



Highways Safety Hub Team Newsletter

September 2023

An inspirational Story

A man who has been fitted with a mechanical heart valve is training for a 61-mile (98km) bike ride to raise funds for heart research.

James Boardman, 51, of Tamworth, Staffordshire, was born with a heart murmur and monitored for it as a child.

"There was always talk that I would have to have a valve replacement, but when it actually happened in my 30s it was quite a shock," he said.

He is to do British Hearth Foundation's (BHF) London-to-Brighton ride.

The off-road challenge starts on the Thames Cycle Track on 23 September and takes riders on a mixture of tracks, including grass and gravel, before ending in Hove.

The father-of-three is a cycling enthusiast, but due to his health had to give up karate, which he also loved.

He realised something was wrong before having the valve fitted when he could not spar for more than 30 seconds.

"After the surgery I couldn't take being knocked about at karate, but I still managed to carry on cycling," he said.

He said he wanted to do the BHF mountain bike event because of the investment the charity had put into research.

"I also lost my father to a heart attack when I was two and my mother also suffered a couple in her early 50s, so it's really personal for me," he said.

Mr Boardman, a senior health and safety advisor for Balfour Beatty Vinci's HS2 project, said the ride would be a "massive challenge" and he would be taking medical advice.

He said he had found the heart surgery almost 20 years ago "traumatic", mentally more than physically.

"I have a very supportive wife and children who love me dearly, but it was such a shock being so immobile and just feeling completely useless," he said.

He hopes to raise awareness about heart issues.

"There seems to be a lot of focus on cancer and men checking themselves, but I don't think people look at the heart in the same way," he said.

The BHF has also begun a new campaign about hidden heart conditions called Spotlight On.



Source: james.boardman@balfourbeattyvinci.com

Macmillan Coffee Morning – 29 September 2023

Macmillan's Coffee Morning is their biggest fundraising event to support people living with cancer

People all over the UK host their own Coffee Morning and donations raised on the day are made to Macmillan.

A Coffee Morning can be whatever you want it to be. Why not treat your colleagues to some homemade bakes.

In 2022, they raised over £12 million and hope to top that this year.



Why host a Coffee Morning for Macmillan?

Boosts team morale

Maybe you haven't socialised as a team for a while. Coffee Morning is a chance to come back together with colleagues and increase workplace well-being.

Fantastic food and drink

Coffee Morning is the perfect excuse to get baking or buy some shop-bought snacks. Need some inspiration? Check out our [recipes](#) – we've got everything from breakfast muffins to baklava.

That feel-good feeling

Raising money for a [good cause](#) makes everyone feel good. Taking time to get to know your colleagues can also be a great way to build stronger working relationships, and maybe even discover shared interests.

Whatever your reason for hosting a Coffee Morning at work, it's a great one and every penny raised will help support people living with cancer.

Entertain and engage

To help raise even more money, get the whole team involved in some games and activities. You could do a bake off, raffle or a quiz. We have plenty of [fundraising games](#) to keep your colleagues entertained.

Get your Coffee Morning Kit

We'll send you a free fundraising kit once you've signed up to host a Coffee Morning. Choose from the complete classic kit with bunting, balloons and a tablecloth or lighter kit with less paper and no plastic.

Each kit includes recipes, a collection box, event posters and a game for your event!

[Register \(macmillan.org.uk\)](https://macmillan.org.uk)

DropBlock Ballasts

Pedestrian barriers consistently blow over due to high winds, poor erection and connection or a lack of, or uneven weighting down. Generally, when these barriers are securely weighted down, sandbags are used. However, these bags can split easily and are sometimes only leaned against the barriers. In both cases they do not function as designed. The sandbags may also be removed by operatives in cases where they want them for other works.



Solution:

Use DropBlock Ballast systems which hook onto the barriers and fences and hold them down securely.



Benefits:

- Highly wind-resistant, robust hooks can protect against high winds with a weight of 9kg.
- A tough alternative to sandbags which eliminates the risk of split sandbags covering the worksite and walkways with debris and sand.
- No deterioration means less sandbags are required on site.
- The blocks are easily installed and fit for purpose and will not slip off the barriers.
- The system is stackable which aids easy transportation and storage.
- Easy carry handholds allow for improved manual handling and safer installation.
- The DropBlocks have built in high visibility strips which aid low light situations and can denote the location of the pedestrian barriers.
- The blocks are made of tough recycled plastic which can also be recycled at the end of life.

Supplier Contacts: Oxford Plastics. Cost £15 per unit.

[DropBlock Ballast | Pedestrian Barrier Ballast | Oxford Plastics](#)

Source: Balfour Beatty

Concrete Washout Solutions

Concrete washout is a hazard to the environment and to people. Due to its high pH, we have to carefully manage what we do with it.

Morgan Sindall Old Street rail project has adopted a solution from Mudtech Tank Division, which uses a concrete washout frame with non-hazardous 'pH Blue' technology, shown in the photograph (right).

On a site restricted by space, the Old Street project has provided good feedback on this product, based on it being easy to use



This system allows a person to wash the wagon chute into a 'BlueRinse Nappy Sack' filter; solids are contained, and the water passes through the sack, which has an alkali reducing agent impregnated into the lining. No power source is required, and a hose can be attached to allow the filtered water to flow to a discharge point.



For projects without a discharge point an alternative is available (shown right).

This system has a tank and a sump to retain filtered water. Also using an alkali reducing filter this closed loop system includes a pump which allows water to be recycled indefinitely.

This is an information and best practice share, and we do not have any affiliation with this service provider. Concrete washout is a standard industry hazard, which we have to deal with across our business units, on various projects, and it is important for us to be informed so that we may adopt the best / most appropriate technology based on site characteristics.

[BlueRinse Concrete Washout](#)

Source: Morgan Sindall

World Suicide Prevention Day – 10th September 2023

World Suicide Prevention Day 2023

10 September



World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) is an annual event held on the 10th September. It is organised by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO). The event represents a global commitment to focus attention on suicide prevention.

It is particularly relevant to the construction industry as workers in construction are nearly four times more likely to take their own lives than in other sectors.

The 10th of September falls on a Sunday, but on Monday 11th September, Skanska UK will be marking the occasion by hosting a webinar with psychologist, Mandy Rutter called 'Broadening the empathy – helping everyone do their bit.'

The one-hour webinar will cover the following topics:

- The relevance of Skanska's commitment to supporting the topic of suicide prevention – our support avenues and national resources to support all those that have been affected by suicide.
- How to approach the topic of suicide, myths that surround suicide, and the longevity of the impact of suicide.
- Plus, a discussion about what we can all do inside and outside of the workplace.

Let's all keep the conversation going on this topic, and please do share what you are doing in your own organisations to mark World Suicide Prevention Day.

For more details contact: Liz Brathwaite liz.brathwaite@skanska.co.uk

Health Safety & Wellbeing Sector Lead – Major Project Highways

Work Fatalities rise ‘A Sobering Reminder’ of the cost of failure.

A TEN per cent increase in the number of people killed at work highlights the need to bolster health and safety standards in Britain’s workplaces.

As new figures published reveal that 135 workers sustained fatal injuries last year – up from 123 the previous year – the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) is calling for continued and strengthened efforts to ensure people are protected at work.

One-third of the fatalities (45) occurred in the construction industry, while nearly a quarter of those who lost their lives (33) were aged 60 or over. Forty of the deaths were caused by a fall from height.



Ruth Wilkinson, head of policy at IOSH said, “This data is a sobering reminder of the consequences of health and safety failures and that our efforts to prevent occupational accidents, incidents, ill health, and diseases must not stop. These are 135 lives lost in one year. These are 135 families, friends and colleagues having to cope with a devastating loss. We cannot accept this.

“We can see where the main hazards and risks lie – people working in construction, working at height, workers aged 60 or over. But, with good health and safety, these risks can be prevented and managed.

“We must ensure that root causes are identified, and action taken to prevent recurrence and, importantly, we must ensure lessons are learned from each one of these tragedies. It is time for the Government, policymakers, and businesses to recognise the importance of good health and safety. They need to take action to prevent harm, implement holistic prevention strategy approaches and ensure that all work is safe and healthy.”

The new figures have been published by the Health and Safety Executive. They take in the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Rates are much lower than previous decades – 227 workers were killed in 2002-03 and nearly 500 in the early 1980s. However, improvements have flat-lined more recently and the rates have remained broadly similar for the past decade.

IOSH has campaigned for health and safety legislation to be protected as the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill passed through Parliament. While it isn’t among the current schedule that is set to be scrapped at the end of the year now the Bill has now passed into law, there is still a possibility for EU-derived health and safety legislation to be included in the future. Should this happen, IOSH is keen to ensure there is a thorough consultation which leads to a robust outcome for the protection of health and safety standards and workers' rights.

Ruth added: “While standards are much improved from previous decades, this will be of no comfort to those families who have lost someone. With a safe and healthy working environment now one of the International Labour Organisation’s fundamental principles and rights at work, let’s make this a watershed moment by increasing awareness and increasing occupational safety and health capacity, regulatory capacity. Let’s strive to make a difference and enhance health and safety standards, performance, controls, and practice at work. Now is not the time to stop and become complacent”.

Other industries with high fatality rates include agriculture, forestry, and fishing (21), manufacturing (15), and transportation and storage (15). Other leading causes were being struck by a moving object (29) and being struck by a moving vehicle (20).

Hidden Disabilities Sunflower

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower for your vehicle discreetly indicates that you may need additional support if you break down or need assistance on a motorway or major A-road in England.



We want you to feel confident that you'll have the help you need if you get into trouble on our roads. Displaying the Sunflower on your vehicle tells us that you have a non-visible disability, and that you may need help with:

- understanding instructions and communicating your needs
- staying calm at a time of stress
- getting to a place of safety
- moving and recovering an adapted vehicle

Who can use the Sunflower?

Anyone with an impairment, hidden or visible, who may need additional support if they break down or need assistance on a motorway or major A-road can display the Sunflower on their vehicle.

How will the Sunflower help me?

The Sunflower will indicate to roadside and emergency services that you or someone in your vehicle has an impairment which may not be visible.

National Highways traffic officers are often first on scene in an emergency on motorways and major A-roads. If a traffic officer sees the Sunflower on your vehicle, they'll ask you about what support you need to help keep you safe.

Traffic officers will always:

- ask how they can help
- listen closely to what you tell them
- be kind and patient
- not judge, and treat you with respect



Where should the Sunflower be displayed?

Display the Sunflower on the rear of your vehicle where it can easily be seen, in a position where it won't obscure your view.

The Sunflower sticker is designed to last at least three years. It can be removed by applying a 70% alcohol solution (such as hand sanitiser). If applied to vehicle bodywork it may cause discolouration.

The Sunflower magnet attaches to your vehicle bodywork and can be placed and removed before and after your journey if required.

Do I have to display the Sunflower on my vehicle?

No, it's up to you if you want to display the Sunflower on your vehicle. The sticker will prompt traffic officers to ask you about your needs. You can also wear a Sunflower lanyard or badge, available from the [Hidden Disabilities Sunflower store](#).

Will traffic officers tell anyone else about my Sunflower?

With your agreement, National Highways traffic officers will make sure that others on scene are also aware of any additional support you may need.

This could include the emergency services and breakdown providers.

Raising the Bar Checklist

This will help check compliance with the guidance by highlighting significant elements. A link is posted below that will direct you to the Highways Safety Hub website where there are also a lot of interesting items. Also consider joining the Twitter group which gives out lots of useful information regarding changes and uploads including the latest safety alerts.

[Home \(highwaysafetyhub.com\)](https://www.highwaysafetyhub.com)

