

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

Equality & Gender Pay Gap Report 2021-22

1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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Foreword

Building a diverse and inclusive workforce remains a priority for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). We are committed to meeting the diverse needs of the communities we serve and recognise the importance of creating an environment where there is equality of opportunity for everyone. We continually strive to increase diversity in our organisation and embed the importance of inclusion. This report outlines the work we have undertaken over the year 2021/2022, 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.



Jon Pryce

Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive



Our Purpose, Vision and Mission

Who We Are

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service receives nearly 10,000 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 just over 6,500 incidents each year – more than 125 incidents every week across the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.



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.

Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services



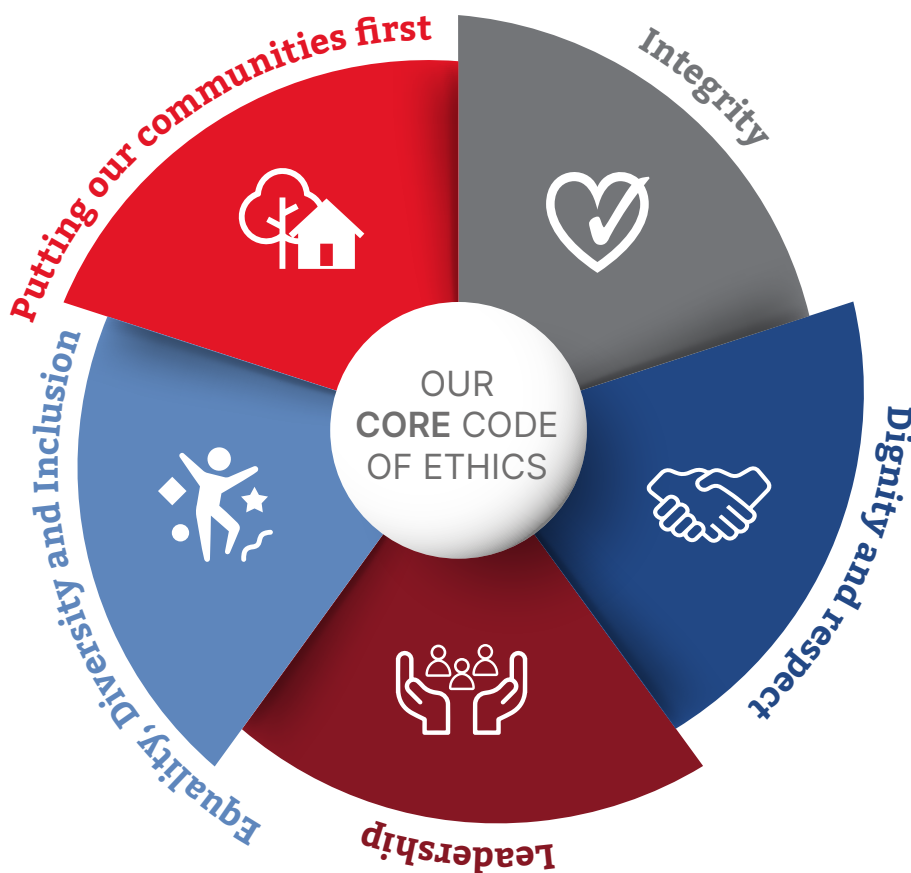
NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council



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

The Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. These principles will help to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity of FRSs, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.

The ethical principles have been produced specifically for Fire and Rescue Services by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.



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

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as civil partnerships. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

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

Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic 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.

Sex

A man or a woman.



¹Definitions provided by the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) (2021)

The Statutory Context (continued)

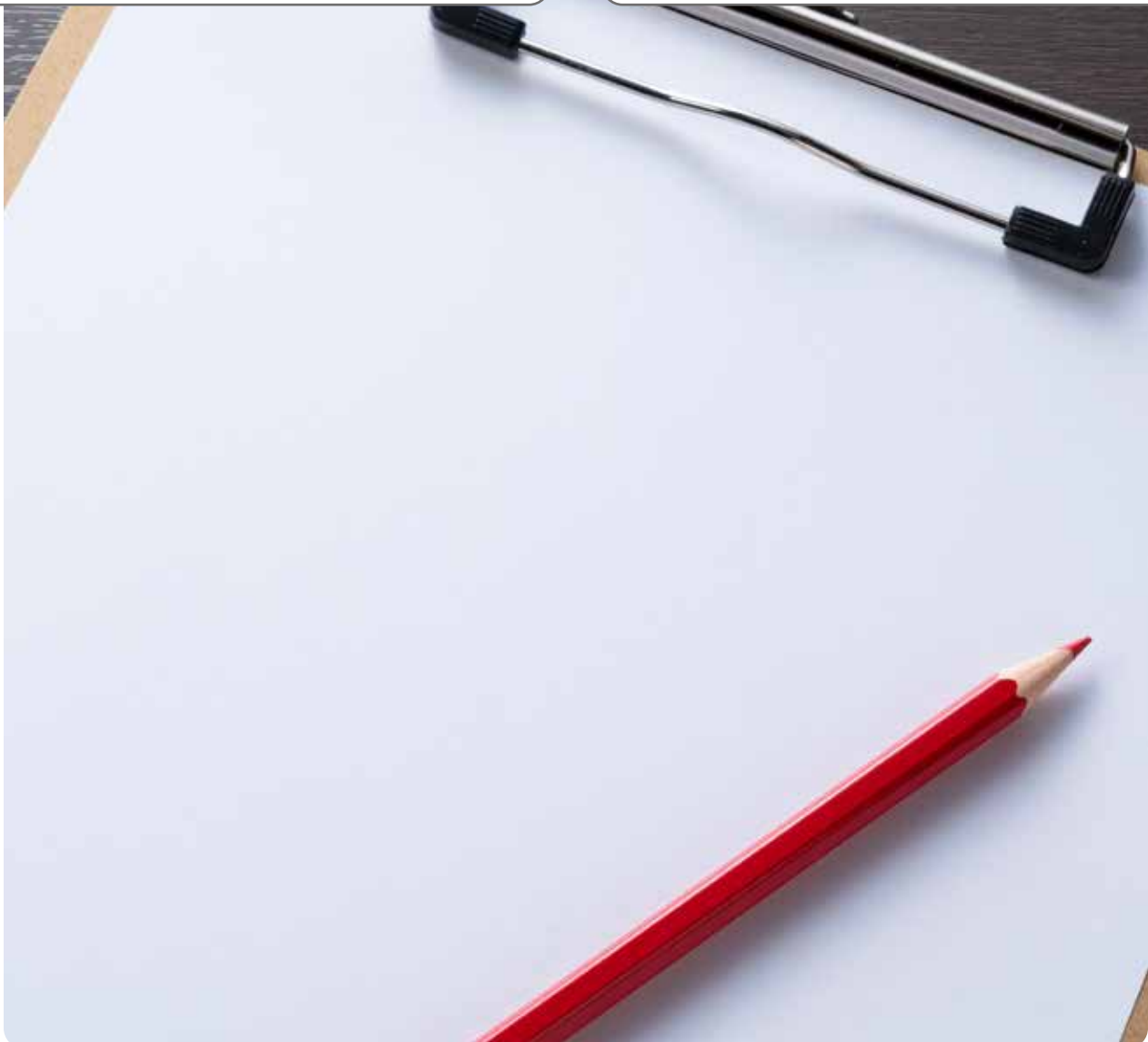
The **Public Sector Equality Duty** is a duty on public authorities like Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority to consider how policies or decisions affect people with protected characteristics:

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.

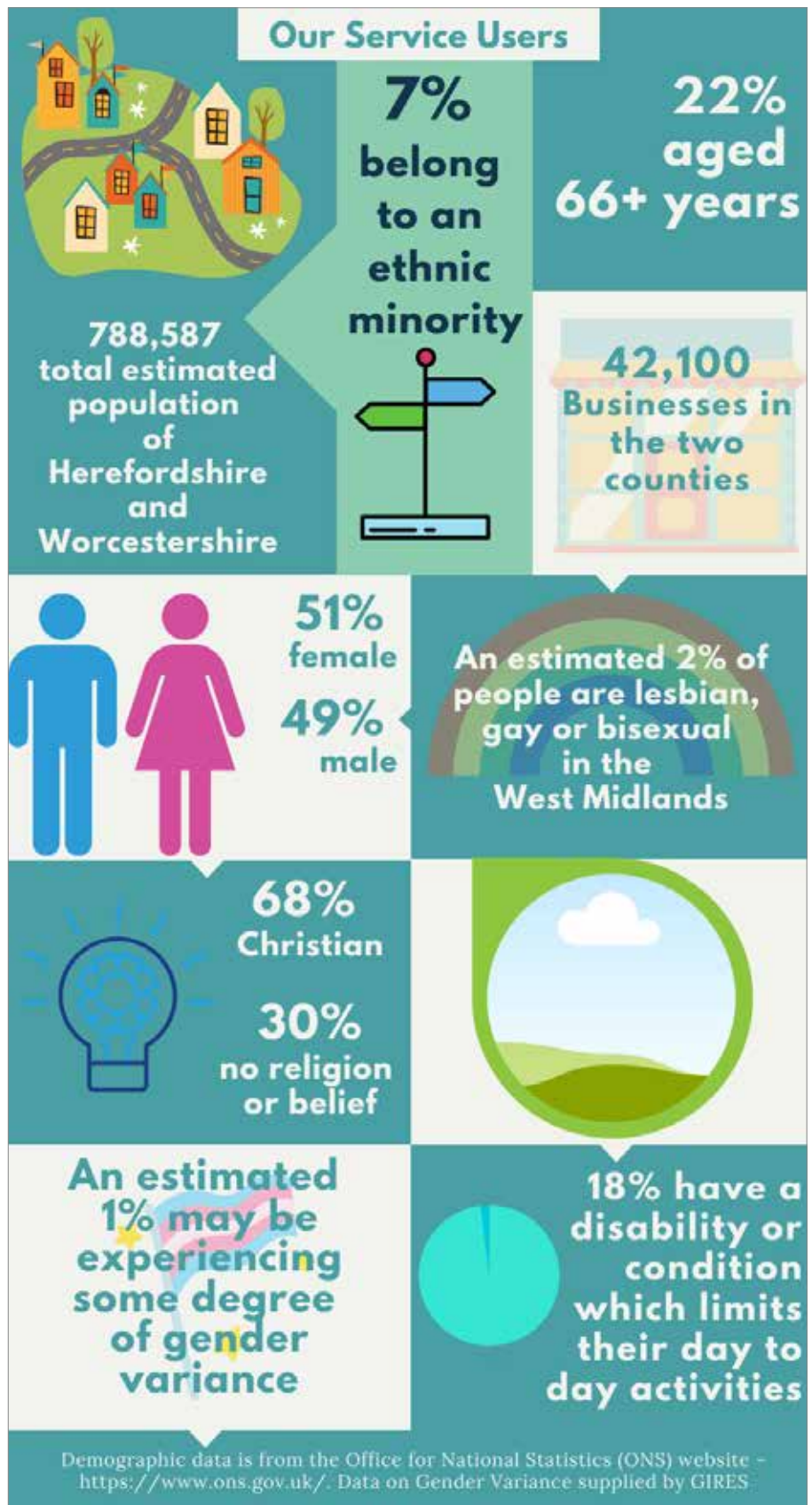
Specific Duty

- Publish equality information at least once a year to show how we are complying with the 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.



Reporting

The annual equality report is presented to our Strategic Leadership Board (SLB), our Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) which has Representative Body membership, and the Fire Authority. The report is made publicly available via our website and to all our employees via our staff intranet.



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 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Where possible, a simple, colour-coded Red, Amber, Green arrow shows where there is a negative change, no change or positive change from last year's report 2020/2021.

Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2021/22

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.

- Three members of the Fire Authority became our **EDI Champions**, to promote, support and drive improvement in regard to equality, diversity and inclusion through all activities of the Authority.
- Our Strategic Leadership Board set their own **equality objectives** for the year to actively promote and champion the ethos of EDI across the Service. An online event to celebrate International Women's Day was sponsored by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and there have been numerous articles produced by SLB members, highlighting inclusion topics.
- Work to embed the use of **people (equality) impact assessments** across the Service has continued through training and toolkits. This supports us to better assess the equality impacts that policies, procedures or services may have on our staff and our communities.

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

- Additional diversity information is requested during our **Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV)** meaning that going forward, we will be able to ensure this service is being accessed by a diverse range of groups in our communities.
- **HFSV 'How Safe Are You'** promotional material is produced in a variety of languages including Russian, Polish, Mandarin and Romanian, with plans to include further languages over the coming year, based on local demographics. The Fire Safety in the Home booklet is also available in multiple languages and is produced in Easy Read format.
- The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) have published a number of **Equality of Access** documents 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, supported by the Service's EDI Officer, utilise and share these documents with crews to explore ways of improving access to our services to all sections of the community.

Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2021/22 (continued)

- Resources provided by the NFCC are regularly promoted to staff, such as **Lunch & Learn Sessions** about different community groups; LGBT+ communities and Gypsy/Traveller communities are some examples of these.
- Information for staff to enhance **understanding of our communities** has been developed and is available on our staff intranet, such as guidance and factsheets on religions and cultures and statistical data on ethnic minority groups and predominant languages spoken in our area.
- We continue to support events to engage with the public such as our local **Pride events** so that not only our communities see that we are an inclusive organisation, but our staff do too. These events have provided great opportunities to promote working for the Service, volunteering and highlighting our Home Fire Safety Visit.
- Our **Dying 2 Drive** initiative is a multi-agency road safety scheme delivered to Year 11 students and is aimed at reducing death and serious injury amongst young road users in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. During the pandemic restrictions, an electronic package was created for schools to deliver the same core messages, however these popular live sessions will commence again during 2022.
- Multi-agency working on other youth engagement activities, such **Crucial Crew** and **Young Citizens' Challenge** initiatives are aimed at raising awareness and targeting young people by educating them on water, fire and road safety as well as arson and hoax calls and are delivered to Year 6 school children. These were also delivered differently during the pandemic, but are commencing face to face in 2022.

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.

- Staff now have access to a **wealth of information** about diverse groups such as different religions, the challenges experienced by members of LGBT communities and the strengths and challenges associated with types of neurodiversity (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD, autism, etc). This awareness will also support staff to complete people impact assessments on new policies or new services.
- To celebrate **International Women's Day**, our women's network, Women@HWFire, hosted an online seminar highlighting the challenges to progression experienced by two senior leaders from the fire service and police. A member of our SLB is an active member and supporter of Women@HWFire and therefore led and facilitated this session. This was the first time our Service had hosted such an event and feedback showed it was a great success.



Our Equality Objectives

Key Highlights 2021/22 (continued)

- New firefighter recruits receive input on our **staff networks**, with a focus on the importance of diversity and inclusion to ensure they know how to get involved.



2021: New wholetime firefighters after completing their training.

- Our support for staff with dyslexia and other types of **neurodiversity** continues to improve and we have seen some fantastic outcomes where support and guidance has resulted in staff thriving in the workplace. A Neurodiverse Staff Network is being launched this year and we look forward to highlighting the work of this network in next year's report.
- Our EDI Officer continues to be visible and accessible to Service staff, which has provided opportunities to regularly engage on inclusion topics.
- We have maintained our corporate membership to the **Asian Fire Services Association (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.

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.

- 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 EDI Officer supports the Prevention team in their work with **Station Prevention Champions**, who focus on community engagement and promoting our key safety messages.
- Webinars and information about inclusion-related topics are regularly highlighted to our women's network **Women@HWFire** and EDI Allies. **EDI Allies** are staff from across the Service who want to support and promote an inclusive workplace. Personal statements on what allyship means to them are published on our Service Intranet. We share learning, practices and related events with our EDI Allies so they can better understand experiences different from their own.

Our Workforce Profile

Our workforce stands at 770 (as at 31 March 2022) – 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.

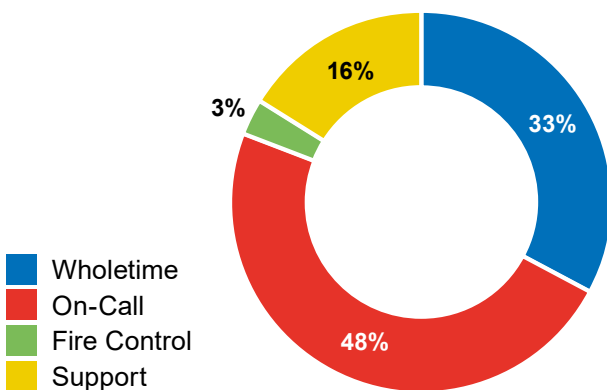
Our Service is made up of four main workforce groups and for the purposes of this report are defined as follows, in line with Home Office definitions:

Wholetime: A full-time Firefighter, regardless of rank.

On-Call: A Firefighter responding when required during their “on-call” hours, regardless of rank.

Fire Control: A Uniformed member of staff working in our Control Centre to answer emergency calls and deal with mobilising, communications and related activities, regardless of rank.

Support: A member of staff who is not a Firefighter or in Fire Control. It includes, for example, administrative roles, analytical support, finance, vehicle maintenance, etc.



Our Workforce Profile

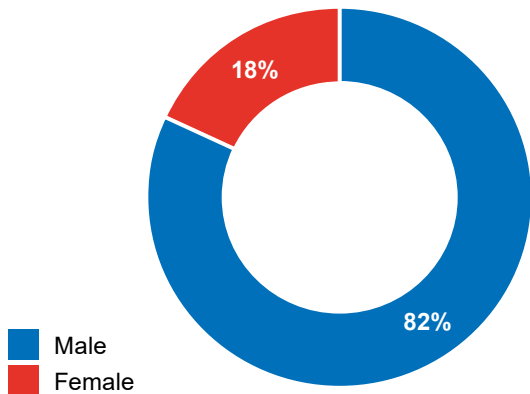
Our Workforce at a Glance



Our Workforce Profile

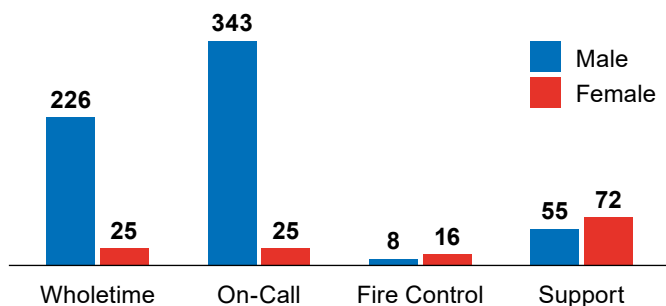
Profile of employees by sex

Total Workforce by Sex



Male employees make up the majority of our workforce – the total distribution of female employees across our Service is 18%, which is unchanged from last year.

The percentage of women in our Wholetime workforce group has seen a slight decrease from last year’s figure (12%) and now stands at 10%. This could be attributed to the proportion of female Wholetime staff leaving the Service (21%) being higher than the proportion of females appointed to Wholetime posts (9%). The actual number is low (6 out of 29 overall) so this percentage looks disproportionately high and should be taken into consideration. The percentage of women in our On-Call workforce group has seen a small increase to 7% - which is 1% higher than last year’s figure. Our Support workforce group continues to be fairly balanced, with women making up 57% 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. The local population excluding those under 18 and those of pensionable age is 33% female and 32% male respectively. This under-representation is a trend across the fire sector as a whole.

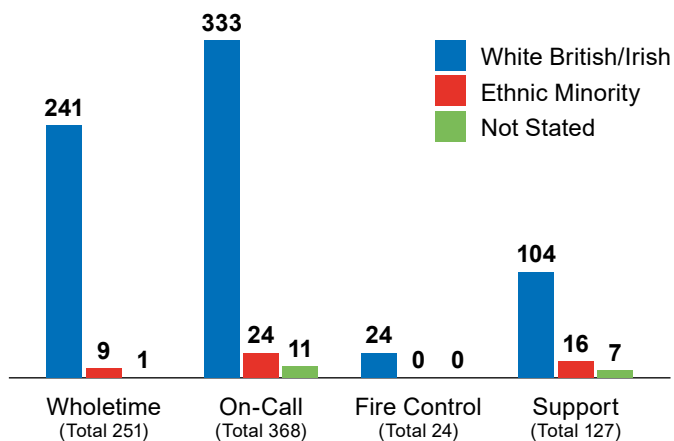
Our Positive Action Plan sets out our ambitions to work to address this imbalance, specifically the representation of women in operational roles. The Service is starting an On-Call Recruitment and Marketing project to deliver innovative marketing and recruitment solutions, to provide greater opportunities for local communities to join HWFRS and increase On-Call availability. One of the project benefits is this may impact positively on the workforce diversity in our On-Call workforce.

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

²Office of National Statistics (2021) Population estimates for the UK mid-2020

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by ethnicity



The profile of employees identifying as belonging to an ethnic minority³ is 6% which is a decrease of 1% from last year. In comparison to our communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, 7% of the population identify as belonging to an ethnic minority⁴ so as an organisation we are close to being reflective of our local community, in relation to ethnicity.

The profile of our total operational workforce who belong to an ethnic minority group is 5% – a decrease from last year’s figure by 1%.

It is notable our support staff comprise of 13% of employees from an ethnic minority background; a percentage which has remained steady from last year.

The employee declaration rate for ethnicity has continued to increase and is now 98% (97% last year).

We have maintained our corporate membership to AFSA who are an organisation striving to progress inclusion in the fire service. With the majority of UK fire services as members, this provides us with opportunities to share learning and increase our knowledge and understanding of inequalities. As well as excellent national conferences, AFSA continually support their membership through the provision of online resources such as e-magazines highlighting current research, data and case studies, which are made available to all our employees, developing their knowledge of inclusion.

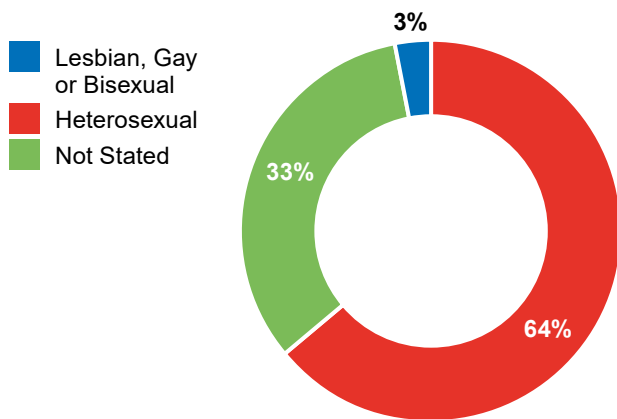


³ We use 'ethnic minorities' to refer to all ethnic groups except the White British group. Ethnic minorities include White minorities such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups.

⁴ Office of National Statistics (2011) Census

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by sexual orientation



The proportion of staff across the workforce who consider themselves to be a member of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) community has increased to 3%. Since 2019, we have seen a year on year increase in declaration rates from staff (+1% each year).

For data protection reasons we have combined the categories of staff and provided them as a percentage only. Data relating to sexual orientation is unavailable in relation to our local communities, however, the Office of National Statistics estimates that 3% of people identify as LGB in the West Midlands⁵. Recent Home Office data also indicates that 3% of all staff employed by Fire and Rescue Authorities across England and Wales identify as LGB⁶.

The declaration rate for sexual orientation in our Service has seen a 2% increase to 67%, which shows a continuing upward trend in the number of staff providing this information. National FRS data suggests that 66% of all FRS staff in England choose to declare their sexual orientation, and so our declaration rate is slightly above the national figure⁶.

The Service continues to support events such as our local Pride events so our commitment to inclusion is visible to our local communities and our employees.

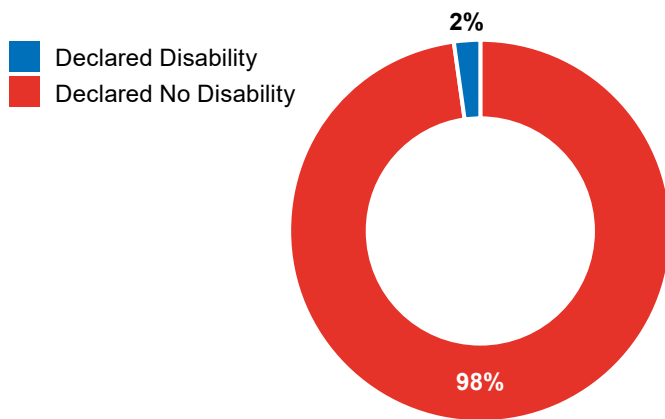


⁵ Office of National Statistics (2019) [Experimental statistics on sexual orientation in the UK](#)

⁶ Home Office (2022) [Fire statistics data tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Our Workforce Profile

Profile of employees by disability



The disability profile across the workforce is 2%, which has remained unchanged for the last 2 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 2022, 4% of our workforce were recorded as having dyslexia. The [British Dyslexia Association](#) estimates that 10% of the population is believed to be dyslexic so we could reasonably estimate that we have a greater proportion of our workforce with a disability⁷.

We continue to enhance our support offer for employees with dyslexia which is having a positive impact on the number of staff seeking support and guidance.

An increased awareness in all types of neurodiversity has also resulted in more staff requesting support for challenges recognised as typical of ADHD and autism. A Neurodiverse Staff Network is being launched in 2022 and early indications show there is a great deal of interest in this group.

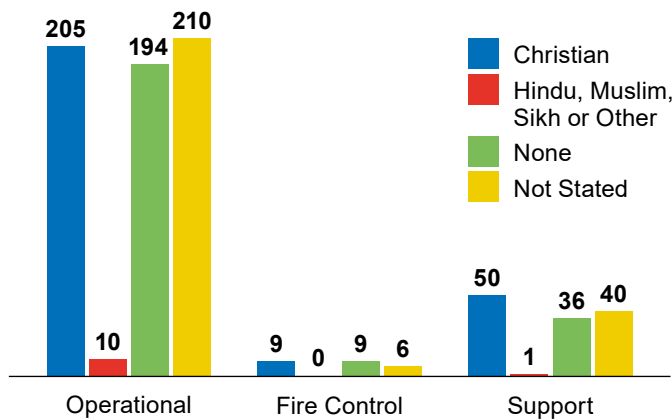
Our Occupational Health provider continues to work with our managers and staff to identify reasonable adjustments that could be implemented to provide appropriate support for individuals at work.



⁷ 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 34% (an increase of 1% from last year) and this is followed by 31% of staff with no religion or belief at all. The proportion of other faiths when combined account for 1% of the workforce.

In comparison to our communities, Christianity is the largest religious grouping at 68% with 30% having no religion or belief. The remaining 2% per cent are made up of five main religions: Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh plus a further 'Other' category for other religions⁸.

The percentage of staff who declare their religion or belief (or as having no religion or belief) has shown an increase of 3% each year for the last 2 years. This is a trend we are working to encourage, as we would particularly like to see an increase in declaration rates within our Wholetime and On-Call workforce groups.

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 2021/22.

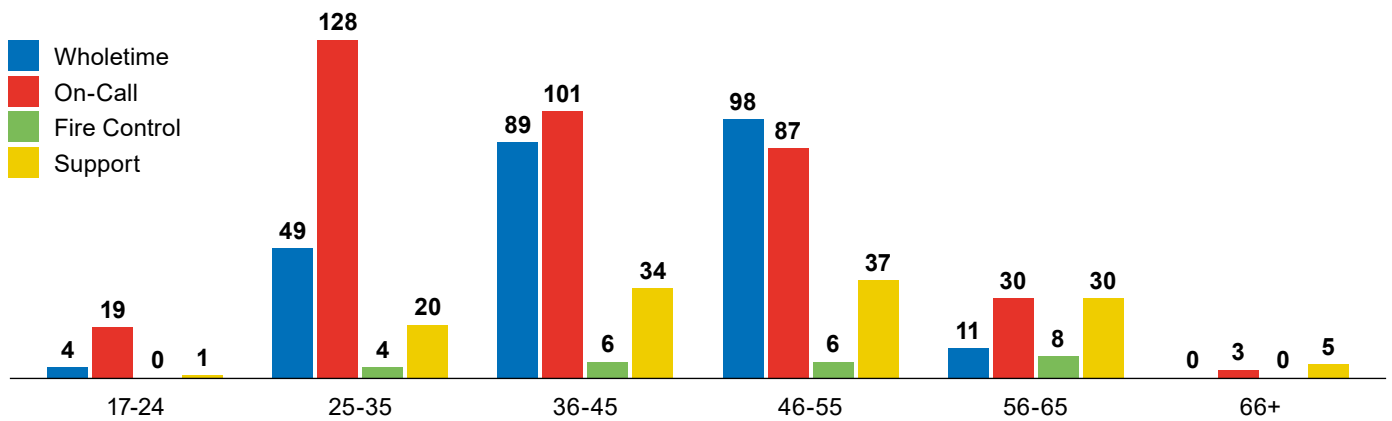
No staff opted to take shared parental leave and nationally, there continues to be a low take-up rate of this type of family friendly leave⁹. At the end of March 2022, 35% of our employees were in a marriage or civil partnership.

⁸ [HWFRS \(2019\) CRMP 2021-2025 Risk Review – People & Places](#)

⁹ [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 (30% of the entire workforce). Last year this was 46 and 55 years. The average age of our workforce continues to be 43 years.

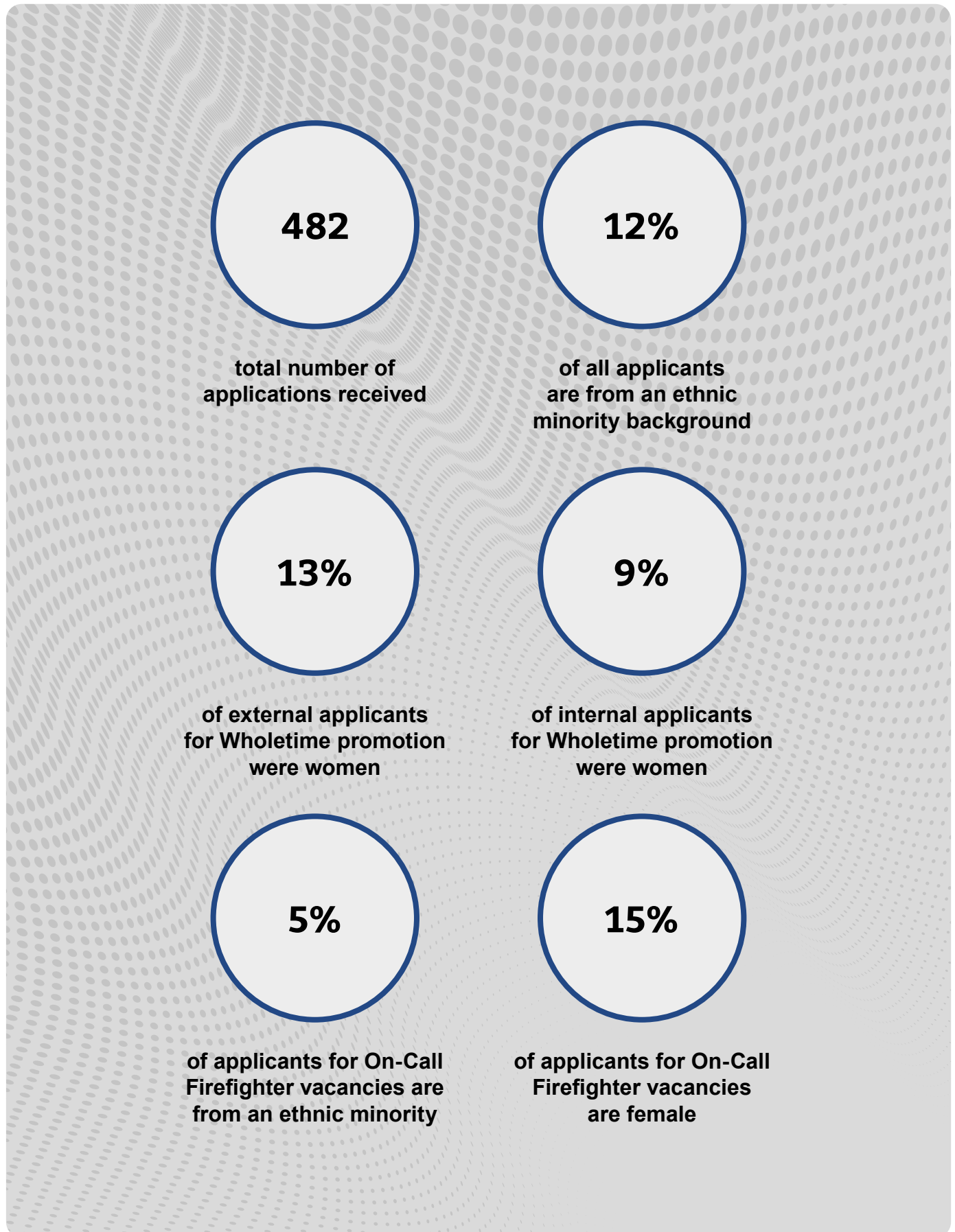
The largest proportion of Wholetime staff are aged between 46 and 55 years which is the same as last year (the proportion has decreased slightly to 39% (43% last year)). This has been the predominant age bracket of Wholetime staff for the last 5 years, prior to which the largest proportion were aged between 36 and 45 years.

The majority of On-Call staff are aged between 25 and 35 years. This proportion has risen by 2% since last year, to 35%. The largest proportion of our Fire Control staff are aged between 56 and 65 years.

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 64 years, and people of a pensionable age (aged 65 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. The pattern is similar across Herefordshire and Worcestershire, though with a lower proportion of people of normal working age and a relatively high proportion of people aged 65 years and over⁸.

⁸ [HWFRS \(2019\) CRMP 2021-2025 Risk Review – People & Places](#)

Applications for Employment and Promotion



Applications for Employment and Promotion

Applications for employment including 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.

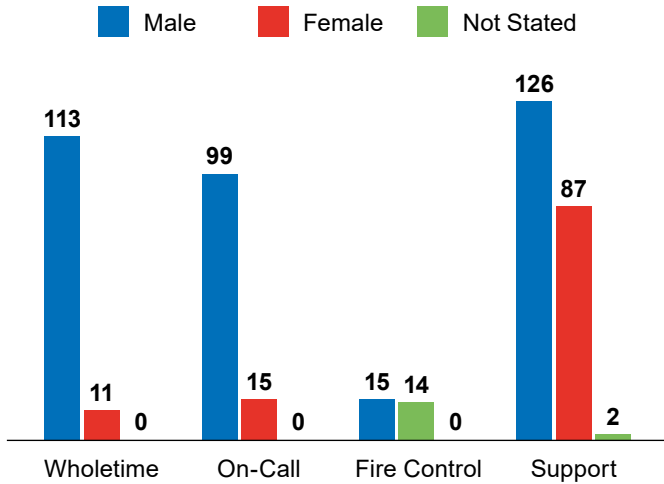
Our recruitment and selection processes are closely monitored to ensure all applicants are treated fairly and consistently in line with all legal, statutory and good practice requirements.

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.



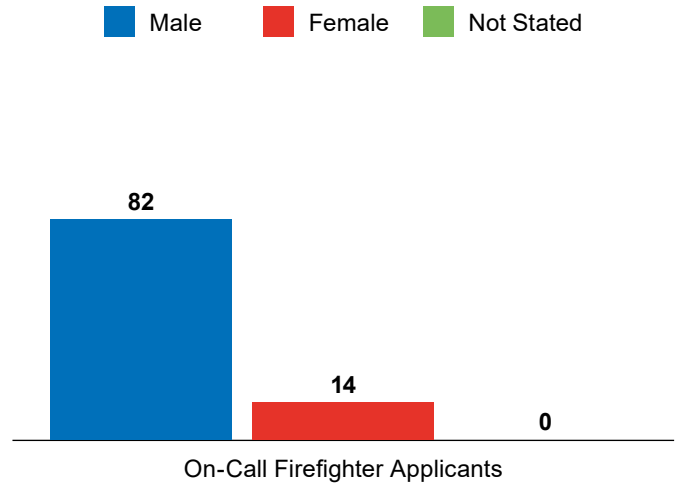
Applications for Employment and Promotion

Applications for employment including promotion by sex



During the year, a great variety of support staff roles were advertised. 59% of applications for these roles were from men, compared to 43% the previous year.

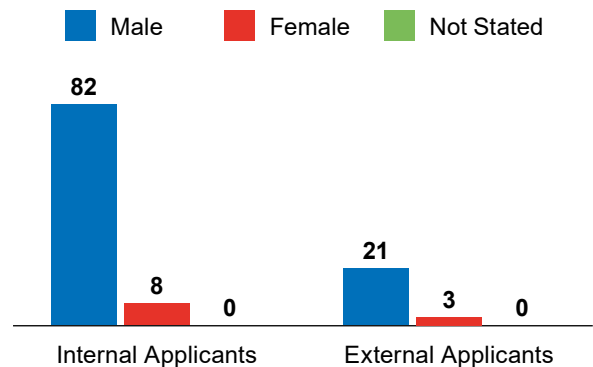
For operational roles, women accounted for 11% of the overall applications, which is 1% lower than last year. Analysing this further, 9% of applications for Wholetime roles were from women – a 3% reduction from last year. This difference could be attributed to last year’s figures incorporating our Wholetime Firefighter campaign, which provided an opportunity to attract more women into the Service at Firefighter level. For On-Call roles (which includes applications for operational On-Call roles at all levels and Urban Search and Rescue Technician on-call roles), 13% of applications were from women (an increase of 7% from last year). Applications for positions in Fire Control were fairly evenly balanced in respect of sex profile.



As we have an on-going recruitment model at entry level for On-Call Firefighter vacancies, we have also examined the sex profile of these applicants. Of the 96 applications received, 15% were from women.

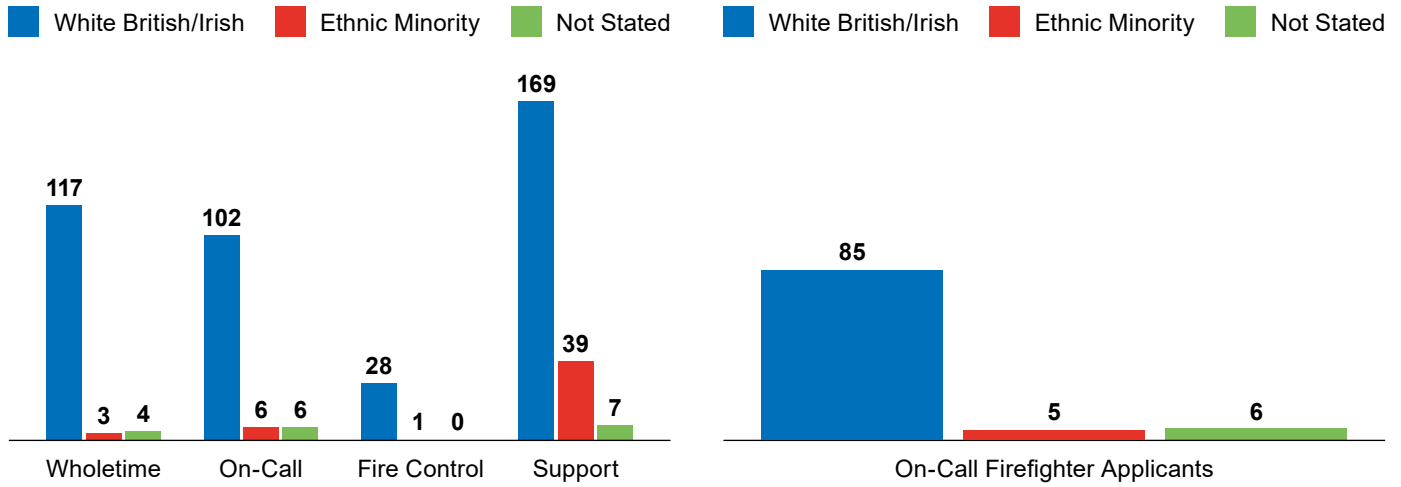
Recruitment/promotion processes for operational roles by sex

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. 9% of internal applications were from women and of the external candidates applying to work for us, 13% were from women.



Applications for Employment and Promotion

Applications for employment and promotion by ethnicity



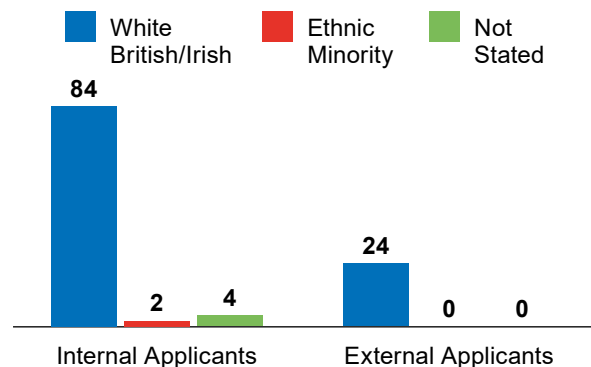
10% of applicants overall, were from an ethnic minority background, which is an increase of 1% from last year. This increase is mainly attributed to the diverse range of applicants attracted to Support staff vacancies, as 18% of applicants for these roles were from an ethnic minority background. This is an increase from last year (15%).

The number of applicants from ethnic minorities for On-Call roles has fallen over the last 3 years. This year's figure is 5%, compared to 9% last year and 12% the year before. 2% of applicants for Wholetime roles advertised through the year were from an ethnic minority and for Fire Control vacancies, the figure was 3%.

We have also examined the ethnicity of those applying for On-Call Firefighter positions. 5% of applicants were from an ethnic minority background.

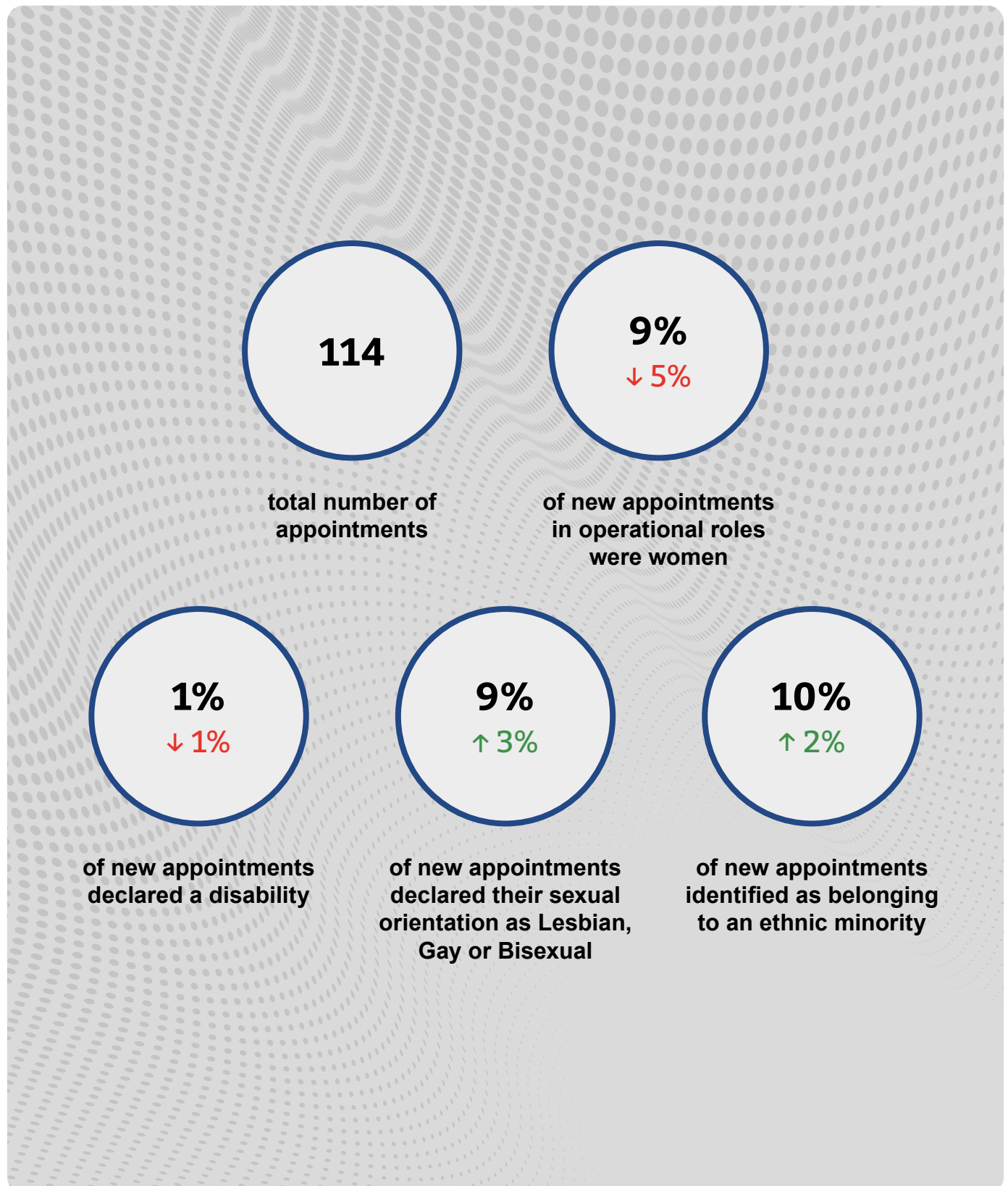
Promotion processes for operational roles

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. All external applicants for operational roles were from a White British/Irish background.



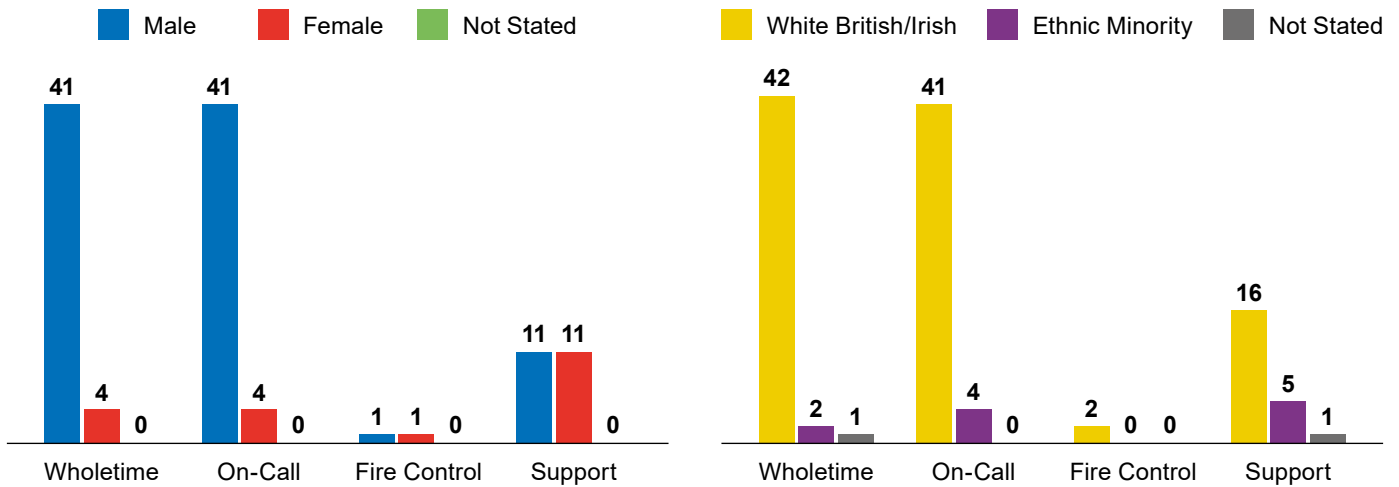
New Appointments 2021/22

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.



New Appointments 2021/22

Sex and ethnicity



Sex

The percentage of new appointments that are women is 18%.

The percentage of women appointed into operational roles at all ranks is 9% which is less than 2020-2021 (14%). The main reason for this difference is we had an increased number of women who were successful in our 2020 Wholetime Firefighter campaign and they were included in last year's appointments figures. We did not run a Wholetime Firefighter recruitment campaign during 2021-2022 which meant intake numbers for new recruits were restricted to On-Call vacancies only.

Our data suggests that male candidates are more likely to pass the Physical Tests stage of the Firefighter Selection Process than female candidates. People (equality) impact assessments on the physical tests have been prioritised for early 2022/23 to propose mitigating actions as appropriate, by each protected group, particularly women.

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

Ethnicity

The percentage of new appointments from an ethnic minority background is 10% - an increase of 2% from 2020-2021. This is very positive when compared to the make-up of our local communities as 7% of Herefordshire and Worcestershire residents belong to an ethnic minority.

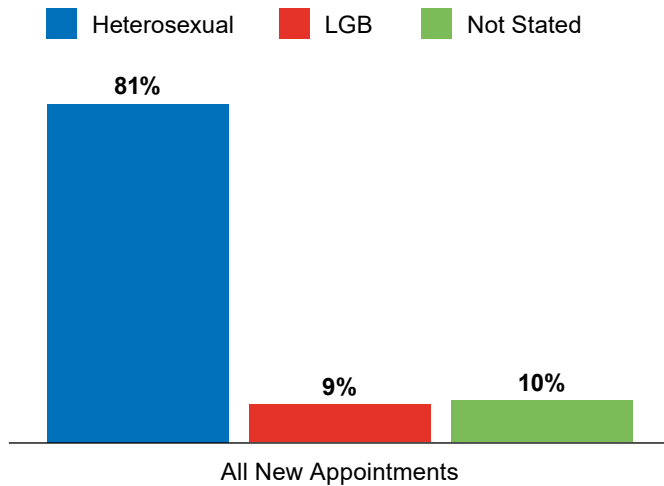
The proportion of new appointments from an ethnic minority in operational roles is 7% (9% for On-Call and 4% for Wholetime). For support staff roles, 23% of those appointed were from an ethnic minority background. 100% of new starters in Fire Control were from a White British/Irish background. However, the actual number of new starters is very small so this percentage looks disproportionately high and should be taken into consideration.

New Appointments 2021/22

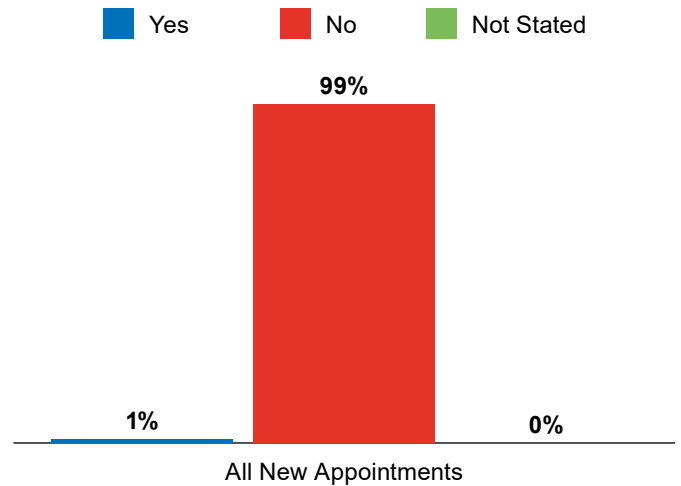
Sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief, and age

9% of new appointments identified as belonging to the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual community, which is a significant increase from last year's figure of 3%. 2% declared a religion other than Christian and the highest proportion of appointees were aged 25-35 years (46%). The number of appointees declaring a disability remains at 1%. Many people who are neurodiverse e.g. people with dyslexia, do not consider this a disability and therefore this may explain the low disclosure rate.

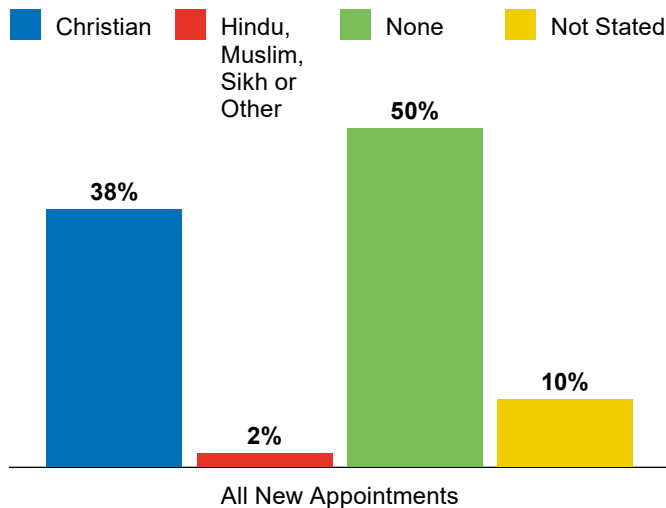
Sexual Orientation



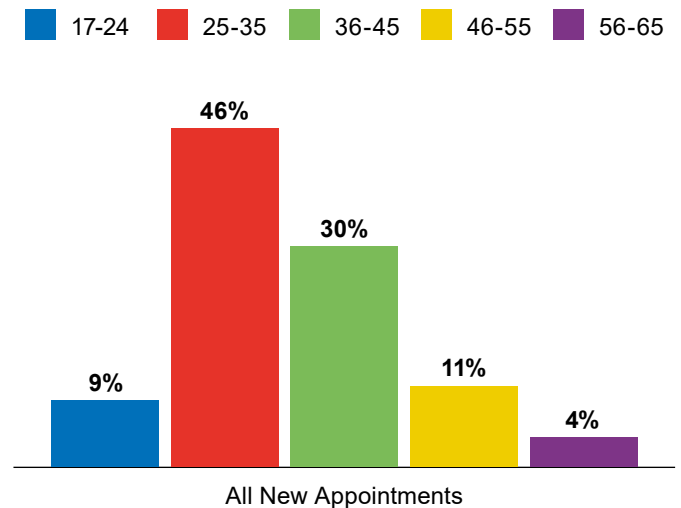
Disability



Religion and Belief

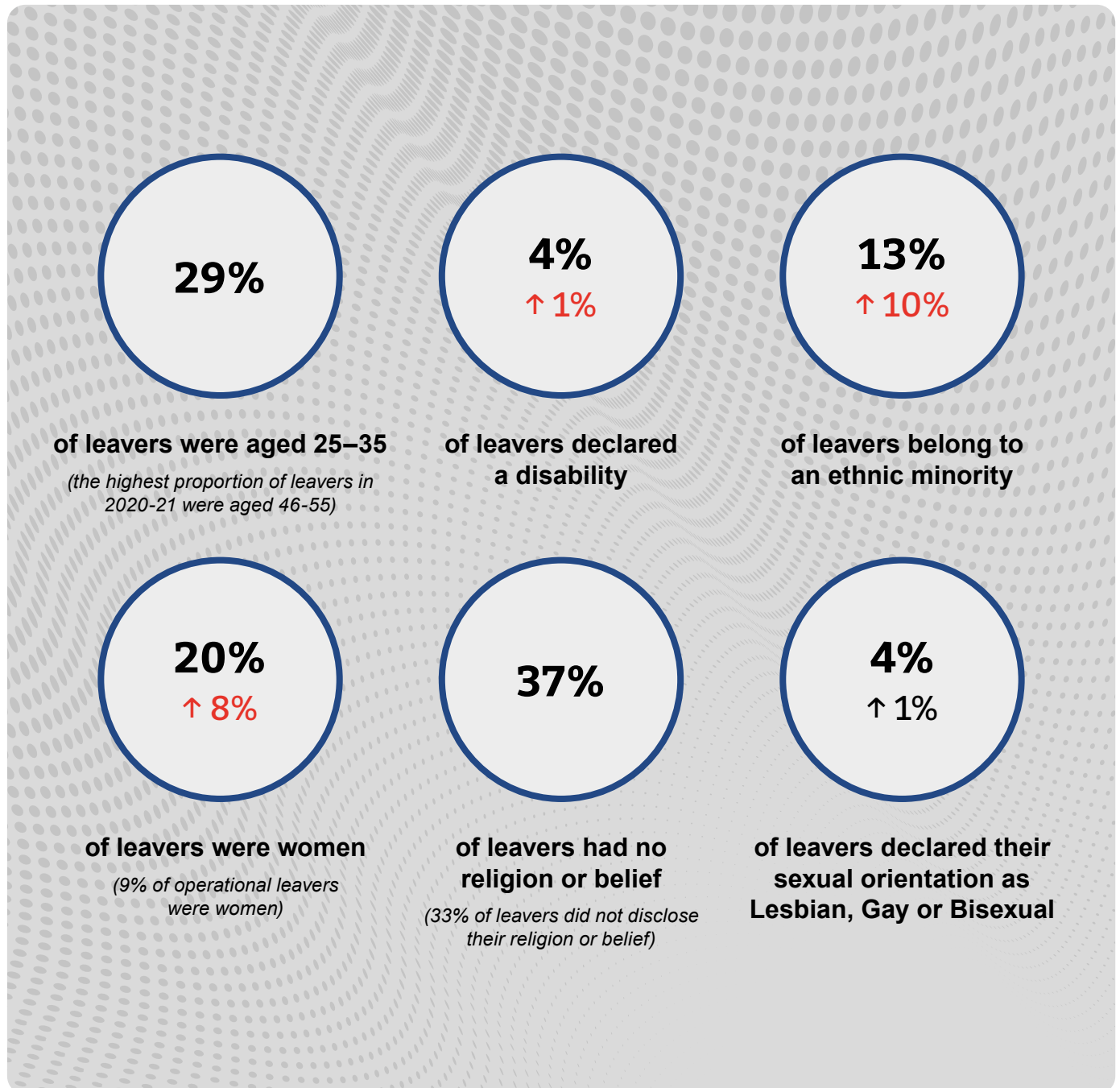


Age



Retention

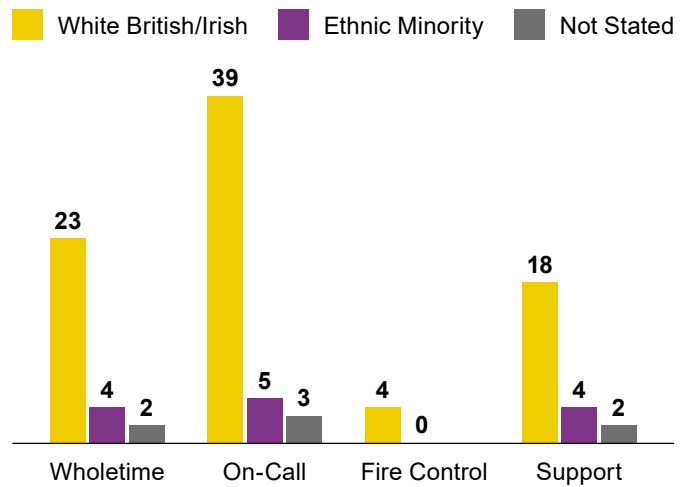
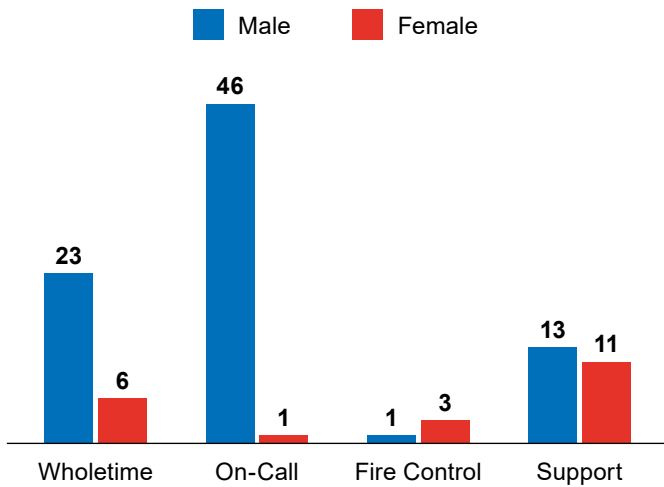
In 2021-2022, 104 employees left the Service. 76 of those were operational staff (47 On-Call; 29 Wholetime), 4 Fire Control staff and 24 Support staff¹⁰. There are a number of factors which may be contributing to an increase in leavers, such as more than double the number of retirements compared to last year, and national challenges relating to pay. An increase in leavers in 2021-22 also appears to be a national trend in FRSs, with a 32% increase in leavers on the previous year across the sector¹¹.



¹⁰ Individuals that ended one of their dual contracts but remained in employment with the Service in another role have been included.

¹¹ Home Office (2022) [Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics: England, April 2021 to March 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fire-and-rescue-workforce-and-pensions-statistics-england-april-2021-to-march-2022)

Retention (continued)



Leavers by sex

In the year ending 31 March 2022, the proportion of women who left the Service is 20%, which is an increase from last year (8%). There was an increased number of leavers overall in the support staff workforce group which has a higher proportion of women, so this may account for the increase.

Of the women who left the Service, 76% resigned, 14% retired and 10% reached the end of a fixed term contract. The overall proportion of females leaving the Service (20%) is slightly higher than the proportion of females appointed to roles (18%). The proportion of women appointed into operational roles (10%) is slightly higher than the proportion of female leavers, which at 9% is the same as last year. Work aligned to our Positive Action Plan will seek to improve the attraction and retention of female operational staff.

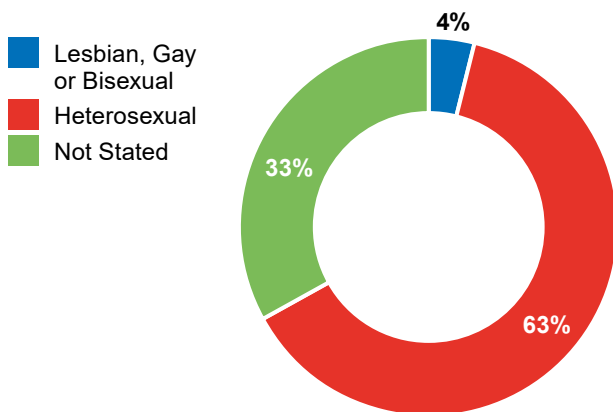
Leavers by ethnicity

81% of leavers were White British/Irish, which has decreased from last year's figure of 91%. Employees from an ethnic minority background accounted for 13% (13 employees) of all leavers, which is a 10% increase from last year. This difference could be attributed to 31% of those staff retiring from the Service.

For this year, the proportion of staff from an ethnic minority leaving the Service (13%) has been higher than the proportion appointed to roles (10%).

7% of leavers did not record their ethnicity – a 1% increase from last year.

Retention (continued)



Leavers by sexual orientation

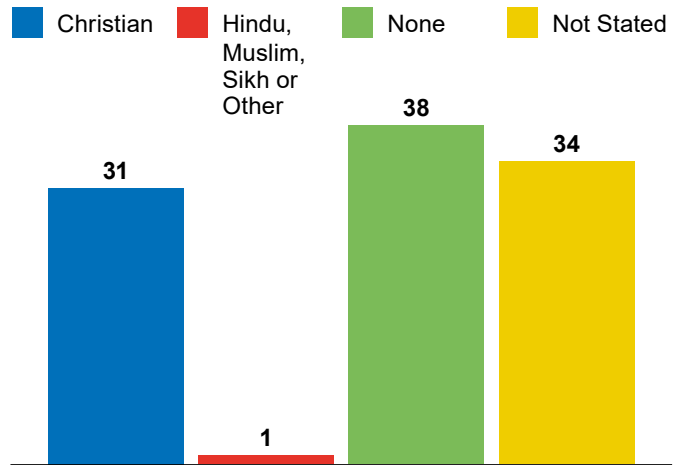
The proportion of staff leaving the Service who consider themselves to be a member of the LGB community is 4%. However, the proportion of new staff who have declared their sexual orientation as LGB is significantly higher – 9%.

Those leavers not disclosing their sexual orientation is 33%. As the declaration rates for staff in post continue to rise, it is likely the declaration rates for leavers will also continue to rise in reflection of this.

Leavers by disability

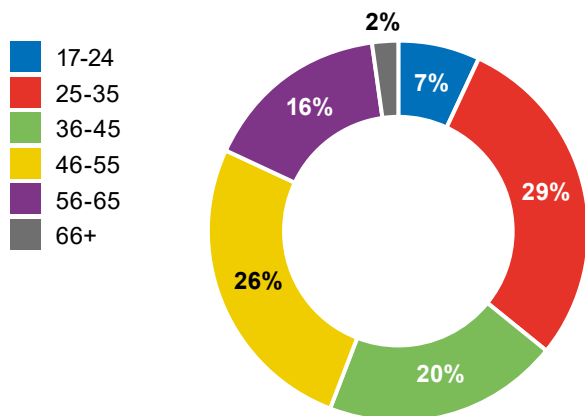
4% of staff who left the Service in 2021/22 declared a disability, which is a continuing increase of 1% each year over the last 2 years. The number of leavers declaring a disability is higher than the number of new starters who declared a disability (1%). As awareness of dyslexia increases in the Service and more staff understand it can be considered a disability under the Equality Act, we may see further increases in overall declaration rates for this protected characteristic.

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 37% of leavers. Those of the Christian faith accounted for 30% of leavers. 33% did not disclose their religion or belief.



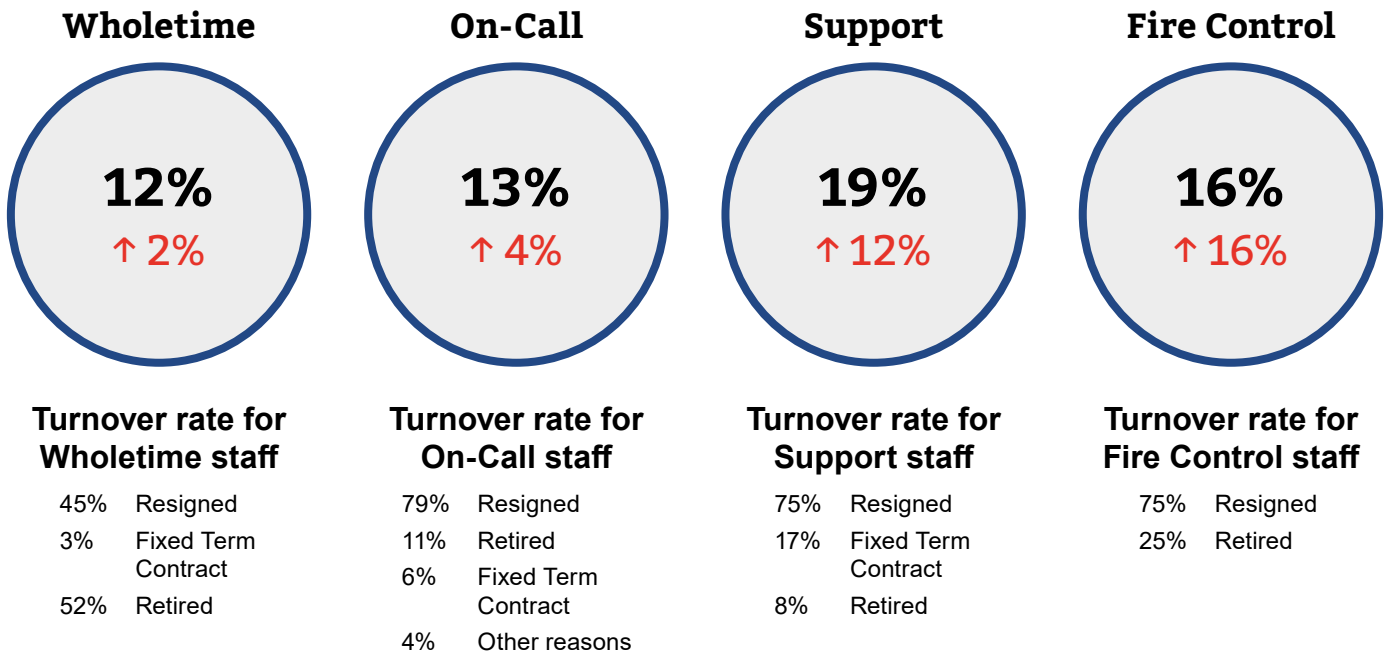
Leavers by age

The largest proportion of leavers were in the age group of 25-35 years. The highest proportion of staff within this age group were from our On-Call workforce and this is reflective of the On-Call workforce age demographic.

Retention (continued)

Turnover¹² and reasons for leaving

Staff turnover has increased over the last year. There were more than double the number of retirements this year (23) compared to last (9), which may be a contributing factor to this increase. 68% of leavers resigned with the highest proportion leaving to take up a role in another emergency service, e.g. fire service or police (21%). After Wholetime leavers, it is Support staff who make up the highest proportion of those leaving to take up a role in another service (21%). 16% of all leavers left within one year of employment; significantly lower than last year (27%). The number of On-Call staff leaving within one year of employment has decreased from 17% to 11%.



Disciplinary and grievances, bullying and harassment

The number of formal Disciplinary and Grievance cases investigated during 2021-22 was numerically very low and therefore for data protection reasons we are unable to report by protected characteristic. No concerns were identified relating to protected groups.

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 2022

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**¹⁰
5. **Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus payment**¹⁰
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 2022 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.

¹⁰ Individuals that ended one of their dual contracts but remained in employment with the Service in another role have been included.

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

Mean Pay Gap

7% ↑



£14.67



£15.83

Difference: £1.16 per hour

Median Pay Gap

3% ↔



£14.26



£14.72

Difference: £0.46 per hour

The **mean pay gap** shows women on average earn 7% less than men in our organisation (an increase of 1% from last year).

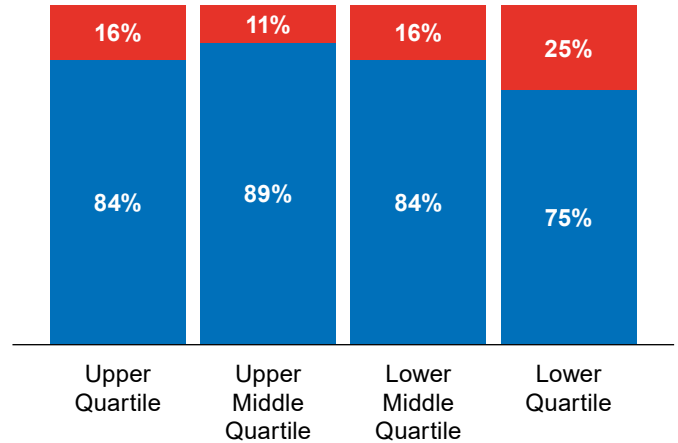
The **median pay gap** shows the midpoint in the range of women's pay is 3% less than the midpoint in the range of pay for men (no change from 2020-21).

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

Men Women



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

This year, there are small fluctuations in all but the upper middle quartile of pay. Of note is an increase in the proportion of males within the lower quartile (up by 3%). There is a 1% increase in the proportion of females falling within the upper quartile of pay.

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 Positive Action Plan.

Contributory Factors

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.

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 the number slowly increasing, signaling positive change in this respect.
- An under-representation of women in operational roles in the Fire sector.
- Within Support roles, women 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 which may delay career progression, contributing to a lack of representation of women at higher levels.



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 focus continues through the implementation of our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan](#) and our [Positive Action Plan](#).

Despite pandemic restrictions being in place during this year, work within our plans continued apace. We were able to demonstrate support and positive encouragement for our female workforce with our first ever online event and the work aligned to our strategic equality objectives has gained momentum.

Over the next year we will focus on the following areas:

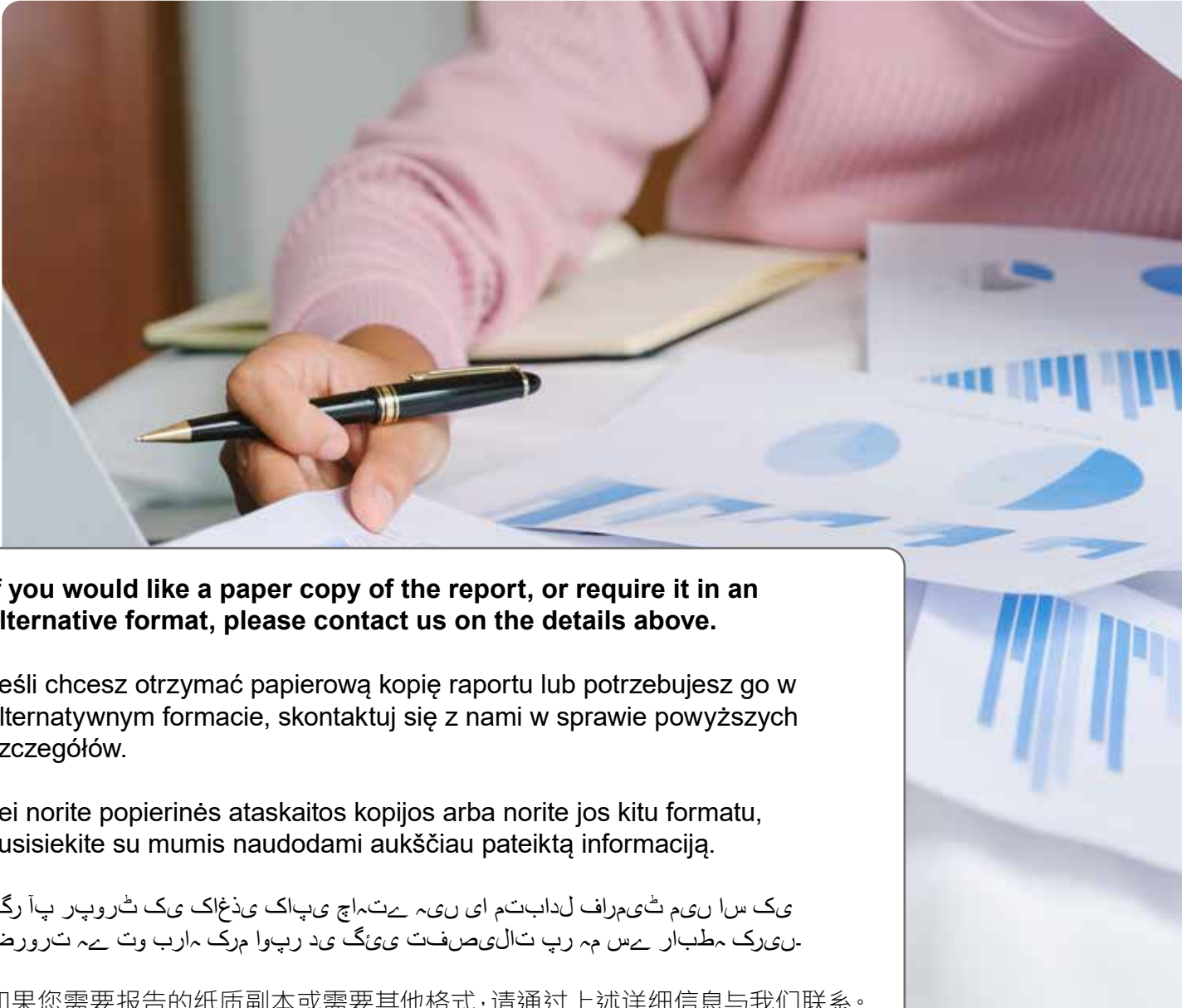
- Embedding the importance of diversity and inclusion, and the wider links to the Core Code of Ethics.
- Positive action to encourage and support women to consider a career in the fire service.
- Continuing to seek opportunities for engagement with minority groups in our communities.
- Promoting and supporting our staff networks so that they can continue to develop and grow.

Conclusion

We are pleased with the work which has been done in embedding the importance of equality and inclusion across our organisation. With the challenges of the pandemic behind us, we will work hard to promote our organisation as an inclusive employer to our communities in order to continue improving the diversity of our workforce, but also to promote the services we offer to everyone.

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.

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