

WAID 2023 Summary for England

This report details the 2023 release of water-related fatality data.

Overall water-related fatalities

In 2023, there were 490 water-related fatalities in England. This is an increase when compared with previous years (see figure 1).

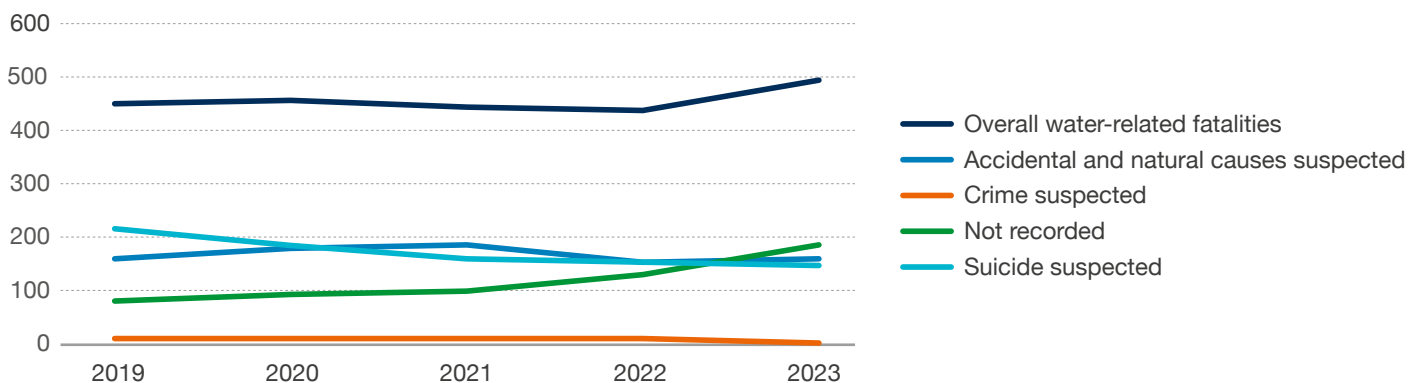


Figure 1: Overall water-related fatalities by year, 2019-2023

Using a three-year average (years 2013 – 2015), prior to the implementation of the **UK Drowning Prevention Strategy**, there were 476 water-related fatalities each year in England. **The 2023 figures show that overall water-related fatalities are above the baseline level (see Figure 2).**

Year	Overall water-related fatalities
Three-year average (2013-2015)	476
2019	450
2020	456
2021	442
2022	436
2023	490

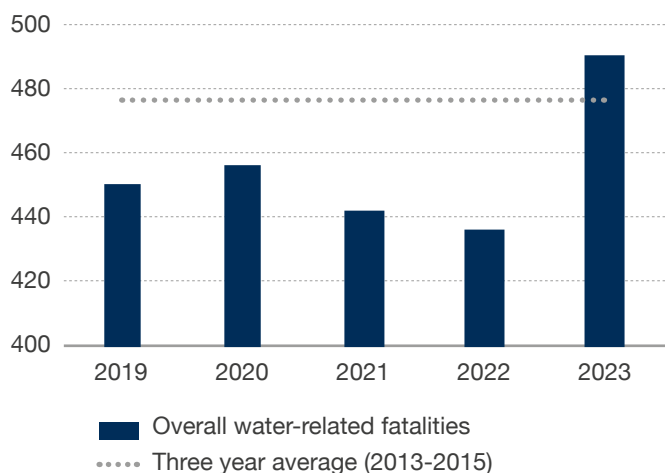


Figure 2: Overall water-related fatalities by year 2019-2023 vs Three-year average baseline, England

Accidental fatalities

In 2023, there were 157 accidental fatalities¹ in England. **This is a decrease when compared to the baseline.**

Year	Accidental fatalities
Three-year average (2013 – 2015)	246
2019	156
2020	176
2021	182
2022	151
2023	157

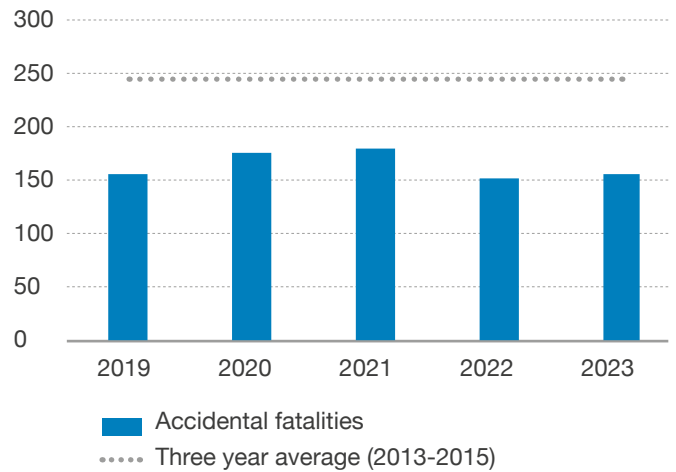


Figure 3: Accidental fatalities by year 2019-2023 vs Three-year average baseline, England

¹ Accidental fatality refers to accidental and natural causes suspected.

Key points

In 2023:

- There were 157 accidental fatalities
- 83% of accidental fatalities were male
- Males 60-69 were the highest group for accidental fatalities (see Figure 4)
- 64% of accidental fatalities happened at **inland waters** (see Figure 5)
- Recreational activities accounted for 49% of accidental fatalities (see Figure 6)
- 27 accidental fatality reports noted the presence of alcohol
- The rate of accidental water-related fatalities is going down (0.27 per 100,000 in 2023) compared to 0.45 in baseline (see Figure 7)

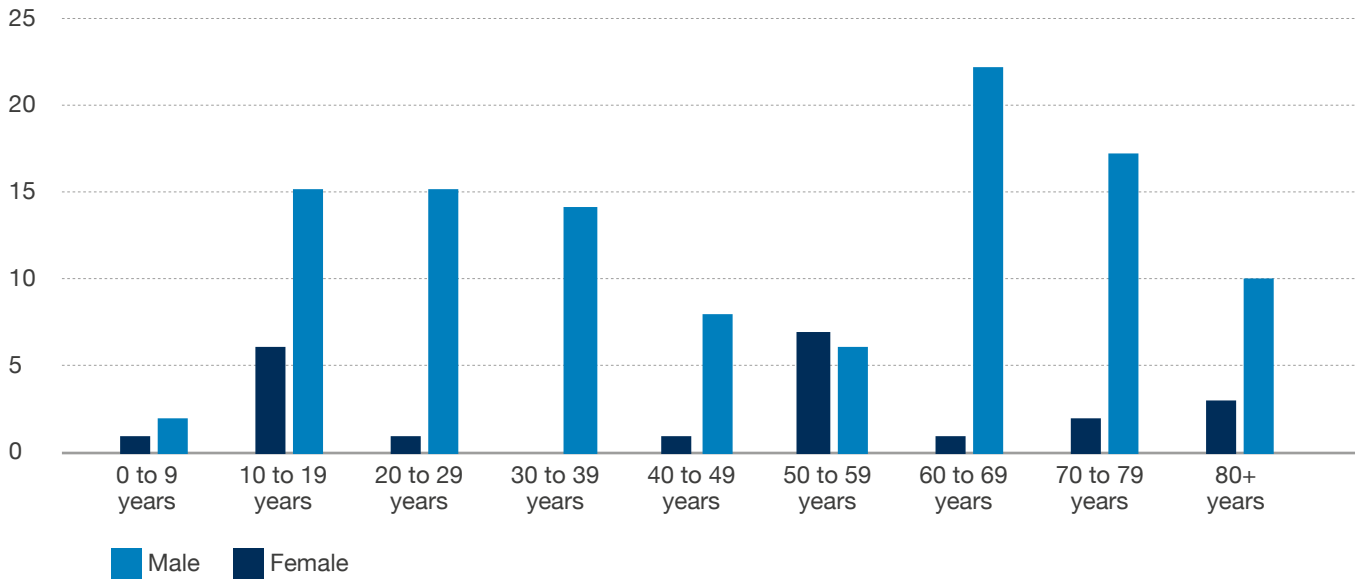


Figure 4: Accidental fatalities by age, N=131, 26 not recorded

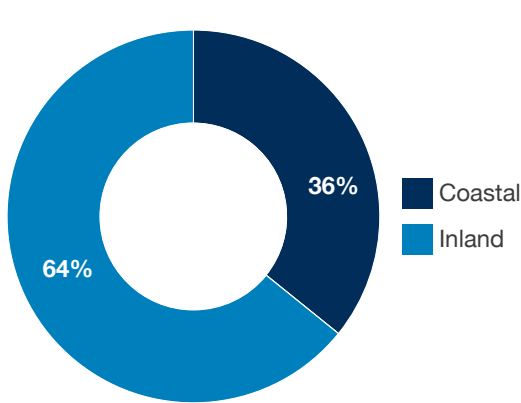


Figure 5: Accidental fatalities by location. N=148, 9 excluded

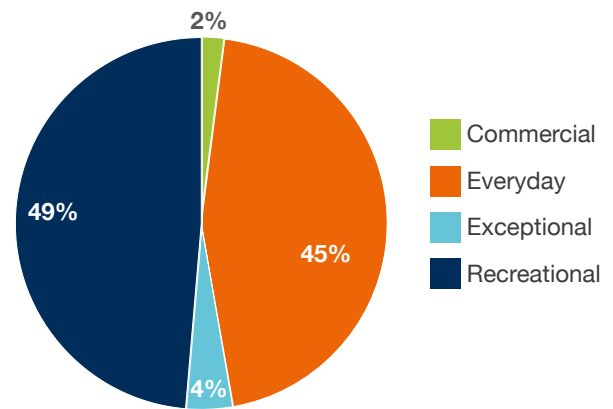


Figure 6: Accidental fatalities by activity. N=148, 9 excluded

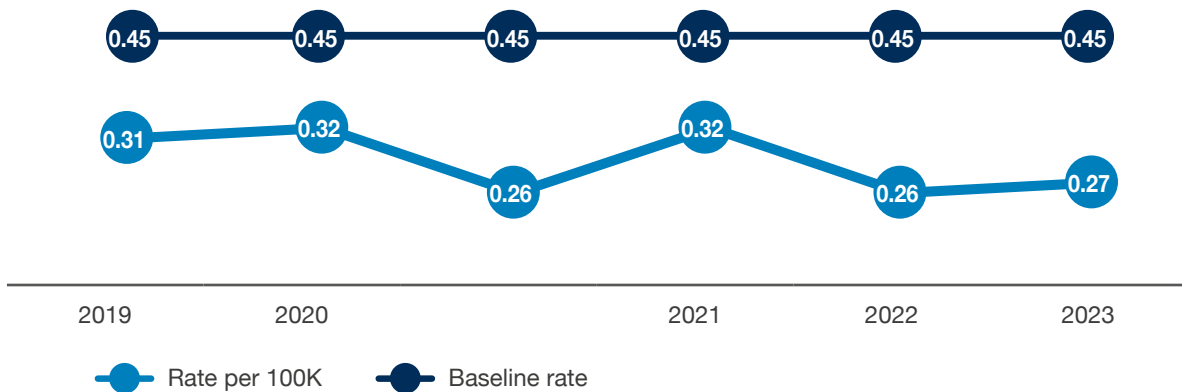


Figure 7: Accidental fatalities by year and rate 2019-2023 and Three year average baseline, England per 100,000 (Population Source: ONS)

Suicide suspected fatalities

In 2023, there were 146 suicide suspected fatalities at or near water in England. This is a decrease from the average baseline.

Year	Suicide suspected fatalities
Three-year average (2013-2015)	163
2019	209
2020	181
2021	155
2022	154
2023	146

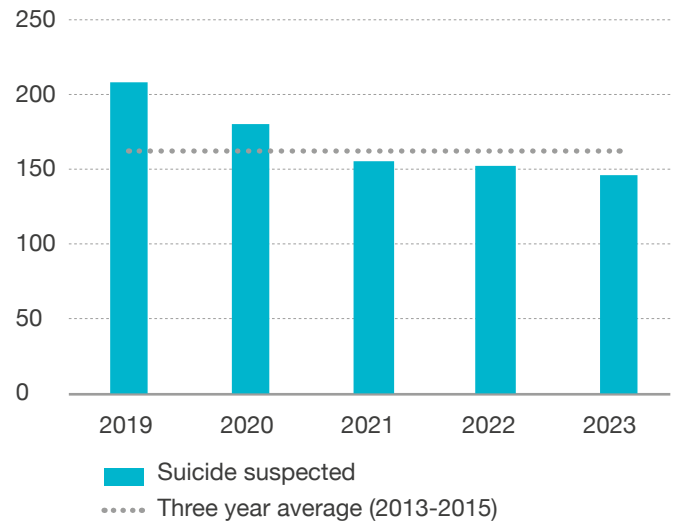


Figure 8: Suicide suspected fatalities by year 2019-2023 vs Three-year average baseline, England

Notes

“Accidental fatalities” refers to accidental causes and natural water related causes.

This data analysis is based on the official releases of WAID data as found online nationalwatersafety.org.uk/waid/annual-reports-and-data. It should be noted that the core data providers continue to improve verification and completeness of records starting in 2012 which results in an improved record set.

All rates for population figures are based on ONS figures for the previous mid-year, published online: ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland. Baseline rates are based on mid-year 2015 data.

Figures 5 and 6 exclude domestic fatalities.