropped. April, June, July and October had the highest monthly accidents.

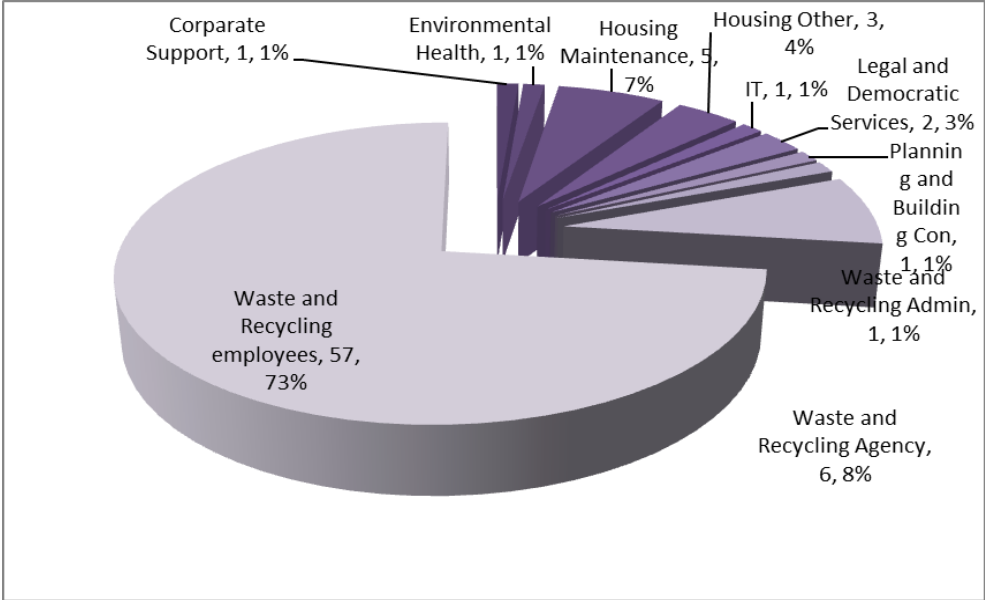


Which teams

This year, 44 employees and 7 agency staff in waste and recycling reported having accidents (79% of the total accidents reported – 2% of the total less than last year), 4 in housing and 2 in the building maintenance unit, 3 in customer services, 2 in parks and one each in animal control, contracts and facilities and property services.

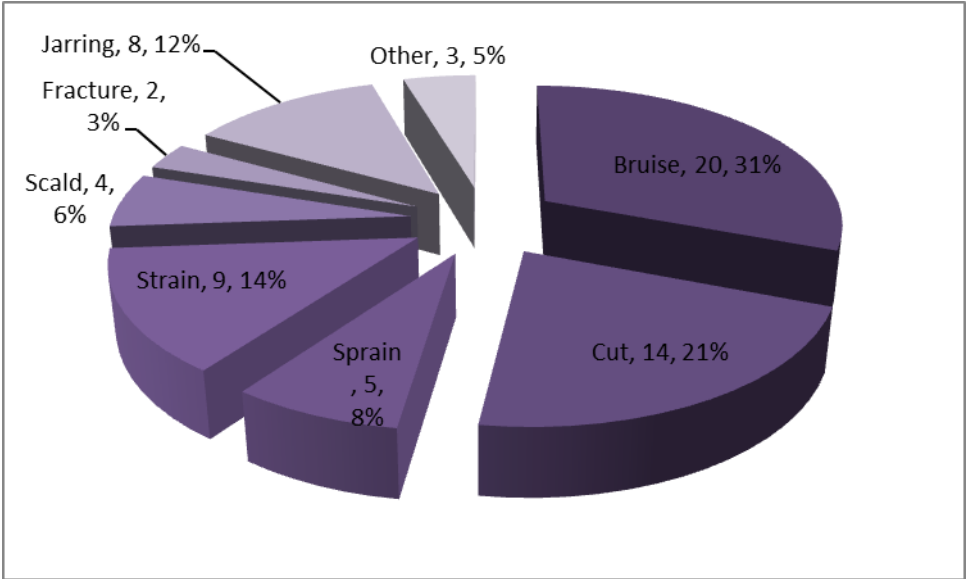


Last year (2014-5) by team, 64 of the accidents were in Waste and Recycling (57 employees, 6 Agency staff and 1 admin employee), 5 Housing Maintenance, 3 Housing other, 2 Legal and Democratic Services, 1 Planning and Building Conservation, 1 IT, 1 Corporate Support and 1 Environmental Health.

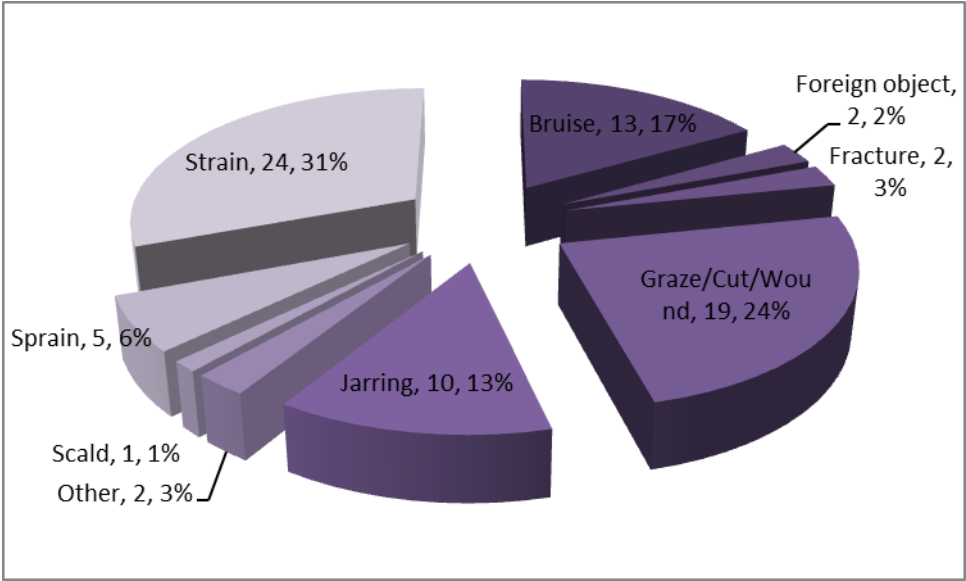


Injuries

20 of the accidents involved bruising, and 14 cuts. Jarring, strains and sprains, and scalds were the other main injuries. There were two fractures – one where someone fell and landed on their wrist and it fractured, and one where someone lifted a bag – not incorrectly and it wasn’t heavy, but for an unknown reason, their finger fractured. There were 4 scalds.

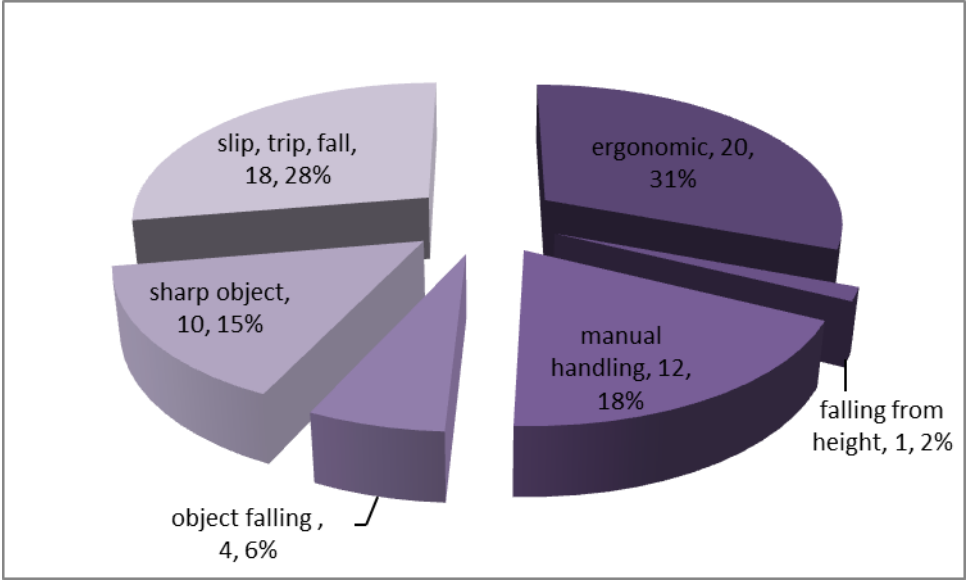


Last year, (2014-5), 24 of the accidents involved strains, 19 grazes, cuts and wounds, 13 bruises, 10 'Jarring' and 5 sprains.

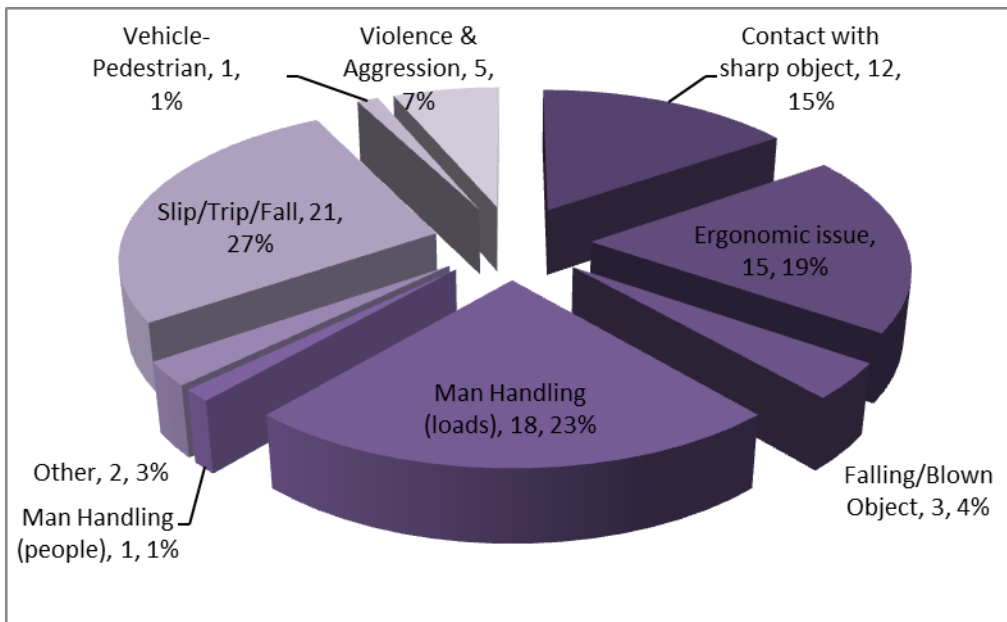


Causes of injury

This year, almost half the accidents have been manual handling and ergonomic (a slightly higher percentage than last year), and a further 28% due to slips, trips and falls (almost the same percentage as last year). 15% were also due to sharp objects (compared to 15% last year). This year, violence and aggression were near misses rather than accidents.

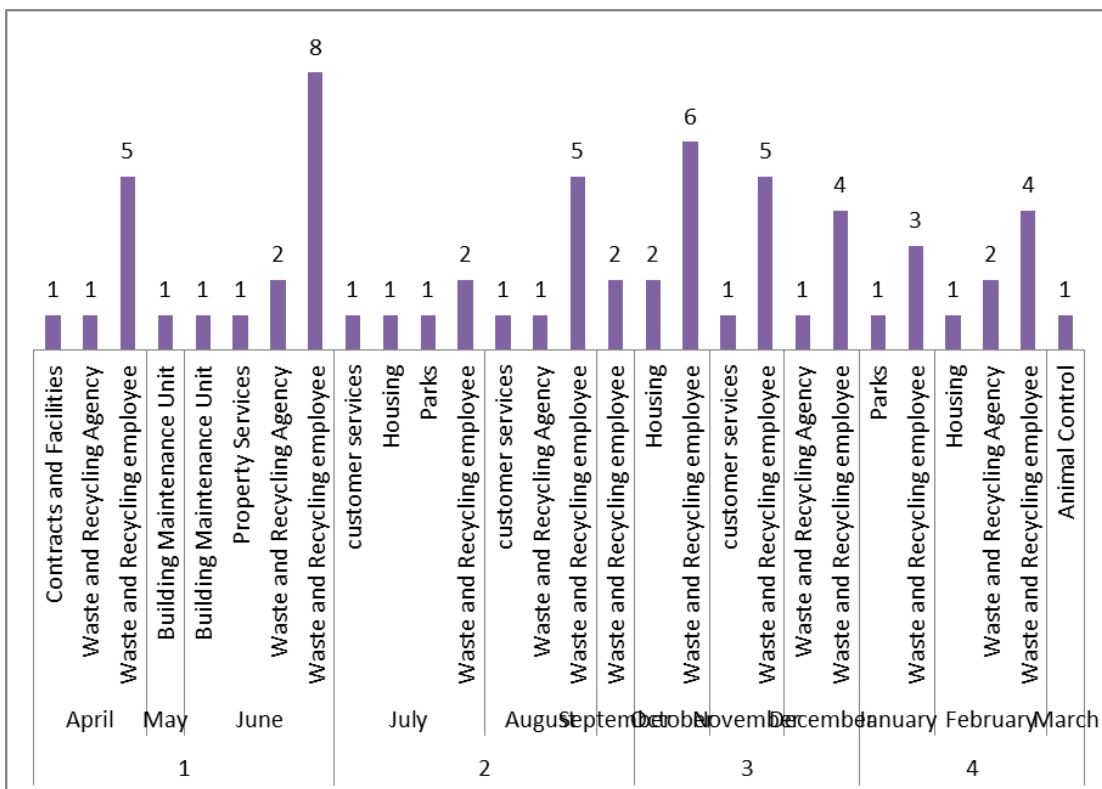


Last year (2014-5) 21 of the accidents involved slips, trips and falls, 18 manual handling of loads, 15 were ergonomic issues and 12 contact with sharp objects.

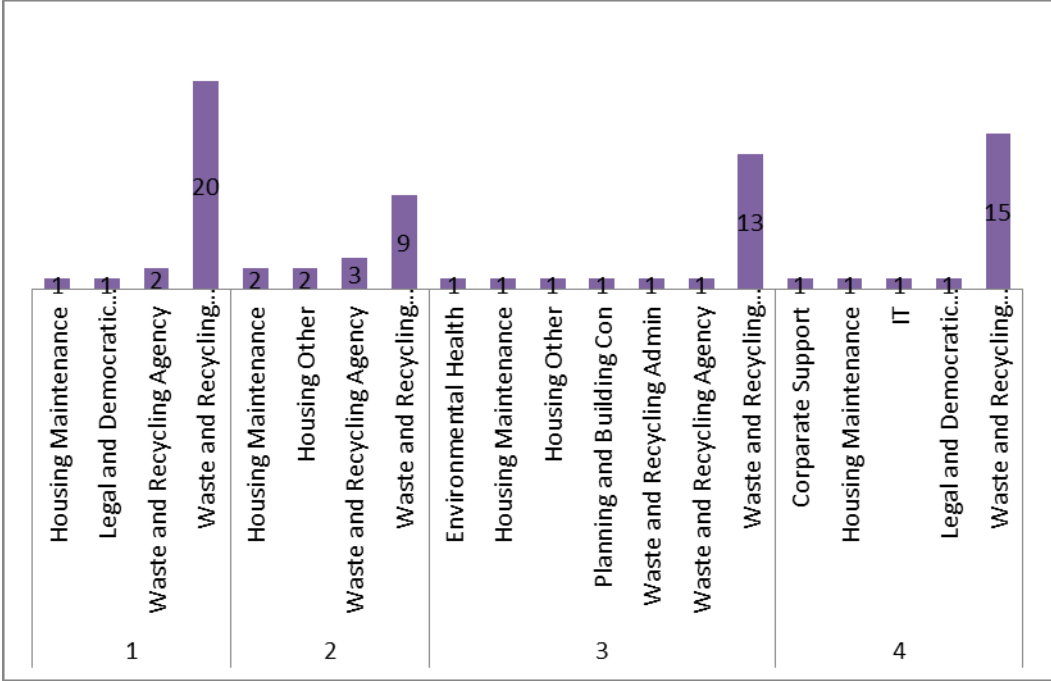


By season

This year, autumn and spring had the highest number of accidents – 20 in spring, 19 in autumn. For waste and recycling there were 16 in autumn and in spring, and winter had fewer than summer.

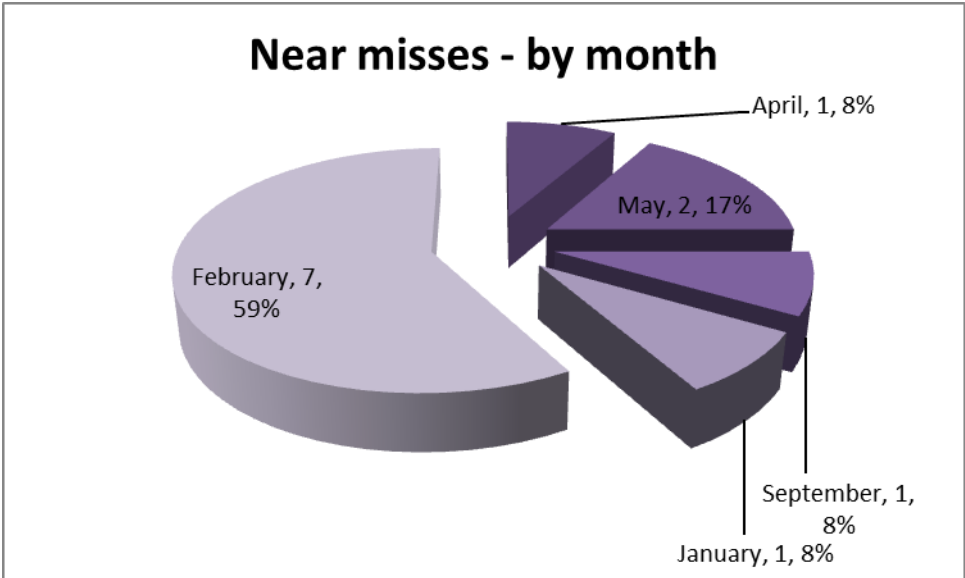


Looking at the seasons last year, the spring had the highest number of accidents, the rest of the year was fairly level, although for Waste and Recycling, the summer had the lowest and this increased each quarter.

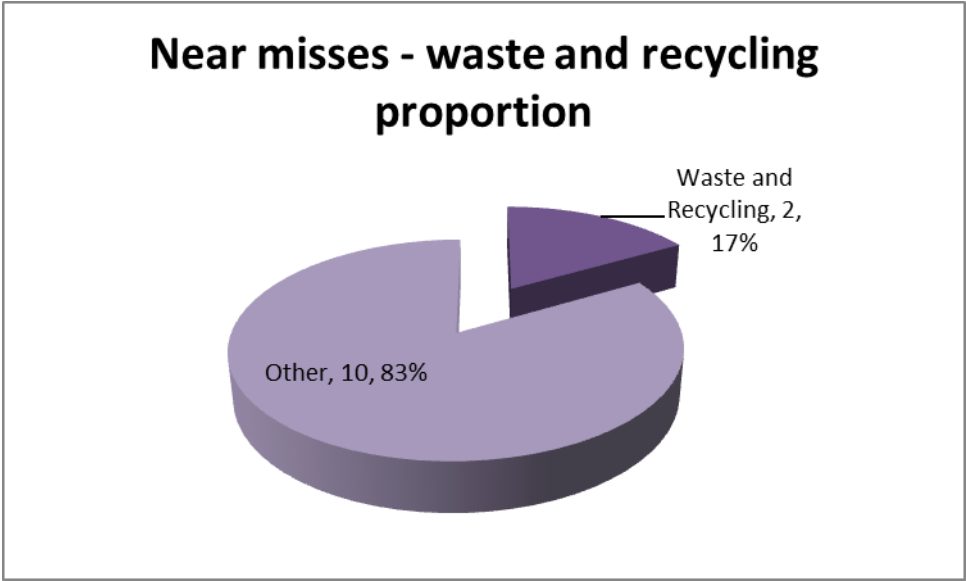


Near misses

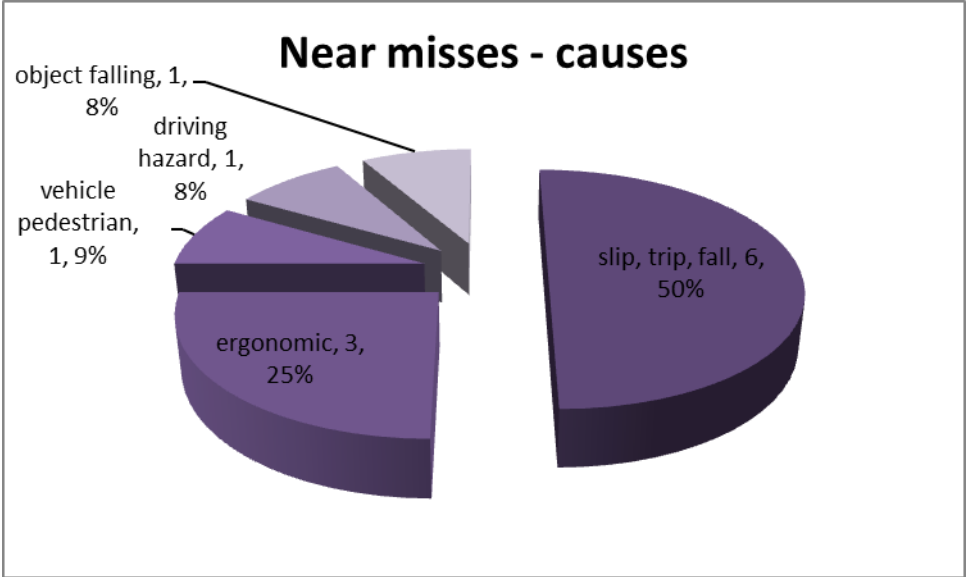
Since the 'near miss campaign' was launched, we have had more near misses reported, but still a total of only 12 in the 2015-6 year.



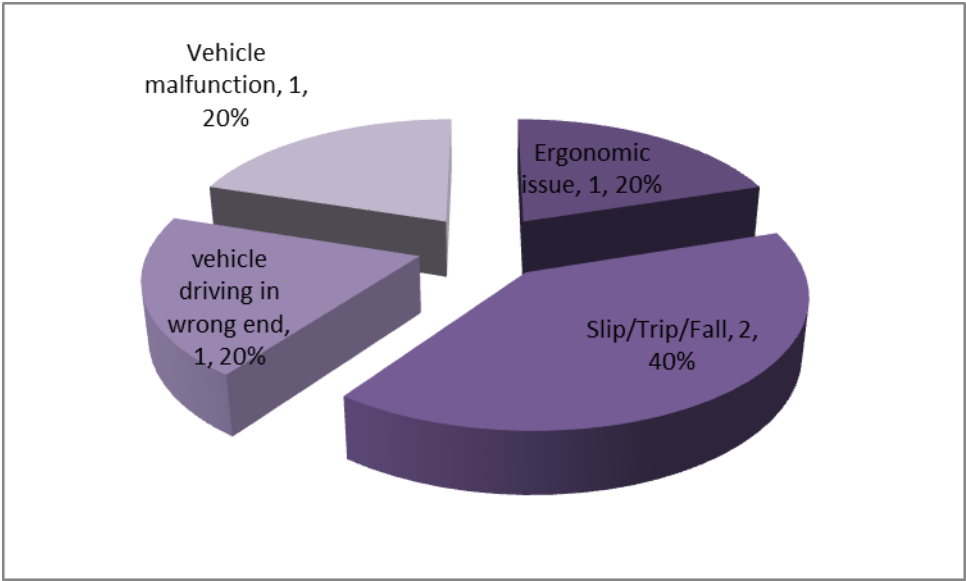
However, only 17% of these are from waste and recycling, compared with their having 79% of the accidents.



The causes of the near misses this year were mainly slips, trips and falls, and ergonomic. This fits with the accidents being reported, except that people aren't reporting near misses with manual handling (and didn't last year either – see below) – presumably because they aren't aware that they are near misses.



Last year (2014-5), we had 5 near misses reported over the whole year:



RIDDOR Reports

There were 9 accidents reported to the HSE under RIDDOR. Two of these were fractures (one a wrist when he fell on a wet bank whilst litter picking, and one a finger when lifting a bag – for no obvious reason). The other seven were due to people having more than 7 days sickness as a result of an accident. Of these, one was 24 days for a cut knee, one was 17 days for a banged chest when slipping off a kerb and falling against a wheelie bin, one was 14 days when stepping down hard from the vehicle and the knee gave way which turned out to be a medical problem, one was 12 days when a chest was banged on an EV cage due to a slip off the EV, two were 11 days due to jarring a back slipping in a churchyard and straining a back when twisting and pulling a bag on an EV, and one was 9 days when pulling a muscle through bending down.

3 Financial Appraisal

At least 165 (79 last year) employee working days have been lost, all but 2 of the accidents in Waste and Recycling (16 accidents – although 3 of these were Agency staff taking 2 days off each (4 days last year)), which means that around 124 (75 last year) days' Agency staff would have to be paid for as a result of the accidents. (Last year, all 17 accidents where time off resulted were in Waste and Recycling.)

This year, 28 of these days were on one accident where a member of Housing staff was litter-picking and slipped and fractured his wrist. 25 days were lost by a fractured finger which appears to be a personal medical problem as the lifting was done properly and it wasn't a heavy item. 24 days were lost by a knee

being badly cut as the result of a trip, leading to hospital treatment and the need to rest it until recovered. 14 days were lost when a knee gave way due to erroneous judgement in stepping off a vehicle. 12 days were lost when a member of Waste and Recycling slipped on an Electric Vehicle and badly bruised his ribs, 11 when another slipped off a kerb and hit a wheelie bin and bruised his chest, and another 11 when a back was strained due to incorrect pushing and pulling. 9 were lost when a recycler bent down (using the correct stance) to pick up a box and felt his leg muscle tear. 47 out of 65 (72%) accidents resulted in no time off work (63 (81%) last year out of 78 accidents).

Insurance

The Council is insured 'for accidents' although much depends on who's having the accident and whether the Council are negligent. Employer's Liability (EL) insurance covers the Council's liability to its employees arising from negligent acts and omissions. Public Liability insurance covers the same in respect of third parties.

We also have a Personal Accident (PA) policy. This is benefit rather than an indemnity policy and no liability need be demonstrated. So if, for example, a worker cut his fingers off in a bizarre accident involving power tools then he or she would be entitled to claim on the PA policy even if an EL claim failed or was not pursued at all. During 2015-2016 we have had no staff claims on either EL or PA.

4 Legal Implications

The Legal Services Department does not need to comment specifically on the accident statistics as it is a progress report.

5 Sustainability Implications

I have not completed the Sustainability Implications Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report.

6 Risk Management Implications

I have not completed the Risk Management Implications Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report.

7 Equality Screening

I have not completed the Equality Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report.

8 Background Papers

There are no background papers.

9 Appendices

There are no appendices.