

WAID 2023 Summary for Water Safety Wales

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

Overall water-related fatalities

In 2023, there were 55 water-related fatalities in Wales. This is slightly higher when compared with previous years (see figure 1).

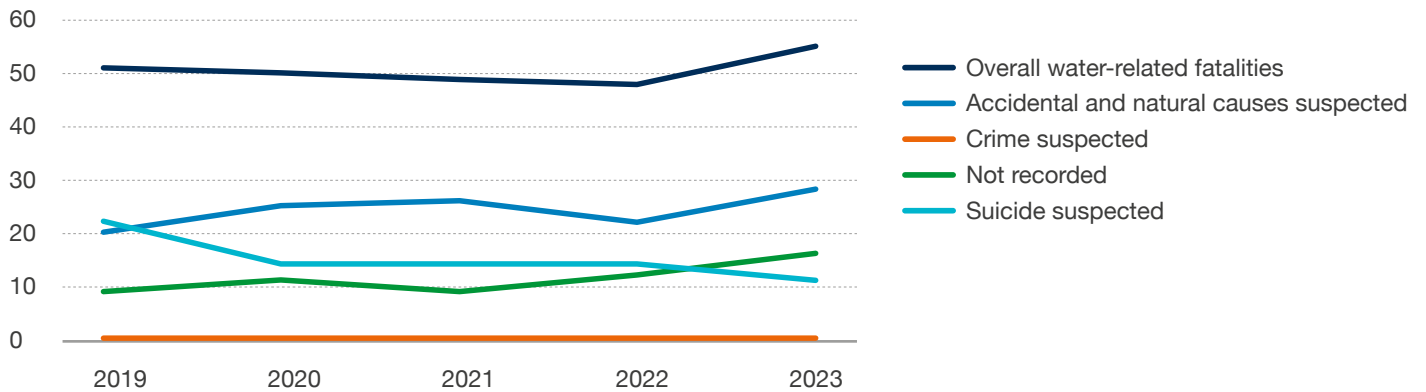


Figure 1: Overall water-related fatalities by year, 2019-2023

Wales' Drowning Prevention Strategy (WDPS) uses a three-year average (years 2016 – 2018) establishing that there are 45 water-related fatalities each year in Wales. **The 2023 figures show that overall water-related fatalities are above baseline level (see Figure 2).**

Year	Overall water-related fatalities
WDPS Baseline (2016-2018 average)	45
2019	51
2020	50
2021	49
2022	48
2023	55

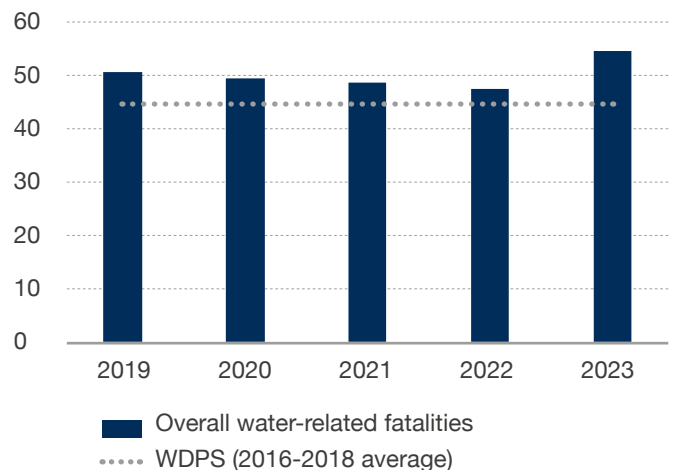


Figure 2: Overall water-related fatalities by year 2019-2023 vs WDPS baseline, Wales

Accidental fatalities

In 2023, there were 28 accidental fatalities¹ in Wales. **This is a 17 per cent increase when compared to the WDPS baseline.**

Year	Accidental fatalities
WDPS Baseline (2016-2018 average)	24
2019	20
2020	25
2021	26
2022	22
2023	28



Figure 3: Accidental fatalities by year 2019-2023 vs WDPS baseline, Wales

¹ Accidental fatality refers to accidental and natural causes suspected.

Key points

In 2023:

- There were 28 accidental fatalities
- 76% of accidental fatalities were male
- Males 10-19 were the highest group for accidental fatalities (see Figure 4)
- 59% of accidental fatalities happened inland (see Figure 5)
- Everyday activities accounted for 52% of accidental fatalities (see Figure 6)
- 2 accidental fatality reports noted the presence of alcohol
- The rate of accidental water-related fatalities was 0.89, an increase from the WDPS (0.76) (see Figure 7)

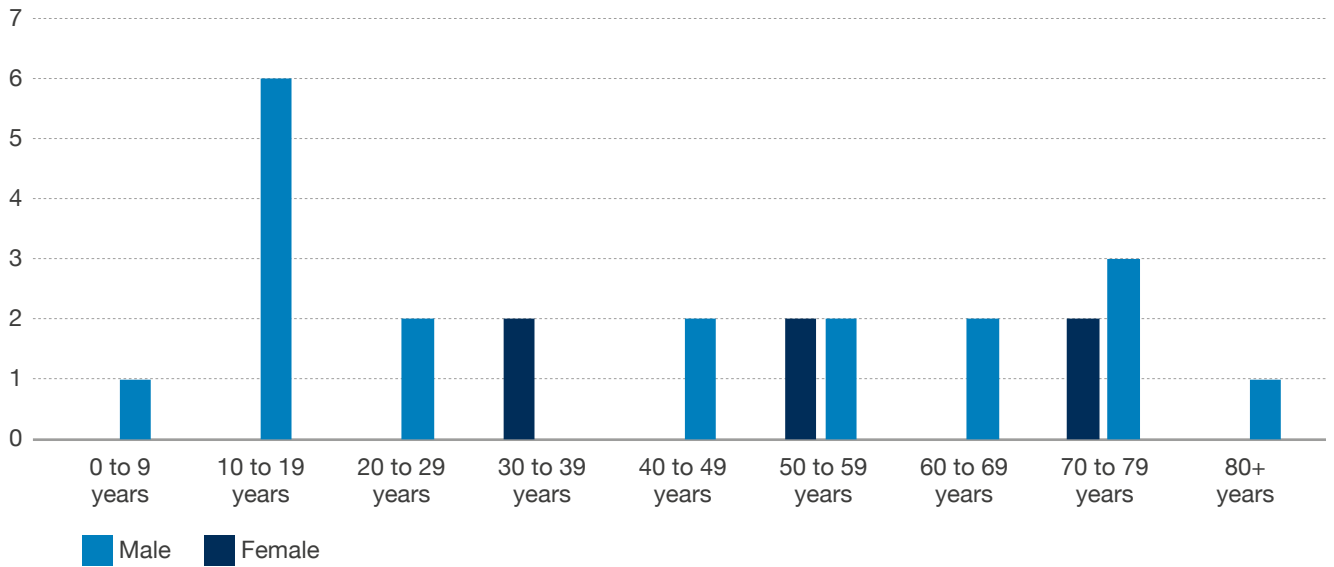


Figure 4: Accidental fatalities by age, N=25, 3 not recorded

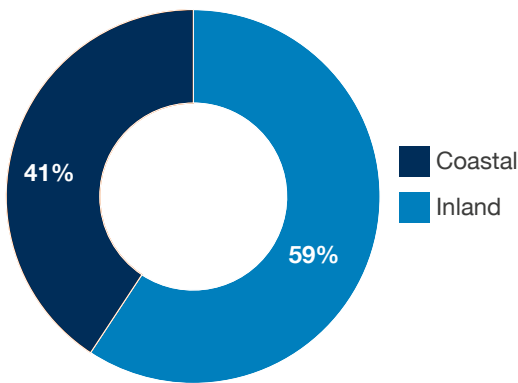


Figure 5: Accidental fatalities by location. N=27, 1 excluded

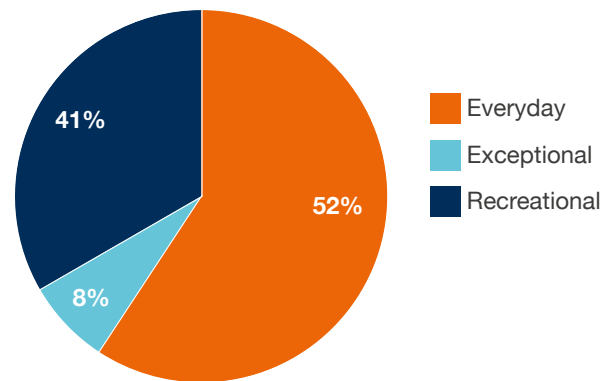


Figure 6: Accidental fatalities by activity. N=27, 1 excluded

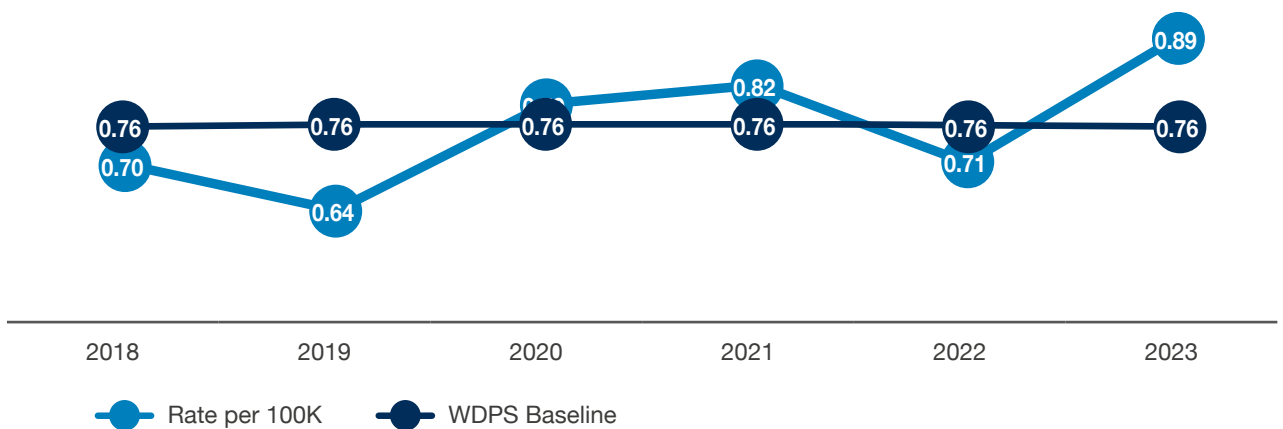


Figure 7: Accidental fatalities by year and rate 2019-2023 and WDPs baseline per 100,000 (Population Source: ONS)

Suicide suspected fatalities

In 2023, there were 11 suicide suspected fatalities at or near water in Wales. This is consistent with previous years but below the average of the WDPS three-year baseline.

Year	Suicide suspected fatalities
WDPS Baseline (2016-2018 average)	13
2019	22
2020	14
2021	14
2022	14
2023	11

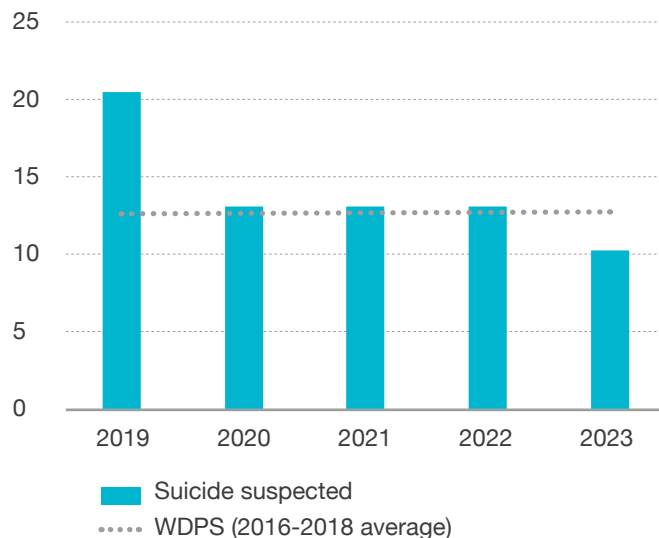


Figure 8: Suicide suspected fatalities by year 2019-2023 vs WDPS baseline, Wales

Notes

“Accidental fatalities” refers to accidental cause 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.