

Equality Monitoring

2019-20

Interim report



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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Introduction

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010 requires all public sector organisations like Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) to publish equality information at least on an annual basis. We usually publish our data by 31 October with a separate Gender Pay Gap report being published the following Spring.

In order to align the collection and reporting of the organisation's equality data, we are incorporating our Gender Pay Gap reporting and equality monitoring information within an annual equality report. This will create a more holistic picture of our data and enable us to analyse, explain and consult on our data prior to publication as well as focus our actions for the year ahead. Therefore for 2020, we are publishing an interim report to enable us to meet our legal duty to publish annually and support the move to the new reporting date.

This interim report is therefore shorter than our usual full report and summarises our actions and progress against our equality objectives in order to meet the aims of the PSED. The full equality report to be published in Spring 2021 will provide detailed information about our areas of equality work and highlight any areas of focus. It will also cover our workforce diversity in more detail and provide an analysis across the protected characteristics. This will inform our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plan 2020-2025 and associated yearly delivery frameworks in support of our overarching People Strategy 2020-2022.

This report covers the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Our Purpose, Vision and Mission



Who we are

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 ensure we understand and appreciate the diversity of the communities we serve and that we have a workforce that is inclusive; where our people fully represent and understand those communities.



Our People

Our People Strategy is a key pillar of our vision and sets out how we will support and value our workforce. An inclusive workplace can help our people to be their whole selves at work, benefiting both our people and our organisation which strengthens our ability to deliver our services effectively.



Our Commitment

We are committed to building a culture where our people feel included, supported and treated fairly. We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, discrimination or any other negative behaviours. We welcome respectful honesty and openness; where our people feel able to offer constructive and professional challenge at all levels, without boundaries across roles and pay grades.

Our equality and diversity work is everyone's responsibility with strategic leadership provided by our Senior Management Board through our People Strategy and Annual Authority plan. Our Organisational Development and Challenge Group (ODCG) and representative bodies also support us to identify practical solutions to help fulfil our equality duties.

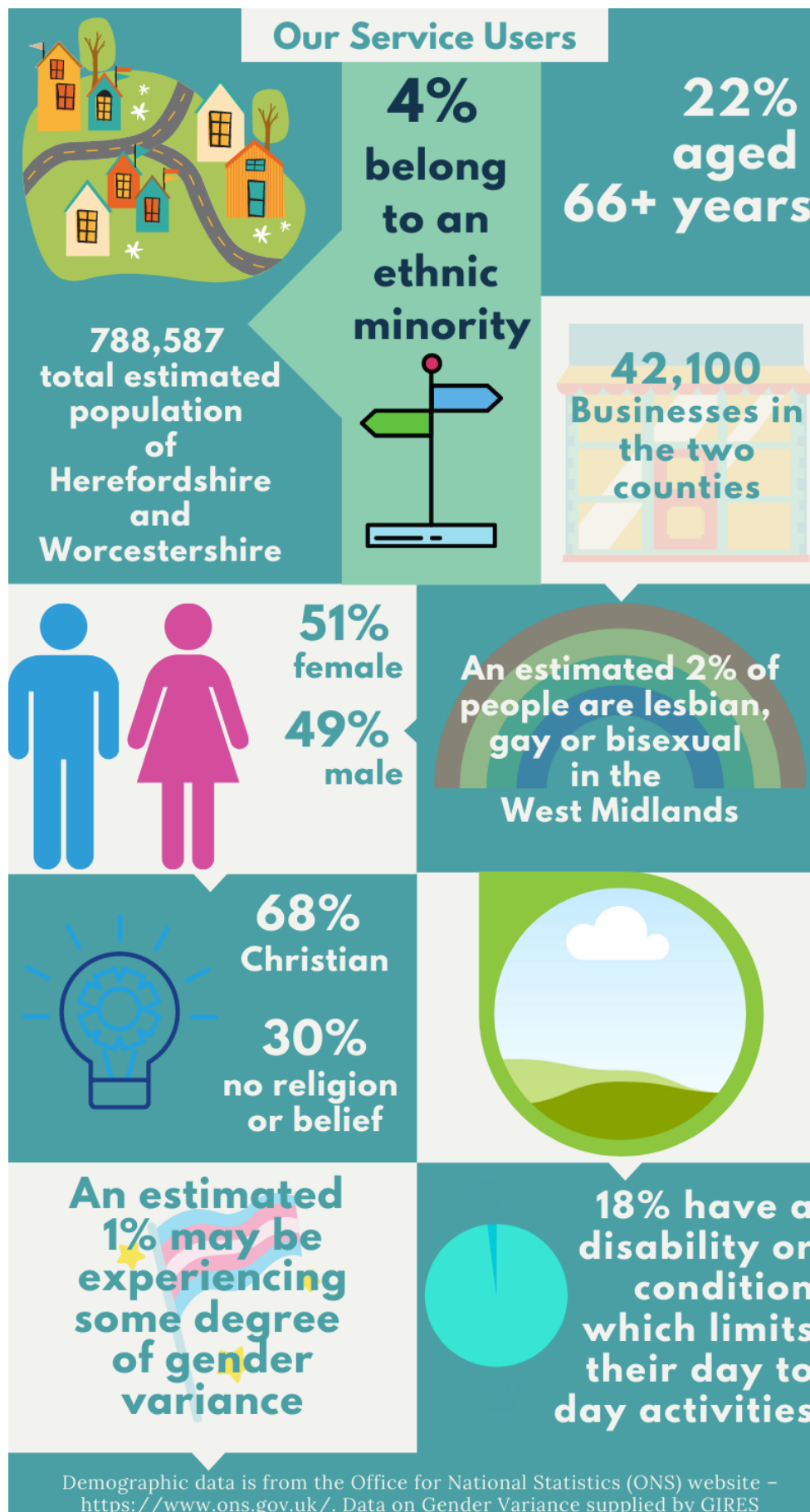
Our Values

How we carry out our core purpose is set out in **Our Values**. These are the guiding principles that are most important to us about the way we work. They help us to identify the right ways of working and acting within our organisation and with the public and our partners, and they help us to make important decisions.

- **Integrity**
We will do the right thing and show fairness and consistency in our approach, taking responsibility for the decisions we make and the actions we take.
- **Honesty**
We will be truthful in our actions and duties to build trust amongst our colleagues and within the communities we serve.
- **Respect**
We value the differences between individuals and create an inclusive environment which recognises everyone's experiences and opinions.
- **Teamwork**
By working collaboratively, we can exceed the expectations and go beyond the achievements of individuals.
- **Openness**
We will act in a way that is transparent and open to review and will welcome new or innovative ways of thinking.

Our Service users

We serve a wide range of people in our local communities within Herefordshire and Worcestershire:

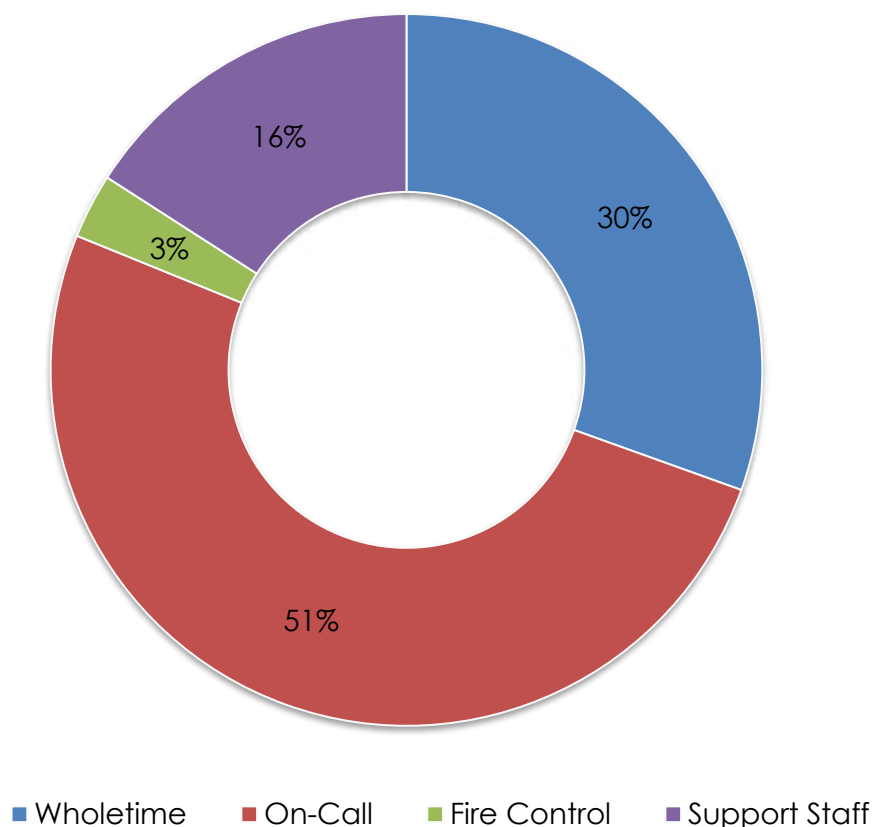


Our employees

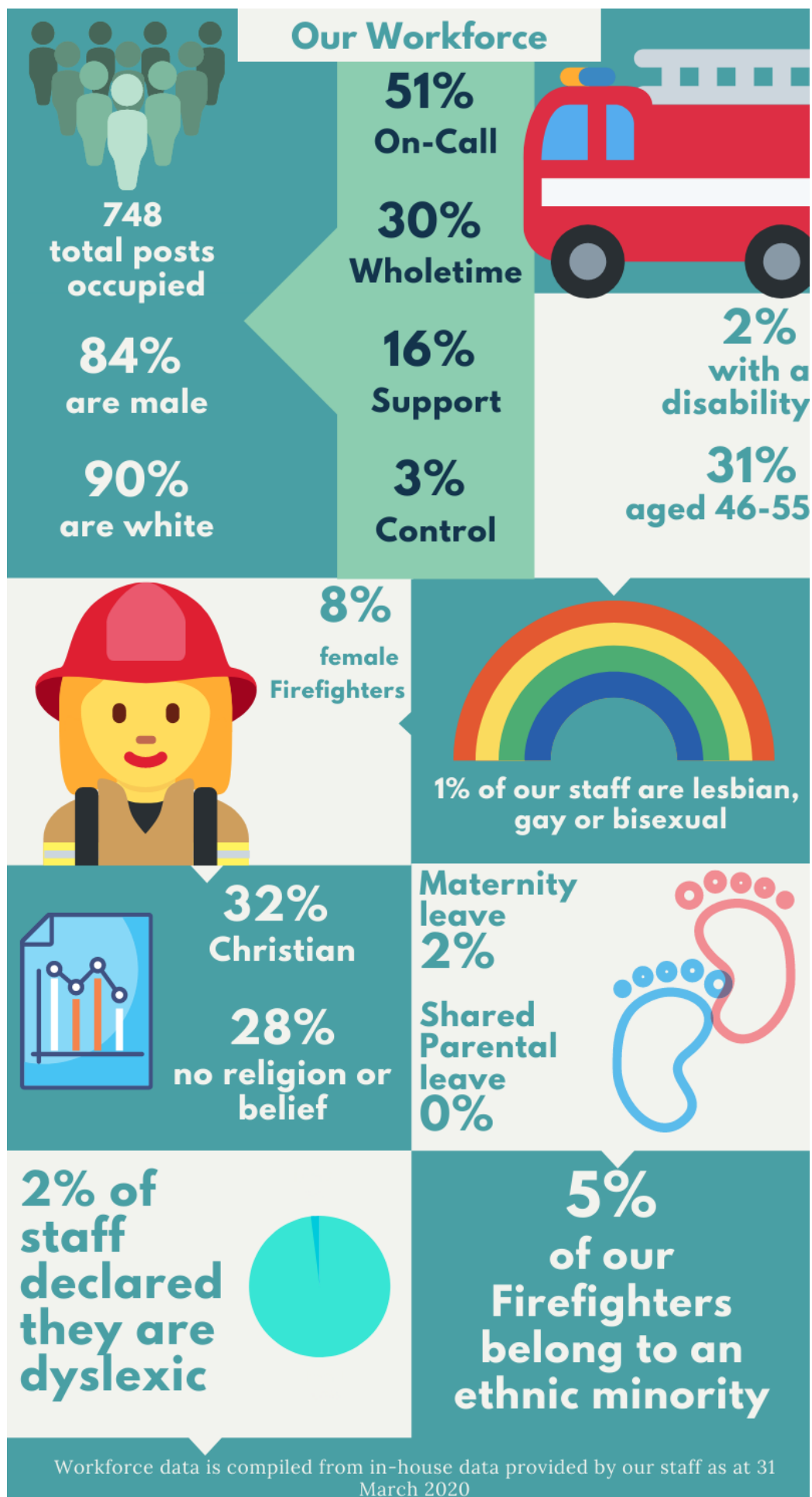
Our Service is made up of four main workforce groups (using Home Office definitions):

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.

The total number of posts occupied in our Service is 748. This means that 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.



The following is a snapshot that represents our total workforce as of 31 March 2020.




Our equality objectives – key highlights during 2019/20

The PSED requires us to develop and publish equality objectives at least every four years. We plan to identify and publish new objectives in 2021. Our current objectives and progress highlights during 2019/2020 are summarised below:

Leadership & Corporate Commitment

We will encourage a culture that supports equal treatment, opportunity, inclusion and transparency at all levels of the Authority

- We have reviewed our **recruitment and promotion principles** to ensure fairness and transparency and to ensure opportunities are equally accessible. We are guided by a set of overarching principles including independent scrutiny provided by a cross-section of employees from across the organisation and representative bodies. The purpose of the independent scrutiny is to provide constructive challenge on any aspect of the process and provide feedback with the aim of providing efficient and effective selection processes, high standards of delivery and a positive candidate experience.
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- Some of our newly-promoted Crew Commanders promoted using our new principles in April 2019
- The **Organisational Development and Challenge Group (ODCG)** acts as a critical friend in challenging our plans and processes in order to improve equality, diversity, consistency, transparency and outcomes. The ODCG meets quarterly and is represented by a cross section of employees at all levels. Representative bodies also attend group meetings and undertake work that assists in the implementation of the People Strategy.
 - We have made good progress to fulfil our **People Strategy 2017-2020**. The People Strategy outlines our clear commitment to developing and maintaining a diverse workforce. Our commitment to equality and diversity summarises a number of targets which are key priorities. These range from embedding the principles and values of our Ethical Framework and Code of Conduct throughout the Service and undertaking positive action programmes to improve our workforce diversity.
 - Our Senior Management Board invited the ODCG to consult with staff from throughout HWFRS to develop the new **Service Values**. We continue to reinforce the Values throughout the Service and in our day to day work to ensure that 'What we believe in' is demonstrated in everything we do, every day.

Service Delivery & Community Risk

We will make sure that our prevention, protection and response activities target the most vulnerable people and the greatest risks

- We have continued our **youth engagement** work with our Young Firefighters Association and **educational programmes** such as “Dying to Drive”. This is a free multi-agency road safety scheme aimed at reducing death and serious injury amongst young road users in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Our events involve realistic road traffic collision reconstruction followed by powerful interactive workshops.



- Our Service continues to be involved in the **Multi-Agency Targeted Enforcement (MATE) initiative**, which brings together several agencies, sharing differing powers of entry and intelligence on premises of concern, with the ultimate joint aim of protecting vulnerable people. This is the first team of its kind and was noted by HMICFRS in their recent inspection of us, as having ‘the potential to be notable practice’.

- We have enhanced our **Safe and Well Checks** to signpost other vulnerabilities to our partners; talking to residents about health and wellbeing issues that may impact on their fire risk and identify any additional advice or support needs.



- We have continued with an **Intelligence Led Audit Programme** (alongside a Risk Based Audit Programme) to identify premises through referrals from other agencies or as a result of local or national fire trends. This approach targets Business Fire Safety resources at premises that are (historically) assessed as being ‘low risk’ but have low levels of compliance with the Fire Safety Order. This has resulted in higher levels of enforcement action and has improved the safety of vulnerable people and groups in our communities.
- We continue to gather feedback on our **Community Risk Activities** to assess their effectiveness in targeting those most at risk within the community.

People and Culture

To have a diverse workforce that represents our community

- We have put together our ambitions and priorities in our **People Strategy 2020-2022**, aligned to the core pillars of the National Fire Chiefs Council's People Strategy. We continue to have equality and diversity as a key commitment and have developed an implementation programme, overseen by relevant leaders with the Service and supported by the ODCG.
- We have re-aligned our **HR & Development team** and our new structure includes an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer and Engagement and Wellbeing Officer to support our journey to improve the diversity of our workforce and embed a culture of inclusion across our Service. Both of these roles will also help us to achieve our People Strategy ambitions.
- We have continued our **Positive Action** work to increase the number of women applying for and being recruited to operational roles.
- We have supported local **Pride** events in Worcester and Malvern and used this as an opportunity to engage with our communities and promote a career with the Fire Service.
- We have encouraged our employees to form their own **staff networks** such as the Women@HWFire group.
- We have introduced an **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Allies** programme to support the promotion of inclusion for all in our workplace and continue to raise staff awareness of equality issues.
- We have maintained our corporate membership to the **Asian Fire Services Association (AFSA)** who are a significant player in the field of diversity and equality both in terms of workforce and service delivery. We continue to build relationships with and learn from a network of equality professionals to better serve our communities. We have continued to attend their national conferences, development days and regional events and share learning with the ODCG and our senior leaders to drive change and support our equality agenda.
- We have maintained our corporate membership to **Women in the Fire Service UK** to demonstrate our commitment to support the future of women working in the fire service. We support our staff to attend national and regional events including the annual national training and development weekend – an inclusive event for all genders - which includes workshops, activities and speakers.



Conclusion

We are encouraged that progress continues to be made to diversify our workforce and ensure everyone feels included in the workplace. We recognise there is always more to do and we continually strive to make a real difference in our communities and in our workplace.

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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