



The Association of
Pallet Networks

2022 pallet sector report

APN collates data from all of the UK's pallet networks, allowing its members to benchmark their performance. This data also provides a unique insight into the health of the UK logistics and palletised freight distribution sectors.

Key highlights from our data is below. For more information on the significance of this data please contact Paul Sanders, APN Chairman on chairman@theapn.co.uk

In 2022 APN members delivered **29.2m** pallets; **8.2%** growth against 2019

The network sector passed the 29 million pallets mark in 2022, with 8.2% growth against 2019. Overall pallet volumes were slightly down against 2021, in an expected equalising effect following post-pandemic surges. However, a comparison with 2019 shows that the sector is still growing at a healthy rate.

61.9% of all pallets on a next-day service

Customer confidence in next day and timed delivery services remained very strong with more than 18 million pallets being delivered on a premium service.

B2C volumes at **4.6m**

B2C has grown since pre-pandemic years. B2C volumes totalled 4.6m in 2022, accounting for 15.9% of total volume, compared to 2019's 13.1%.

In terms of delivery, there is a 50/50 split between next-day and economy service for B2C. Full pallets accounted for 53% of all economy B2C pallets and quarter pallets accounted for 56.9% of all next-day B2C pallets.

Although pallet networks were originally designed to cater for B2B freight movements, the network model has shown huge flexibility in dealing with the needs of the B2C marketplace.



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Trailer utilisation in 2022 was **72.1%**

Trailer utilisation decreased in pallet networks to average 72.1% across the year, against 2019's 75.6%. However, this is still five percentage points higher than the Department for Transport's figure of 67% for articulated vehicles. As such pallet networks still offer better utilisation of vehicles, and contribute to the lowering of road and fuel use and emissions reduction.

Hub safety continues to improve

Although numerically safety-related incidents at pallet network Hubs increased slightly, the rate of incidents per 100,000 pallets reduced for the fifth consecutive year. The rate is now 0.46 per 100,000 pallets, 11.8% lower than 2021.

The most common cause of Hub related safety incidents, accounting for 26.8% of the total, is load security equipment such as straps, nets and curtains. These accidents all lead to injury and accounted for 32% of all lost time (20 out of 62 days).

Networks focus on across-the-board sustainability

Sustainability is one of the three strategic pillars of the APN. Network hubs play a vital role in the pallet network model. Therefore, over 2022 we have been measuring sustainability of the network hubs in five key areas:

~ energy use ~ water consumption ~ paper use ~ waste management ~ carbon emissions

Our newly formed Sustainability Forum Group brings together experts from each network to benchmark operations, discuss best practice, identify opportunities and measure the impact of initiatives in this important area.

Average pallet weight drops to **369kg**

The average pallet weight decreased again in 2022, as it has for consecutive years. This may be linked to the growth in B2C business, in which a high proportion of next day delivery freight comprises quarter pallets.