



Equality & Gender Pay Gap Report 2022-23

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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Foreword

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) is fully committed to meeting the diverse needs of the communities we serve. Building a diverse and inclusive workforce remains our priority, whilst striving to grow, learn and develop our culture to continually improve our behaviours at work, underpinned by the Core Code of Ethics. This report outlines the work we have undertaken over the year 2022/2023, as well as our statutory duty to report on the following:

Monitoring of Equality Information

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the public sector Equality Duty. The Equality Duty requires public bodies with 150 or more employees to publish information at least annually about their employees, furthering the aims of the Equality Duty and to consider how activities affect people who have protected characteristics.

Gender Pay Gap

The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 require employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing the average difference in pay between their male and female employees (known as the gender pay gap). **It is important to note that, our gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work.**

What is clear, however, is that our gender pay gap is affected by the roles in which men and women currently work within the Service and the associated salaries that these various roles attract.

Declaration

I can confirm that the Gender Pay Gap data included within this equality report is accurate and has been calculated according to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.



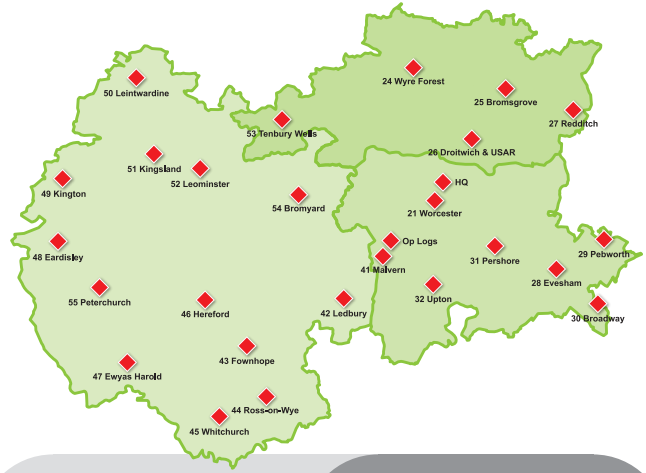
Jonathon Pryce

Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive

Our Purpose, Vision and Mission

Who We Are

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service receives approximately 17,000 emergency calls each year requesting assistance at a wide variety of incidents, including property and countryside fires, road traffic collisions, collapsed structures, water rescues, hazardous materials and animal rescues. We attend on average 7,366 incidents each year – that equates to 142 incidents every week across the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.



25
Fire
Stations



41
Fire
Engines



Purpose

Why we are here

Keeping people safe from fire and other risks. Responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies.

Vision

What we want to do

Saving More Lives: Building on our successes to continue to make a difference, improve lives and help secure resilient communities.

Mission

What we do every day

As one professional team we will work hard every day to deliver high quality, sustainable services to our communities.

Our Fire Stations are staffed by a mix of 'Wholetime' Firefighters – operating on a full-time basis and providing an immediate response, and On-Call Firefighters who live or work locally and are available within five minutes should they be needed. All our Fire Stations respond to emergencies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Some Stations are crewed by Wholetime Firefighters as well as On-Call colleagues. We also operate three 'day-crewed' stations that have Firefighters operating Wholetime during the day and On-Call overnight. The remaining Stations are all staffed solely by On-Call Firefighters.

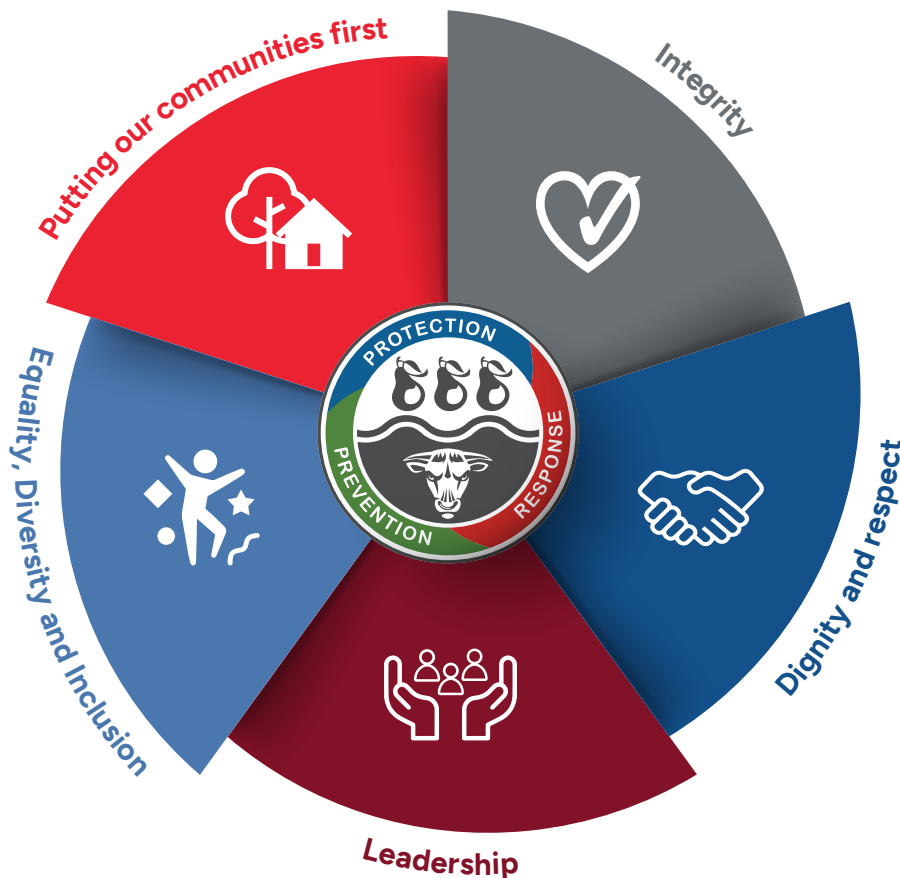
Our Service is supported by our Fire Control team who answer emergency calls and deal with mobilising, communications and other activities and also our Support teams in our corporate areas such as ICT, HR & Development and Payroll, Operational Logistics and Finance.

Our core purpose, vision and mission are what drives and motivates our people to make the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire safer. To do this effectively we need to understand and appreciate the diversity of the communities we serve and have a workforce that is inclusive; where our people fully represent and understand those communities.

Our Ethical Principles

We are guided by the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services \(FRS\)](#) in England.

The Core Code of Ethics sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. These principles are our guiding set of values and help us to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.



Putting our communities first



We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

Integrity



We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

Dignity and respect



We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership



As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.

The Statutory Context

The Equality Act should make it easier for individuals to be aware of their rights under the law and for services and organisations to meet their legal responsibilities. The purpose of the Act is to ensure that everyone, whether at work or in using a service has the right to be treated fairly. It protects people from discrimination on the basis of certain characteristics. These are known as the nine protected characteristics¹.



Age

A person belonging to a particular age or range of ages.



Disability

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day- to-day activities.



Gender reassignment

Where a person undergoes, or proposes to undergo, a process of reassigning their sex.



Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage and civil partnerships are legally recognised relationships between a same-sex or opposite-sex couple.



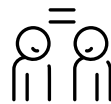
Sex

A man or a woman.



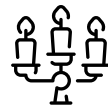
Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context.



Race

A race is a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship) ethnicity or national origins.



Religion or belief

Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.



Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

¹ Definitions provided are aligned to the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) (2021).

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** is a duty on public authorities like Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority to consider how policies or decisions affect people with protected characteristics

General duty

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination; harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Specific duty

- Publish equality information at least once a year to show how we are complying with the equality duty.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives every four years.



Our Service Area

Our Service area extends from the metropolitan borders of the West Midlands to the rural southern borderland between England and Wales and covers two counties; Worcestershire in the east and Herefordshire to the west. The infographic gives a summary of what the population of Herefordshire and Worcestershire looks like. This helps us to see how reflective we are as a workforce, in comparison to the communities we serve.

Population

790,709

total estimated population of Herefordshire and Worcestershire



Sex

49% male

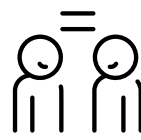
51% female



Age

176,827

people aged 66+ years



Race

10.18%

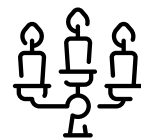
belong to an ethnic minority group (including White minority groups)



Disability

143,322

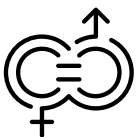
have a disability or condition which limits their day to day activities



Religion or belief

53% Christian

38% no religion or belief



Gender

Reassignment
0.5%

of people in England and Wales identified as a gender different from the sex they were registered with at birth



Sexual

Orientation
2%

of people over 16 identified as LGB+

Reporting

The information in this report has been compiled from data provided voluntarily by our staff or applicants and covers the protected characteristics.

The data reported here is anonymised which means that a person cannot be identified from the information provided. We may only provide percentages in relation to the overall workforce for some protected groups in order to effectively anonymise, particularly where numbers of people with that characteristic are numerically low, potentially making it easier to identify individuals.

The data in this report covers the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Where possible, an arrows shows where there is a negative change, no change or positive change from last year's report 2021/2022.



Our Equality Objectives

Key highlights 2022/23

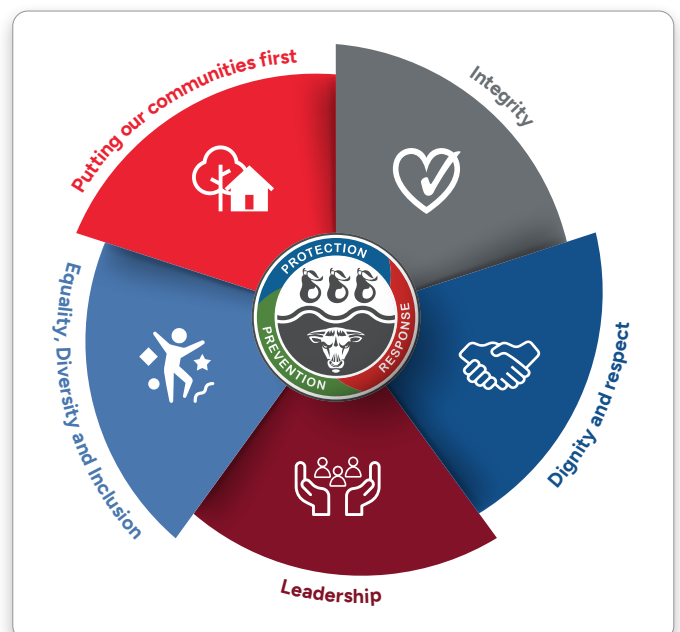
The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to develop and publish equality objectives at least every four years. As part of the Service's on-going work and commitment to equality, we formally set our [equality objectives for 2021-2025](#) in July 2021, which are aligned with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2020-2025). A summary of work against these new Equality Objectives is as follows:

Our Organisation

Leadership & Corporate Commitment

Our leaders will provide visible leadership to ensure our people, our partners and our communities see the personal commitment to inclusion. We will maximise the transparency of our organisation so our activities can be scrutinised and we can be held accountable.

- Our Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) continued to meet their own **equality objectives** to demonstrate their personal commitment to mainstreaming diversity and inclusion practices across the organisation. SLB members have shared numerous articles over the past year raising awareness and championing inclusive topics, events and celebrations, such as Ramadan, Pride and Neurodiversity. SLB members have also represented the organisation at national conferences facilitated by the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA), along with a cross section of staff.
- Work to further embed the use of **people (equality) impact assessments (PIAs)** across the Service has continued with training, accessible guidance for staff and a quality assurance process to ensure the consistency and quality of each assessment. This supports us to ensure that our policies, procedures or services do not have an adverse impact on different groups of people.
- An **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy** has been published to set out how we demonstrate due regard to the aims and requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. It also demonstrates how we are fully committed to developing and supporting a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in our workforce and in the planning, design and delivery of our prevention, protection and emergency response services.
- We have adopted the **National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) Core Code of Ethics**, which replaces the Service values, and outlines ethical principles of expected inclusive behaviour. Extensive work has been completed to embed these throughout the organisation, overseen by the Culture & Ethics Steering Group, which is a cross functional team with representatives from across HWFRS.



- A comprehensive independent **cultural audit** commenced in early 2023, in line with our equality, diversity and inclusion workstreams. The outcome directly informs the Service wide Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Training programme, as well as recommendations being incorporated into our wider plans and strategies.
- A new **speaking up service** has been launched, to provide staff with an additional mechanism to report workplace issues or concerns, which is external, independent and confidential.



- Appointment of an Inclusion & Organisational Development Manager, which is a new role to promote and increase diversity within HWFRS and embed a culture of inclusion and cohesion across the organisation.



Our Communities

Understand, engage and build good relationships

We will better understand our communities by ensuring we put in place systems that enable the collection, collation and analysis of community data and information. We will enhance our engagement with our communities to foster good relationships and understand the community priorities.



PREVENTION

- The NFCC have published **Equality of Access** documents which draw together research, statistics and information to support fire services to engage with community groups who may not normally engage with our sector for a variety of reasons. Our Prevention team focus on specific themes based on the documents each quarter, working with crews to find ways of improving access to our services to all sections of the community.
- Our Prevention team have linked with local partners to promote **accessible services** to communities. The new Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) leaflet has been produced in a variety of formats including large print and multiple languages reflective our communities.
- We have continued to support community events, such as our local **Pride** celebrations. These events have provided great opportunities to demonstrate our commitment to inclusivity and engage with our communities, to provide safety advice, advertise HFSVs and promote working or volunteering for the service.

Our Equality Objectives

Key highlights 2022/23 (continued)

- Each fire station has an **NFCC Campaign Calendar**, which also includes notable EDI events and key religious and cultural festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Diwali, etc. so that key fire safety messages can be promoted at appropriate times for all sections of our community.
- Our **Fire Cadets**, a uniformed youth organisation, was formally launched during this year, welcoming young people aged 13-17 years. Over a quarter of the cadets are girls (28%). The cadets take part in a structured training programme where they learn a variety of skills and practical exercises that focus on Fire Service activities, prevention activities and social responsibility.



YOUR
IMPACT

Better young drivers.
Safer passengers.
Confident choices.

- The **Your Impact** initiative is a multi-agency scheme aimed at reducing death and serious injury amongst young road users in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The aim is to provide students with the education, tools and confidence to make the right choices using the road to first become better passengers. The initiative involves using virtual reality headsets to show scene reconstructions, as a way of delivering key messages. The event is delivered to mainstream schools as well as schools supporting students with particular needs. Alternative media options will also be available so that as many young people as possible can access the programme, making it very inclusive.
- Other young engagement activities include **Crucial Crew** and **Young Citizens Challenge**, aimed at raising awareness and targeting young people by educating them on water, fire and road safety as well as arson and hoax calls.
- We have regularly engaged with our communities via our **social media platforms**, to promote topical safety messages, promote working or volunteering for us, as well as highlighting key Service events or activities.

Our People

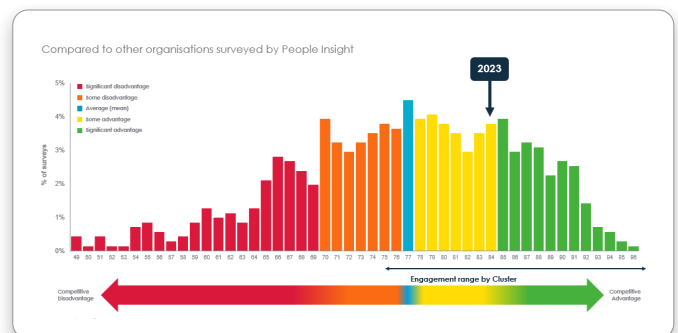
Develop, engage and understand

We will develop our people to better understand diversity and inclusion. We will better understand our workforce composition through our workforce data. We will create an inclusive culture where our people feel able to be themselves.

We will put in place effective strategies to enable engagement with our staff and networks to continue to develop an inclusive culture.

- A Service-wide **EDI Training Programme** was tendered and awarded to an external specialist provider. This comprehensive training programme will enhance the workforce's understanding of the importance of EDI in the workplace and their responsibility in supporting HWFRS in being an employer of choice with a truly inclusive workplace.
- A revised annual **Appraisal** process was launched, which is aligned to the Core Code of Ethics and assesses staff performance against the ethical principle of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

- A **Staff Engagement Survey** was carried out in early 2023, with an excellent participation rate (65%) and an exceptional overall employee engagement score (84%). The results demonstrated that HWFRS is considered a good place to work, creating a positive employee experience, with staff who are highly committed and proud to work for us. The majority of staff feel that they belong at HWFRS, including employees from under represented staff groups.



- A **wealth of EDI information** is available for staff to access including community profile data, supplemented by regular awareness campaigns with opportunities to attend learning and development sessions, such as a Race Equality Week webinar facilitated by West Mercia Police.
- Highly successful **Menopause Awareness** workshops were facilitated for female members of staff, to develop knowledge and understanding in a safe, supportive environment.
- A communication campaign was launched with videos and presentations to ensure all staff had an in-depth understanding of our inclusive recruitment approach and **positive action** initiatives being utilised for this year's Wholetime Firefighter recruitment process.

Our Equality Objectives

Key highlights 2022/23 (continued)

- A **Critical Conversation** workshop was facilitated for female members of staff who wanted support to develop confidence and practical skills in dealing with difficult conversations.
- **Dyslexia Awareness training** has increased awareness across the organisation which has led to a growing number of individuals seeking assessments and support.
- We have maintained corporate membership of [AFSA](#), which is nationally recognised in our sector as a respected source of knowledge as well as a major champion of inclusion.
- We continue to be corporate members of [Women in the Fire Service UK](#) to demonstrate our commitment to support gender equality in the Fire and Rescue Service.



Our Partners

Working together

We will work with external partners to develop strategies that enable effective service provision to our communities. We will collaborate across our own business functions and staff networks to better build equality and inclusion into our policies, processes and practices to ensure inclusion and our values are at the heart of everything we do.



- The **Neurodiverse Staff Network** was launched, which aims to raise awareness and support staff who are neurodiverse. The network is ever growing in members, and is proving to be a real asset. Members have attended the national Dyslexia Show, provided input to new recruits and given feedback on proposed initiatives.
- Members from our **women's network**, Women@HWFire attended a Leadership and Networking Army Away Day with colleagues from West Mercia Police and other Fire and Rescue Services, to network and build leadership and teamworking skills.



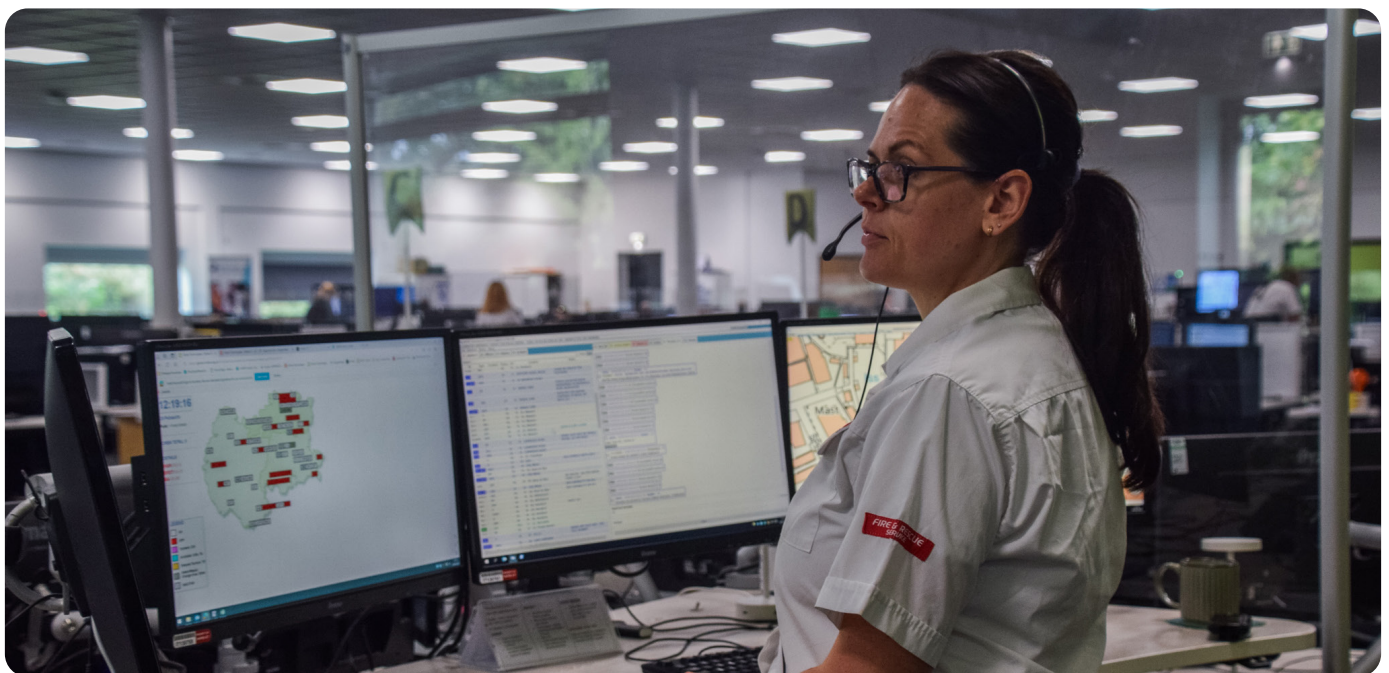
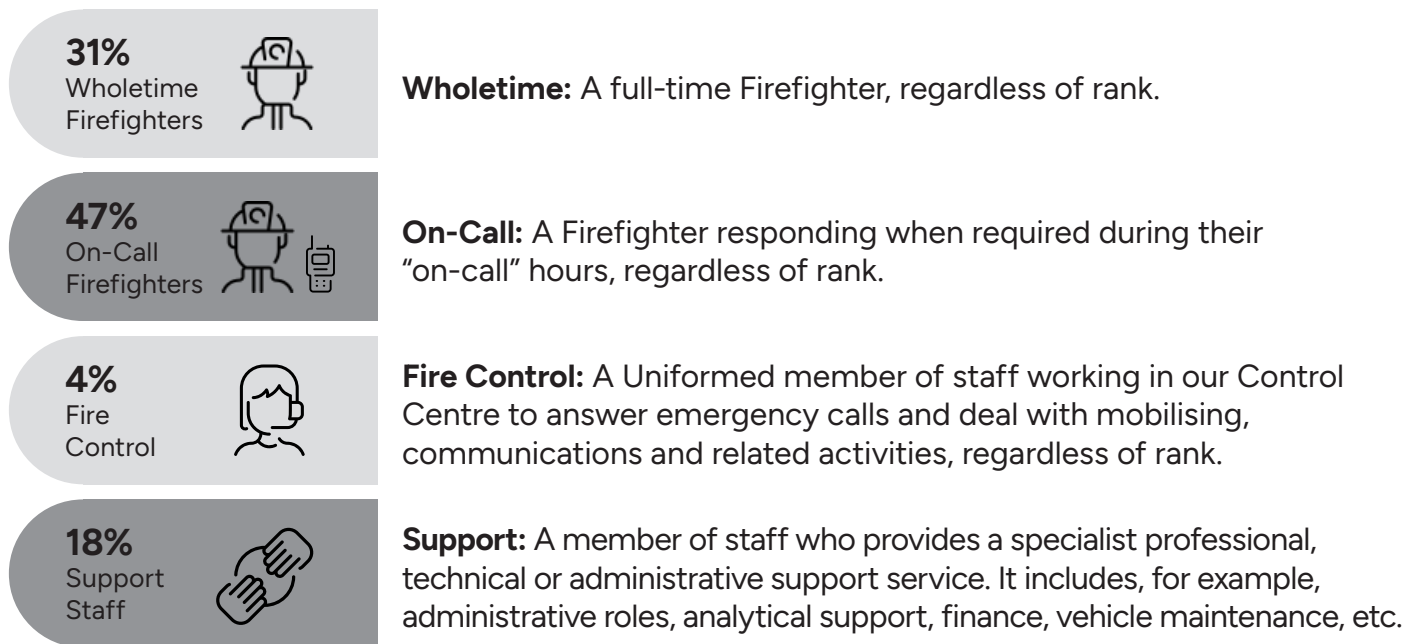
Practical Firefighter taster session February 2023

- Women@HWFire also collaborated with colleagues from West Mercia Police's women's network, to celebrate **International Women's Day**. The groups met at the commemorative flower garden at Hindlip Hall, where one flower has been planted for every female employee of both organisations.
- Representatives from Women@HWFire also attended the first regional women's network meeting, along with our partners from Shropshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Services.
- A number of staff have volunteered to be **EDI Allies** and champion EDI within HWFRS. Members have been offered opportunities to attend learning events, with representatives attending the AFSA Summer Conference.
- **Inclusive recruitment** practices were further embedded, to ensure processes attract a more diverse talent pool. A Wholetime Firefighter Recruitment campaign was launched with targeted marketing, informative and practical taster sessions, and a female fitness programme, with many aspects supported by our staff networks.
- We continue to be part of **Hate Incident Partnership** forums in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire, which helps us to understand issues and support initiatives where possible.

Our Workforce Profile

Our workforce stands at 764 (as at 31 March 2023) – this figure is the number of total posts occupied. In analysing our workforce data, secondary contracts are included and this is done in order to reflect the workforce data submitted to the Home Office as part of our annual Fire Statistics return. Otherwise, the data would disregard secondary contracts which make up a portion of our establishment and also helps us to identify any potential trends in particular workforce groups. This also helps us to give a more accurate view of how the diversity of our employees reflects that of the communities we serve.

Our Service is made up of four main workforce groups and for the purposes of this report are defined as follows, in line with Home Office definitions:



Our Workforce Profile

Our workforce at a glance

29%

of employees are aged 36-45 years
– the largest proportion
of the workforce
(the same age group as last year)

2%

of the workforce
declared a disability

5%

of employees belong to an ethnic
minority (incl White minority groups)



2021/22: 6%

19%

of the workforce
are female



2021/22: 18%

9%

of operational staff
are female



2021/22: 8%

36%

of the workforce are Christian
– the largest religious grouping
in the workforce

3%

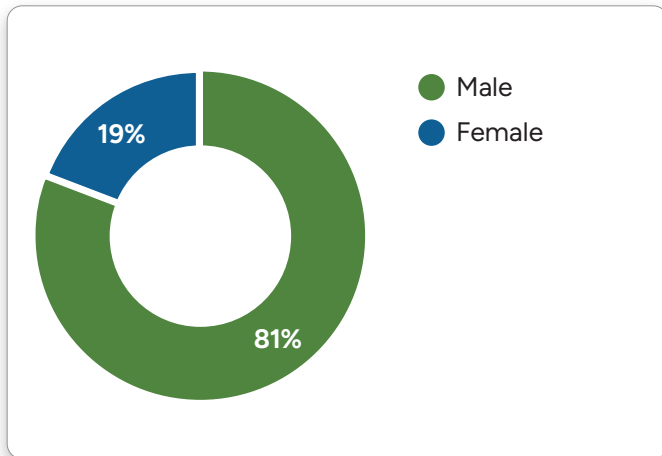
of employees declared their sexual
orientation as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual



2021/22: no change

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by sex

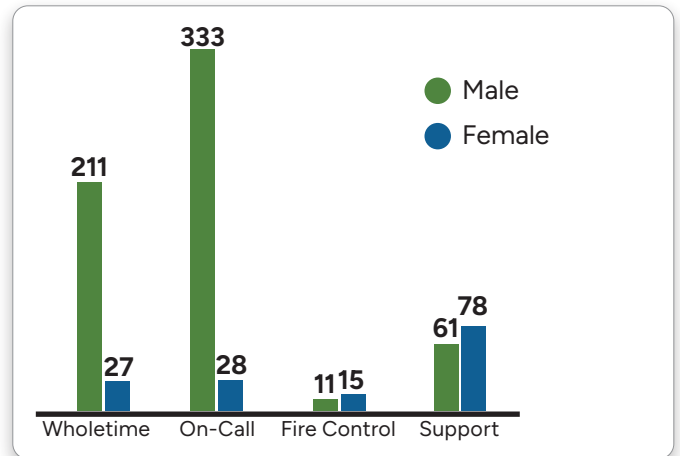


Male employees make up the majority of our workforce – the total distribution of female employees across our Service is 19%, an improvement from last year (18%).

The percentage of women in our Wholetime workforce group has also seen a slight increase from last year's figure (10%) and now stands at 11%, which is higher than the national 9% average for Fire and Rescue Services.

The percentage of women in our On-Call workforce group has increased over the last 2 years, up from 6% in March 2021 to 8% in March 2023. Our Support workforce group continues to be fairly balanced, with women making up 56% of this group.

The Service's workforce is not currently reflective of the local population of Herefordshire and Worcestershire which stands at 51% female and 49% male across all ages². Of the local population, 59% of males and 58% of females are aged between 18 and the current pensionable age (66). This under-representation is a trend across the fire sector as a whole.



We continue to work to address this imbalance, specifically the representation of women in operational roles. This year's Wholetime Firefighter Campaign presented an opportunity to attract more women at entry level. Taster sessions and a fitness programme were some of the positive action activities implemented, resulting in 16% of applications from women. The Service also embarked on an On-Call Recruitment and Marketing project whose activities may have contributed to the increase in the proportion of female applicants to the On-Call Firefighter role.

We recognise that monitoring numbers of transgender employees is highly sensitive and for data protection reasons we do not currently publish this data.

² [Census – Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by ethnicity

	White						
	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnicities	Other ethnic groups	White British Irish	Other white ethnic groups	Prefer not to say
Wholetime	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	95.4%	1.3%	2.1%
On-Call	0.3%	0.3%	2.5%	0.0%	90.0%	3%	3.9%
Fire Control	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	96.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Support	0.0%	0.7%	1.4%	0.7%	91.4%	1.4%	4.3%
Total	0.3%	0.3%	1.8%	0.1%	92.1%	2.1%	3.3%

This year, we have improved the quality of our data collection and aligned to the 2021 Census ethnicity classifications. We have combined and presented this data via the five high-level ethnic groups, which provides more insights into our workforce ethnic profile than in prior years. We have provided further details in the White ethnic category, to identify the minority groups within this ethnicity³.

The profile of employees identifying as belonging to an ethnic minority group (including White minority groups) is 5% which is a slight decrease from last year (6%). The latest community data from the 2021 Census shows that our local communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire have become more ethnically diverse. 10% of the population identified as belonging to an ethnic minority group (including White minority groups)⁴, an increase from 7% in the 2011 census.

When considering ethnicity via the high-level ethnic groups, 2.49% of our employees identified as belonging to an Asian, Black, Mixed or 'Other' ethnic group combined. When comparing our data to the latest census information, 5.43% of our local communities reflect this ethnic profile.

The changing local demographics has impacted on how reflective we are of our communities. There are positive indications that our ethnicity profile will improve, as 10% of applicants this year were from an ethnic minority background and 8% of new appointments identified as being from an ethnic minority group. We will strive to increase the diversity of our workforce by continuing our work to engage with communities and attract people from all ethnic groups when we are recruiting.

Our employee declaration rate for ethnicity remains high with 96% of staff recording their ethnic background. In comparison, 93% of Fire Services employees nationally declared their ethnicity⁵.

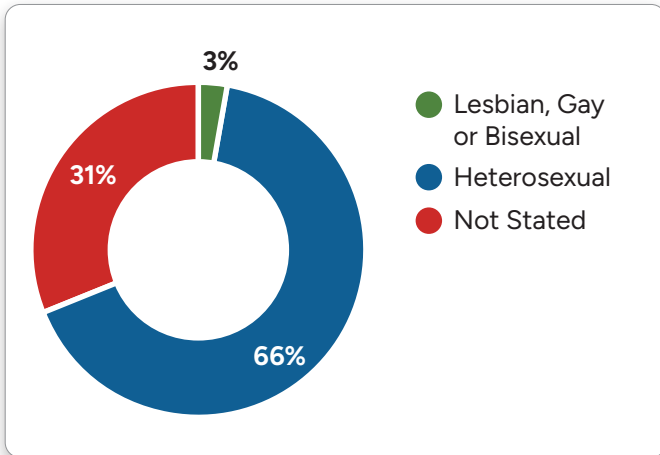
³ White minority ethnic groups can include groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups.

⁴ Office of National Statistics (2021) Census

⁵ Home Office (2023) [Fire statistics data tables – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fire-statistics-data-tables)

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by sexual orientation



The proportion of staff across the workforce who identify as Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) has remained at 3%.

For data protection reasons we have combined the categories of staff and provided them as a percentage only. Recent census data relating to sexual orientation

indicates that 2% of our local communities identify as LGB⁶. Home Office data indicates that 4.2% of all staff employed by Fire and Rescue Authorities across England identify as LGB⁷.

The declaration rate for sexual orientation in our Service has seen a continual increase over the last few years, up from 65% in 2021 to 70% this year. National FRS data shows that 68% of all FRS staff in England recorded their sexual orientation, so our declaration rate is slightly above the national figure⁷.

The Service continues to support local Pride events, taking the opportunity to promote working or volunteering for our organisation, and home fire safety visits. Attendance at these events show our communities, and our employees that we are committed to inclusion.

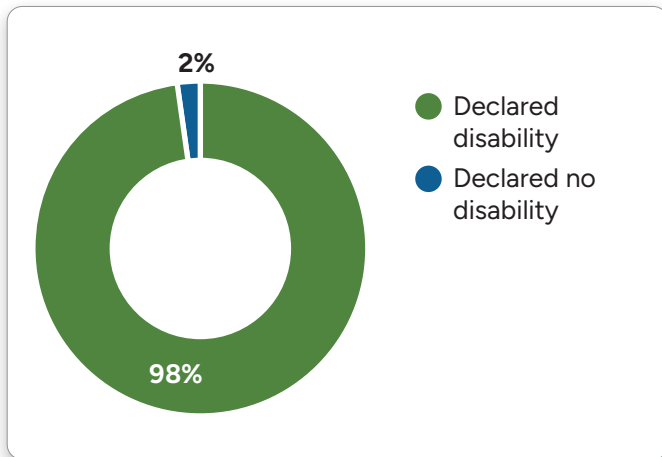


⁶ Office of National Statistics (2021) Census

⁷ Home Office (2023) [Fire statistics data tables – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fire-statistics-data-tables)

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by disability



The disability profile across the workforce is 2%, which has remained unchanged for the last 3 years. For data protection reasons we have combined these categories and provided them as a percentage only.

Although conditions such as dyslexia may meet the definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010, individuals with dyslexia and other types of neurodiversity do not necessarily consider it a disability.

As at 31 March 2023, 5% of our workforce were recorded as having dyslexia, increasing from 4% last year. The British Dyslexia Association estimates that 10% of the population is dyslexic, so we could reasonably estimate that we have a greater proportion of our workforce with a disability⁸.

Awareness and support for staff with all types of neurodiversity continues to build and develop. 2022 saw the launch of our Neurodiverse Staff Network which to date, has 30 members from all areas of the Service. The Network's senior sponsor is the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, who actively supports and encourages the work of the group. The network's activities are centred around promoting a workplace where everyone can reach their full potential. This has had a positive effect, with members of staff commenting that they once felt progression was out of reach for them, but they are now striving to move forward in their careers.

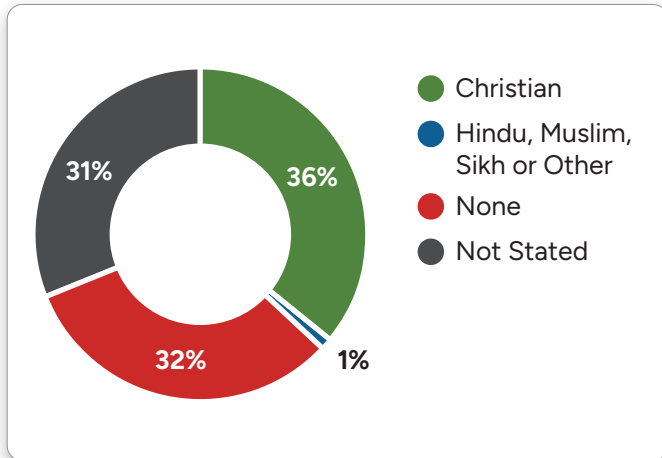
We continue to strive to improve our understanding of neurodiversity, reduce stigma and better support neurodivergent staff in the workplace. Further awareness training for managers is being planned which aligns to the Service's ethos in having a workplace where everyone can thrive.

Our processes in identifying reasonable adjustments that could be implemented to provide appropriate support for any individuals who need them, are now well embedded.

⁸ British Dyslexia Association (2019) Dyslexia

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by religion or belief



Christianity is the largest religious grouping within our Service at 36% (an increase from 34% last year) and this is followed by 32% of staff with no religion or belief at all (a rise from 31%). The proportion of other faiths when combined account for 1% of the workforce.

When comparing our communities, Christianity is the largest religious grouping at 53%, with 38% having no religion or belief. 3% of the local population are recorded as following five main religions: Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh plus a further 'Other' category for other religions⁹.

The percentage of staff who declare their religion or belief (or as having no religion or belief) has continually increased over the last 3 years. This year, the figure has risen by 2 percentage points.

We continue to offer a Chaplaincy service that works across faith and belief boundaries and offers support to everyone by supplementing our existing staff wellbeing services.

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by pregnancy, maternity and marital status

We collect and monitor data relating to other protected characteristics such as pregnancy, maternity and marital status. 2% of women employed by the Service were on maternity leave during 2022/23.

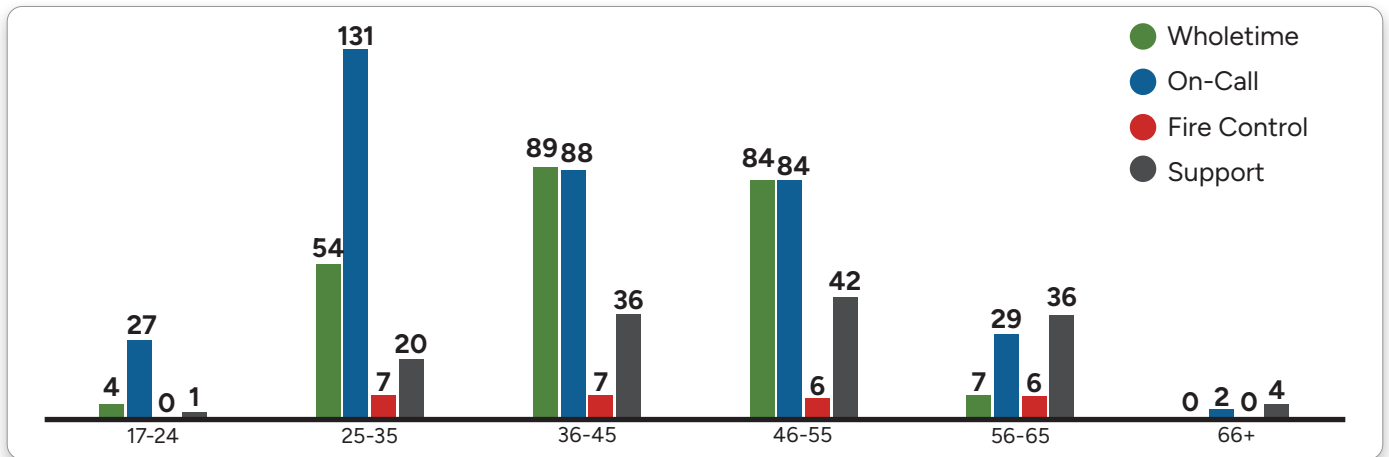
No staff opted to take shared parental leave and nationally, there continues to be a low take-up rate of this type of family friendly leave¹⁰. At the end of March 2023, 34% of our employees were in a marriage or civil partnership.

⁹ Office of National Statistics (2021) Census

¹⁰ [UK Parliament \(2021\) Paternity Leave – Questions and Answers](#)

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by age



The largest proportion of our workforce is aged between 36 and 45 years (29% of the entire workforce). This is the same age group as last year. The average age of our workforce continues to be 43 years.

The largest proportion of Wholetime staff are aged between 36 and 45 years. This is a change after 5 years of the 46-55 age bracket being predominant for this work group.

The majority of On-Call staff are aged between 25 and 35 years, which is on a par with last year's data.

In Fire Control, the age of staff is fairly evenly spread across the groups, from 25 to 65. Similarly, the majority of support staff are

also spread across these age groups, with the highest proportion in the 46-55 group (30%).

The UK population is growing larger and getting older. When broken down by age, there are three important groupings; children and young people aged 0-15 years, people of a working age between 16 and 65 years, and people of a pensionable age (aged 66 years and over). The national trend shows that the proportion of those of a working age is continuing to shrink, whilst those of a pensionable age is increasing.

Applications for Employment and Promotion

At a glance

946

total number of applications received

10%

of all applicants are from an ethnic minority background (incl White minority groups)



2021/22: no change

24%

of external applicants for Wholetime promotion were women



2021/22: 13%

23%

of internal applicants for Wholetime promotion were women



2021/22: 9%

11%

of applicants for On-Call Firefighter vacancies are from an ethnic minority (incl White minority groups)



2021/22: 5%

22%

of applicants for On-Call Firefighter vacancies are female



2021/22: 15%

Applications for Employment and Promotion

Our vacancies are advertised through our [website](#), our social media channels, our internal staff Bulletin and a regional public sector specific jobs board – [WM Jobs](#).

We also advertise positions through the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) website, [AFSA](#) and [Women in the Fire Service UK](#). We may also use specialist recruitment channels for identified “hard-to-fill” vacancies.

Applicants are asked to complete a diversity monitoring form and submit this with their job application securely and confidentially through our online recruitment portal. This information is not disclosed to recruiting managers, so shortlisting and selection decisions are based on vacancy-related information demonstrated by the applicant.

We do not set specific recruitment targets in relation to protected groups and appointments are made solely on merit.

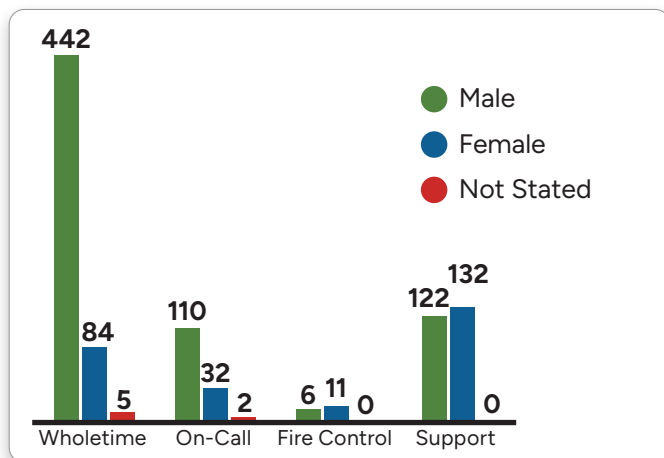
Our recruitment and selection processes are closely monitored to ensure all applicants are treated fairly and consistently in line with all legal, statutory and good practice requirements.

For the purposes of this report, a promotion is considered a change in role to a higher grade, achieved through a promotion process. Substantive promotion processes are open to both external and internal applicants, therefore the figures below include internal and external applications. This is so we can produce holistic, meaningful data and better monitor the conversion rates of applications to appointments for all candidates by protected group.



Applications for Employment and Promotion

By sex



During the year, a variety of support staff roles were advertised, our ongoing recruitment model for On-Call Firefighter vacancies continued, and a Wholetime Firefighter Campaign was launched.

For support staff applications, there was a fairly even gender balance with 52% of females and 48% of males attracted to apply.

In respect of Fire Control positions, the majority of applications received were from women (65%).

For all operational roles (Wholetime roles and On-Call Firefighter applications), women accounted for 17% of the overall applications, which is a significant rise from last year's figure of 11%. Analysing this further, 16% of applications for Wholetime roles were from women – up from 9% last year.

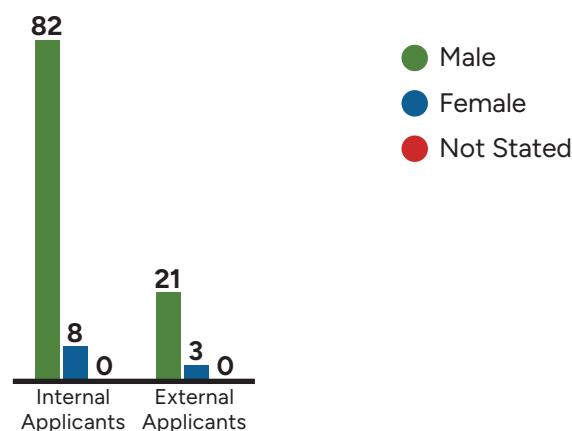
This rise could be attributed to the work done in the lead up to our Wholetime Firefighter Campaign. Women were specifically targeted to consider applying for the role of firefighter. As well as taster sessions (open to everyone), women were offered to join a fitness programme, designed to help them prepare for the physical elements of the selection process.

There has been a significant rise in the number of females applying for On-Call Firefighter vacancies. This year, more than double the number of women applied, up from 14 last year to 32. Therefore, the proportion of female applicants was 22% overall, up from last year's figure of 15%.

A proportion of applicants for operational roles did not wish to declare their gender. Overall, 1% (7) of applicants declined to record this. This is an increase from last year's data where only 2 applicants for support staff roles chose not to declare.

Recruitment/promotion processes for operational roles by sex

Promotions occur, in a large proportion, mainly within operational areas of the Service. These range from the role of Crew Commander up to Chief Fire Officer. This year, 23% of internal applications were from women – a significant increase from 9% last year. Of the external candidates applying to work for us, the proportion of women has also seen a notable increase. This year, 24% of applicants were female, compared to 13% the previous year.



Applications for Employment and Promotion

By ethnicity

	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnicities	Other ethnic groups	White		Prefer not to say
					White British Irish	Other white ethnic groups	
Wholetime	3	7	13	2	487	11	7
On-Call	0	2	4	0	125	10	3
Fire Control	0	0	1	0	16	0	0
Support	18	8	6	1	207	12	2
Total	21	17	24	3	835	33	12

We have aligned our data collection to the 2021 Census ethnicity classifications, so that we can compare our data to the most up to date community demographics.

10% of applicants overall, were from an ethnic minority background (including White ethnic minority groups), which is on a par with last year's figure.

The number of applicants from ethnic minority groups for On-Call roles has significantly increased. The percentage of applicants is more than double from last year, up from 5% to 11%. This increase may be attributed to the work of the On-Call Marketing Project, whose aim is to attract more applicants from different community groups.

The figure for Wholetime roles has also seen an increase, with 7% of ethnic minority applicants this year, compared to 2% last year.

The number of applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds attracted to Fire Control vacancies has increased to 6% from 3% last year.

The number of applicants for Support staff roles, from an ethnic minority background has continued to stay at 18% – unchanged from last year.

When considering ethnicity via the high-level ethnic groups, 7% of all applicants identified as belonging to the an Asian, Black, Mixed or

'Other' ethnic group combined (all ethnicities excluding White ethnic groups).

5% of Wholetime applicants are recorded within these categories, 4% of On-Call applicants and 13% of Support applicants.



Applications for Employment and Promotion

By ethnicity (continued)

Comparing our data with our local communities

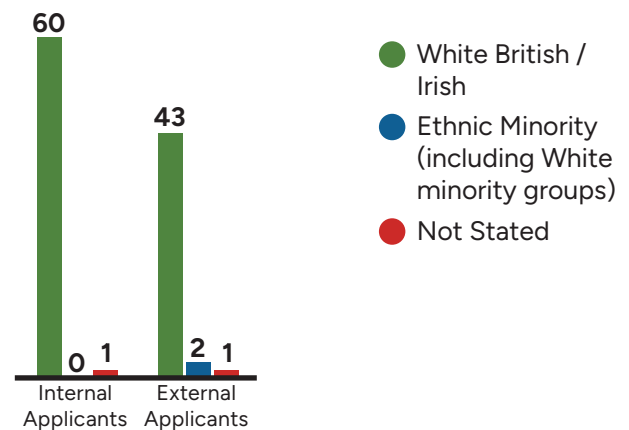
The proportion of our local communities who are from an ethnic minority background (including White minority groups) is 10%. 5% of local communities are from an Asian, Black, Mixed or 'Other' ethnic group combined (all ethnicities excluding all White ethnic groups).

Therefore, in the last year, we have successfully attracted a diverse range of applicants who are reflective of the communities we serve as an organisation.



Promotion processes for operational roles

As our recruitment processes for wholetime operational managers attracts internal candidates seeking promotion and external applicants attracted to work for us, we have examined the ethnicity of both sets of candidates. Two external applicants for operational roles, representing 4%, were from an ethnic minority background. This is an increase from last year, when all external candidates were from a White British background.



New Appointments 2022/23

At a glance

We define new appointments as those successful in securing a new role with HWFRS following a selection process. This may include current employees who have secured an internal promotion or a different role, as well as external candidates joining our Service.

95

total number of appointments

18%

of new appointments in operational roles were women



2021/22: 9%

3%

of new appointments declared a disability



2021/22: 1%

6%

of new appointments declared their sexual orientation as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual



2021/22: 9%

8%

of new appointments identified as belonging to an ethnic minority (incl White minority groups)

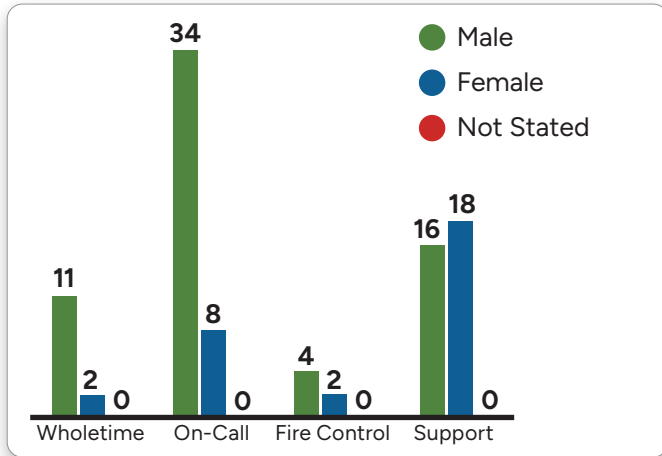


2021/22: 10%

New Appointments 2022/23

Sex and ethnicity

Sex

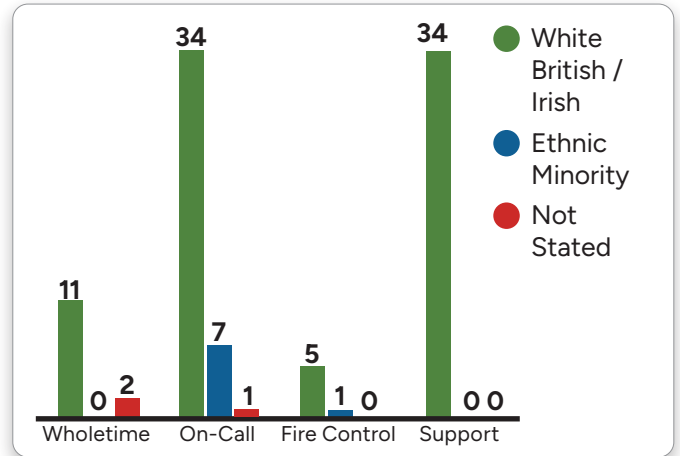


Women represented 32% of all new appointments.

The percentage of women appointed into operational roles at all ranks is 18% which is twice as many as last year (9%). Reasons for this difference are that this year saw a lower number of operational appointments overall, with an increase in the number of females appointed into On-Call Firefighter roles. Last year saw 4 female On-Call Firefighters being appointed, whereas this year, the figure has doubled to 8. This may be reflective of the work being done by the On-Call Marketing Project, as well as the practical support provided locally to female On-Call applicants in their preparation for the physical job-related tests. Historically, our statistics show that women are more likely than men to be unsuccessful at this stage of the selection process. Therefore, this increase in appointments is very pleasing to see.

Appointments for Support vacancies were evenly balanced with regards to sex profile.

Ethnicity



The percentage of new appointments from an ethnic minority background (including White minority groups) is 8% – a slight decrease from 10% in 2021-2022.

The proportion of new appointments from an ethnic minority background in operational roles is 13%, with all being appointed into On-Call Firefighter roles. This is an increase from 9% for this staff group.

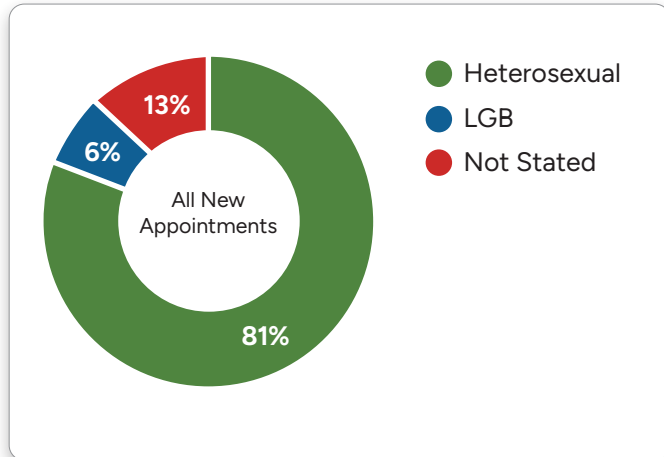
For support staff roles, all those appointed were from a White British/Irish background.

The number of new starters in Fire Control is very small, however statistically, 17% were from an ethnic minority background.

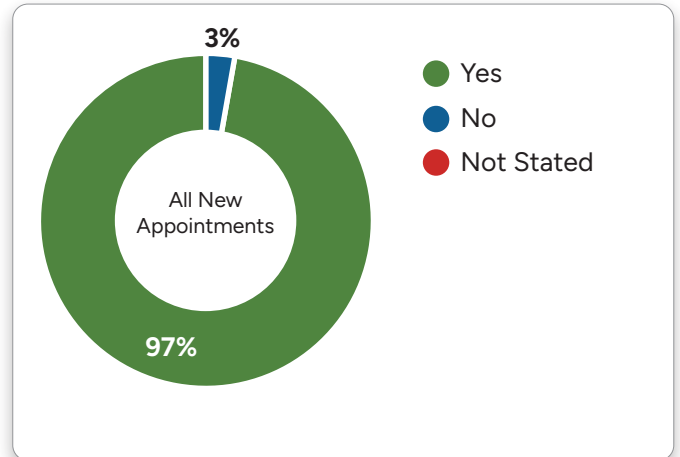
New Appointments 2022/23

Sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief, and age

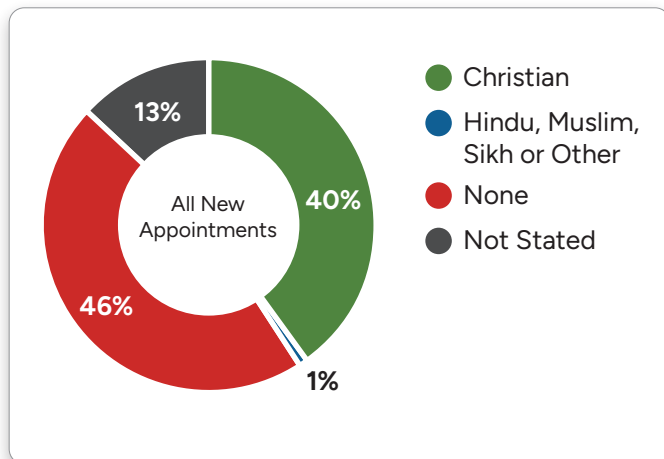
Sexual Orientation



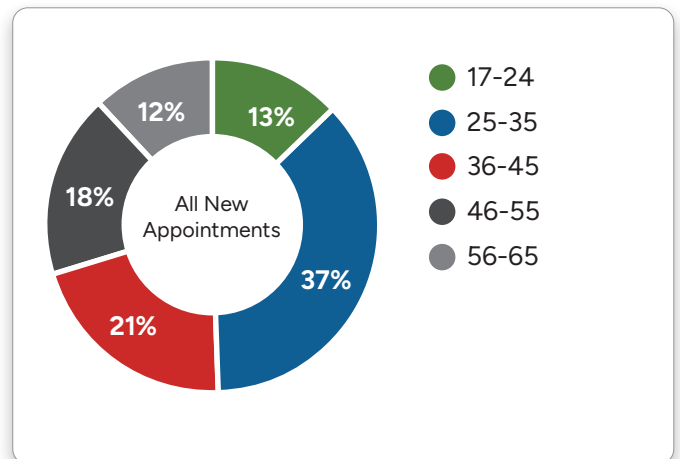
Disability



Religion and Belief



Age



6% of new appointments identified as being Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual, which is higher than 2 years ago (3%), but a decrease from last year's figure of 9%. It is pleasing to see that this statistic has generally increased during the last few years, indicating that new employees that identify as LGB feel confident to declare this protected characteristic for confidential monitoring purposes.

1% declared a religion other than Christian and the highest proportion of appointees were aged 25-35 years, in line with last year's figure. It is notable that new appointees in the 56-65 age bracket (12%) is 3 times higher than last year's figure of 4%. The number of appointees declaring a disability has increased to 3% – a rise of 2% from last year's figure.

Retention

At a glance

In 2022-2023, 93 employees left the Service. 75 of those were operational staff (52 On-Call; 23 Wholetime), 3 Fire Control staff and 15 Support staff¹¹. The highest number of leavers continues to be from the On-Call work group, which has been an area of focus for the Service, and indeed the sector as a whole. It is notable however, that the rate of turnover for On-Call staff has slowed from the previous year and it may be that the continued work of the On-Call Marketing Project will impact positively on this further.

30%

of leavers were aged 36–45
– the highest proportion
of leavers

2021/22: highest proportion
of leavers were aged 25-35

1%

of leavers declared a disability



2021/22: 4%

9%

of leavers belong to
an ethnic minority



2021/22: 13%

17%

of leavers were women (8% of
operational leavers were women)



2021/22: 20%

35%

of leavers had no religion or
belief (35% of leavers did not
disclose their religion or belief)

4.3%

of leavers declared their
sexual orientation as Lesbian,
Gay or Bisexual

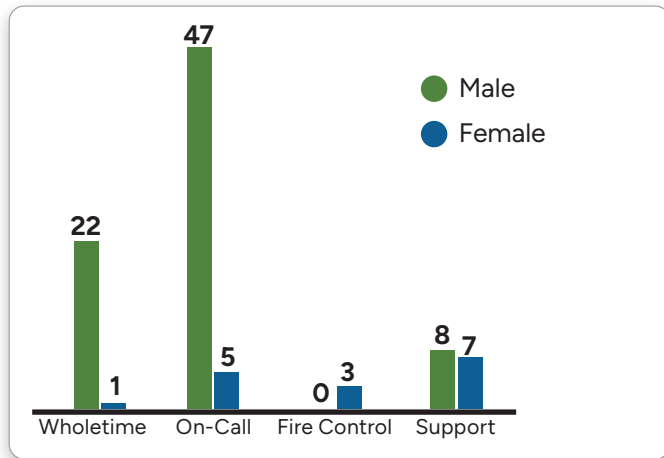


2021/22: no change

¹¹ Individuals that ended one of their dual contracts but remained in employment with the Service in another role have been included.

Retention (continued)

Leavers by sex

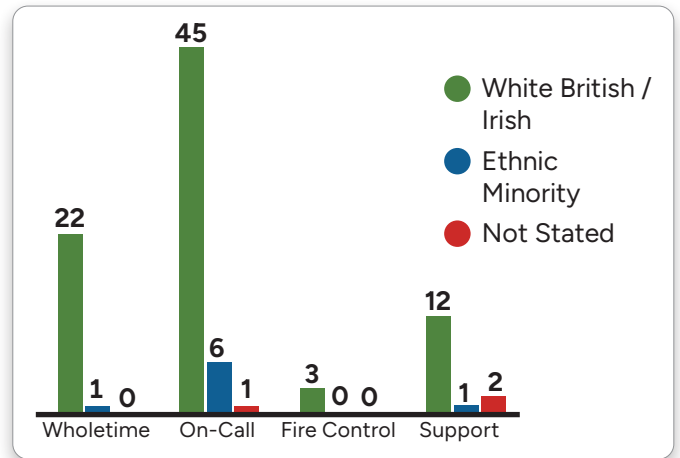


In the year ending 31 March 2023, the proportion of women who left the Service is 17%, which is a decrease from 20% last year. The small number of leavers from Fire Control were all female; however, this is the predominant gender within this workforce group, which has become more gender balanced this year. There was an increase in the number of females leaving the on-call workforce group (up to 5 from last year's figure of 1). Only 1 female left the wholetime workgroup within this year, a reduction from last year's figure (6).

Of operational leavers, 8% were women, which is a decrease from 9% last year.

Of the women who left the Service, 69% resigned, 25% retired and 6% (1) reached the end of a fixed term contract. The proportion of females joining the Service (32%) is considerably higher than the proportion of women leaving (17%). Similarly, with operational roles, the proportion of women appointed (18%) is again considerably higher than the proportion of operational females leaving the Service (8%).

Leavers by ethnicity



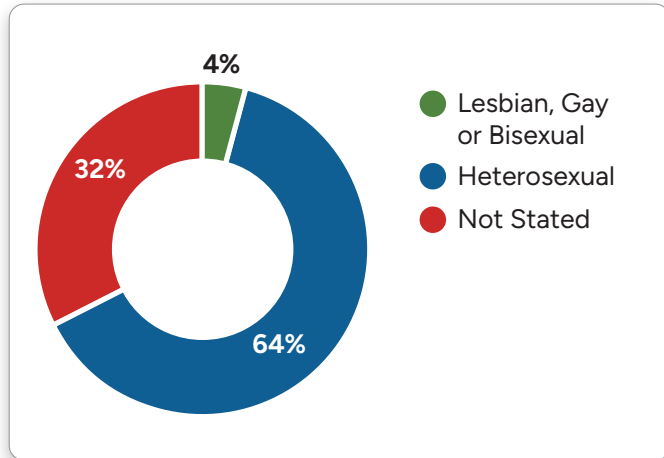
88% of leavers were White British/Irish, which has increased from last year's figure of 81%. Employees from an ethnic minority background accounted for 9% (8) of all leavers, which is a reduction from last year's figure of 13%.

For this year, the proportion of staff from an ethnic minority leaving the Service (9%) is only slightly higher than the proportion appointed to roles (8%).

Only 3 of the 93 employees (3%) leaving the Service did not record their ethnicity, in comparison to last year's figure of 7%.

Retention (continued)

Leavers by sexual orientation



The statistics in relation to the sexual orientation of leavers, is relatively similar to last year. The proportion of staff leaving the Service who identify as LGB is 4.3% (last year 4%). However, the proportion of new staff who have declared their sexual orientation as LGB is higher – 6%.

Those leavers not disclosing their sexual orientation is 32% (last year 33%).

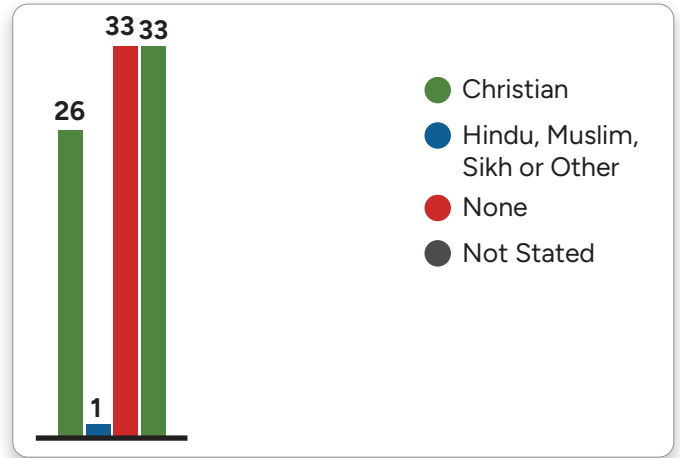
Leavers by disability

1% of staff who left the Service in 2022/23 declared a disability. This is lower than last year’s figure of 4%.

The number of new starters who declared a disability is 3%, which is higher than the number of leavers who recorded this.

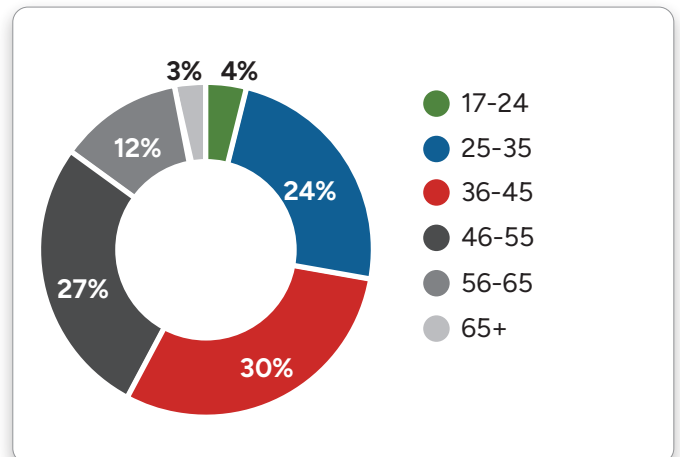
There were no employees leaving the Service who had not declared their disability status.

Leavers by religion or belief



Employees with no religion or belief accounted for 35% of leavers. Those of the Christian faith accounted for 28%. 35% did not disclose their religion or belief.

Leavers by age



The largest proportion of leavers were in the age group of 36-45 years, which is higher than last year (25-35). The number of leavers in this age group increased by 10% from last year. The highest proportion within this age group were from our On-Call workforce.

Retention (continued)

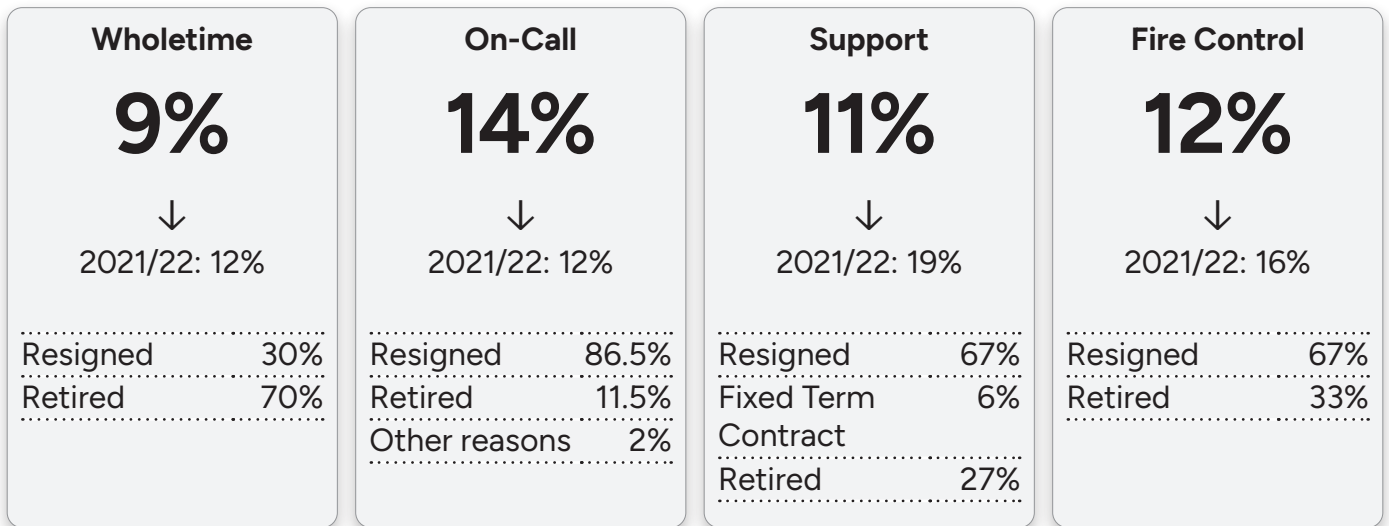
Turnover¹² and reasons for leaving

Staff turnover has decreased for every work group other than On-Call. The rate of turnover for On-Call has slightly increased, up by 1 percentage point from last year. The highest number of leavers were from this group and of those who resigned, 38% did not formally declare a reason and 27% cited primary work commitments or personal circumstances as their reason for leaving.

The number of retirements in this year (27) was higher than last year (23) and the majority of these were from the Wholetime work group. Of the support staff who resigned during this year, 6 did not record a reason for leaving.

17% of all leavers left within one year of employment, which is a slight increase from last year (16%).

Turnover rates



Disciplinary and grievances, bullying and harassment

There were 9 formal disciplinary cases during this year and all involved operational staff. 89% of cases involved male staff and 11% involved female members of staff. As the numbers are low, we cannot report these cases by any further protected characteristics for data protection reasons, however no concerns have been identified relating to protected groups.

There were 4 formal grievances raised during the year, with 50% being raised by male staff and 50% by female staff.

Bullying and Harassment

There were no formal cases of bullying and harassment reported.

¹² Staff turnover refers to the percentage of employees who leave an organisation and are replaced by new employees.

Gender Pay Gap as at 31 March 2023

As an employer with 250 or more employees, we have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 to publish gender pay gap information relating to our employees. We must publish this information on our external website and a dedicated Government website: gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk.

The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between men and women in a workforce. There are six calculations as follows:

- 1. Mean gender pay in hourly pay** – the percentage difference between the mean average hourly rates of men and women’s pay.
- 2. Median gender pay gap in hourly pay** – the percentage difference between the midpoints in the ranges of men and women’s pay.
- 3. Mean bonus gender pay gap**¹³
- 4. Median bonus gender pay gap**¹³
- 5. Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus payment**¹³
- 6. Proportion of men and women in each pay quartile** – calculated by dividing employees into four even groups according to their pay. The upper quartile with the highest level of pay and the lower quartile with the lowest levels of pay.

All staff who were deemed to be full pay relevant employees at 31 March 2023 are included. The figures are based on established contracted posts within the Service and include Wholetime / On-Call Firefighter dual roles and secondary employment contracts.

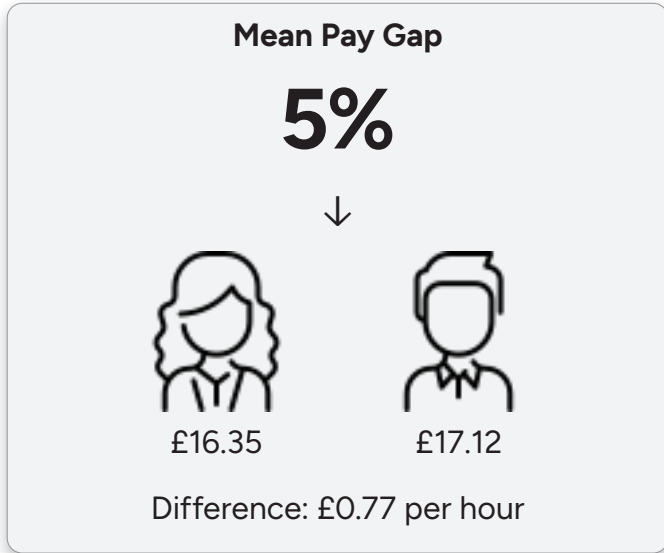
The salaries of all operational staff (Wholetime, On-Call and Fire Control) are established within the “Grey Book” (terms and conditions) and are standard throughout the UK Fire and Rescue Service. Support staff salary levels are based upon a job description formally evaluated for the role. Annual Pay awards are negotiated nationally.

For our On-Call employees, the average weekly working hours can vary significantly across this workforce group and drastically distort the calculations and so the nationally agreed basic fixed hourly rate of pay is used. It should also be noted that other Fire and Rescue Services may choose to calculate the hourly rate of On-Call and other employees differently and this should be taken into consideration if making direct comparisons.

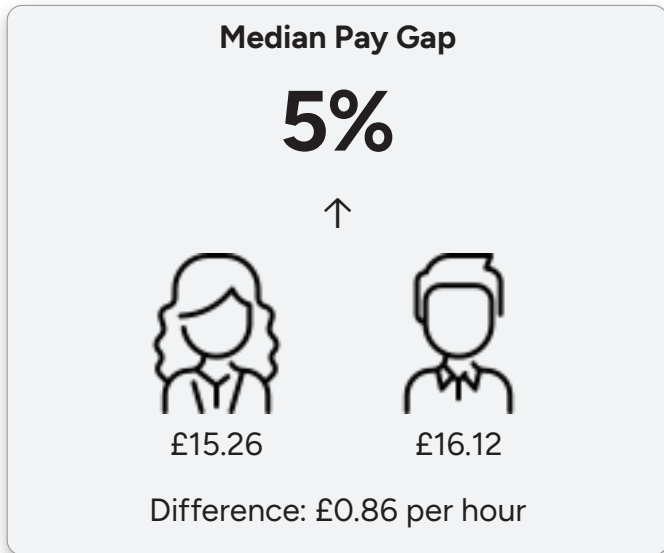
¹³ We do not pay bonuses to staff and therefore do not provide calculations relating to points 3, 4 and 5 above.

Our Pay Gap Figures

The **mean pay gap has reduced since last year**. Women on average earn 5% less than men in our organisation (7% in 2021/22).



The **median pay gap** shows the midpoint in the range of women’s pay is 5% less than the midpoint in the range of pay for men (an increase from 3% in 2021/22).



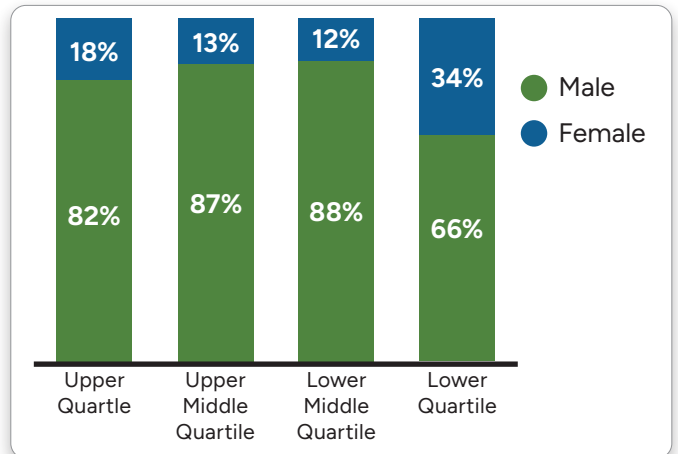
We believe **the gender pay gap does not arise from paying men and women differently for the same work** but is as a result of the roles in which they work and the salaries these roles attract.

Men and women in our organisation undertaking the same role are paid the same.

However, there are more men than women in our workforce and essentially more men occupying higher level positions within the Service.

Men and Women by Pay Quartiles

Our **pay quartile** data reflects our organisation’s current workforce profile – there are a high proportion of men compared to women.



This year, it is notable that there is an increase in the proportion of females within the upper and upper middle quartiles. In both quartiles, the proportion of females has increased by 2% from last year. This could be linked to an increase in the number of female staff appointed to higher paid roles and the decrease in the number of women leaving the Service.

We recognise a lack of representation of women in the Fire sector as a whole and continue to drive change through the implementation of our equality objectives and through activities guided by our Positive Action Statement of Intent.

Contributory Factors

There are some factors which may contribute to our gender pay gap:

- An imbalance in the number of men and women throughout the organisation, particularly women in senior management positions in operational roles, although we have seen this number increasing. This is particularly evident with the 2% increase of women in the upper pay quartiles this year.
- An under-representation of women in operational roles in the Fire sector as a whole.
- Within Support roles, more women than men tend to occupy posts within the lower pay scales such as administration, whereas specialist support roles which attract higher rates of pay, such as ICT, tend to be predominately male.
- Women are also more likely to take time out of the labour market to raise children and/or care for dependents which may delay career progression, contributing to a lack of representation of women at higher levels in the organisation.

Closing the Gap and Our Future Equality Work

Our ambitions to create a more inclusive organisation are set out in our [People Strategy](#) and the work we do to meet our equality objectives. We have also produced a Positive Action Statement of Intent, which we use as a guide to implementing activities to increase diversity.

Over the next year we will focus on:

- Continuing on our organisational cultural journey, by producing a Cultural Statement of Intent.
- Further embedding the Core Code of Ethics so that our staff understand the importance and value of these, through the introduction of interactive workshops, led by managers.
- Positive action to empower more operational women to reach their potential and apply for promotion
- Continuing to seek opportunities for engagement with minority groups in our communities, to promote working or volunteering for our organisation, as well as accessing our services.
- Promote, support and grow our staff networks so that members can continue to inspire and develop each other

Conclusion

Work to embed the importance of equality and inclusion across our organisation continues and we are very pleased with the progress made over the last year. We will always work hard to improve the diversity of our workforce, striving to reflect the rich mix of our communities and champion our organisation as an inclusive employer.

Further information on our equality, diversity and inclusion work can be found on our website: www.hwfire.org.uk. Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer can also be contacted at info@hwfire.org.uk and we welcome any feedback you may have on this report.

All published documents on our website work well with Google Translate, enabling the content to be accessed in languages other than English.

If you would like a paper copy of the report, or require it in an alternative format, please contact us on the details above.

Jeśli chcesz otrzymać papierową kopię raportu lub potrzebujesz go w alternatywnym formacie, skontaktuj się z nami w sprawie powyższych szczegółów.

Jei norite popierinés ataskaitos kopijos arba norite jos kitu formatu, susisiekite su mumis naudodami aukščiau pateiktą informaciją.

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ہی رگ ہطبار۔

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HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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