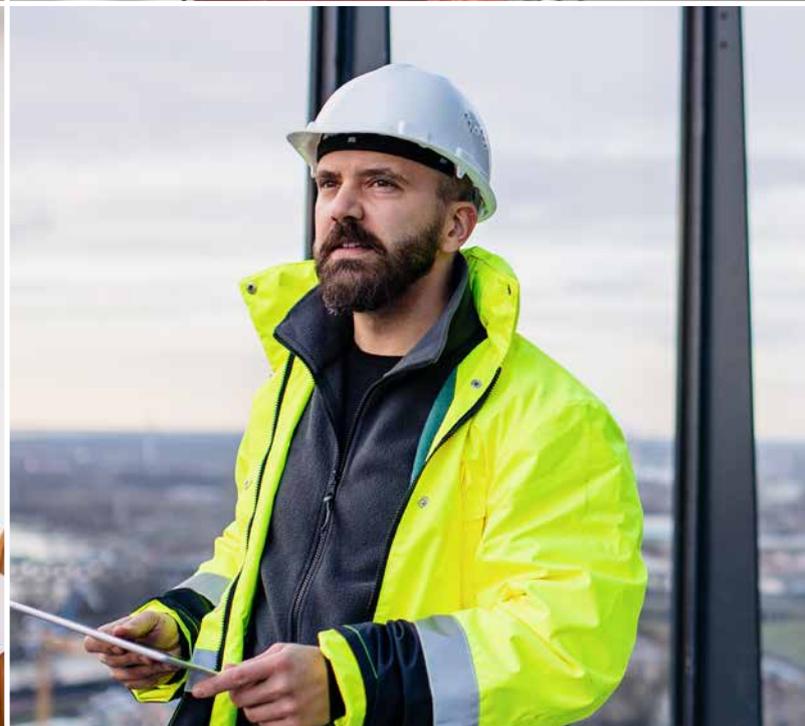




BRITISH  
SAFETY  
COUNCIL

Because  
Experience  
Counts



# Impact Report

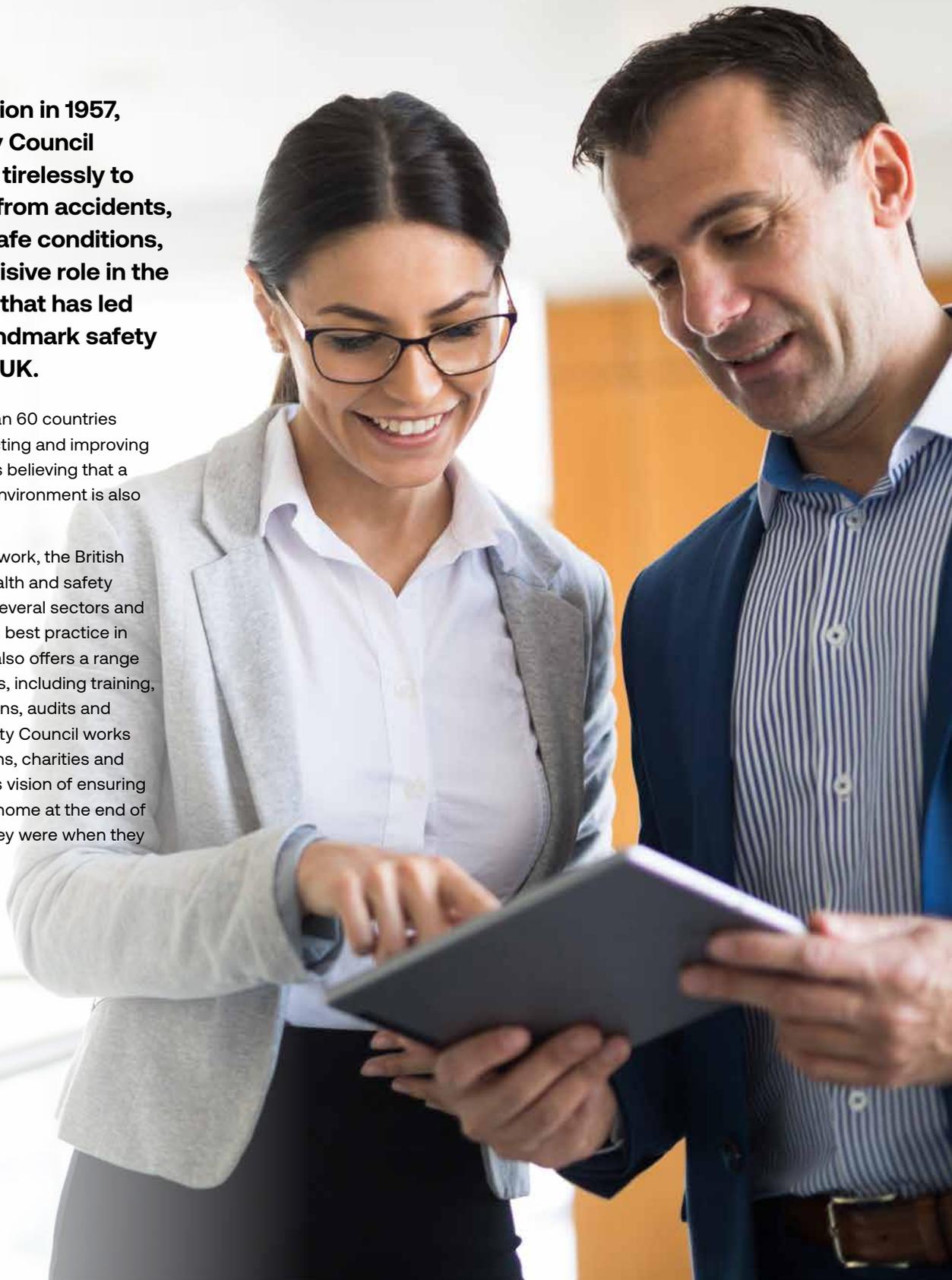
2021

# The British Safety Council believes that no one should be injured or made ill through their work.

**Since its foundation in 1957, the British Safety Council has campaigned tirelessly to protect workers from accidents, hazards and unsafe conditions, and played a decisive role in the political process that has led to adoption of landmark safety legislation in the UK.**

Its members in more than 60 countries are committed to protecting and improving the wellbeing of workers believing that a healthy and safe work environment is also good for business.

As part of its charitable work, the British Safety Council leads health and safety networking forums for several sectors and facilitates and promotes best practice in Britain and overseas. It also offers a range of services and products, including training, qualifications, publications, audits and awards. The British Safety Council works closely with organisations, charities and individuals who share its vision of ensuring that every worker goes home at the end of the day as healthy as they were when they went to work.



# Contents

---

Foreword by Mike Robinson	2
<hr/>	
<b>Our Campaigns</b>	
COVID-19	4
Time to Breathe	6
Wellbeing	8
Other Tactical Work	9
<hr/>	
News and Media	10
<hr/>	
Advocacy	11
<hr/>	
Our Events	12
<hr/>	
Mates in Mind	13
<hr/>	

# Foreword by Mike Robinson



We started the 2019 Impact Report stating that ‘engagement with impact is at the heart of the work of the British Safety Council’. Little did we know how important this philosophy would be in 2020. As we write this report at the beginning of 2021, we acknowledge the unprecedented impact that COVID-19 has had on our activities and those of our customers and members.

The word ‘unprecedented’ has had a good outing in 2020, but I think we do need to acknowledge that 2020 was different and in fact ‘unprecedented’ due to COVID-19. Not only has COVID-19 had an immense impact on British Safety Council, but I know from talking to many members and customers during the year, that thousands either personally or from an organisational perspective had first-hand experience of the negative impacts too.

I can’t say that I am going to look back at 2020 with any great relish, but I can take some positives from this extraordinary time, particularly when it comes to our impact.

We have invested significantly in our digital learning capabilities over the last few years and many organisations have been able to benefit from this. During 2020, we were one of the first health and safety organisations to launch Live Online training. This proved to be popular with many organisations and enabled aspiring health and safety professionals to continue their education.

Although many members and customers were initially forced to pull back on audit and consultancy work, through our development of remote services, we ended the year with significant numbers embracing this new approach to health, safety and wellbeing.

As organisations started considering going back to work, we launched our unique COVID Assurance Assessment Service. Again, this was a huge success around the world, as many organisations looked to benefit from our expertise. There is no doubt in my mind that many thousands of workers will have gone home safe as a result of this work.

I wrote in the December/January 2020 edition of Safety Management Magazine about the shift in 2020 to a greater consensus on the value of health and safety including wellbeing and mental health. This latter aspect was a key focus for us in 2020, as we developed our new Being Well Together service. Being Well Together is one of the biggest and most important developments we have focused on in recent years. This new holistic, integrated, health, safety and wellbeing service had a soft launch in 2020 but is now available to all members and customers.

More flexible working was something we had planned to explore further in 2020. With lockdowns in place, this initial vision became a reality much quicker than we could have imagined. Although presenting its own challenges, this has now become a new-normal for the organisation. Although we have some way to go to be as flexible as we wish,

much progress was made in 2020 and our staff have broadly embraced this new way of working admirably.

I also just want to briefly touch on the charitable work we carried out in 2020. Although we didn’t manage to spend much time on our core planned campaigns like the impact of air pollution on outdoor workers, we saw an immensely positive impact from our charitable work. Over 10,000 people, for example, took advantage of the free mental health training we offered. We also achieved record levels of press coverage and impact around the world on areas like the (subsequently postponed) Olympics, returning to work and schools opening.

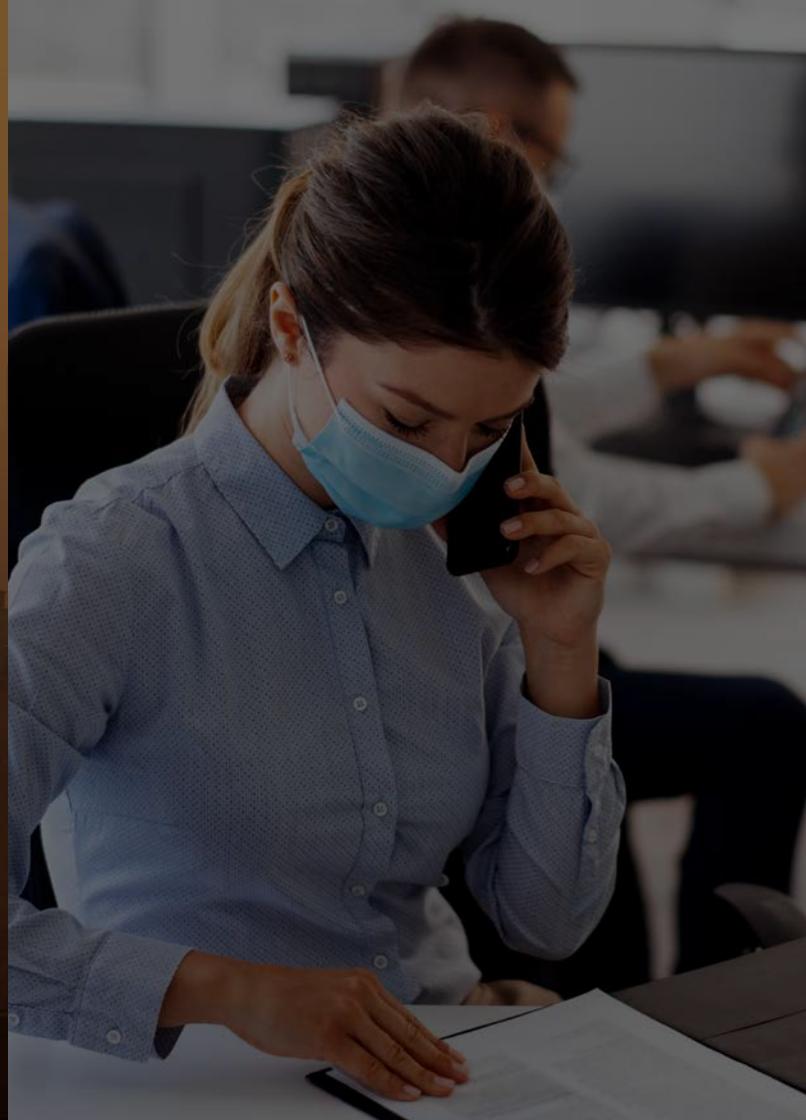
Alongside these many positives, were also some real challenges too, particularly as we ‘right-sized’ the organisation to cope with the pandemic. However, I am immensely proud of the dedication and work ethic of all British Safety Council staff before, during and after this. We are ultimately a people business and we can only deliver the service that we do through the commitment of our people.

Clearly, we are not out of the woods yet on COVID, however, we are entering 2021 with some confidence. Since the COVID pandemic struck many people have died or been seriously damaged by the virus. But the global numbers remain smaller than the toll of workers killed, injured or made ill through their work – so our mission to make workplaces safer and healthier remains vital and must continue.

**Mike Robinson**  
Chief Executive  
British Safety Council

# Our Campaigns

Like so many other things, COVID-19 had a big impact on our campaigning activities in 2020. Areas we thought we would be focusing on like the Time to Breathe Campaign and Presenteeism broadly remained on hold. However, we had some great successes with our focus on COVID-19 and lobbying around the same.



# COVID-19

**As already mentioned, much of our policy and campaigning activity during 2020 focused on the COVID-19 situation. The pace of developments in this unprecedented area meant keeping ahead was difficult.**

However, we quickly clarified positionings, which then fed into our communications e.g. Olympics, 2 metre rule, face coverings, school & university safety and return to work. This was in no small part down to the tremendous work of the Policy & Influencing team, who spent significant time listening to Westminster discussions and announcements, as well as liaising with our Sector Interest Group members and taking advice from external advisers.

From a standing start our COVID-19 activities quickly developed into a fully formed tactical campaign.

Free mental health digital learning courses were one of the major successes of our campaign and aligned with our charitable purpose. We identified early on, the effect that COVID-19 and lockdowns were having on peoples' mental health. We then released five free mental health digital learning courses during the first lockdown and over 10,000 people took advantage of this. The previously paid for courses were:

- Remote working
- Managing stress in teams
- Start the conversation
- Manage the conversation
- Stress awareness.



## “82% of members in our annual brand tracking survey were aware of our COVID-19 campaigning activity.”

Webinars formed a key part of our COVID-19 activities, as we attempted as quickly as possible to help, advise and assist members and customers with their many questions and concerns. The following webinars took place across the UK and internationally during 2020:

- Managing and supporting people working from home
- Building safety during the lockdown
- Planning the return to work safely
- Covid-19: the long-term implications for health and safety
- Live Online training x2
- British Safety Council Return to Work Guidelines
- COVID Assurance Assessment service x2.

The COVID-19 Return to Work Guidelines webinars and COVID-19 Assurance Assessment Service webinars achieved record registration numbers of over 700 people. It was also pleasing that with such reduced head count within the British Safety Council team, that some more junior team members stepped up and chaired the webinars themselves, which took great courage.

Sector Interest Group (SIG) meetings have always been an important source of networking and information sharing for members, but none more so than during 2020. Traditionally SIG meetings happen 2-4 times a year depending on the sector. During 2020, some groups like the Retail SIG met for a number of months on a weekly and then bi-weekly basis, to share knowledge and experiences. This ultimately, helped to shape a lot of what consumers then saw in terms of prevention and controls.

Aligning with the UK government COVID Secure guidance, British Safety Council developed a detailed general Return to Work Guide and linked Assurance Assessment Service. Combined, these services provided employers with the much-needed comfort, that they were following best practice guidelines. These services were promoted extensively and internationally in marketing and PR activities during 2020 and this has carried over into 2021. As part of our public affairs work, we additionally developed a cut down promotional leaflet to support these services and promoted it to all UK MPs.

Other activities provided by British Safety Council included:

- Free access to Croner-i HR module – over 1,300 people took advantage
- Web information tool – we set up a specific coronavirus section within our website with useful international COVID-19 information sources
- New products and services – we launched and promoted new Live Online training and Remote Auditing services, with many organisations switching from face to face. Such has been the success, that these services have now become a staple area of focus for us
- Free Mates in Mind resource – we partnered with our sister charity Mates in Mind to jointly promote to British Safety Council members and customers, their free mental health resources which included:
  - Homeworking mental health tips
  - Supporting remote workers checklist.

See also Advocacy section on page 11.

# Time to Breathe

**Due to COVID-19, during 2020 large parts of our activity on the Time to Breathe campaign were postponed. The major disruptive stunt we had planned for October in Manchester aimed at driving investment in the air pollution monitoring infrastructure was put on hold until 2021.**

Despite the lack of stunt, campaign momentum built up during 2019 continued into 2020. We still received many requests from workers asking for access to our unique Canary air pollution monitoring app. Canary usage data also continued to build and will provide a valuable source of information as we relaunch activities in 2021. In total, we now have over 500 supporter organisations and 1,800 registered Canary users.

We also saw some positive movements from the UK Government around alignment with World Health Organisation's (WHO) targets. In December, we welcomed an announcement by the Prime Minister that the UK will aim to cut its carbon emissions by at least 68% of what they were in 1990, by the end of 2030. However, we also highlighted in the press that the Government's target will only be met if it is underpinned by tangible actions to deliver its ambition. Such actions include the Government adopting the WHO air pollution targets, allowing electric only cars in cities from 2030 and improving air quality measurement across the UK. We also pointed out that there is an early opportunity for the Government to put its words into action by adopting the WHO air pollution targets as part of the Environment Bill currently progressing through Parliament.

Time to Breathe takes to the streets to call for outdoor workers' rights to clean air.



The Heathrow third runway was a key air pollution topic during 2020. The Supreme Court reversed a decision to block plans for a third runway at the airport, which meant that developers could then seek planning permission for the project. The British Safety Council called on Heathrow Airport to provide concrete assurances that the expansion would not breach acceptable levels of noise and air pollution, and that it is compatible with the UK's climate policy. This meant the addition of a new runway would not contravene the Government's ambition to cut its carbon emissions by at least 68% of what they were in 1990 by the end of 2030, as well as deliver the Government's Net Zero target by 2050.

The other major development aligned with our campaign related to the heart-breaking case involving the inquest of Ella Kissi-Debrah. In a ground-breaking ruling, the coroner found that Ella Kissi-Debrah's death in February 2013 was caused by acute respiratory failure, severe asthma and air pollution exposure. Southwark Coroner's Court found that air pollution made a material contribution to Ella's death and ruled in favour of her family. This was a legal first. The ruling highlighted the dangers of everyday exposure to unhealthy levels of pollution in towns and cities across the UK, particularly for outdoor workers and children. Following the announcement and continuing our support for Kissi's mother, British Safety Council called on the UK government once more to enshrine in UK law the WHO air pollution limits.

Even though we were limited in how much activity we could physically put in place during the year, we took the time to start thinking more about our campaign roadmap and ultimate goals for Time to Breathe. Mirroring activities across our other major campaign work, we started to embed Theory of Change modelling into our thinking. This will prove valuable in future when planning activities and reporting our progress against target outcomes.

Time to Breathe takes to the streets to call for outdoor workers' rights to clean air.



# Wellbeing

## Our founder James Tye was truly ahead of his time when it comes to the importance of workplace wellbeing.

Back in the 1980s he recognised that workplace stress was increasingly damaging peoples' health and wellbeing and he founded the British Wellness Council to produce messages on how to stay physically and mentally healthy.

Wellbeing was always going to be part of our 2020 campaign plans, albeit things took a slightly different path due to COVID-19. Prior to 2020, British Safety Council had produced various papers, videos and positionings around wellbeing. We had spent 2019 planning for a campaign around presenteeism in 2020. In fact, we partnered with Vitality

Health/Rand Europe on a presenteeism research project aligned with the Britain's Healthiest Workplace initiative.

However, as COVID-19 took hold, it became clear that a broader campaign was needed around wellbeing, of which presenteeism would form part. We also needed to align our commercial services and campaigning activities on the subject, the result was Being Well Together (BWT).

BWT, was launched in late 2020, in the best traditions of the British Safety Council. It brings together the latest thinking from experts and draws on the experience of: ourselves, Mates in Mind, Mercer Marsh Benefits, Croner-i, Sussex Mindfulness Centre and the National Counselling Society.

BWT is the result of significant research carried out during 2020 with members on both a quantitative and qualitative basis. Samples covered organisations at different stages of wellbeing strategy development i.e. starting out, developing, leading.

What key aspect the researched showed was that wellbeing isn't that important to people currently, but is expected to grow significantly moving forward.

Similar to Time to Breathe, Theory of Change modelling was used as the basis for our wellbeing campaign planning, with a roadmap and measurable outcomes core outputs. First steps have already been taken on this roadmap, with British Safety Council itself becoming a BWT supporter, appointing a wellbeing Executive lead and starting to fully embrace the principles.

Examples of Being Well Together material.



# Other Tactical Work

**Alongside our main campaign work, there were a number of developments in Westminster where we took the opportunity to promote British Safety Council, it's members and our charitable objectives, which included sending all the new shadow ministers a letter from our Chief Executive.**

We also wrote to every MP in Westminster, following their election, to introduce them to British Safety Council but also more importantly introduce our COVID Assurance Assessment Service and guidelines. Two special flyers were produced for this specific purpose.

During the year, the UK Government launched a Fire Safety Consultation. The fire safety consultation, published alongside the draft Building Safety Bill, is a key part of the Government's package of reform to improve building and fire safety in all regulated premises where people live, stay or work and to deliver key Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations. We engaged with members to obtain their feedback before we produced a final response in October on their behalf.

British Safety Council also called on the Government to provide adequate funds for the new building safety regulator as the draft Bill was finally published. The Bill formally creates a new national regulator for the safety of buildings, working with local authorities and environmental health departments. The Government asked HSE to establish the new building safety regulator to oversee the safe design, construction and occupation of high-risk buildings, so that residents are safe and feel safe.

British Safety Council wrote on behalf of members to the Housing Minister Chris Pincher MP, asking for an urgent update on the Building Safety Bill. We expressed concern at the slow progress in removing dangerous ACM cladding from high-rise residential buildings, but welcomed the Bill being published. We felt that the measures set out by the Government in the Building Safety Bill should mean that building owners have nowhere to hide if they break the rules. However, if that is to mean anything for residents and workers in potentially unsafe buildings then the Government has got to stump up for it. The HSE has a great track record, but if they are to live up to the expectations of the Bill, then they must be properly resourced. The reality is that over the last decade funding has halved, and staff numbers cut by a third.

Brexit also remained on our radar, particularly as a no-deal situation was looking highly likely for much of 2020. We started to reconnect with other health, safety and environmental trade associations around a joined-up approach to lobbying and the protection of worker rights. This work is continuing in 2021 as the UK government has been vocal in their desire to adjust regulations around worker rights despite a deal having been agreed with the EU.

# News and Media

“251% uplift in PR reach and 221% uplift in PR coverage year on year.”

**Despite reduced team resource, the quantity and quality of our PR activities remained extremely high in 2020. In fact, due to our activities around COVID-19, we had our third successive record year of coverage, more than doubling coverage compared to 2019.**

Key highlights:

- We issued 33 press releases in 2020
- Impressive improvement in reach, 251% up on 2019 and coverage up 221% on 2019
- COVID-19 attracted the most coverage: postponement of the Olympic Games (March), COVID Assurance Assessment (August) and returning to the office (August)
- Awards also received good coverage (August)
- The COVID Assurance Assessment Service achieved the most reach
- Top channels for coverage were World news, UK news and UK trade/ India news
- In terms of topics covered by releases in 2020, most were COVID-related (60%) followed by building/ fire safety and air quality (Time to Breathe)

- British Safety Council functions that achieved the most coverage were audit & consultancy, awards and policy & campaigns.

The majority of our communications activity focused on coronavirus related subjects. However, we also responded to the global outrage at the death of George Floyd and the worldwide protests led by #blacklivesmatter. We called on everyone to have the right to live with dignity and free from fear, whoever they are or wherever they live.

**To find out more about our news and publications please contact Damian Testa:**  
damian.testa@britsafe.org

Safety Management magazine



Safety Management poster



# Advocacy

**“British Safety Council achieved a Net Promoter Score of 37 in 2020.”**

**British Safety Council regularly carries out brand tracking. This is done to ascertain the health of its brand, obtain comparisons with competitor organisations, gauge interest and happiness with its products and services, as well as understand awareness and cut through of marketing and campaigning activities.**

The latest research carried out at the end of 2020, with both members and customers, showed some positive year on year movements, with over 1,000 respondents.

Overall, people were more aware of our marketing in 2020, which is positive and we believe down to our COVID-19 campaign work. The statistics also point towards our engagement having greater cut through than the previous year.

There was a definite feeling of increased attractiveness of trade body membership in 2020. It came through in several questions, which is again likely driven by COVID-19 and health & safety professionals seeing the real benefit.

The 2020 results show a general improvement in preference levels across both members and customers, again likely driven by the COVID-19 work we carried out. Members, in particular, showed a large increase in Net Promoter Score and the best in recent history.

We also carried out research around our values. What came out more strongly than anything else was that members and customers see British Safety Council as the knowledgeable expert. Pleasingly, we are also seen as a leading figure in the health and safety industry.

The results show that the communications and campaign work we carried out around COVID-19, had a huge impact and people really took notice. Wellbeing awareness also remained high, likely driven by Mates in Mind and the promotional work we did around the launch of our Being Well Together service.



# Our Events

**Much of the planned event activity was obviously postponed or cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020. This included events such as the Health & Safety Event – ExCel and Health & Safety Expo – NEC, as well as our planned support for the Air Quality Conference North (linked with the next stage of Time to Breathe).**

During the year, we kept up dialogue with the various event organisers who carried out activities to keep engagement going with their target audience. From our perspective, this included our Chairman, Lawrence Waterman OBE, representing British Safety Council at the Safety & Health Expo Digital Week, which consisted of a week of webinars on various topics. The organisers of the NEC event have produced a regular newsletter and helped us promote our free and paid for COVID-19 services.

Unfortunately, we also had to cancel our face to face events such as the Sword and Globe of Honour Awards, International Safety Awards and Annual Conference. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, we did carry out significant other virtual events such as the COVID-19 related webinars and Sector Interest Group meetings, which were warmly welcomed by members.





## **Mates in Mind addresses the pressing challenge of mental ill-health within the construction sector and beyond.**

Although mental ill-health is a pervasive challenge across all UK workplaces, its negative impact within the construction industry is undeniable. During 2020 the global pandemic added to the existing mental health challenges faced by those who remained at work, were working remotely, furloughed and those without work. A 2020 survey from the Chartered Institute of Building found that over the past year 87% of construction workers experienced anxiety and 26% had suicidal thoughts. 71% responded they had no formal training over the past three years for mental health.

The need for Mates in Mind support has never been so clear. Supported by the volume of inbound contact for advice, guidance and assistance that doubled across the year. However, we also saw a steep decline in donations as organisations focused on dealing with the COVID-19 outbreak.

However, it became clear for many organisations that providing mental health support to their workforce, who were having to deal with new mental health challenges, was now a critical part of providing a healthy and safe work environment.

Through 2020 we have empowered 135 new Supporters in tackling the issue and embedded positive steps towards creating mentally healthy workplaces and reached more than 92,000 new workers with advice, training and support – bringing our total number of Supporter organisations to 460, reaching more than 350,000 workers.

Our Supporters were highly engaged in addressing the stigma of mental health through this unprecedented year. During the pandemic we provided a series of free mental health webinars, developed a COVID-19 resource hub, created a new model of live-online training and delivered 177 courses and provided 84 days of tailored programme support to specific organisations. We also reached out to non-Supporters with free training which saw over 10,000 downloads of e-learning mental health courses.

Our reach and engagement via our social media channels saw a 47.4% increase compared to last year. Across our social media channels, we reached over 1,175,692 people with our messaging and saw our audience numbers grow by over 37%.

There was also a significant focus on reaching out to vulnerable groups, such as sole traders and the self-employed. These individuals do not have access to in-company support and were heavily impacted by the pandemic.

This result could only have been achieved through the development of meaningful partnerships with our Supporters and Business Champions. The fact that 83% of our Supporters are small to medium sized businesses means that the Mates in Mind impact is reaching beyond the large corporates, into their supply chains, and also resonating with micro businesses and those that don't have wider internal support structures.



Because  
Experience  
Counts

## **No-one should be injured or made ill through their work.**

Our mission is to keep people as safe and healthy as possible in their work through education and practical guidance. We look forward to working with you to achieve this goal.

If you have any enquiries or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **British Safety Council**

70 Chancellors Road  
London W6 9RS  
United Kingdom

**T** +44 (0)20 8741 1231

**E** [ask@britsafe.org](mailto:ask@britsafe.org)

**🌐** [britsafe.org](http://britsafe.org)

**f** [/britishsafetycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/britishsafetycouncil)

**📧** [@britsafe](https://www.instagram.com/britsafe)

**in** [/company/british-safety-council](https://www.linkedin.com/company/british-safety-council)

**📺** [youtube.com/britishsafetycouncil](https://www.youtube.com/britishsafetycouncil)