

HSE Chair – We need to continue to build on our strong expertise and experience to address future challenges



A blog by Sarah Newton, HSE Board Chair

Alongside the Queen's Platinum Jubilee next week, there is another anniversary that's close to all of us at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This year also marks 50 years since the publication of the Robens Report which led to the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, paving the way for the creation of HSE the following year.

Since our inception, we have successfully driven down the number of workplace injuries and deaths to a fraction of those which devastated families' lives when the Queen first came to the throne.

While the UK is one of the safest countries in the world to work, we also want it to be amongst the healthiest, with mental health treated as importantly as physical health.

Our mission is expanding beyond worker protection and we need to continue to build on our strong expertise and experience to address future challenges, such as new technologies in the workplace, the growth of new ways of working and enabling the safe transition to the Government's commitment to the net zero agenda.

To help keep us on this course, we've set out an ambitious new HSE strategy for the next decade. Protecting people and places will be at the heart of everything we do as a regulator.

As ever, our fundamental principle is to ensure that those who create risk take responsibility for controlling it. Those who fail to do so will be held to account and bear the cost.

Our new strategy sets out a refreshed set of priorities for HSE that also reflect added responsibilities, including establishing the Building Safety Regulator and extending our role in chemical regulation.

The passing of the Building Safety Act 2022 a few weeks ago means we can now formally set up a regulator in a similar way to how the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 led to the formation of HSE. We will use our regulatory expertise and experience to provide a Building Safety Regulator, part of a new building safety regime, that will help keep residents in England safe in their homes.

Our expanded remit on chemical regulation, following the UK's departure from the EU, will continue to ensure businesses can trade and use chemicals, pesticides, biocides, and detergents safely, while protecting human health and the environment.

Nowhere is the pace of technological advancement more evident than in the UK's move towards net zero and the development of sustainable, clean energy. Transitioning to a carbon neutral economy presents new risks where we will need to apply scientific expertise and continue to work alongside initiatives like the Gas Safe Register.

Implementing our strategy of protecting people and places, will require even greater collaboration across sectors and industries.

For example, we can build on the success of our [Working Minds campaign](#), where we realised early on that we couldn't effectively tackle work-related stress and poor mental health alone. We worked with and listened to experts from MIND, ACAS and Federation of Small Businesses and last month achieved the milestone of 500 champions for our campaign to increase awareness of the risks of work-related stress and encourage businesses to take action.

At the heart of our strategy are the passionate, and highly skilled people that make up the organisation I am so proud to be part of. All working together to protect people and places, today and for the future.

Please read the [strategy](#) in full.