



The Association of
Pallet Networks

2024 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 info@theapn.co.uk

Health and safety gains

Following six years of successful reduction in Hub safety incidents, 2024 saw an increase of 20%. However, due to intense and consistent prior work by the Health and Safety Forum, this is an increase against record lows. The incident rate for 2023 was 0.36 per 100,000 pallets which was the lowest rate achieved in six years.

The 2024 figure, therefore, while higher, is still lower than any year prior to 2023, at 0.42 incidents per 100,000 pallets.

Total volumes

APN members delivered 29.3 million pallets in 2024. That's 3.2% higher than 2023 and shows a steady, more confident market than we have experienced since before the pandemic. 2024 figures are 8.4% higher than the 2019 pre-pandemic figures. The busiest month for the networks was October, with 2.8m pallets; and the quietest December, with 1.8m.

Volumes by size

In 2023 all pallet sizes declined from 2022 volumes, but in 2024 the reverse was true.

2024 growth in next day volumes was 3.0% for full pallets, 3.1% half pallets and 3.7% for quarter pallets.

Full pallets accounted for 49% of volume, half pallets 29% and 22% quarter pallets.

Volumes by service

Next-day services regained ground against economy services at 62% in 2024 - a percentage point higher than in 2023 - with economy services accounting for 38% of total volume. Next Day volumes in Q4 2024 were 5.5% higher than Q4 2023. Economy volumes in Q4 were 3.9% higher than the same period 2023.



The Association of
Pallet Networks

2024 pallet sector report

Home delivery growth

15.5% of all pallets were delivered to residential addresses (B2C) in 2024, This is one percentage point above 2023.

More than half of all B2C pallets were delivered on a next-day service in 2024. As with last year, next-day services remain the most popular option for suppliers and customers in the B2C sector. This may be slightly skewed by pallet size for B2B freight, as almost 60% of quarter pallets are sent next-day, in contrast to full and half pallets where economy is still the most popular choice.

Average pallet weight

Again 2024 bucked a trend of several years in which average pallet weight has fallen. The 2024 figure was 370kg against 366kg in 2023.

Although only 4kgs difference, previous years' decline has also been small but steady. (2020= 379kg, 2021 374kg, 2022 369kg.) It will be interesting to see whether this is a glitch or a true reversal going forwards.

Maintained service levels

Service levels, measured by intact, in full, on-time deliveries, were maintained at 96% across the sector. Customers continued to favour next-day and premium services, despite inflationary pressures which might have indicated a move to more economy transport options. This reflects reliable and robust service levels provided pallet networks compared to other forms of logistics support, and/or that convenience and immediacy are of great value to customers.

The lack of a suitable recipient at point of delivery, or an unsuitable delivery location can both complicate delivery. Service levels are supported by a high use of technology, both to inform the recipient and to notify the customer of planned and completed deliveries.

Consignment numbers grow

In 2024 the number of consignments has grown by 2.9% compared with 2023. Q4 consignments saw growth of 4.3% from Q4 2023. The average pallets per consignment KPI has remained at 1.43.