



Equality & Gender Pay Gap Report

2023 - 2024

1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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Foreword

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) remains committed to meeting the diverse needs of the communities we serve. We are dedicated to building and nurturing a professional, safe and inclusive workplace culture, where our leadership is diverse and visible, and our staff feel respected, valued and able to thrive. Everything we do is underpinned by the Core Code of Ethics and we prioritise learning and continual improvements to achieve an inclusive environment. This report outlines the work we have undertaken over the year 2023/2024, 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 which requires public bodies with 150 or more employees to show how they meet the Equality Duty and consider how their activities affect people with protected characteristics. They also need to publish information at least annually about their employees.

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 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

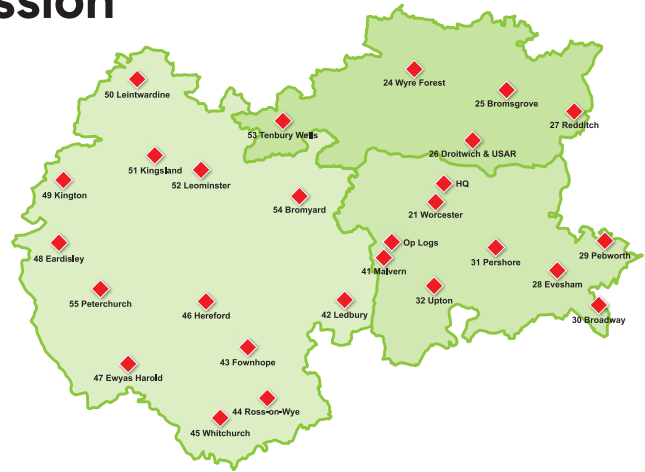
Chief Fire Officer /
Chief Executive



Our Purpose, Vision and Mission

Who We Are

HWFRS receives approximately 10,000 emergency calls each year requesting assistance at a wide variety of incidents, including property and countryside fires, Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs), collapsed structures, water rescues, hazardous materials and animal rescues. We attend on average 8,006 incidents each year – that equates to 154 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 Fire Control who are frontline for receiving emergency calls and deploying crews to incidents. In addition, our professional teams provide

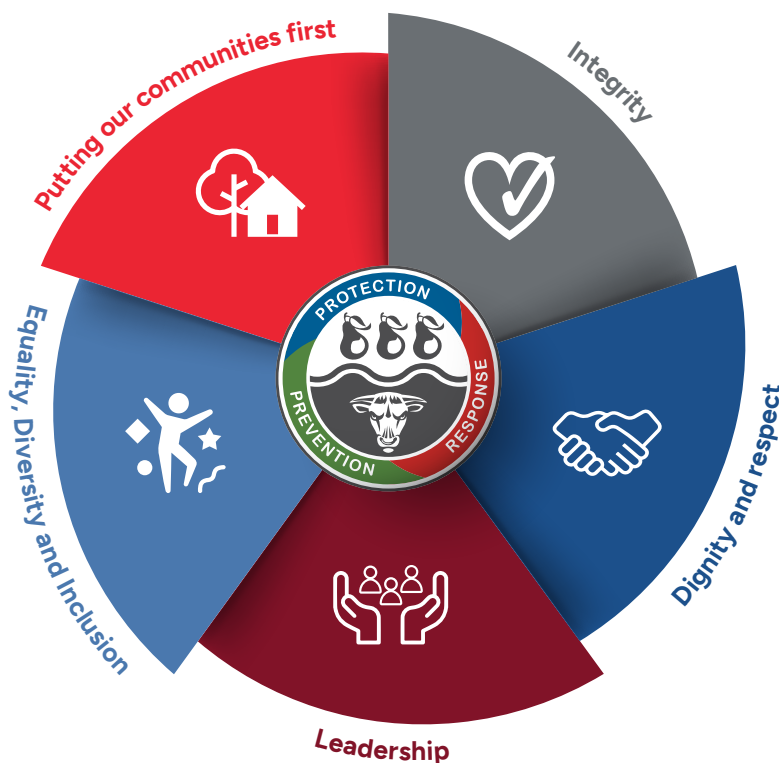
support and enabling services such as ICT, HR & Development and Payroll, Operational Logistics and Finance.

Our core strategies provide a clear focus on our primary functions: Response, Protection and Prevention. Our Purpose, Vision and Mission represents our commitment to putting our communities first, keeping people safe from fire and other risks and protecting the most vulnerable. They underpin everything we do, which benefits us as individuals, the whole Service and everyone in the communities we serve. To effectively deliver our services, 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.



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.



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.



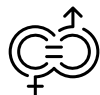
Race

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



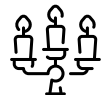
Gender reassignment

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



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.



Marriage and civil partnership

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



Sexual orientation

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



Sex

A man or a woman.



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

The Statutory Context continued

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 general 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

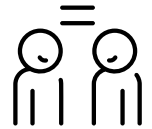
790,709

total estimated population of Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Race

10%

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



Age

176,827

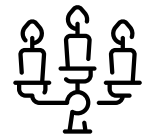
people aged 66+ years



Religion or belief

53% Christian

38% no religion or belief



Disability

143,322

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



Sexual Orientation

2% of people over 16 identified as LGB+



Sex

49% male

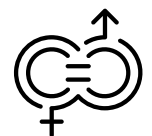
51% female



Gender Reassignment

0.5%

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



Census – Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

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 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Where possible, an arrow indicates where there is a change from last year's report 2022/2023.'



Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2023/24

Progress against our current equality objectives for 2021-2025 are shown below:

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.

- Having fully adopted the **National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) Core Code of Ethics**, which outline the ethical principles of expected inclusive behaviour, extensive work has taken place to embed these across our organisation. The Service's Culture & Ethics Steering Group introduced ethical dilemma workshop toolkits, as an interactive way of highlighting what the Core Code means to all our staff. Practical sessions are delivered locally by managers, using a resource pack with details of the Code and dilemmas to discuss, with positive feedback received about the format. Our approach on this was highlighted at a national level through a NFCC Case Study, published and available for other fire services to view as an example of best practice.
- In Spring 2023, we conducted a comprehensive **independent cultural audit** to assess our organisational culture and practices. The outcomes contributed towards a number of plans and programmes, and directly informed the content of our Service-wide Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training Programme launched this year.
- A **Positive Action Statement of Intent** was produced to outline how we will utilise positive action principles to encourage under-represented groups within our communities to engage with recruitment and prevention activities.
- The use of **People (equality) Impact Assessments (PIAs)** is in place within the Service supported by a quality assurance process to ensure the consistency and quality of each assessment. This type of assessment helps to identify any potential adverse impacts on different groups of people when a policy, procedure or service is introduced or changed, and measures are then put in place to reduce or remove these impacts.
- An external **speaking up service** continues to be available for staff, providing a mechanism to report workplace issues or concerns to an independent source, which complements our range of established internal reporting routes.



Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2023/24 continued

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.

- Our Prevention team continue to use the **NFCC Equality of Access** documents which draw together research, statistics and information to help fire services engage with community groups who may not normally engage with our sector. Our Prevention Engagement Officers work with crews to find ways of improving access to our services for all sections of the community. As part of this targeted work, we have attended several community events at local mosques, generating 41 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs).
- Our Prevention team have linked with local partners to promote **accessible services** to communities. The HFSV leaflet is available in a variety of formats including large print, easy read and multiple languages which is reflective of our communities.
- We are proud to continue supporting community events like **Pride** as an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to inclusivity and highlighting our key safety messages and generate HFSVs. They also provide opportunities to promote working or volunteering with us.
- Each Fire Station uses the **NFCC Campaign Calendar** to raise public awareness of various risks such as the "Fire Kills" campaign. The calendar also includes notable EDI events and key religious and

cultural festivals, such as Christmas, Chinese New Year and Diwali so that key fire safety messages can be tailored and promoted at relevant times to all sections of our communities.

- Our **Fire Cadets** (formerly the Young Firefighters Association) is a uniformed youth programme designed to engage young people, typically aged 13-17, in activities that build their skills, confidence, and teamwork abilities. The number of girls within our Fire Cadets has increased from 28% last year, to 33%. The Fire Cadets take part in a structured training programme where they learn a variety of skills and practical exercises that focus on service activities, prevention activities and social responsibility.

Supporting local pride celebrations



Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2023/24 continued

- 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 scheme is aimed at Year 10 students who are road users including car passengers, pedestrians, cyclists and soon-to-be young drivers. The interactive workshops provide them with the education, tools and confidence to make safe choices on the road. The programme includes realistic RTC 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 are available so that as many young people as possible can access the programme, making it very inclusive.



YOUR IMPACT Better young drivers. Safer passengers. Confident choices.



- The **Young Citizens Challenge** has also taken place this year; delivered to Year 6 school students and is designed to raise awareness of personal and community safety focused on fire, road, water and electrical safety along with issues around anti-social behaviour, stranger danger and knife crime.
- Our Corporate Communications team use their expertise to support us in engaging with our communities via **social media platforms** and other multimedia methods, promoting safety messages, key Service events or activities, as well as highlighting us as an inclusive employer.

Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2023/24 continued

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 significant Service-wide **Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Training Programme**, delivered by an external specialist provider, has launched its roll out to all staff, volunteers and Fire Authority members. The aim of the programme has been to enhance our understanding of the importance of EDI in the workplace and our responsibility in supporting HWFRS in being a truly inclusive workplace. As of 31 March 2024, 50% of members of staff have attended the programme, which is being delivered successfully and is receiving consistently positive delegate feedback.
- The annual **Appraisal** process has been updated and moved online, which has resulted in an improved appraisal experience for staff and managers. The improved process includes assessing staff performance against the ethical principle of EDI and reviewing reasonable adjustments that may be in place for individuals.
- A **Staff Engagement Survey** carried out in 2023 had an excellent participation rate (65%) and an exceptional positive engagement score of 84%. The results demonstrated that HWFRS is a good place to work and employees are highly committed and proud to work for the

organisation. The survey indicated that most employees feel like they belong at HWFRS and can be their true self, with higher than average 'BELONG' scores from female employees and staff from ethnic minority groups. Feedback from the Staff Survey also informed the EDI Training programme content.



- A **wealth of EDI information** is available for staff to access, including community profile data, supplemented by regular awareness campaigns. Campaigns and topics are delivered via digital signage situated on Fire Stations and within departments, with engaging media content produced by our talented corporate communications team. Resources on our staff intranet have been improved to create a 'hub' of information that is more visually appealing and accessible via tablets and mobile devices. Opportunities to attend learning and development sessions are also promoted to staff regularly, such as one-hour 'Listen and Learn' webinars facilitated through the NFCC.

Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2023/24 continued

- A cohort of male and female staff attended the first national NFCC **Menopause Conference**, specifically focusing on considerations for the fire service, which prompted posters to be distributed raising awareness on menopausal symptoms and where to find more information.
- **Neurodiversity training** for senior managers raised awareness and understanding of neurodiversity, complimenting the support systems we have in place for staff.
- 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 (WFS) UK** to demonstrate our commitment to support gender equality in the Fire and Rescue Service. We were delighted that the Chair of our Women's Network was recognised with the Dany Cotton Inspiring Leadership Award from WFS.



Video still from our Neurodiversity Celebration Week Video

Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2023/24 continued

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** continues to grow and support the Service in raising awareness of neurodiversity and how people can be supported in the workplace. Input is given to new recruits at induction so they feel more confident to seek support. A highlight for the network was the production of an informational video, where staff across the Service joined with network members to convey key messages in an engaging way. The video was shared on social media with lots of positive feedback.
- Our women's network, **Women@HWFire**, continues to be a positive, supportive element within our organisation. Activities of the Network this year included the following:
 - Members arranged a Wellbeing Walk on the Malvern Hills to celebrate International Women's Day.
 - There is regular liaison with our colleagues in West Mercia Police's women's network who invited staff to join an event with speakers from policing and the fire service.
 - Women@HWFire facilitated an inspiring event, which was open to all staff. The day featured motivational talks

from accomplished female staff from the fire and police sector. The '**Lift as you climb**' event was also open to colleagues in West Mercia Police and was a fantastic development and networking opportunity, well received by all attendees.

- Members attended an online **Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Masterclass on Menopause**, and staff were offered the opportunity to attend a **Menopause Nutritional Course** hosted by West Mercia Police.
- A new national LGBT+ network was launched, **UK Fire Pride**. It is the first network of its kind for the UK fire sector, providing support and guidance, with a national conference planned in 2024.
- **Inclusive recruitment** practices have been expanded to enable our selection processes to be neurodiverse-friendly.
- We continue to be part of **Hate Incident Partnership** forums in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire, which comprises of different organisations and charities whose aim is to reduce hate crime within our communities. Our involvement helps us to understand issues and support initiatives where possible.



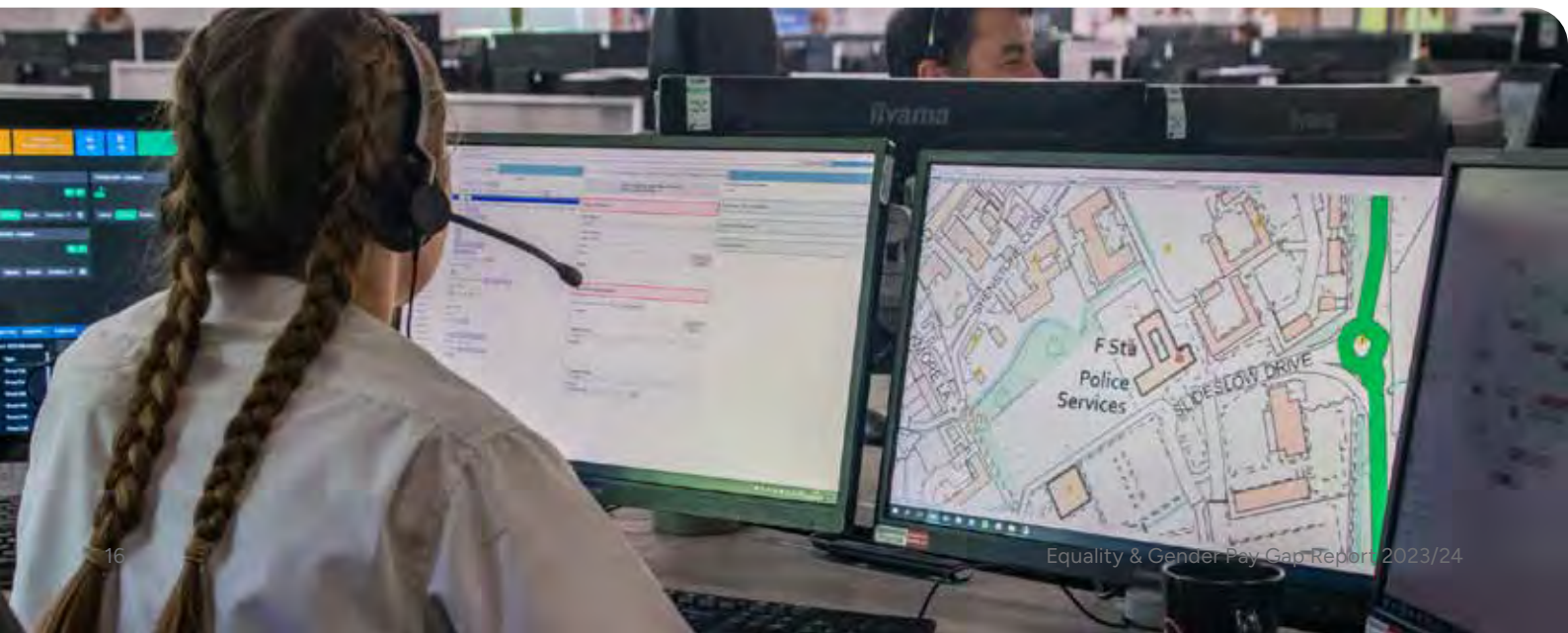
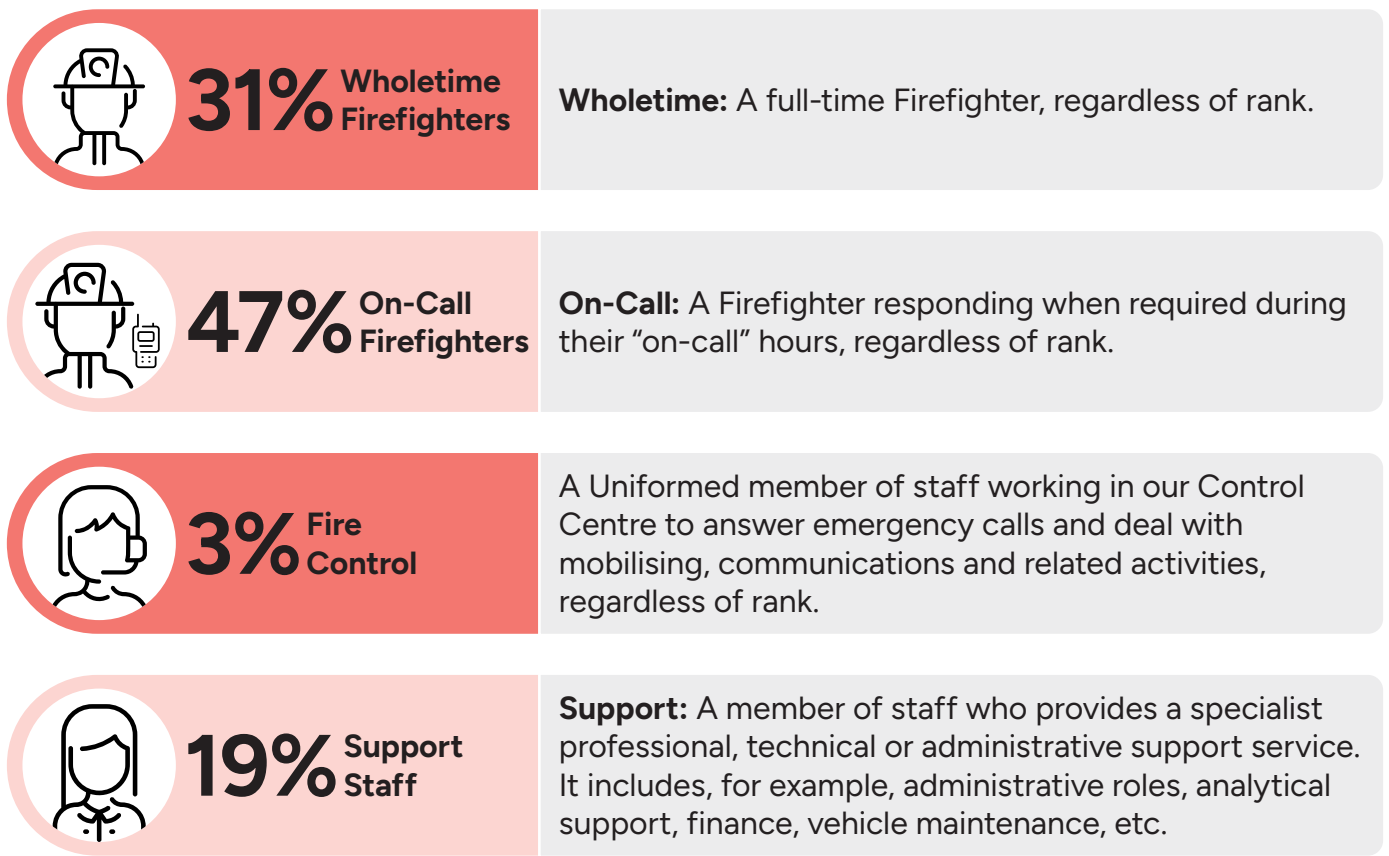
Women @HWFire 'Lift as you climb' event - November 2023

Our Workforce Profile

Our Workforce at a Glance

As at 31 March 2024, there are 764 total posts occupied. In analysing our workforce data, secondary contracts are included 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, that 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 continued

30%

of employees are aged 36-45 years – the largest proportion of the workforce (the same age group as the last 2 years)

20%

of the workforce are female



2022/23: 19%

2%

of the workforce declared that they are disabled

10%

of operational staff are female



2022/23: 9%

5%

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



2022/23: 5%

35%

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

2.5%

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

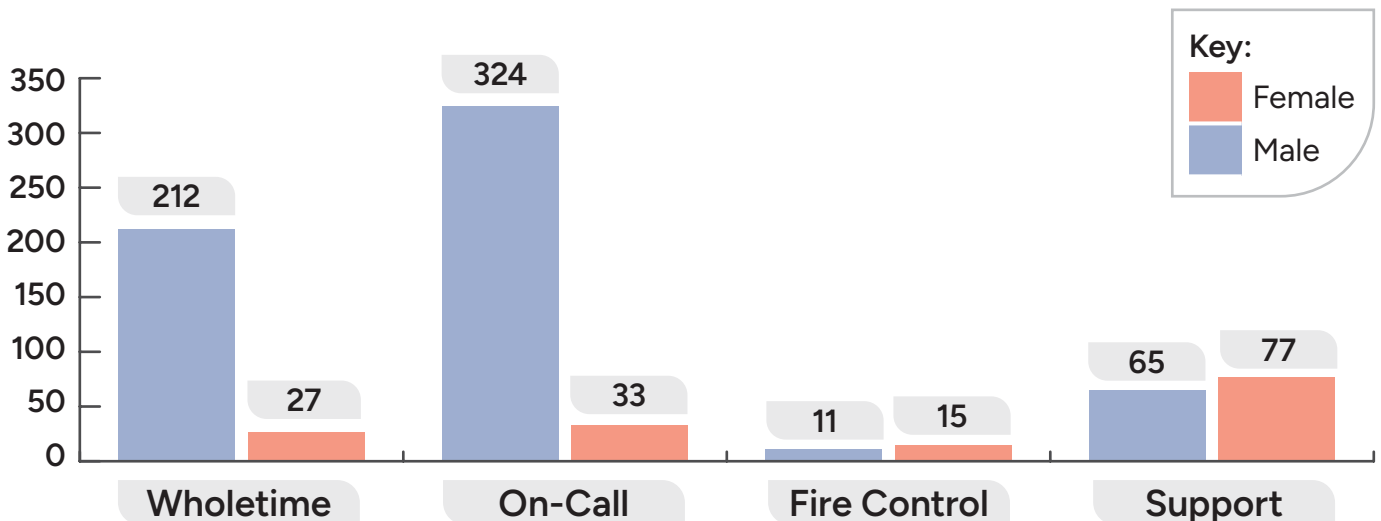
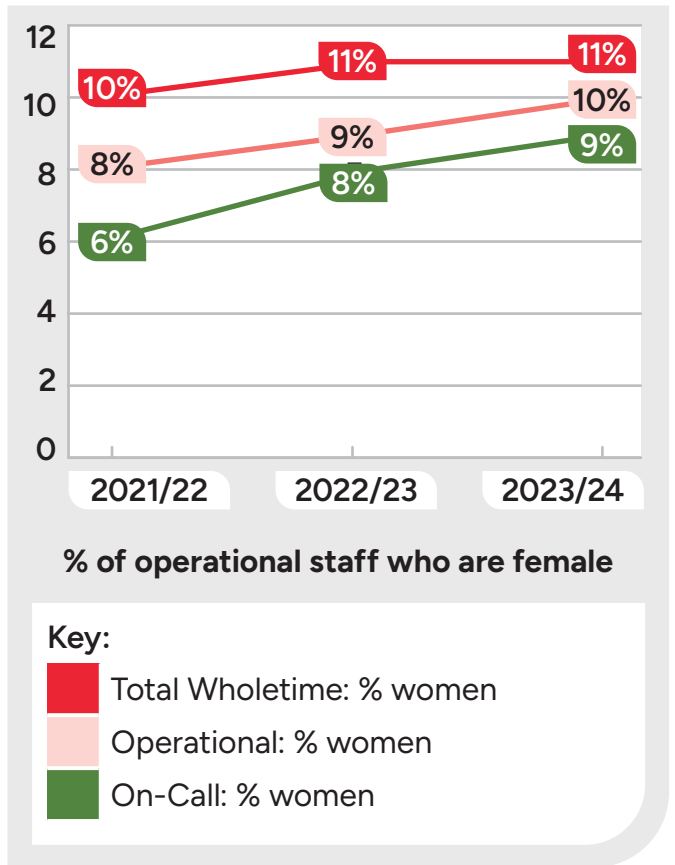
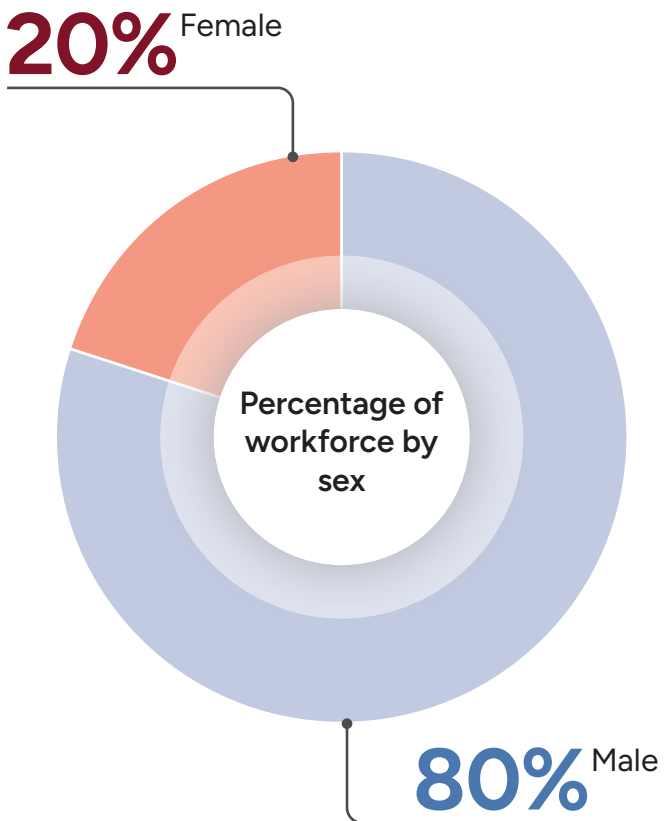


2022/23: 3%

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 20%, a further increase from last year (19%).



Our Workforce Profile

Profile of Employees by Sex continued

Examining Trends

Wholetime and On-Call Staff: The percentage of females in our Wholetime workforce group has remained at 11%. The percentage of females in our On-Call workforce group has steadily increased over the last 2 years and is now 9%.

Fire Control and Support Staff: There is a fairly even balance of males and females within both of these workforces.

The Service's workforce is not currently reflective of the local population of Herefordshire and Worcestershire in respect

of sex². This under-representation is a similar trend to that of the fire sector as a whole, as nationally, 9.3% of firefighters are female³. The proportion of our operational staff who are female (10%) is above the national average. However, we will continue to work to address this imbalance.

Data on Transgender employees

We recognise that monitoring numbers of transgender employees is highly sensitive and for data protection reasons we do not publish this information. However, guidance and information to support managers and staff is published and available on our staff intranet.



² Census – Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

³ Home Office (2024) [Fire statistics data tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of Employees by Ethnicity

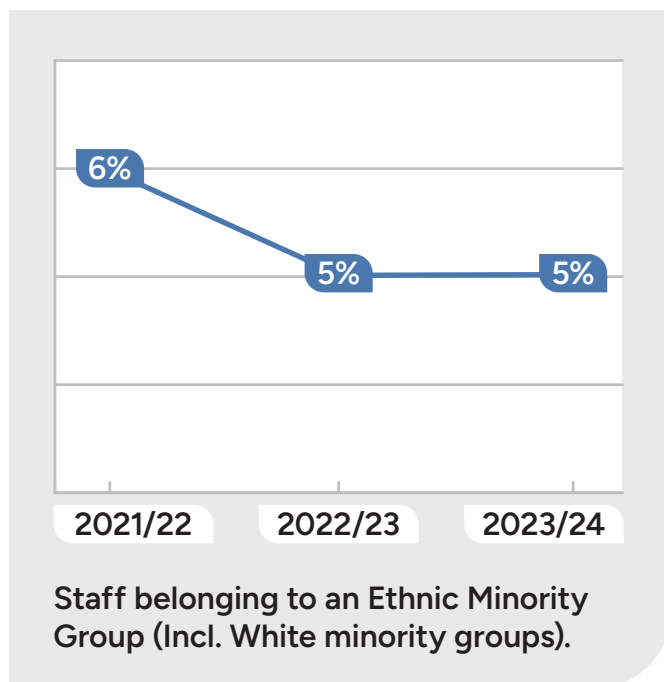
Our ethnicity data is presented via the five high-level ethnic groups reflecting the Census classifications in order to provide more comparable insights into the make-up of our workforce.

The profile of employees belonging to an ethnic minority group (including White minority groups)⁴ remains the same as last year – 5%.

Data from the 2021 Census shows that 10% of our local communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire belong to an ethnic minority group (including White minority groups)⁵.

Our employee declaration rate for ethnicity has increased again this year and now stands at 97%. In comparison, 91.2% of Fire Services employees nationally declared their ethnicity⁶.

	Asian or British Asian	Black or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnicities	Other ethnic groups	White		Prefer not to say
					White British Irish	Other white ethnic groups	
Wholetime	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	95.4%	1.3%	2.1%
On-Call	0.3%	0.3%	2%	0.0%	90.5%	3.4%	3.6%
Fire Control	0%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	96.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Support	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%	0.0%	89.4%	1.4%	5.6%
Total	0.3%	0.4%	1.7%	0.0%	92.0%	2.2%	3.4%



⁴ White minority ethnic groups can include groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups.

⁵ Office of National Statistics (2021) Census

⁶ Home Office (2024) [Fire statistics data tables](#)



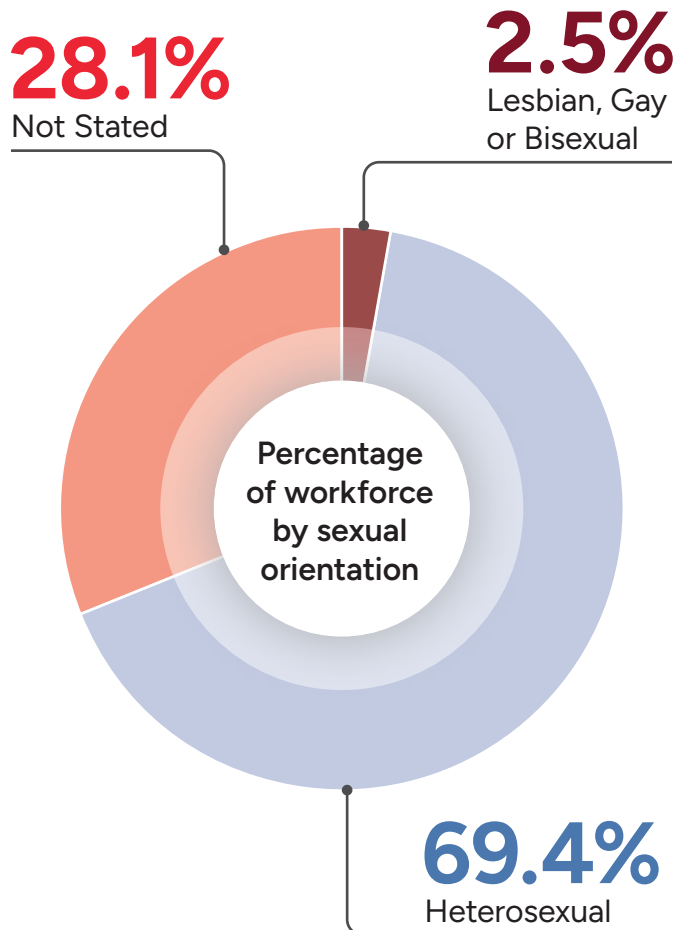
Our Workforce Profile

Profile of Employees by Sexual Orientation

The proportion of staff across the workforce who identify as Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) has decreased very slightly to 2.5% (3% last year). 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 LGB+⁷ and so the figure relating to our staff is in line with our communities. Home Office data indicates that 4.9% of all staff employed by Fire and Rescue Authorities across England identify as LGB+⁸.

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 72% this year.

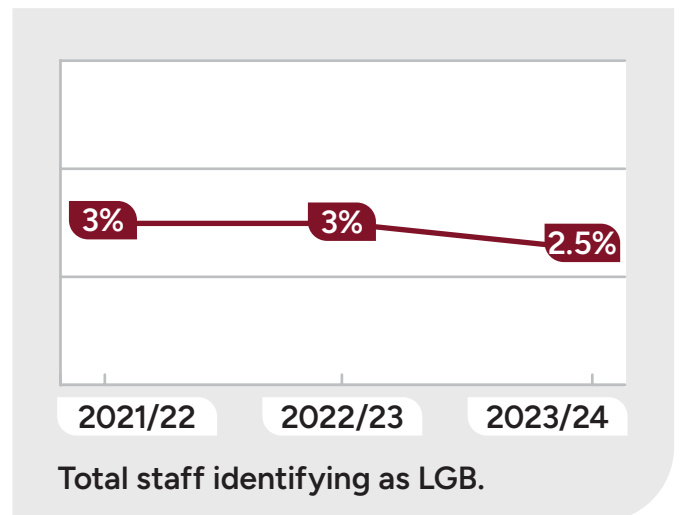


National Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) data also shows an increase in declaration rates, with 72% of all FRS staff in England recording their sexual orientation - meaning that our figure is in line with the national statistic⁸.

Examining Trends

Over the last few years, our Service has seen an increase in the proportion of staff declaring that they identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (from 1% in 2020). The percentage this year is very slightly lower, however it is still reflective of our communities and the declaration rate overall for this protected characteristic continues to rise. Although the data is anonymised, this continual increase may indicate that our existing staff and new starters are more comfortable providing the information and this is a trend we welcome.

The Service supports local Pride events as an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to inclusivity and highlight our key safety messages and generate HFSVs. It is also an opportunity to promote working or volunteering with us. On a national level, an LGBTQ+ fire service network was launched during the year, which our Service is proud to be part of. The first UK Fire PRIDE conference is due to take place in 2024.



⁷ Office of National Statistics (2021) Census

⁸ Home Office (2024) [Fire statistics data tables](#)

Our Workforce Profile

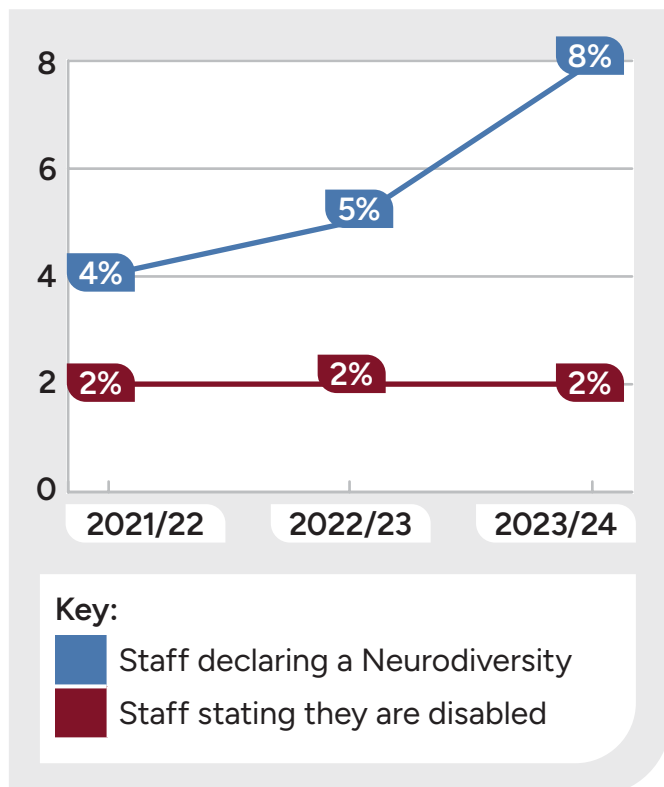
Profile of Employees by Disability

The disability profile across the workforce is 2%, which has remained unchanged for the last 4 years.

Although some neurodiverse conditions may meet the definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010, individuals with Dyslexia and other types of neurodiversity do not necessarily consider themselves to be disabled. The number of neurodiverse staff seeking support in the workplace continues to increase, likely due to the increased awareness in the Service.

There are now 8% of staff who have declared a neurodiversity, with Dyslexia the most common.

This percentage figure has doubled in 2 years and as the British Dyslexia Association estimates that 10% of the population is dyslexic, we could reasonably expect this figure to continue to rise.⁹



The Service has a Neurodiverse Staff Network, with the Assistant Chief Fire Officer as organisational sponsor. With their active support, the Network aims to increase awareness about the strengths and challenges associated with different types of neurodiversity. A major highlight of the year was the production of an informational video, explaining facts and statistics around neurodiversity, with many staff across the Service joined by with members of the Network to take part in the film. The video was used to promote Neurodiversity Week but will also be used in the future to highlight the Service as an inclusive employer.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) awareness training was delivered to senior managers with further neurodiversity training proposed for the future. In addition to this, an updated toolkit for managers was developed, providing comprehensive guidance on practical and reasonable adjustments.

⁹ British Dyslexia Association (2019) Dyslexia

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of Employees by Religion or Belief

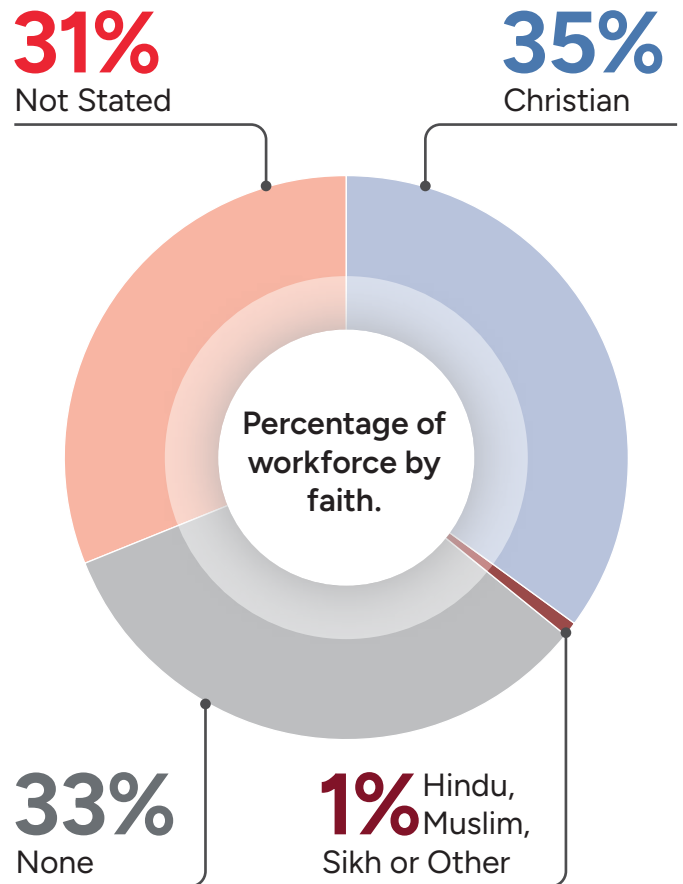
Christianity is the largest religious group within our Service at 35% (a slight decrease from 36% last year) and this is followed by 33% of staff with no religion or belief at all (a rise from 32% in 2023). The proportion of other faiths when combined account for 1% of the workforce, which is unchanged from last year.

Christianity is the largest religious group in our local communities 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 religions. Of these, census data shows that the Muslim faith is the most practiced within Herefordshire and Worcestershire, after Christianity¹⁰.

Stronger links with our local Muslim communities has been developed over the last year. Our Prevention team have attended community events at local mosques and fire stations have contacted local Islamic groups including an Islamic College, to actively promote their Station open days as welcoming events for everyone.

Profile of employees: pregnancy and maternity

We collect data relating to other protected characteristics such as the number of female employees taking maternity leave. 1% of women employed by the Service were on maternity leave during 2023/24. There are a number of family friendly policies in place and the enhanced maternity pay offer planned for 2024 will provide further benefits and support.



¹⁰ Office of National Statistics (2021) Census

Our Workforce Profile

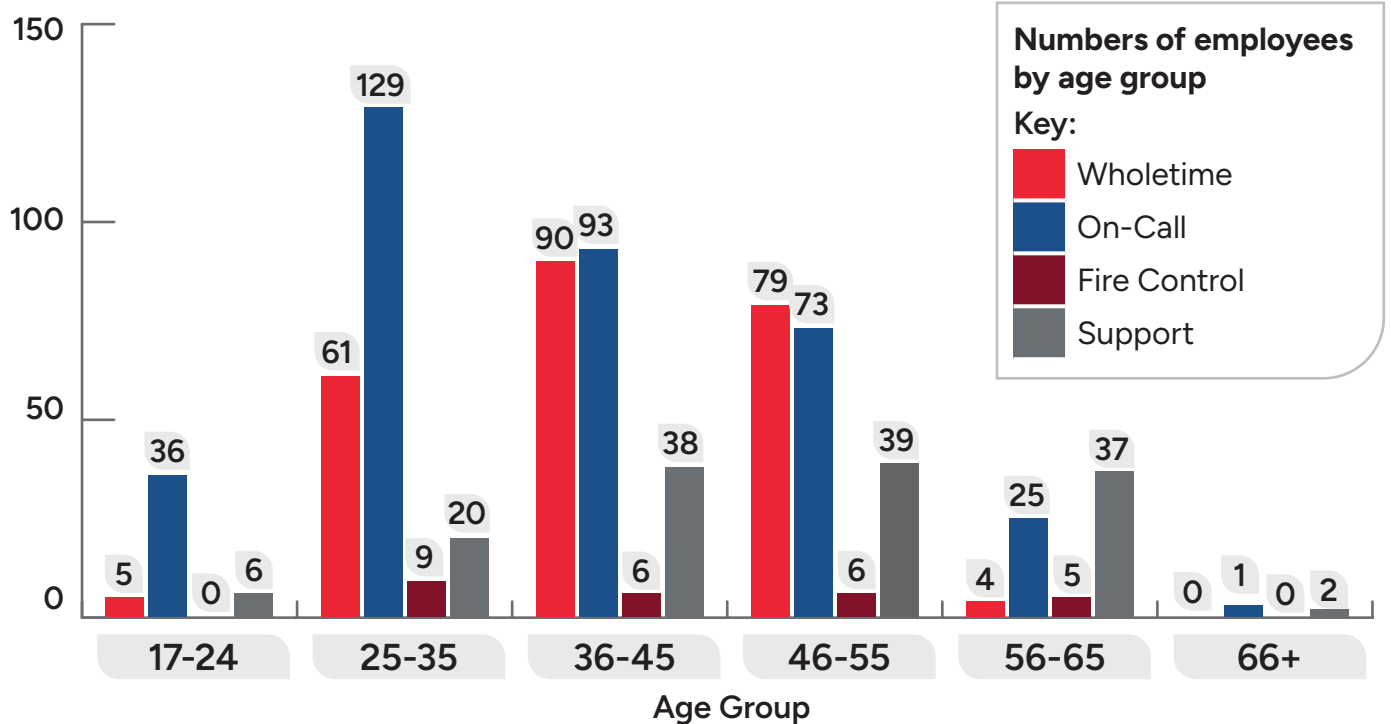
Profile of Employees by Age

The largest proportion of our workforce is aged between 36 and 45 years (30% of the entire workforce). This is the same age group as the last 2 years. The average age of our workforce continues to be 43 years.

The largest proportion of Wholetime staff are aged between 36 and 45 years. The majority of On-Call staff are aged between 25 and 35 years, which is on a par with the data for the last 2 years. In Fire Control, the age of staff is fairly evenly spread across the groups, although the highest proportion are in the 25-35 age category. Similarly, the majority of

support staff are also distributed across the age groups, but the highest proportion are in the 46-55 group (27%).

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

594

total number of applications received

14%

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



2022/23: 10%

22%

of applicants for On-Call Firefighter vacancies are female



2022/23: 22%

7%

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



2022/23: 11%

16%

of external applicants for Wholetime promotion processes are from an ethnic minority background (incl White minority groups)



2022/23: 4%

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. This includes ‘substantive’ promotion processes which are open to both external and internal applicants.

Applications for Employment and Promotion

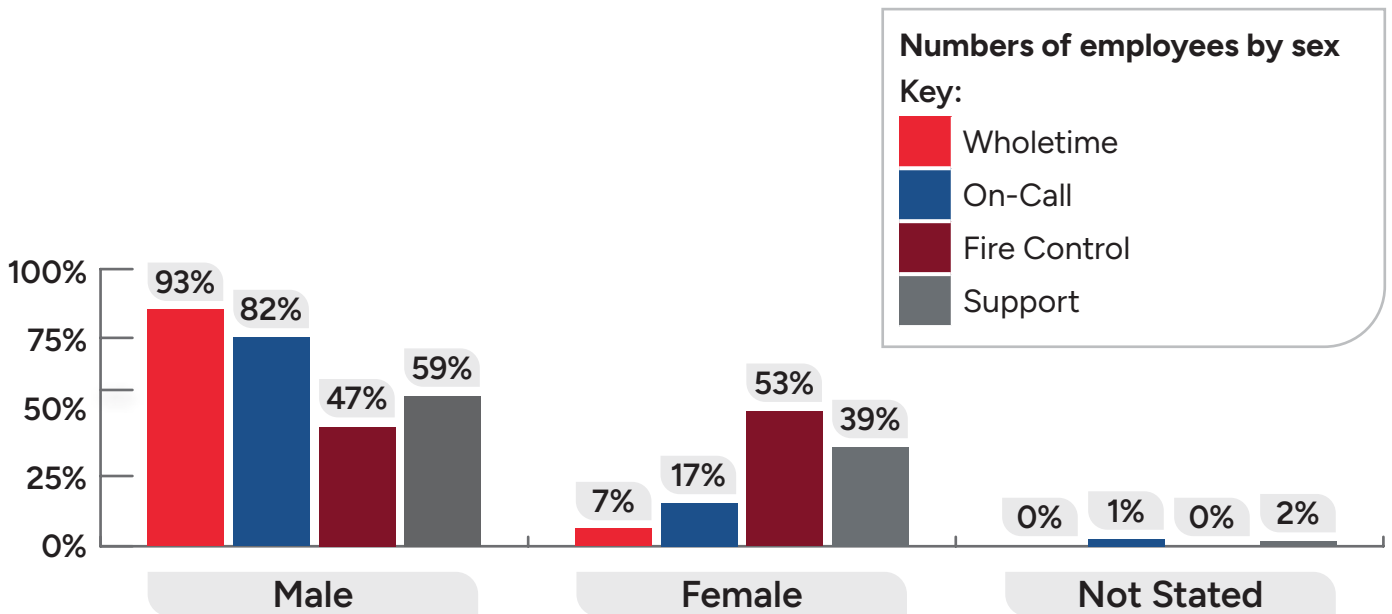
By Sex

During the year, there were 594 applications for employment or promotion received.

For Fire Control applications, there were no significant differences in the sex of those attracted to apply for positions. Support staff applications saw a reduction in the proportion of women applying for roles (39%) compared to last year (52%). However, the type of support roles advertised during the

year varied enormously from analyst posts to logistics positions, therefore attracting a wider range of people of both sexes.

Applications for all Wholetime posts comprised of 7% females, which is a reduction from last year's figure of 16%. The Service did not run a Wholetime Firefighter campaign this year which may account for the difference shown.

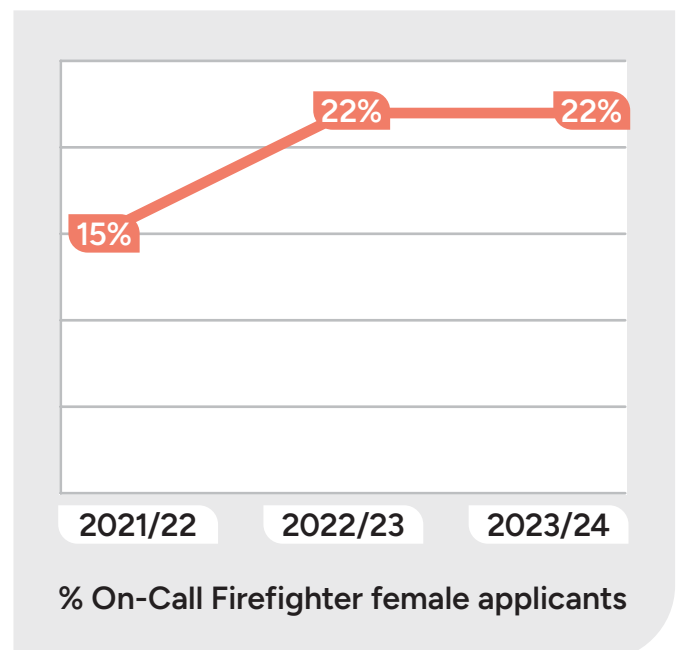


Examining Trends

Applications for On-Call posts

For our On-Call workforce, there are internal opportunities for promotion, in addition to recruitment at entry level (On-Call Firefighter). We continually recruit for On-Call Firefighters and this presents an ongoing opportunity to attract more women to the sector. We have examined trends for this role in particular.

The proportion of female applicants for this role has remained at a steady 22%. Our On-Call Engagement Team continue to facilitate recruitment promotional activities for this workgroup.



Applications for Employment and Promotion

By Ethnicity

Of the 594 applications received, we are delighted to see that overall, the proportion of applicants from an ethnic minority background (including White ethnic minority groups) has risen to 14% - an increase from last year's figure of 10%. As the proportion of

our local communities from an ethnic minority background (including White minority groups) is 10%, it is very pleasing that we are attracting a diverse range of applicants who are reflective of our communities.

	Total no of applications received	Asian or British Asian	Black or Black British	Mixed or Multiple ethnicities	Other ethnic groups	White		Prefer not to say
						White British Irish	Other white ethnic groups	
Wholetime	87	0%	2%	5%	0%	90%	2%	1%
On-Call	174	0%	1%	1%	0%	94%	3%	2%
Fire Control	57	2%	4%	0%	0%	93%	2%	0%
Support	276	9%	8%	2%	0.4%	72%	6%	4%
TOTAL	594							

Furthermore, when considering ethnicity via the overall ethnic groups, 10% of all applicants identified as belonging to an Asian, Black, Mixed or 'Other' ethnic group combined (all ethnicities excluding White ethnic groups).

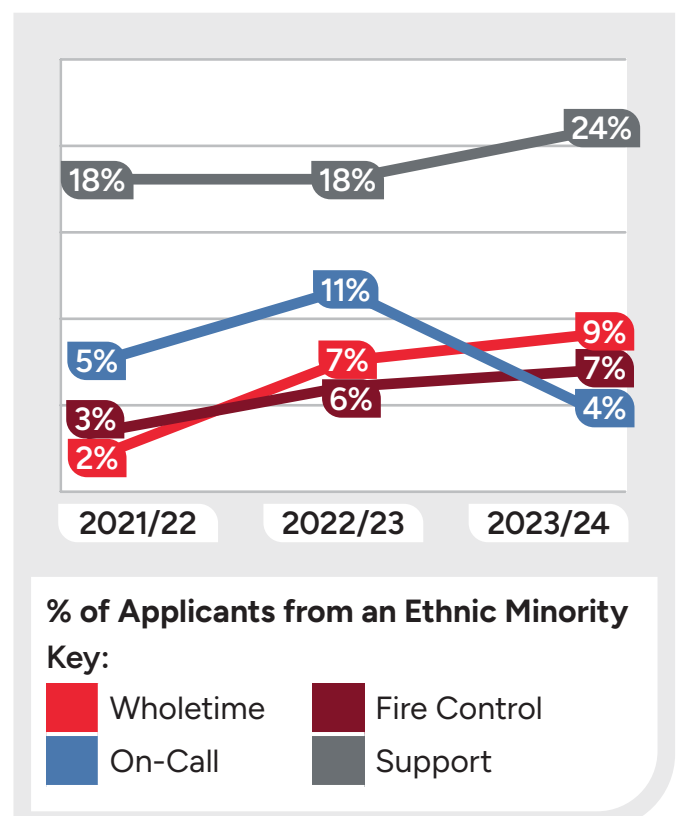
On-Call vacancies over recent years. On-Call staff are required to live or work within 5 minutes of the recruiting Fire Station, with local demographics impacting on the ethnic profile of applicants.

According to the last census, 5% of our local communities are recorded as being in this combined ethnic group and therefore, our data illustrates great success in attracting talent from minority groups.

Examining Trends

The data shows the proportion of ethnic minority applicants for Wholetime, Fire Control and Support staff vacancies has steadily risen over the last 3 years. Attracting a more diverse range of applicants is one of the fundamental building blocks to making our workforce more diverse and so this is a trend we want to see continue.

There has been a variable trend in the proportion of ethnic minority applicants for



Applications for Employment and Promotion

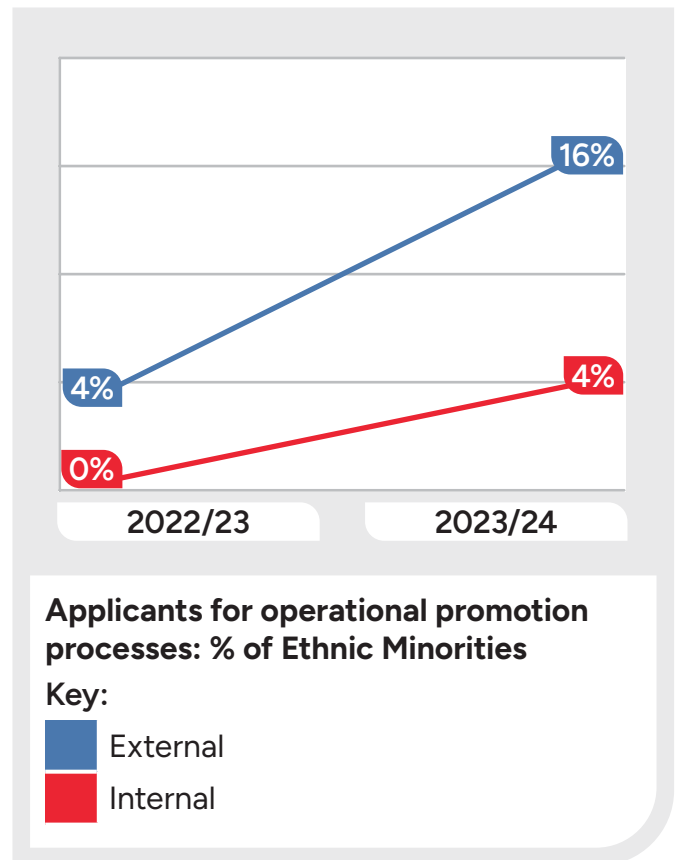
By Ethnicity continued

Promotion processes for operational roles

Due to workforce planning, we regularly run promotion processes within operational areas of the Service at all leadership levels. These processes can be focused on internal and/or external applicants.

There were 56 internal candidates and 43 external candidates for our promotion processes and we are delighted that the data shows an increase in the number of applicants from an ethnic minority for both.

In particular, the figure for the proportion of external candidates attracted to work for us, has seen a significant increase from last year.



New Appointments 2023/24

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.

100

total number of appointments

14%

of new appointments in operational roles were women



2022/23: 18%

3%

of new appointments declared that they are disabled



2022/23: 3%

4%

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



2022/23: 6%

5%

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



2022/23: 8%



New Appointments 2023/24

Sex and Ethnicity

Sex

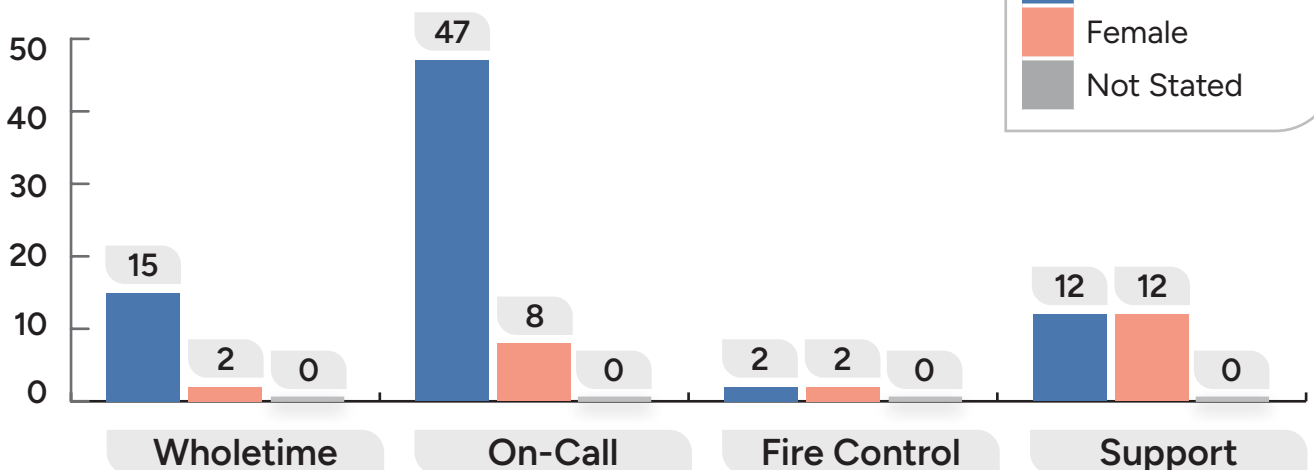
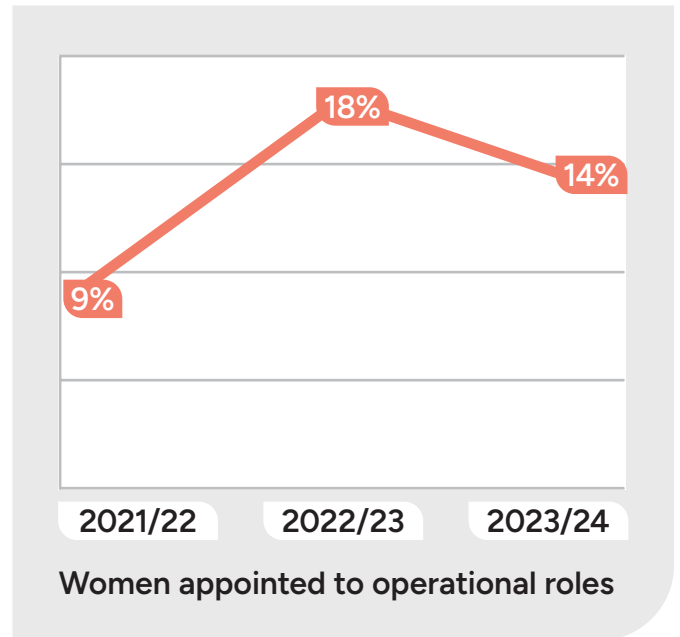
Women represented 24% of all new appointments.

The percentage of women appointed into operational roles at all ranks is 14%. Although this is a decrease from last year's figure (18%) the overall trend in recent years indicates a rise in the proportion of women being successful in recruitment and promotion processes.

Furthermore, the proportion of females appointed to operational roles (14%) is still higher than the proportion of females currently in our operational workforce (10%).

When examining operational appointments in more detail, women were appointed into 12% of Wholetime roles and for On-Call posts, the figure was 15%.

Appointments for both Fire Control and Support Staff vacancies were evenly split between males and females.



New Appointments 2023/24

Sex and Ethnicity continued

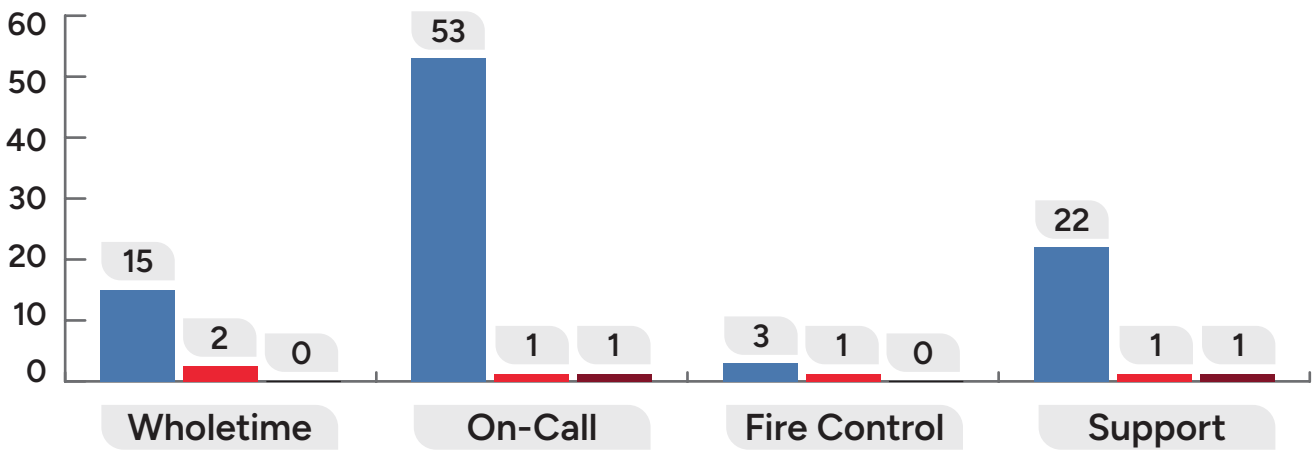
Ethnicity

The percentage of new appointments from an ethnic minority background (including White minority groups) is 5% – a decrease from last year’s figure (8%). There has however been an increase in the percentage of applicants from minority backgrounds attracted to work with us. More successful attraction rates may in turn lead to more diversity amongst our new appointments. This will be monitored throughout the next year.

New appointments from an ethnic minority background

Key:

- White British / Irish
- Ethnic Minority (including White minority groups)
- Not Stated

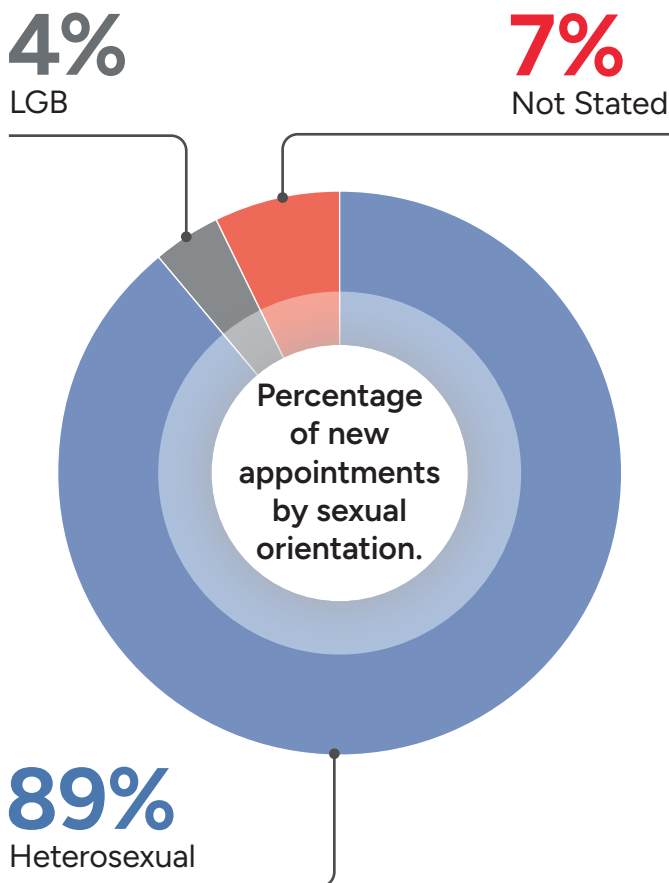


New Appointments 2023/24

Sexual Orientation, Disability, Religion and Belief, and Age

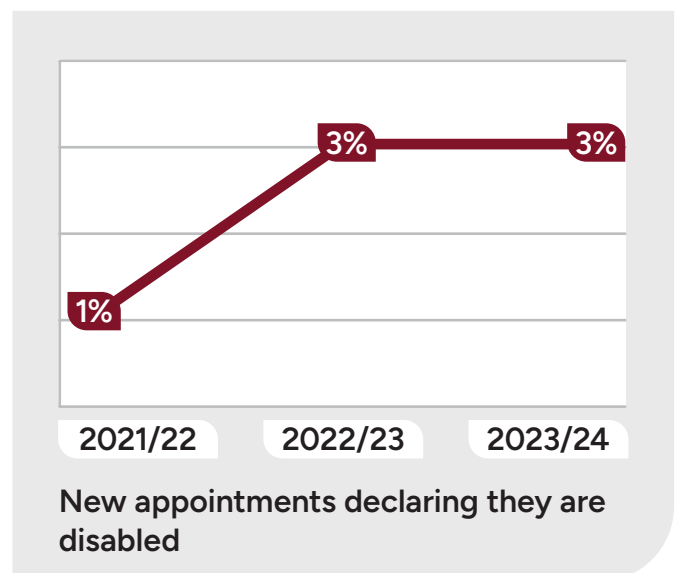
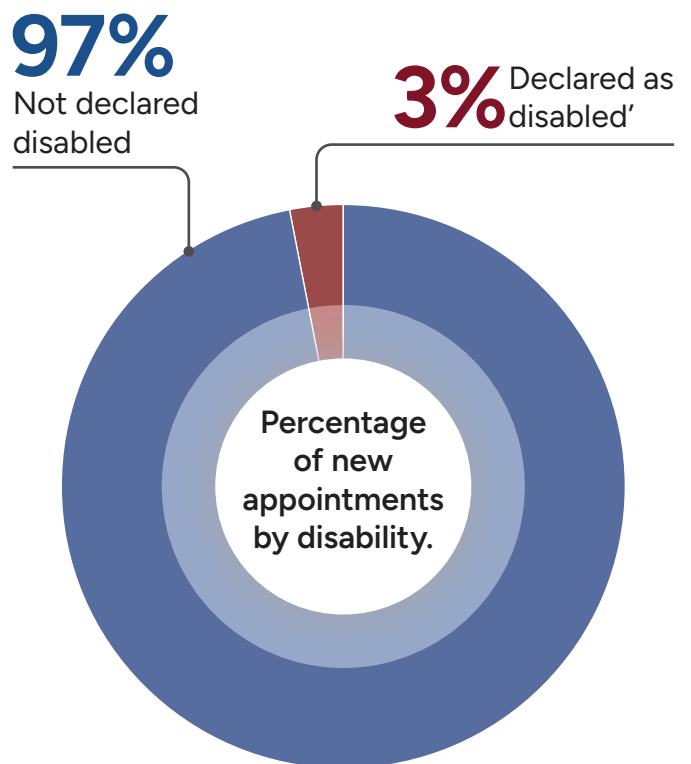
Sexual Orientation: Examining Trends

This year, 4% of new appointments identified as being Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB). This figure is slightly lower than last year (6%), and is in line with the proportion of applicants who declared their sexual orientation as LGB (5%). Furthermore, census data indicates that 2% of our local communities identify as LGB+ and so the percentage of new appointees with this protected characteristic is double the figure relating to our communities.



Disability: Examining Trends

All new starters who considered themselves to be disabled, recorded that this was due to a neurodiversity. As awareness of neurodiversity increases in society and the number of adults seeking a diagnosis increases, we may see this figure continue to rise in the future.

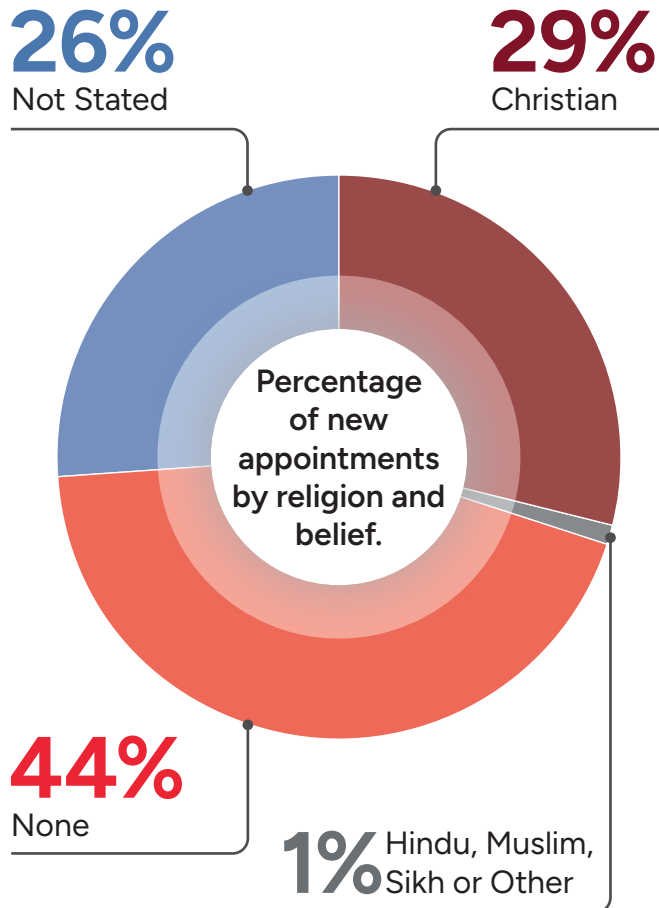


New Appointments 2023/24

Sexual Orientation, Disability, Religion and Belief, and Age continued

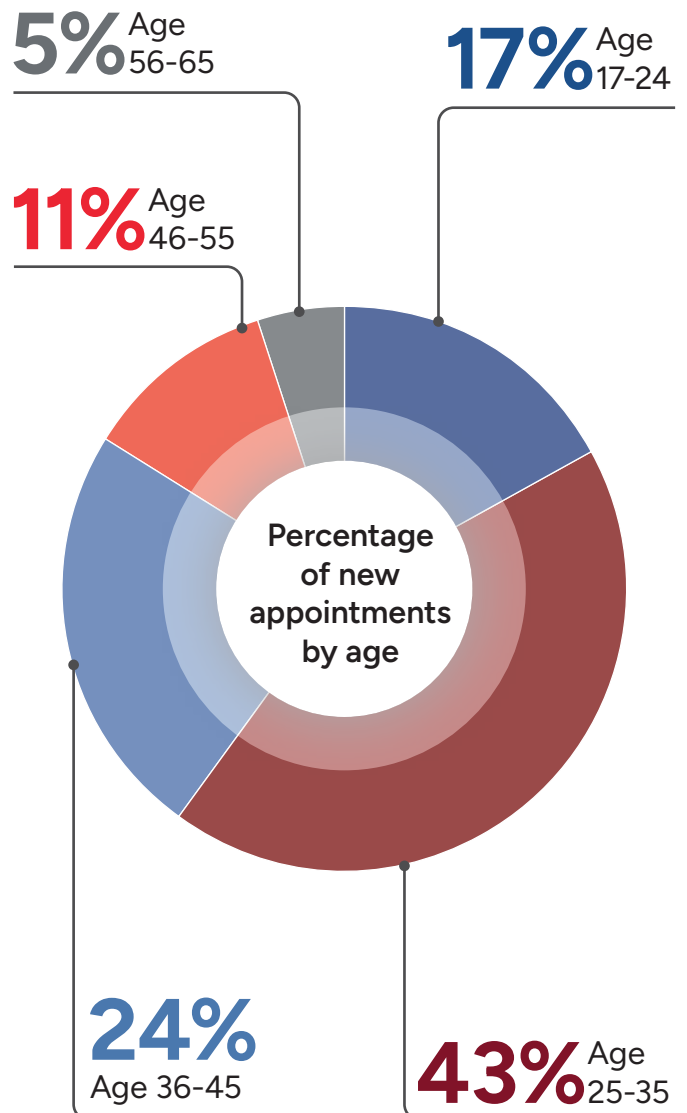
Religion and Belief

The percentage of new starters who have not declared a religion has doubled this year to 26%.



Age

When examining the age groups of new starters, there are no significant changes to the figures from last year, other than for the 56-65 age bracket. The percentage of new appointments from this age bracket has fallen significantly from 12% to 5%.



Retention

At a Glance

In 2023/24, a total of 92 employees left the Service:

14

Wholetime Staff

3

Fire Control Staff

53

On-Call Staff

22

Support Staff¹¹

5%

of leavers belong to an ethnic minority



2022/23: 9%

17%

of leavers were women
(6% of operational leavers were women)



2022/23: 17%

40%

of leavers were aged 25–35
This was the highest proportion of leavers

2022/23: highest proportion of leavers
were aged 36-45

3%

of leavers declared a disability



2022/23: 1%

7%

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



2022/23: 4%

36%

of leavers were of Christian faith

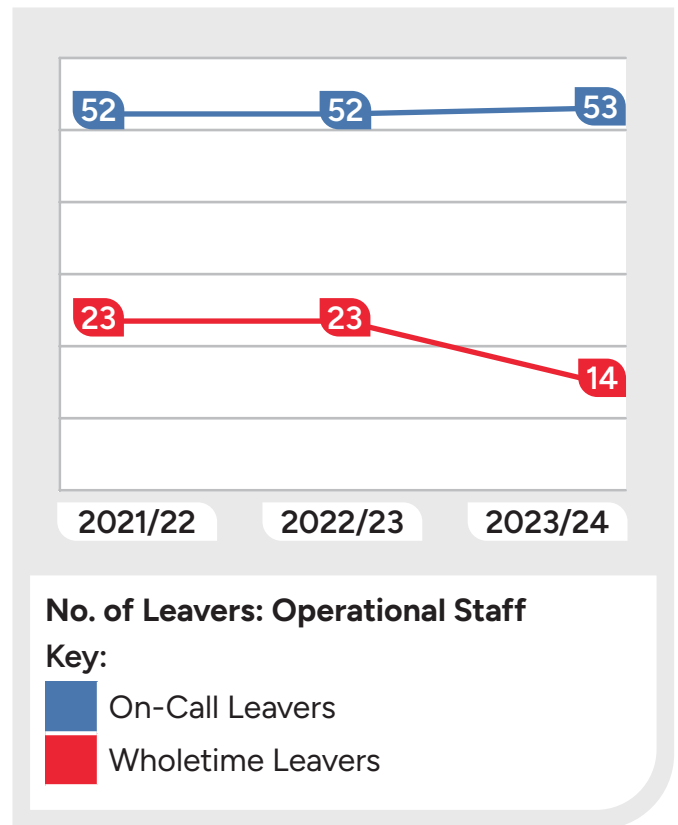
¹¹ 12 Individuals that ended one of their dual contracts but remained in employment with the Service in another role have been included.

Retention

Examining Trends

Protected Characteristics for All Leavers

- **Ethnicity:** 5% of leavers were from an ethnic minority background. Over the last 3 years, this proportion has been falling – from 13% in 2021/22, 9% last year, to this year’s figure of 5%, and it is comparative with the percentage of our workforce from an ethnic minority background, also 5%.
- **Sexual Orientation:** 7% of leavers identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (4.3% last year). Although this is an increase from last year’s figure, the proportion of our staff who identify as LGB (2.5%) has not been greatly impacted as this figure has only decreased slightly from last year.
- **Disability:** 3% of leavers considered themselves to be disabled, which is higher than last year’s figure (1%). We have seen a significant increase in the number of staff declaring a neurodiversity (now 8%), who could be considered disabled. When considering this figure, the percentage of leavers who are disabled is much lower than the proportion of staff who may have this protected characteristic.
- **Age:** 40% of leavers were from the 25-35 age bracket. Over the last 3 years, the highest proportion of leavers has fluctuated between the 36-45 and 25-35 age brackets.



Protected Characteristics of Leavers from Each Workforce

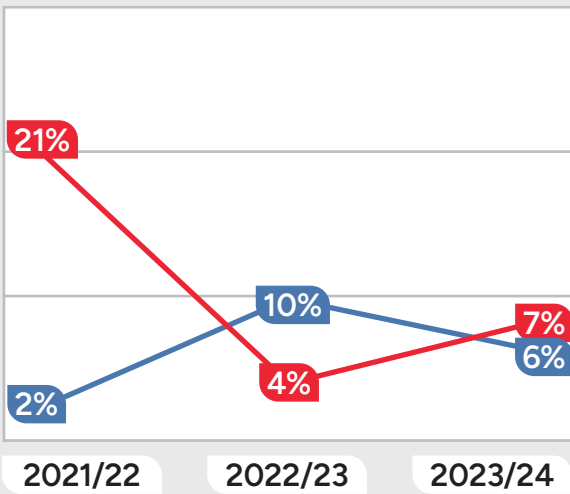
Operational Staff Overall

- **Wholetime Staff:** Of the 14 leavers, 1 was female, representing 7% of those leaving that workforce. 14% (2) were from an ethnic minority background.
- **On-Call Staff:** Of the 53 On-Call leavers, 3 were women, representing 6% of those leaving that workforce, which is a reduction from last year. 4% (2) of On-Call leavers were from an ethnic minority background.

The average length of service of On-Call staff was 9 years.

Retention

Examining Trends



% of Operational Leavers who were Female

Key:

- % Female On-Call Leavers
- % Female Wholetime Leavers

- 6% of operational leavers (Wholetime and On-Call) were female. This proportion has decreased gradually over the last 3 years from 9% in 2021/22 to 8% last year.
- 6% of operational leavers were from an ethnic minority background

Fire Control and Support Staff: Only 3 people left Fire Control positions last year. There were 22 support staff leavers, with an even split between males and females.



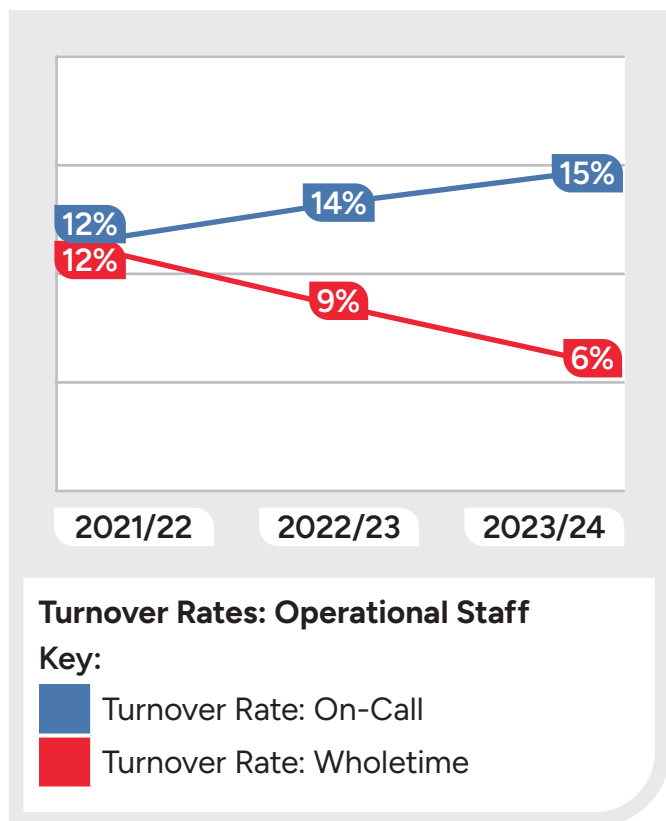
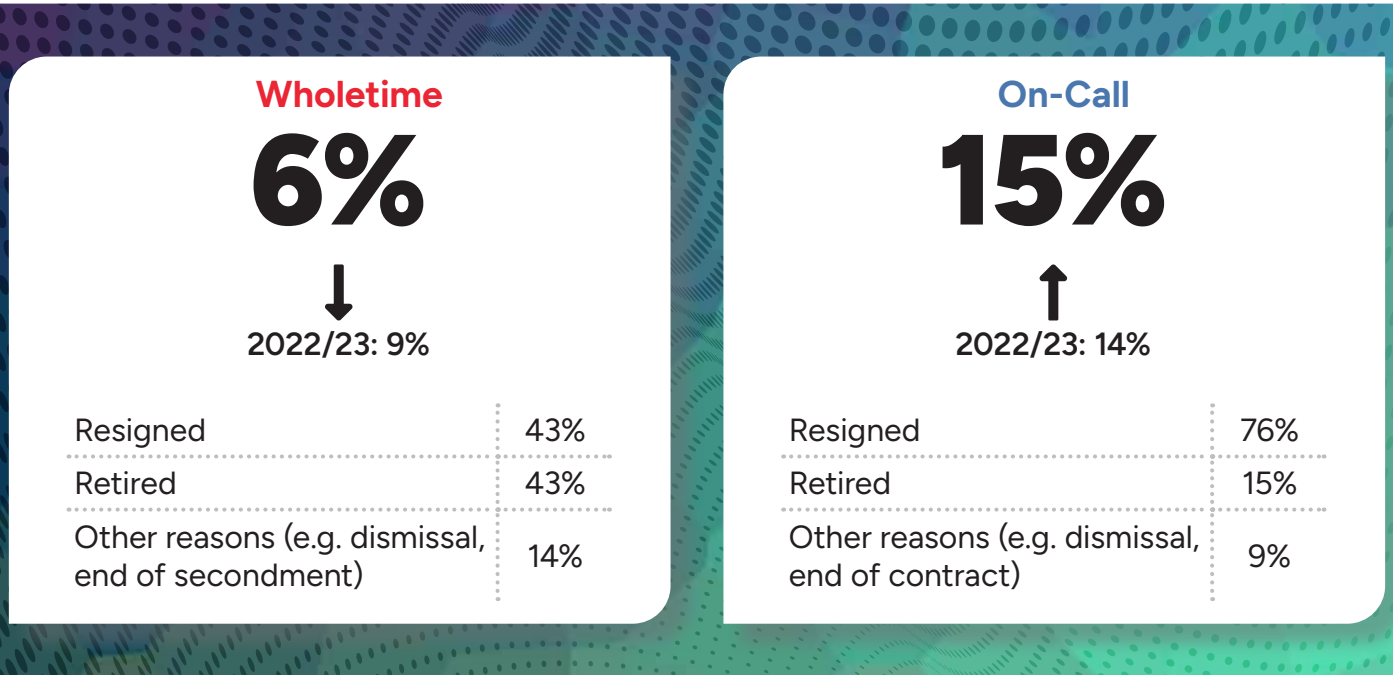
Retention

Turnover¹² and Reasons for Leaving

Turnover rates

The workgroup experiencing the highest level of staff turnover during this year was support staff. Turnover for this group was 16%, compared to 11% the year before.

15% of all leavers left within one year of employment, which is the lowest proportion in 3 years.



Whilst the rate of staff turnover amongst our Wholetime workforce has fallen, turnover for On-Call staff has seen a gradual increase.

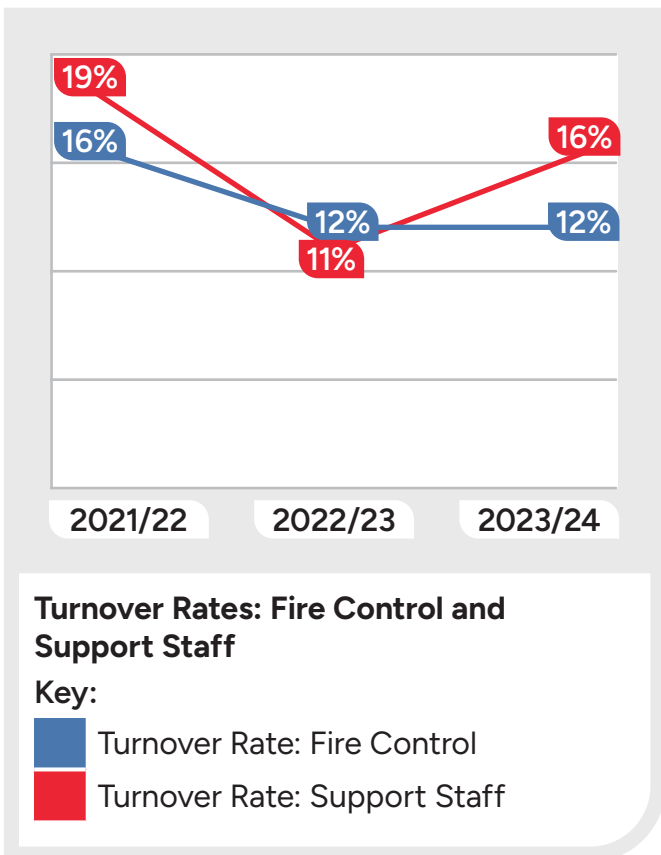
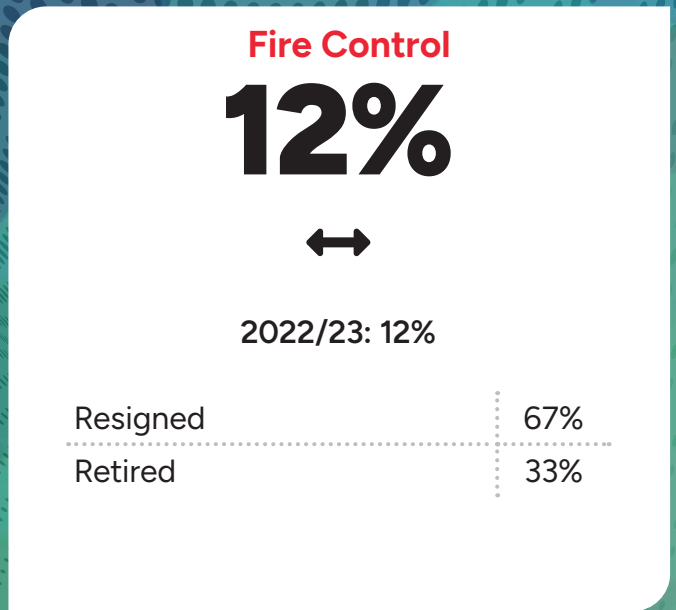
There were slightly more retirements of On-Call staff this year and less resignations (45 last year and 40 this year). 30% of resignations from On-Call were due to personal circumstances, leaving the local area or because of work commitments. 30% did not indicate a reason.

Retaining On-Call staff is a national issue, presenting challenges for most UK fire services.

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

Retention

Turnover and Reasons for Leaving



The number of support staff resignations has increased from 10 last year, to 16 this year. 50% of those who resigned indicated 'other employment' as the reason and 31% of those who resigned did not indicate a reason. The turnover rate of Fire Control staff has remained level with the year before.

Disciplinary and Grievances, Bullying and Harassment

The Service has actively promoted its 'speaking up routes' to ensure all staff know how to raise concerns and report poor behaviour, via a range of internal channels and an external, independent reporting service. Furthermore, the EDI training programme launched this year, which every member of staff will attend, reinforced the importance of challenging all inappropriate behaviour to achieve a positive, safe and inclusive culture. It is an expectation that as a result of programmes like these, staff will have the confidence to report poor conduct, and the number of discipline and grievance cases may rise – and this is precisely what has occurred. There were 19 formal discipline cases during this year compared to 9 last year and all involved operational staff – 79% were from the Wholetime workforce. 53% of those involved were in the 25-35 age bracket – and 89% were male.

There were 9 grievances raised during the year compared to 4 last year, with 1 case linked to bullying and harassment. 78% of grievances were raised by Wholetime staff and of all staff submitting grievances, 56% were female, 44% were male. Overall, 56% were in the 46-55 age bracket.

Bullying and Harassment

The number of formal cases linked to bullying and harassment was numerically very low and therefore for data protection reasons, we are unable to report by protected characteristics. No concerns or trends were identified relating to protected groups.



Gender Pay Gap

as at 31 March 2024

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 gap¹³**
- 4. Median bonus gender pay gap¹³**
- 5. Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus payment¹³**
- 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 2024 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.

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

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.



Our Pay Gap Figures

The **mean pay gap** has decreased from last year's figure of 5%. Women on average earn 4% less than men in our organisation.

The **median pay gap** shows the midpoint in the range of women's pay is 2% less than the midpoint in the range of pay for men, which is a notable decrease from last year's figure of 5%.

Mean Pay Gap

4%



Female

£17.39



Male

£18.17

Difference: £0.78 per hour

Median Pay Gap

2%



Female

£16.54



Male

£16.91

Difference: £0.37 per hour

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.

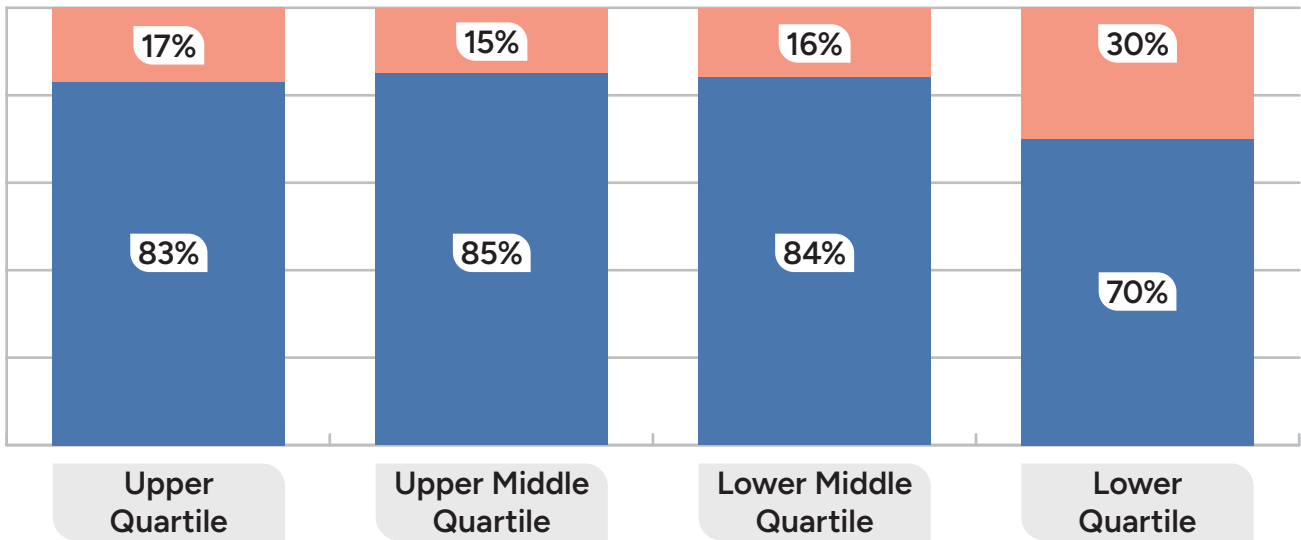


Our Pay Gap Figures continued

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.

Key:
 Male
 Female



Although there is a slight decrease in the proportion of women in the upper quartile this year, there are increases in the proportion of female staff within the upper middle and lower middle quartiles. This indicates a rise in the number of women on a higher rate of pay within our organisation:

Upper Quartile:	A slight decrease from 18% to 17%
Upper Middle Quartile:	An increase from 13% to 15%
Lower Middle Quartile:	A significant change from 12% to 16%
Lower Quartile:	The proportion of women has fallen from 34% to 30%

Overall, these changes indicate that there are more women in our organisation in higher paid roles when compared to last year’s data.

We are pleased to see this indication of progress against the work that we have done in encouraging a culture where more women feel confident to progress in their careers in our organisation. It is still recognised there is a lack of representation of women in the Fire sector as a whole and therefore we will continue to drive change, encouraging all our staff to aim high and reach their full potential, as well as working to attract more women into a Service that we are proud of.

Our Pay Gap Figures continued

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 management positions in operational roles. Indications are that this landscape is changing, with this year's increase in the proportion of women within the two middle pay quartiles.
- 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 employment to raise children and/or care for dependants 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 implement activities to increase diversity.

Over the next year we will focus on:

- Progressing on our organisational cultural journey; launching a Culture Statement of Intent to shape, guide and sustain our strategic goals and priorities.
- Continue the work already done to embed the Core Code of Ethics so that our staff understand the importance and value of these, through interactive workshops, led by managers.
- Deliver the Service-wide EDI training programme to all staff.
- 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.
- Enabling our staff networks to flourish so they can help to nurture a positive, inclusive work environment.

Conclusion

We are very pleased to see the continual progress that our organisation makes in creating an inclusive culture, where our staff understand the importance of equality and diversity, and calling out poor behaviour. The benefits are that people will want to work with us and when they do, they will feel able to do the best job they can and reach their full potential. We will therefore continue to monitor the work we do in achieving a more diverse workforce, but also to build on the progress already made.

Further information on our equality, diversity and inclusion work can be found on our website: www.hwfire.org.uk. The Service 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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ہاربوت ہتہ ترورض یں سآں یں ٹیمراف لدابتم
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HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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