

5th June 2013

See Distribution:

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTION - ANNUAL REPORT 2012 / 13

1. Introduction

1.1 The Safety Officer's planned activities for 2012/13 included the following, tasks and targets:

Accidents:	Collate, record on the corporate database and monitor all accidents Investigate Reportable accidents
Safety Audits:	Complete Safety Audits of Leisure Centres to meet the requirements of QUEST. Complete Safety Audits of manual tasks to identify noise HAV and Manual Handling issues
Safety Policy and Guidance:	Review Safety Policy Update & circulate Civic Centre & Arnot Hill House Fire Evacuation Procedures Review and circulate Fire Safety, Accident Reporting, Alcohol & Drugs, Display Screen Equipment, Smoking & Risk Assessment Guidance Notes Assist Managers to comply with their health and safety responsibilities
Safety Training:	Plan, prepare and deliver employee and manager safety awareness training Plan, prepare and deliver / facilitate other courses as required Generate / update all safety training records on the corporate database
Occupational Health:	Plan / arrange eye tests for DSE Users; hearing tests for workers in noisy environments; Hepatitis A and B / HAVS cover / screening for vulnerable staff; vibration testing for workers using vibrating tools & equipment Generate / update all occupational health records on the corporate database Host an Employee Health Fair
General Administration:	Answering queries via Intranet, telephone and Internet General administration tasks (Budget, Email etc) Complete an Annual Report
Safety Liaison:	Collate information for distribution via internal and external safety meetings / seminars

1.2 Local performance indicators included the following:

- t Review six Management Safety Guidance Notes including the Safety Policy
- t Ensure a 80% Satisfaction Rating for health and safety training courses
- t Ensure 60% of all employees trained in health and safety awareness

1.3 Working a four day week has been quite challenging especially when balancing the requirements of a full time job. Some tasks have now taken a lesser priority as shown in the table below with safety liaison cut by a third and general administration continuing to fall over the last 6 years. Occupational Health is now more reliant on the nurses as my commitment is reduced by a third. Areas remaining static or increasing significantly are safety training and policy / guidance. Audits remaining the same and as reflected in accident statistics less time has been devoted to accident recording. The time for each task may need to be reviewed to either increase or lower the time recorded to address the observations contained in this report, in particular safety training, safety audit and policy/guidance.

Tasks / Period	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013
Accident recording and Investigations	14.8%	14.7%	14.7%	7.9%	21.4%	13.0%
Safety Audits or Inspections	14.1%	11.1%	11.1%	6.8%	10.8%	11.5%
Safety Policy and Guidance	7.8%	18.7%	18.7%	17.7%	8.0%	15.9%
Safety Training	20.9%	14.1%	14.1%	25.7%	18.9%	28.7%
Occupational Health	1.9%	5.9%	5.9%	8.6%	9.0%	5.8%
General Administration	23.5%	19.5%	19.5%	17.9%	16.0%	15.0%
Safety Liaison	17.0%	16.1%	16.1%	15.5%	15.9%	10.1%

2. Executive Summary

2.1 At the end of 2012-13 it can be seen that whilst there were some health and safety issues these can be addressed for a relatively small outlay in terms of time, effort and money but could produce benefits in business terms i.e. an increase in productivity, compliance with current legal requirements and, most importantly, protection of the workforce. Key issues remain and include noise induced hearing loss, hand arm vibration syndrome and manual handling injuries highlighted through the accident reporting process which has developed into civil claims against the council.

2.2 The conclusions are therefore centred on the above topics:

- The movement of loads, especially in Direct Service areas, to determine if there are less hazardous alternatives
- The use of vibrating tools to determine if the current control measures are suitable and sufficient
- Noisy operations to determine if the current control methods are suitable and sufficient
- Further safety awareness training to ensure the more vulnerable employees and managers are fully aware of their responsibility to either follow (i.e. the employee) or generate (i.e. the manager) necessary safety guidance.

3. ACCIDENTS

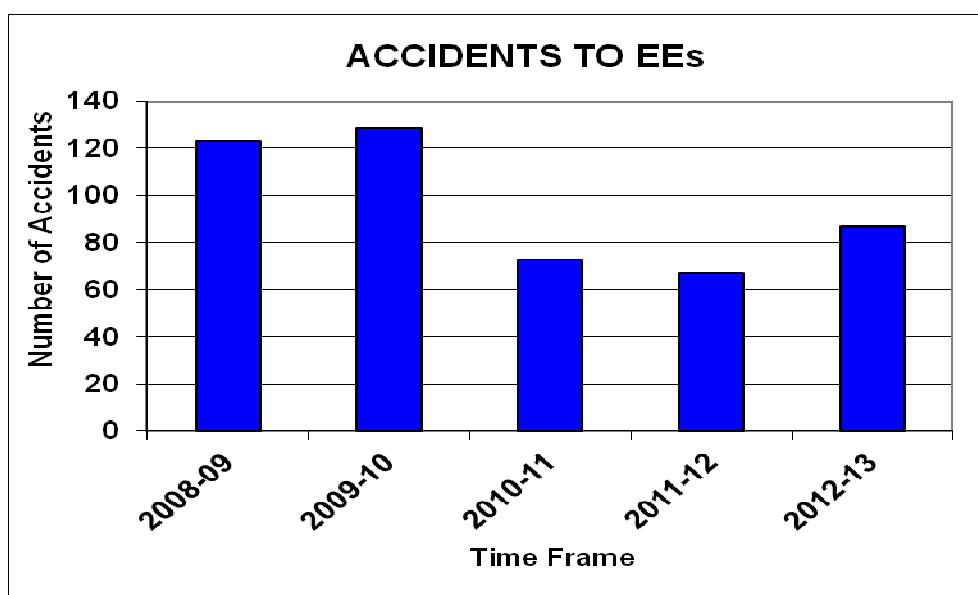
3.1 Streamlining the reporting procedure has increased efficiency resulting in a general fall in the time taken to process accidents. Unfortunately compensation claims, relating, in the main, to manual handling, hand arm vibration and noise induced hearing loss are still causing concern. They continue to be robustly investigated

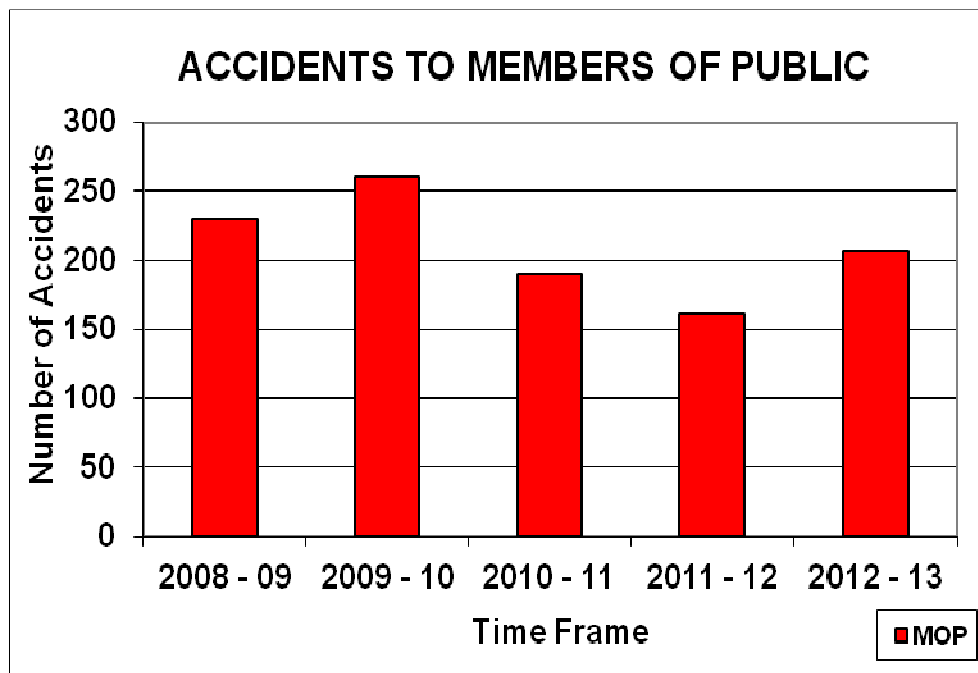
resulting in longer investigation times but a successful defence two years ago highlighted effective management action and comprehensive operating procedures. However there continues to be a relaxed approach to accident investigation at section level that reduces the effective defence of potential civil claims. One area that requires further work is accident investigation and training has been updated to address not only the immediate cause of an accident but the underlying or root cause. Leisure Services have generally addressed this observation but other areas need further work.

3.2 Service Area Staffing Levels - Accident statistics are based on the number of staff employed by the council in each service area. In health and safety terms each person employed by the council is included, not just the full time equivalent. I have tried to place the old service areas into the new directorates for continuity. The current structure below is compared with the previous three years.

Service Area / Year	Apr 09-Mar 10	Apr 10-Mar 11	Apr 11-Mar 12	Apr 12-Mar 13
Directorate A (Comms., Elect., Org. Develop)	22	22	23	26
Directorate B (Audit, CS&IT, Fin & Rev)	106	113	125	126
Directorate C (Community, Leisure, P&E)	328	285	295	289
Directorate D (PASC, Waste, P. Prot, Trans)	140	169	173	175
Planning & Environment (absorbed into Directorate C)	63	66	n/a	n/a
CS & OD (absorbed into Directorate A)	59	58	n/a	n/a
Democratic & Community Services (Legal)	19	18	14	13
TOTALS	737	731	630	629

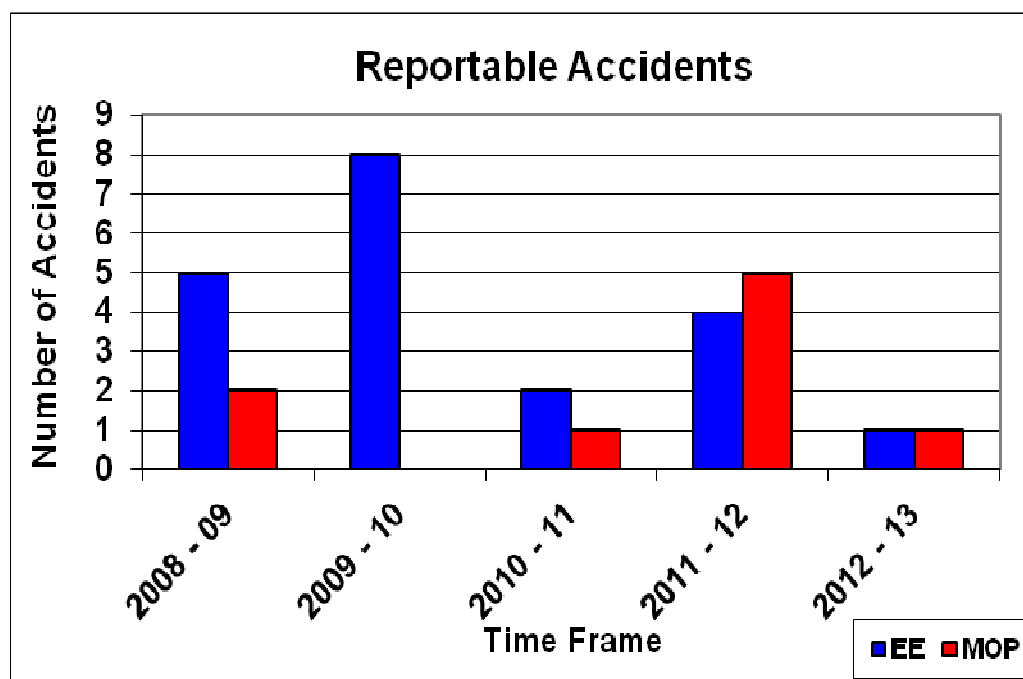
3.3 Employees and Members of Public - The number of accidents to EEs has risen for the first time in three years from a low in 2011 of 73 to 87 this year (see below). The trend for members of public (MOPs) has also risen in the same period from 160 to 207(see below). The majority of incidents to MOPs include: swimming into walls, cutting feet on tiles, slipping in the changing rooms and sport related injuries, where they are struck by, for example, shuttlecocks, footballs etc or slipping on floors when playing racquet or contact sports.





3.4 **Reportable accidents** – The chart below identifies the number of reportable accidents involving both MOPs and council employees. Reportable accidents are those that generally involve more than three days off work, fracture of bones, dangerous occurrences, and death or whether a member of public has been taken to hospital following an accident on council premises.

3.5 The reporting of “Reportable” accidents relies on the manager to inform the safety officer when and if the above criteria are met. The time taken to report these incidents can be in excessive especially when the employee goes home following visits to the hospital. Action has been taken to improve reporting times through further training.

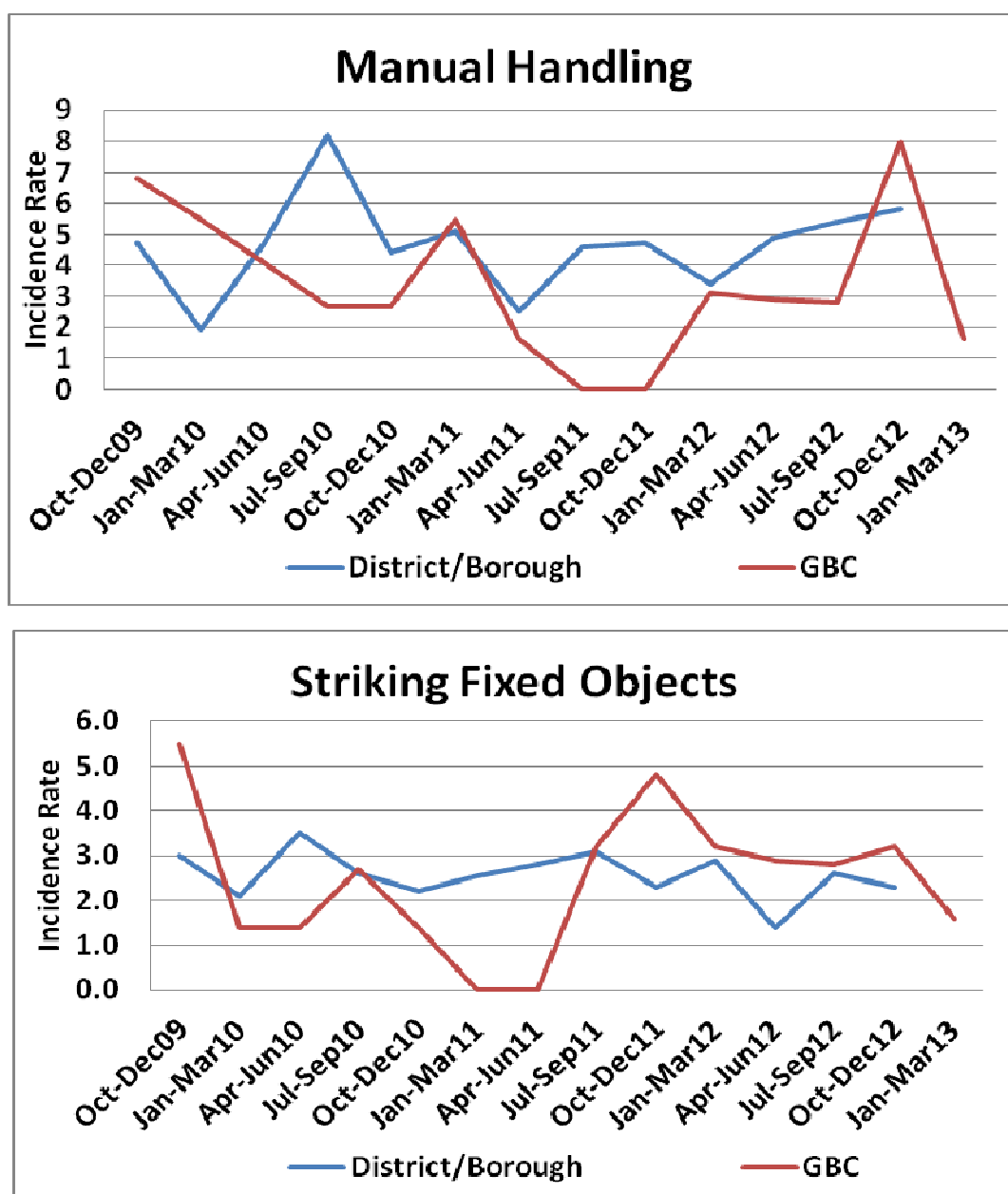


3.6 Reportable accidents to EEs have reduced to one – a manual handling incident and one to a MOP who slipped down the steps at the Richard Herod Centre Bowls Club. She cut her left hand and had to be treated in hospital.

3.7 Accidents are recorded quarterly and forwarded to the Local Government (East Midlands) Office where they are converted to a rate per 1000 employees and compared with other Local Authorities. The main HSE categories of accident are: MH (Manual Handling); SFO (Striking Fixed Objects); SMO (Struck by Moving Objects); STF (Slip, Trip and Falls); VIO (Violence); and OTH (Other types of Accident).

3.8 **Accident by Type** – The following tables shows that there is little difference between GBC and other districts / boroughs for each of the HSE recognised category of accidents. The tables provide the quarterly rate of incidents in all the above categories. Verbal abuse and SMO categories remain higher than the average across the county.

3.9 **MH (Manual Handling)** – After a steady fall from 7 per 1000 in 2009 to under 3 per 1000 at the end of 2010 we had no MH accidents for six months. The rate has risen to just over 3 per 1000 in the last quarter of the year up to 8 per 1000 during October to December before falling to just over 1 per 1000 at the end of the period, due mainly to incidents in the depot. A concerted training schedule has kept the figures low and has reversed the trend of being slightly higher than other boroughs/districts. Main areas of concern are still the depot and leisure centres where most of the manual work is carried out.

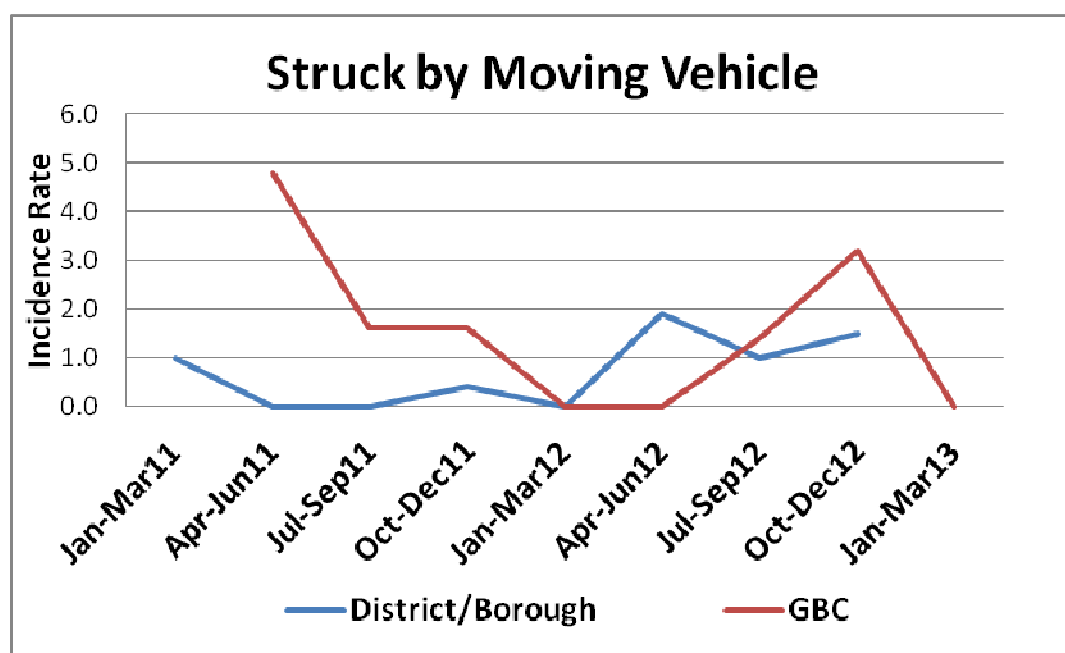
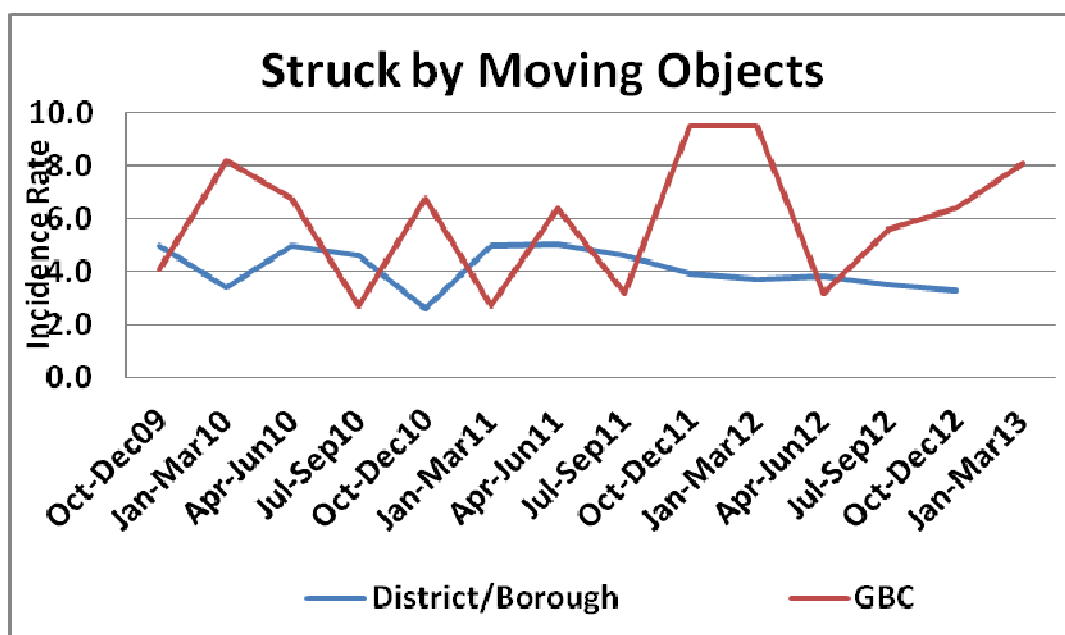


3.10 **SFO (Striking Fixed Objects)** – Walking into doors, shelves and cupboards was quite common six years

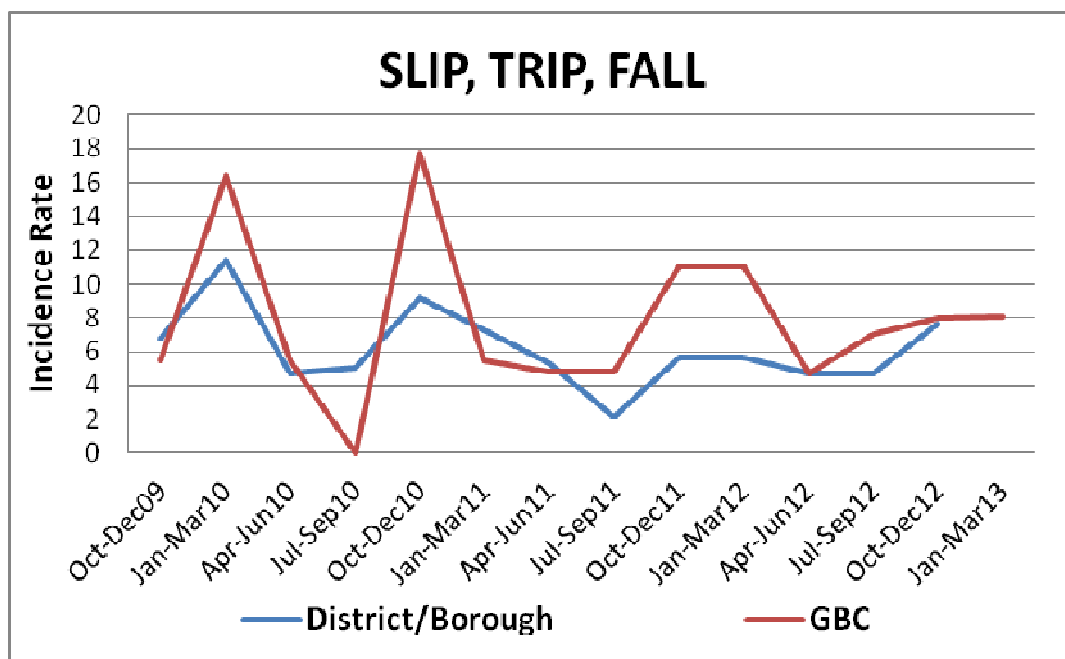
ago, but good management action involving the rearrangement of offices and the supply of modern equipment saw a steady fall from 8 per 1000 to zero in the March 2011. Since last year there has been a steady fall to just over 1 per 1000.

3.11 **SMO (Struck by Moving Object)** – Following a high figure of 9 per 1000 last year this category continued to fall slowly to June last year when four accidents occurred over three months involving cleaning, picking up a broken box, moving a bin over a kerb and pulling a trailer over a gully. Accidents usually involve doors opening onto unsuspecting employees, employees striking others in corridors and items falling off shelves. Manual workers have suffered from branches falling out of trees, road traffic accidents and accidents involving tools and equipment. Management have been taking the necessary and proper action to prevent a recurrence including fitting office doors with glass inspection panels.

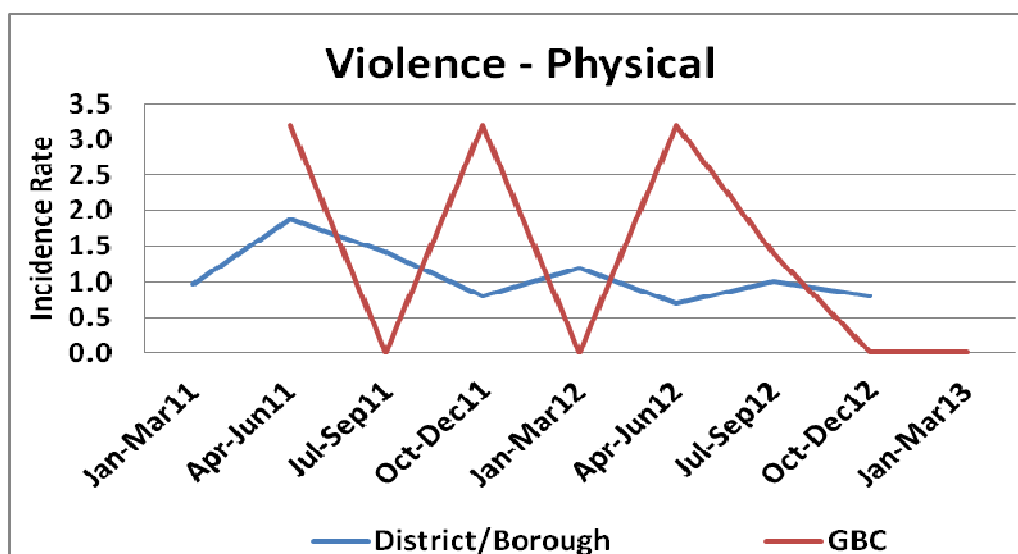
3.12 The category was split in 2011 to identify SMOs involving vehicles and identified a significant number but this has now fallen to nil in the last quarter. Depot employees invariably record the most accidents in this category; however they are not uncommon in busy offices.

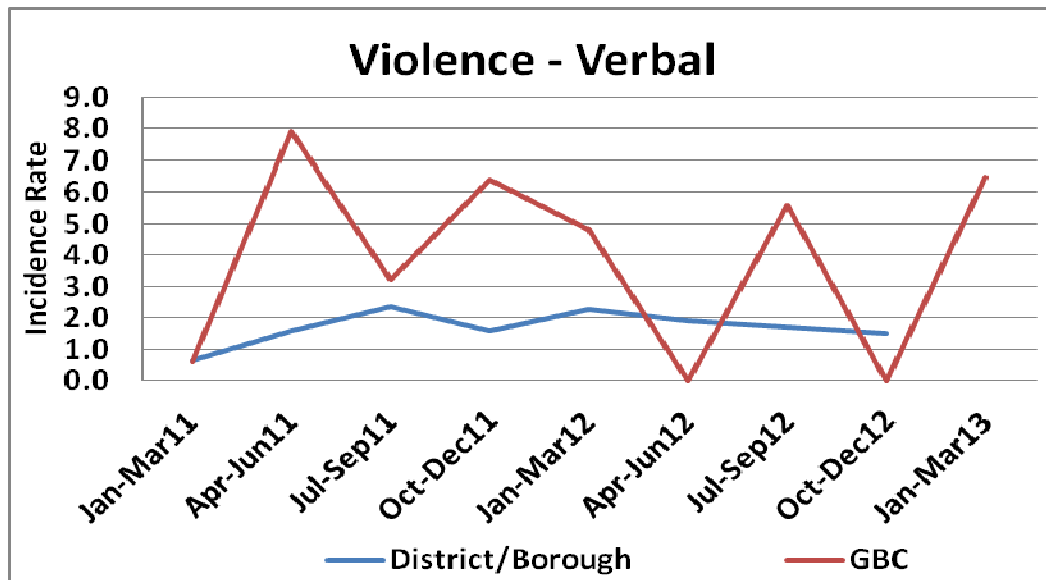


3.12 **STF (Slip, Trip and Fall)** – Slips, trips and falls peaked at 16 per 1000 in 2010, falling to zero by September of the same year. Unfortunately STF accidents during the heavy snowfalls in the winter saw this figure rise again to nearly 18 per 1000 with accidents to Direct Services and Leisure based employees. Slip-on ice shoes were provided to prevent a recurrence of this type of accident but there are still a high number of accidents in this category and double the county average at the end of last year. There has been a recovery over the year but it is still the highest category at 8 per 1000 accidents. Incidents included stepping out of vehicle cabs onto uneven ground (3), slipping on wet grass (4), Tripping over a bramble (1), tripping over a stone (1), falling off a wall when circuit training (1), cutting a hedge on uneven ground (1), leaning over on a chair (1), falling down a rabbit hole (1) and walking on icy surfaces (4).

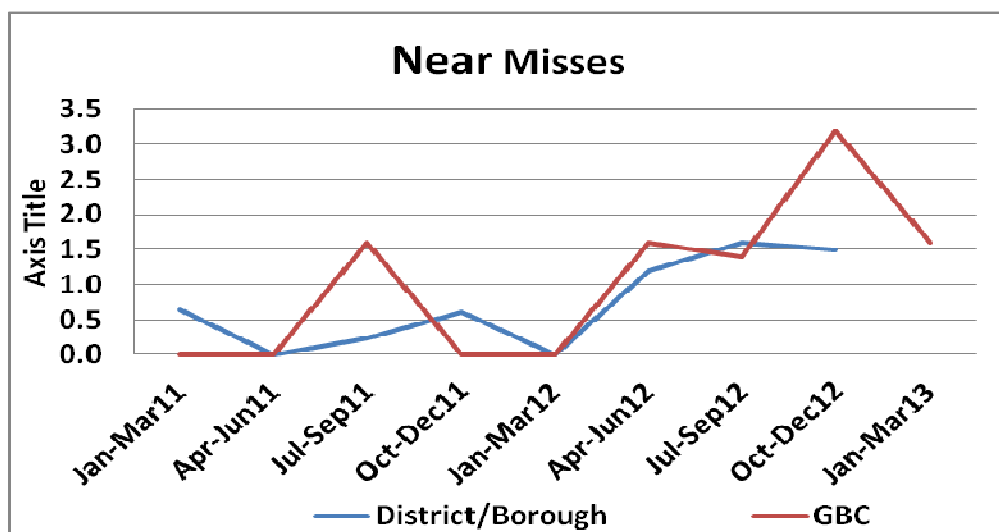
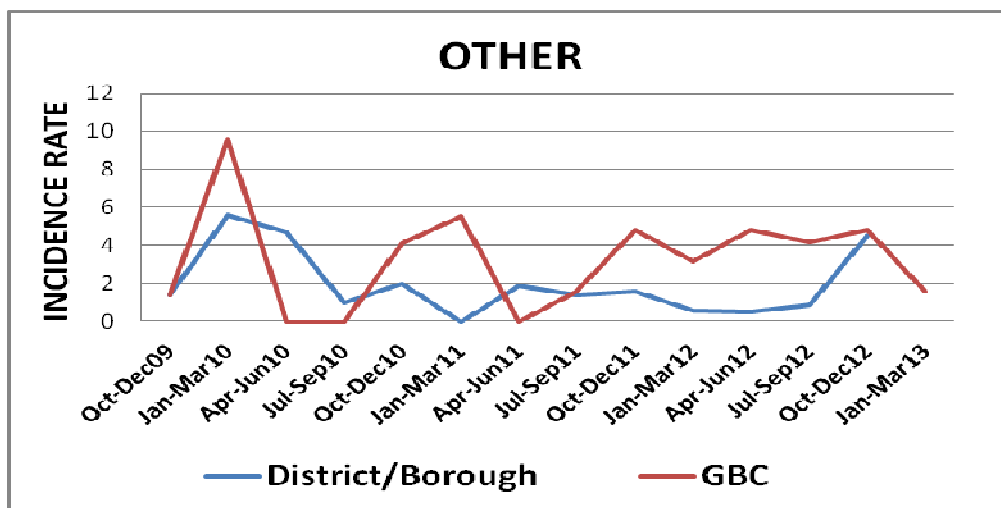


3.13 **VIO (Violence)** – Violence takes two main forms, physical and verbal abuse; physical violence now stands at zero after a peak in June 2012. This involved one member of staff who was threatened with physical abuse and one who was attacked by a dog. There have been no incidents in the last 6 months. Verbal abuse shows peaks and troughs throughout the period and Gedling has generally been above the average for the East Midlands since January 2011. Training courses on how to deal with perpetrators of violence have been popular and the content of the courses include breakaway techniques in case the violence escalates to physical attack. Some useful methods to defuse situations have also been developed following this training. Incidents are related to dealing with MOPs in leisure centres (6), Finance (1), PASC (1), and Waste Services (1).

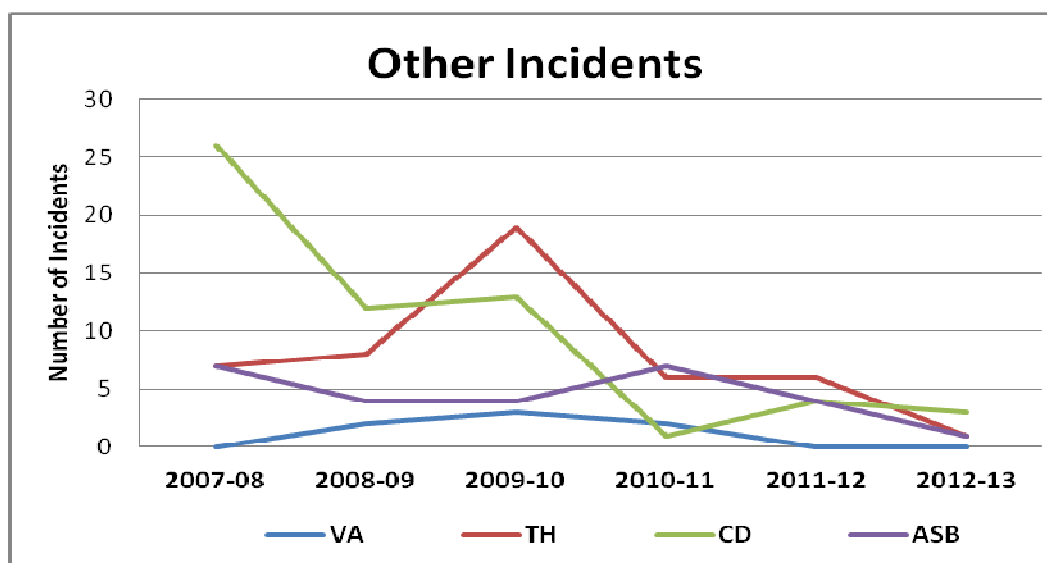




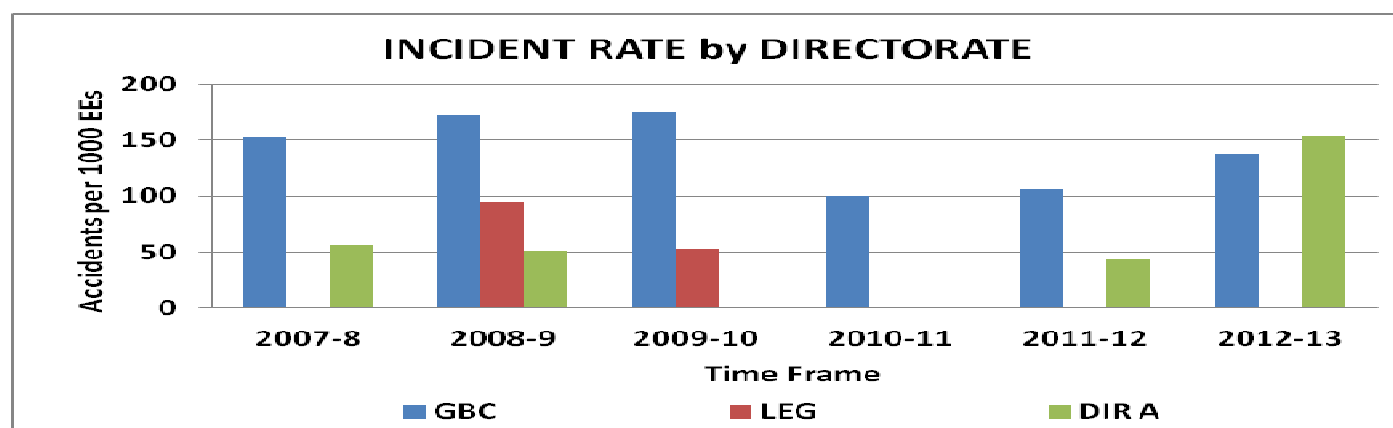
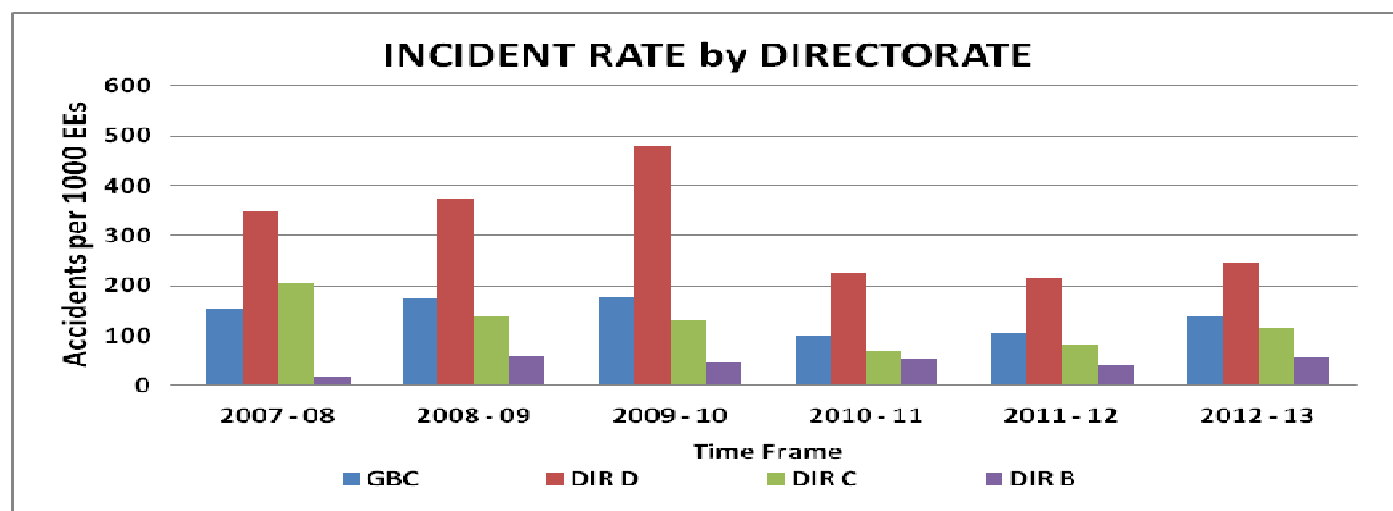
3.14 **OTH (Other types of accident)** – Most accidents can be categorised within the above headings and further training last year on accident reporting ensured that this category was on a downward slope. The category covers near misses, sport related accidents etc. Recording Near Misses has been particularly useful as it triggers an investigation before an accident happens. This year section managers are recording more incidents under this category especially in PASC.



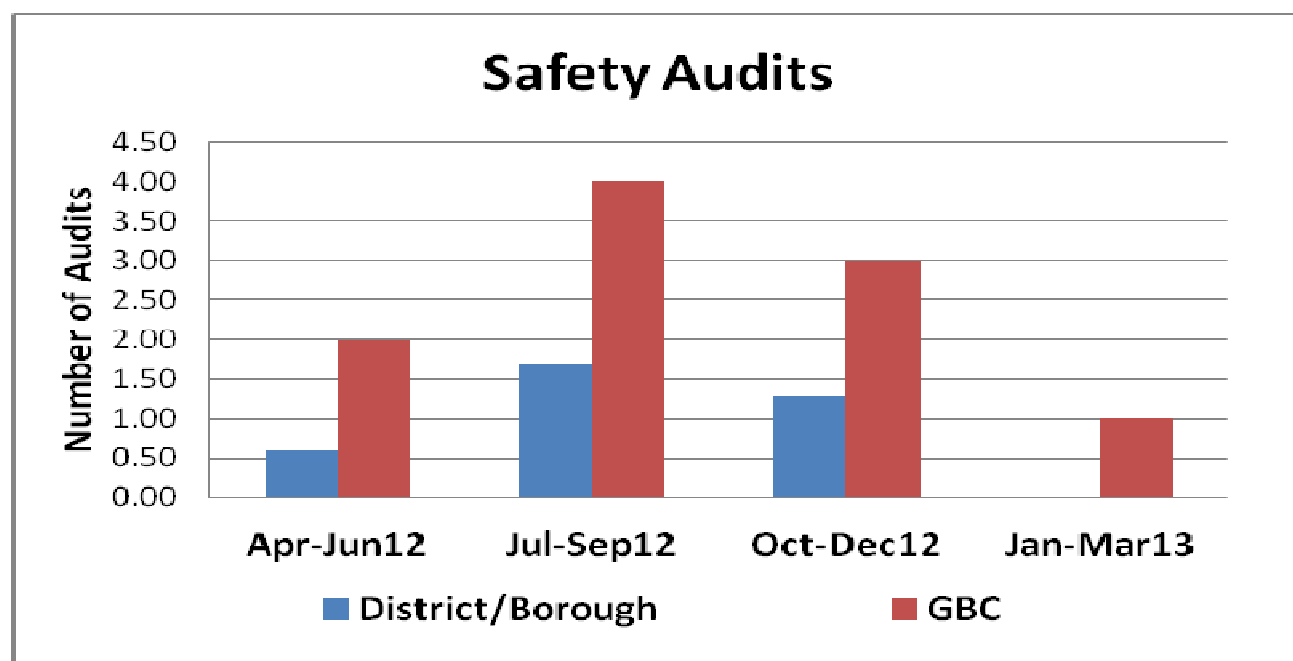
3.15 GBC records the further categories of anti social behaviour (ASB), Criminal damage (CD), Theft (TH) and Vandalism (VA) and the general trend is downward in all categories.



3.16 **Incident Rate by Service Area** – The bar chart below compares the incidence of accidents in the authority with those in the individual directorates. As expected, the highest incidence rate is in the old Direct Service areas, which is invariably double the borough incidence rate. They are followed by the leisure based areas where most of our other manual employees work. After a significantly high accident rate up to 2010, the last three years have been generally consistent at or about 200 per 1000 employees. The smallest directorates and Legal do not have many, if any, significant accidents recorded.



4. SAFETY AUDITS



4.1 Safety audits are carried out to check for compliance with corporate and local safety policies, guidance or procedures. Each leisure centre is now audited annually to ensure they are ready for annual external audit by QUEST as are the various sections in Direct Services with the smaller sections audited at five yearly intervals. The above bar chart compares the number of audits carried out at Gedling with those in the rest of the East Midlands.

4.2 The main observations included the need to complete, update or review risk, COSHH, MH, DSE or Fire assessments and ensure employees attend corporate safety training. Managers had identified the majority of their activities that would cause a significant risk of harm to both staff and their customers but still need to formalise any outstanding, significant risks on the reverse of the risk assessment form. Other major observations include the need to clarify the adopted control measures in order to fully protect the workforce and visitors to the workplace, and identify root causes of accidents. Audit reports have been completed for externally audited sections (Leisure Centres) and action taken to address any non compliance in other areas with the respective section manager. Reports are invariably completed within two days of the audit (with two exceptions), especially those carried out in leisure centres. Observations and recommendation sheets are attached for action with replies expected within a ten day period.

5. SAFETY POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 The Safety Policy was revised and reissued in May 2012 to include major changes to the management structure. The revision also includes changes to legislation updated or introduced at that time.

5.2 Safety guidance drafted and processed this year include:

- ◆ Accident Reporting Forms
- ◆ Fire Risk Assessment Guidance Note
- ◆ Fire Procedures for the Civic Centre
- ◆ Fire procedure for Arnot Hill House
- ◆ Fire and Emergency Guidance Note
- ◆ Alcohol and Drug Guidance Note
- ◆ Display Screen Equipment Guidance Note

5.3 Safety Guidance still under review include:

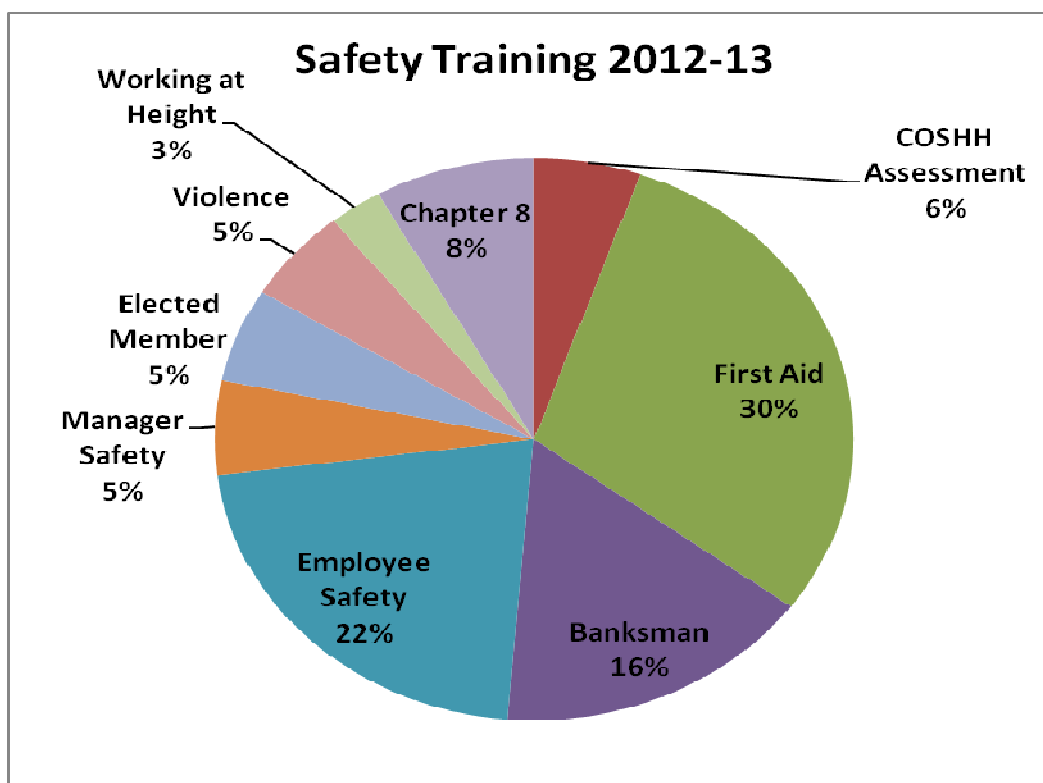
- ◆ Accident Reporting Guidance Note
- ◆ Management of Safety Guidance Note
- ◆ Risk Assessment Guidance Note
- ◆ Noise at Work Guidance Note
- ◆ Vibration at Work Guidance Note

5.4 CHAS members and senior management were kept abreast of the HSE's Strategy document which highlights the criteria required to comply with health and safety legislation and will be used for benchmarking in the future. Further documents explaining sensible risk management have also been circulated.

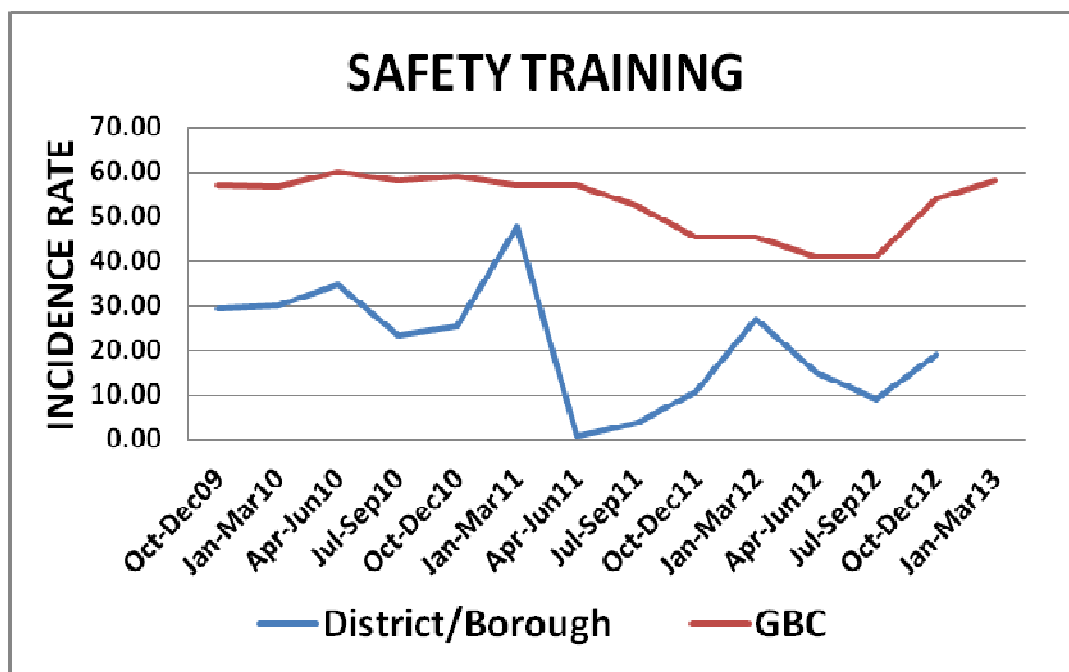
5.5 All documents are placed on the intranet once full consultation has taken place.

6 SAFETY TRAINING

6.1 All employees are given a safety induction by local management when they arrive at the council. Part of the process is to ensure the employee attends a safety awareness course bookable on the events folder of the intranet. This course covers general health and safety issues encountered in the workplace i.e. law, accident reporting, manual handling, hazardous substances, electrical and computer safety, noise and vibration safety, safety signs and fire awareness. Managers are then required to attend a manager's safety awareness course which includes how to complete the various risk assessment forms, accident investigation, law, and safety management. Both courses are one day long and assessed through multi choice test papers. Other section specific training is provided as and when required. The pie chart below represents training carried out this year.



6.2 Staff turnover makes a target greater than 60% difficult to achieve and following the latest employee and manager safety training this figure has yet to be reached. The overall figure for all employees at the end of the last quarter was 58% but safety training planned for the autumn of this year should address any shortfall in the target. The table below compares safety training carried out at GBC with other districts / boroughs in the East Midlands. From the start of this comparison GBC has consistently been at least 20% above other East Midland districts / boroughs.



6.3 A further target of 80% of First Aiders / Appointed Persons trained is used as a target and currently stands at 95% (Cover complies with legislative requirements for employees on our premises). In addition 65% of Appointed Persons (those who support the First Aider) are trained and course planned for the summer should address any shortfall. A new course: Basic First Aid Life Skills, is currently being rolled out to anyone who is not a first aider. It covers CPR, recovery position, heart attack and choking skills. All first aiders are offered defibrillator training to supplement their qualifications. All first aid training is now carried out in house to reduce costs and increase efficiency. An outlay of approximately £750 (for training the two trainers) has reduced the individual cost of £120 to £25 per person.

6.4 **Safety Training Appraisal** – Critiques are issued to delegates attending each training session. They cover two main areas: General learning methods used by the tutor and relevance of the training to the delegate in the job they do. They are collated as a percentage with the aim of reaching 60% in each category. Scrutiny of three types of course, Banksman, EE Safety awareness and Manager Safety Awareness are provided:

Course / Part appraised	General Content 2012	General Content 2013	Relevance to Workplace 2012	Relevance to Workplace 2013
First Aid	91%	n/a	100%	n/a
Banksman	n/a	93%	n/a	77%
Employee Safety Awareness	70%	86%	87%	94%
Manager Safety Awareness	80%	94%	95%	98%

6.5 Written comments included tailoring courses to types of workplaces rather than the generic version; more emphasis on practical work; more discussion required with fewer slides and more time for the test. Other comments included good DVDs and very informative with useful reminders and updates. These and other observations will be adopted in safety training courses this year.

6.6 Safety training courses were again offered to external delegates and Clinical Commissioning Group and Rushcliffe Borough Council took advantage. It is hoped that others courses can be offered on a top up basis in the future.

7. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

7.1 A contractor provides an occupational health service to address work related hazards that have been identified through the risk assessment process. These include: blood borne diseases; hazardous substances related (e.g. asbestos, legionella); noise induced hearing loss; strain and similar injuries to the eyes; Vibration related injuries; and lung damage following exposure to dusts and fibres.

7.2 **Hepatitis A & B** – Hepatitis A & B can be contracted through some of the tasks carried out by employees (e.g. cleaners and first aiders) and can be by either the oral or faecal route (HEP A) or bodily fluids (HEP B). We used to offer prophylaxis for both which was renewed every 5 years (HEP A) or 10 years (HEP B) but a new treatment is now available which gives cover for both A and B and this cover is for life. Over the last year we have been continuing to update employee records to reflect the change.

7.3 **Hearing Tests** – These have been carried out for all employees who have been exposed to noise at or above the first action level to determine if hearing damage has occurred. This is a rolling programme and will continue until the employee either retires or changes employment. The database at Orchard Health is currently being updated following staff changes.

7.4 **Eye tests** – These are carried out for employees who use computers as part of their job to determine if they require glasses for PC work. Once again this is an on going programme of work that will continue until the employee either retires or changes employment.

7.5 **Vibration Damage Monitoring** – The register of vulnerable employees reflects recent changes in the regulations and is used to determine how long an employee can use a particular tool or whether redeployment is necessary. This is also an on going programme of work, which will continue until the employee ceases to use tools and equipment that vibrate at or above the first action level. Once again the database is being updated to include starters and leavers

7.6 With savings in the training budget more time has been spent on Occupational Health this year to cover the retesting of DS employees following their claim that the equipment we provide is exacerbating existing levels of damage.

7.7 Another successful health fair was held in January 2013 with support from UNISON. A report is attached at Annex A. UNISON provided funds to offset the cost of holding this popular event. Employees were able to have their weight, blood pressure and heart rate measured, their blood and urine checked for diabetes, prostate health and cholesterol level and their bone density measured. Leisure staff carried out fitness checks and the Food Team offered samples of healthy eating (exotic fruits). Stalls highlighted sport and healthy lifestyle initiatives and nurses were available for professional advice. Dental Health was added for the first time this year.

8. SAFETY LIAISON

8.1 The CHAS Group continued to meet on a quarterly basis to review health and safety issues and act as a consultation group for health and safety within the council. Sub groups are formed from members of the Group to look at corporate guidance. The Joint Consultative and Safety Committee continues to meet and health and safety is featured on the agenda. Advice and guidance is offered as and when requested.

8.2 External liaison is maintained through various safety groups:

EMRLGA

General local authority safety issues shared with members of the 45 local authorities in the East Midlands. HSE Strategy and benchmarking initiatives are presented by the current Chairman – GBC Safety Officer

Midlands Construction

This Group provides information on highway and construction based matters; although not attended the information provided has been invaluable in developing the fire policy and work on the highways carried out by PASC operatives.

Nottinghamshire Occupational Safety and Health Association

Liaison with local businesses to discuss various health and safety topics including updates from the HSE (Nottingham Office) and law updates (Browne Jacobson Solicitors) (Secretary and treasurer)

Nottinghamshire Safety and Risk Management Group

Nottinghamshire Local Authority Safety Officers share knowledge at a local level to the benefit of all parties, especially sharing guidance notes, training events and costs, seminars on asbestos, contracting, legionellosis as they apply to LAs.

9. UNPLANNED TASKS

9.1 The following unplanned tasks were completed during the year:

- **Contract auditing** – This involves checking contract paperwork for client officers in Leisure Services who employ stone masons and play equipment providers. This year there was also a need to update the Occupational Health contract.
- **Investigating accidents related to Insurance Claims** – following claims this year from both employees and members of public relating to a variety of issues e.g. Noise Related Hearing Loss, Vibration and Manual Handling injuries, and slips, trips and falls.
- **Document Management related** – Checking documents prior to placing them on the IDOX system. With office moves over the last three years a considerable amount of paperwork has accumulated from the time when there were no computers and it is gradually being either stored electronically or shredded.

10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1 An external audit has confirmed that health and safety is managed effectively in the council however another inspection by our insurer considered that more work may be required to reduce the number of claims against the council. Taking into consideration the results of safety audits this year and the standard of accident reporting the following should be considered:

Recommendations	Resource Implications	Priority	Review Date
Complete a thorough safety audit of PASC and Waste Services to identify significant issues	Can be completed within current SO work plan. Some routine tasks will be given a lower priority	High to determine following action	30SEP13
Review Safety Guidance to determine if the above is suitable and sufficient. Develop further guidance as necessary following safety audit	Can be completed within current SO work plan. Some routine tasks will be given a lower priority	Medium to High depending on review and audit	31DEC13
Carry out revised Manager's Safety Awareness training to remaining managers	Can be completed within current SO work plan. Some routine tasks will be given a lower priority. Training venues will need to be allocated.	Medium to High depending on numbers	31MAR13

10.2 The attached Position Statement (**Annex B**) shows that the majority of identified health and safety issues have been addressed and now require a safety audit to determine compliance. Newer legislation has yet to be supplemented with Gedling Borough Council Safety Guidance Notes, but training has been made available to employees that are affected by it.

10.3 If you require any further information relating to this Report, please contact the undersigned

B J Saunders
Safety Officer
Ext 3940

Annexes:

Annex A Health Fair Report dated JAN 2013
Annex B Position Statement dated MAR 2013

Distribution:

Action:

CHAS Officers:

Caroline McKenzie	Directorate D	Jayne Cox	Directorate C
Duncan Adamson	Directorate B	David Archer	Directorate A and Legal

Information:

Chief Executive & Corporate Directors:

John Robinson
Stephen Bray (DIR A) David Wakelin (DIR D) Mark Kimberley (DIR B) Paula Darlington (DIR C)

Vince Rimmington Audit & Risk Management