

CDDFRS Equality Data Report 2024



About this report

This report contains equality information required by Regulation 2 of the Equality Act (Specific Duties) Regulations.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010. Which are to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Promoting equality of opportunity means public bodies have to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages for groups of people.
- take steps to meet the needs of protected groups of people.
- encourage all groups of people to participate in public life or other activity in situations where their participation is low.

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities, to publish:

- equality objectives, at least every four years.
- information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty.

As a public authority, County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) is subject to this PSED.

This report shows how CDDFRS complies with the PSED in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in relation to its diversity and inclusion, as an employer and in the community.

Although compliance with the general equality duty is a legal obligation, CDDFRS recognises that it also makes good business sense. We believe that if we can provide appropriate services to meet the diverse needs of our communities, we will undertake our core business more efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, a workforce that has a supportive working environment is a more productive one.

The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin).
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This report includes information about our employees and the people who we provide a service to, in County Durham and Darlington and will be accessible to the public. The information contained in the report will enable customers, staff, and our regulators to assess our equality performance. The findings will also enable us to identify equality priorities and development areas which inform our equality objectives. We also publish these objectives every four years to show how we meet the general equality duty.

The report covers the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023. It reflects the policies and approaches that were current during this period.

Background

Our Purpose

CDDFRS undertakes a number of activities, aimed at making our communities safer and stronger. We know that responding to emergencies is our first duty, but we also recognise we can help prevent fires in the home and at work.

We are committed to making sure that people, businesses and organisations in County Durham and Darlington are protected by:

- (a) Planning and preparing for emergencies and providing a professional and effective response at all times.
- (b) Providing professional advice and assurance to support business development and ensure public safety.
- (c) Engaging and educating people to improve their safety and wellbeing.
- (d) Delivering an efficient fire and rescue service through the effective use of public money and be accountable to the public.
- (e) Working closely with our partners to improve public safety.
- (f) Supporting and developing our staff and ensure our values are at the centre of everything we do.

Whilst our core purpose will remain to save lives and prevent incidents as an emergency response provider, we recognise that as society, the economy and technology shifts, this has an impact on how people conduct themselves at home, at work and in the community.

Our Strategic Objectives

We endeavour to 'Be the Best' and the Service of Choice and in order to fulfil our vital purpose, this report is based upon our Vision of 'Safest People, Safest Places' through:

- Business Fire Safety
- Community Safety
- Value for Money
- Working Together
- Our People Our Way

- Emergency Response
- Diversity and Inclusion

Our Values

Our core value is to be the best by:

- Being Professional
- Being Innovative
- Being Effective

The People we serve.

The Service area covers the two Unitary Authorities of County Durham and Darlington and a geographic area of 939 square miles with a population of approximately 623,000 people. Within the Service area there are approximately 290,000 households and around 18,500 business premises.

The Office of National Statistics provides key population information on the composition of the communities within County Durham and Darlington. The 2021 census figures for the population of County Durham and Darlington are shown below:

County Durham and Darlington Census 2021 population.

Unitary Authority	Male Population	Female Population	Population
County Durham	255,304	266,764	522,068
Darlington	52,670	55,129	107,799
Total	307,974	321,893	629,867

Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Since the last census carried out in 2011 County Durham has shown an annual population increase of 0.18% and Darlington an increase of 0.21%.

Section 1: Our Employees

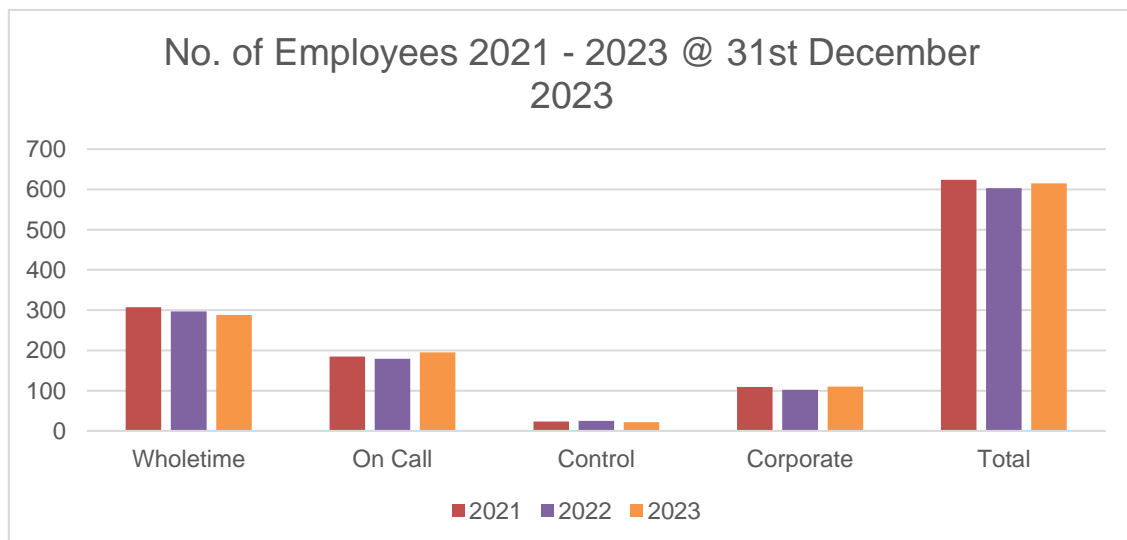
1.1 Workforce Profile

This information demonstrates that the make-up of our organisation strives to reflect the community we serve. The number of people employed by CDDFRS between January 2023 and December 2023 was 615.

There has been an increase of 12 employees in 2023 which is explained below.

Number of employees in post 2021 – 2023 (31 December 2023)

Year	Wholetime	On Call	Control	Corporate	Total
2021	307	185	23	109	624
2022	297	179	25	102	603
2023	288	195	22	110	615
Change 22/23	-9	16	-3	8	12
% Change 22/23	-3%	8.9%	-8%	7.8%	2.0%



1.2 Staffing Strength (FTE) by role (31 December 2023)

	Wholetime	On Call	Control	Corporate	Total
Principal Officers	1	0	0	0.61	2
Area Manager/Grade 15	2	0	0	2	4
Group Manager/Grade 14	5	0	0	1	6
Station Manager/Grade 10-13	16	0	1.6	15.76	33.36
Watch Manager/Grade 8-9	43	10.14	7.22	17.11	78.47
Crew Manager/Grade 7	56	19.05	2	24.29	101.34
Firefighter/Grade 6 & below	165	99.61	8.5	28	301.11
Apprentice	0	0	0	14	14
Total	289	128.8	19.32	102.77	539.89

The number of staff employed by CDDFRS has increased by 2.0% over the last 12 months.

This is due to the Service undertaking further changes to the structure to ensure it continues to address the anticipated challenges over the medium term, such as the uncertainty surrounding future funding for the sector, ensuring internal skills, capacity, and ability to execute areas of improvement as required by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) (Effectiveness, Efficiency and People report, 2021/2022).

As part of these changes the Service introduced a modification of crewing to the remaining 5 appliances around the county which were crewed with 5 firefighters to being crewed with 4 the same as the rest of the Service. This resulted in 16 posts being removed from the operational establishment. Doing this safeguarded the Service to maintain the same number of fire engines around the county. CDDFRS still remains one of the fastest FRS to respond to emergencies and is

recognised by HMICFRS as the fastest predominantly rural FRS in England. The reduction in uniformed staff is being achieved through natural turnover.

The 3% decrease in wholetime employees is also as a result of the retirement profile of the Service which shows that several uniformed personnel have reached retirement age. The Service currently runs a successful firefighter apprenticeship programme to assist to alleviate any shortfall. However, it has been agreed that a wholetime recruitment campaign will take place during 2024 as there has been some unexpected leavers and this is deemed the most appropriate way to recruit.

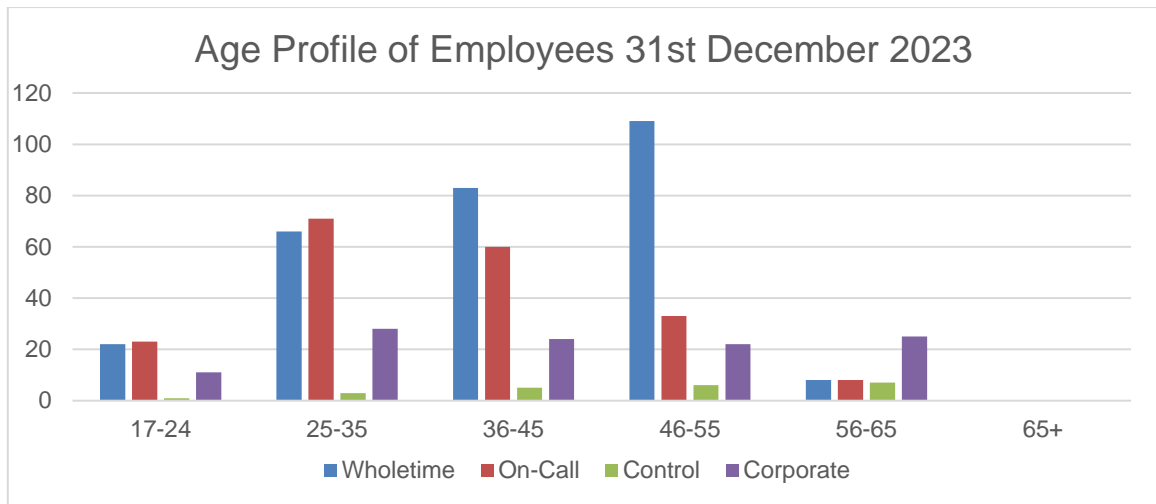
The Service continue to carry out ongoing recruitment of on-call employees (Retained Duty System (RDS)) the number of employees has increased this year by 8.9% going from 179 to 195. This can be accounted to work life balance of homelife and primary employments and the demographic population within a 5-minute response radius of our on-call stations. We do however continue to enhance our ability to attract and retain the very best talent we can in this area.

1.3 Age profile

The age profile of the workforce shows most staff are now aged between 36 and 45 (28%) where in 2022 (29.7%) the majority was aged between 46 and 55 which is a close second this year (27.6%).

Age of employees (31 December 2023)

	17-24	25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	65+
Wholetime	22	66	83	109	8	0
On-Call	23	71	60	33	8	0
Control	1	3	5	6	7	0
Corporate	11	28	24	22	25	0
Total in each age bracket	57	168	172	170	48	0
	9.3%	27.2%	28.0%	27.6%	7.8%	0%



As shown above CDDFRS continues to both attract and retain employees across a diverse age range which is generally representative of our communities (ONS Census 2021).

The majority of employees remains largely within the 36–45 and 46–55 age brackets which will be a legacy of the recruitment freeze experienced a few years ago.

The 17-24 bracket remains around 9% thus demonstrating our continued commitment to develop the next generation of employees within the Service which is done via our apprenticeship scheme where we have successfully recruited 7 cohorts of firefighter apprentices over the last 7 years. We have also recruited apprentices previously within control, workshops, and other corporate roles.

We continue to raise the profile of our award-winning apprentice firefighter recruitment campaign throughout our communities to help encourage an age diverse workforce (there is no upper age limit to our apprenticeship schemes).

The Service continues to operate cadet schemes across a number of fire stations encouraging individuals from our diverse communities to participate either as a cadet or to help us support the delivery of our schemes. It is encouraging that some of our cadets have decided to join our firefighter apprenticeship scheme and on-call workforce. In addition, the Service remains committed to engage with all underrepresented groups through internal and external communication channels, achieving this through focused engagement, targeted communication,

and community interaction. We have also held a number of Positive Action events and will continue to do so to encourage under-represented groups to apply to the Service in operational roles. We will be running a positive action campaign for recruitment of wholetime Firefighters in 2024.

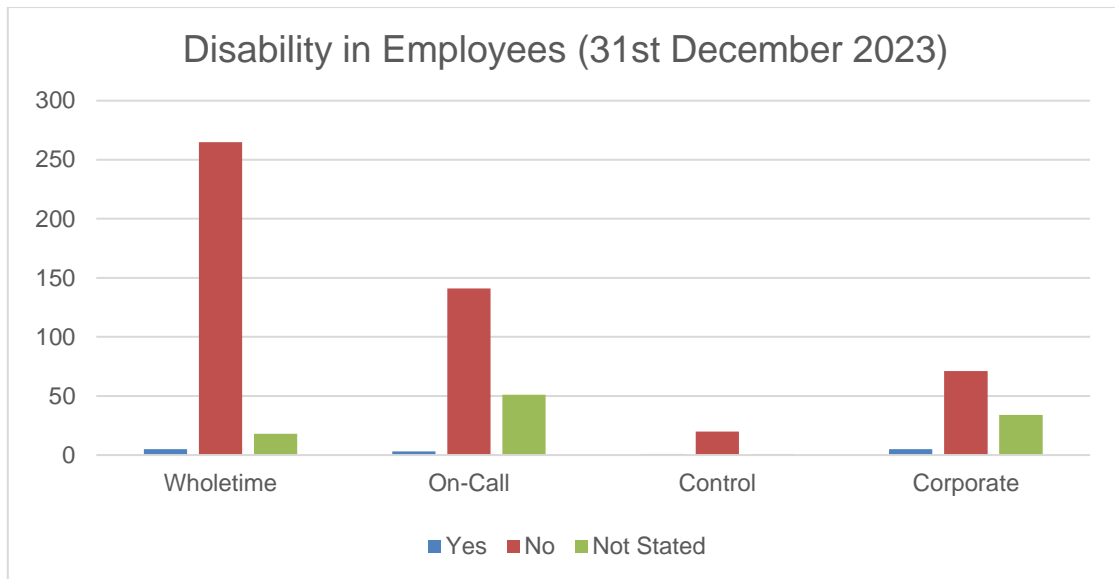
We are also committed to carrying out community events; open days, school visits where we can further demonstrate the vast variety of employment opportunities available. We have made good progress through the Services ‘Connect’ campaign which helps us understanding the communities we serve.

1.4 Disability

The disability profile of the workplace has remained the same since 2022. Of the 14 employees stating they are classed as having a disability, 5 were in support roles. In operational roles, 5 are from wholetime, 3 in on-call and 1 in control have declared themselves as having a disability. This represents 2.3% of the total workforce declaring themselves as having a disability in 2023.

Disability in Employees (31 December 2023)

	Yes	No	Not Stated	Total	Yes %
Wholetime	5	265	18	288	1.7%
On-Call	3	141	51	195	1.5%
Control	1	20	1	22	4.5%
Corporate	5	71	34	110	4.5%
Total	14	497	104	615	2.3%



We continue to record and monitor disability profile of our workforce in order to best support employees with adjustments where appropriate.

We strive to understand and improve our support mechanisms and accessibility provisions for employees with disabilities. We continue to hold the 'Disability Confident Leader' certificate showing our continued commitment to inclusiveness.

Our Health and Fitness Advisor, Mental Health First Aiders, Trauma Support Team and People and Organisation Development Team continue to be proactive in raising the awareness of mental health issues. Our Mental Health First Aiders provide advice and support by assisting to identify the signs of mental health and how to signpost employees to the correct treatment and support. Our Trauma Support Team continues to be embedded into our employee welfare provision, the availability and support of which has been well received since it was established. Due to the success of the Trauma Support Team we are recruiting and training another 5 members of staff to assist in delivering this service.

We also have ongoing access for employees to an employee assistance programme (PAM Assist); which has a free confidential helpline and mobile app for all employees, providing advice and guidance on a wide range of issues.

We have dedicated Occupational Health, Physiotherapy and Health and Safety provision to help us ensure we can support our employees' health and wellbeing needs at all times; consideration is given to employee safety and wellbeing both

at home and at work. We continue to provide a hybrid working scheme allowing eligible employees to work from home or other service locations. All employees who are home working are asked to complete an online training package regarding their health and safety at home in addition to undertaking a DSE assessment. Following all assessments, where employees require additional equipment to ensure their safety and health is maintained, arrangements are made to provide these. Hybrid working arrangements are also reviewed regularly to make sure they are still suitable for both the Service and the individual.

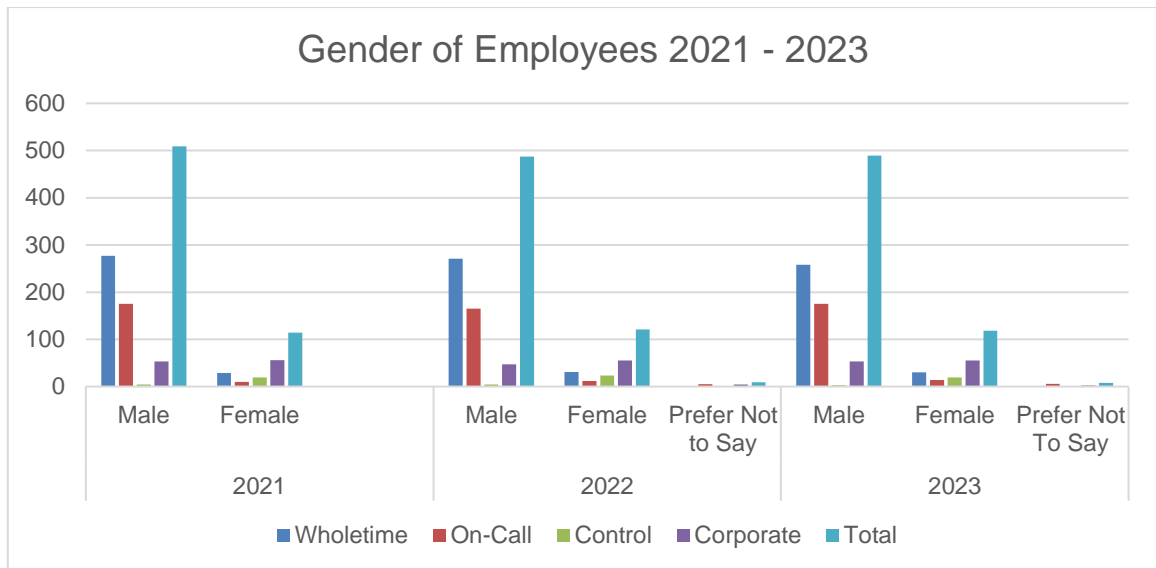
All new buildings across our estate are fully accessible and underwent an Equality Impact Assessment at various stages of planning and build. We aim to ensure adequate support and reasonable adjustments are supported whenever possible.

1.5 Gender

Even though there has been a decrease in the total number of employees there has been an increase in the ratio of female employees to male within the workforce. Almost 79.5% of employees within our organisation are male and 20.5% are female this has increased by 1.8% from 2022. 10.4% are female in an operational capacity which is a considerable increase from 6.5% last year.

Gender of employees 2021 – 2023 (31 December 2023)

	2021			2022			2023		
	Male	Female	Prefer Not to Say	Male	Female	Prefer Not to Say	Male	Female	Prefer Not to Say
Wholetime	277	29	1	268	28	1	258	30	0
On-Call	175	10	0	163	11	5	175	14	6
Control	4	19	0	4	20	1	3	19	0
Corporate	53	56	0	46	54	2	53	55	2
Total	509	114	1	481	113	9	489	118	8



As of 31 March 2023; 8.7% (2,985) of all firefighters employed by Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) in the UK were women [source: www.gov.uk]. Therefore, CDDFRS lies above the national average for female operational firefighters at 10.4%.

Within the operational roles, a number of females occupy roles which attract a higher rate of pay. Further details on the impact of Gender Pay Gap can be located within our Gender Pay Gap report.

In operational roles, women represent 10.4% of the workforce, an increase of 3.9% on the previous year. Women account for approx. 50% of support roles (corporate). The percentage of women in senior roles (Area Manager / Grade 15 and above) within the Service has decreased during 2023 due to changes within SLT as one female member of staff transferred to another service.

As a Service we are aware that our gender split is primarily male dominated and we continue working with our local communities to help us address this.

Throughout our recruitment programmes, we look to run a number of “taster” sessions encouraging all potential candidates to find out a little more information about our recruitment processes and what could be expected in relation to physical fitness.

1.6 Gender Reassignment

We currently do not collect gender reassignment data from employees and would not be unable to publish any data to ensure anonymity for our employees.

1.7 Pregnancy and Maternity

Three people who took maternity leave in 2022 have returned to their original roles in 2023 and one is expected to return in 2024. This is a positive statistic which can be attributed to our work life balance policies and flexible working options available to employees. We are committed to offering flexible employment practices which recognise that staff want to find a balance between their home and work life. We offer flexible working; job share and career breaks as well as various types of leave to employees to be as family friendly as practicable.

Pregnancy and maternity in employees 2021 – 2023 (31 December 2023)

	2021	2022	2023
Number expected to return	4	4	3
Total number returned	3	1	3

We continually review our Family Leave policies, procedures and benefits. This enables us to gain credibility through women and family organisations, increase recruitment and retention of our workforce and improve staff morale and engagement.

1.8 Ethnicity

‘White British or Irish,’ make up the vast majority of the workforce (552). 49 people had not declared their ethnicity and 5 people had declared their ethnicity as ‘Asian or Asian British’.

White British ethnicity remains the same as last year at 90%. Asian or Asian British denomination has also remained the same since 2022. The percentage of staff who identify as being from an ethnic minority group has risen to 2.28% this year from 2.15% last year, the communities, we serve according to the 2021

Census which outlines that just over 3% of the population of County Durham identify as people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Race of employees 2021 – 2023 (31 December 2023)

	2021	2022	2023
White British/Irish	566	548	552
White other	3	3	3
Mixed	1	1	3
Asian/Asian British	3	5	5
Black/Black British	5	4	3
Chinese	0	0	0
Other ethnic minority	0	0	0
Not stated/blank	50	42	49
Total % ethnic minority employees	1.91%	2.15%	2.28%

According to Fire and Rescue National statistics as published within the Fire Data statistics in 2022, 94.4% of all Fire and Rescue employees were ‘White’ and 4.5% of firefighters were from the combined ‘Asian, Black, Mixed and Other’ (including Chinese) ethnic groups.

The national average of fire and rescue service staff (including support staff) from Asian, Black, Mixed and Other backgrounds in 2022 was around 5.6%. CDDFRS remain lower than the national average at 2.28% of the workforce being from ethnic groups but as previously advised we remain relatively reflective of the communities we serve.

Source: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/workforce-and-business/workforce-diversity/fire-and-rescue-services-workforce/latest>

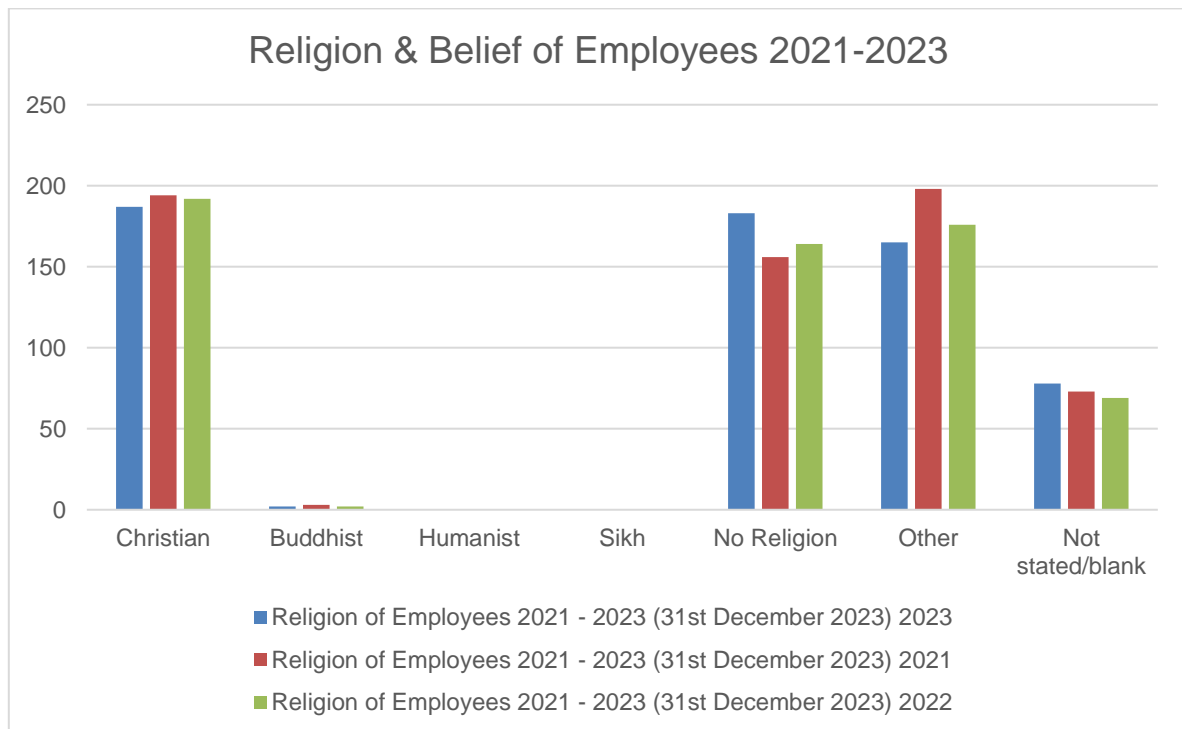
We continue to work with ethnic minority groups within the community to build relationships, understand challenges and opportunities and continue with further positive action events throughout our recruitment campaigns to encourage more members of under-represented communities to come into our organisation and understand what career opportunities are available.

1.9 Religion and Belief

The religion or belief profile of the workforce remains largely unchanged when compared to 2022; those with no religion has increased by 2.8% and those claiming other has decreased by 2.2%.

Religion of employees 2021 – 2023 (31 December 2023)

	2021	2022	2023
Christian	194	192	187
Buddhist	3	2	2
Humanist	0	0	0
Sikh	0	0	0
No religion	156 (25%)	164 (27%)	183 (29.8%)
Other	198 (31.7%)	176 (29%)	165 (26.8%)
Not stated/blank	73 (11.6%)	69 (11%)	78 (12.7%)
Total	624	603	615



We continue to encourage all personnel to complete all aspects of equality data however 12.7% of staff have not stated or have left their religion blank which is an increase from last year. The Service will continue to communicate the importance of data monitoring to staff and encourage accurate data collection through understanding the reason this information is collected and collated and hopefully this will reduce.

Collection of this data enables the Service to appreciate the religious requirements of our employees when developing our policies and procedures.

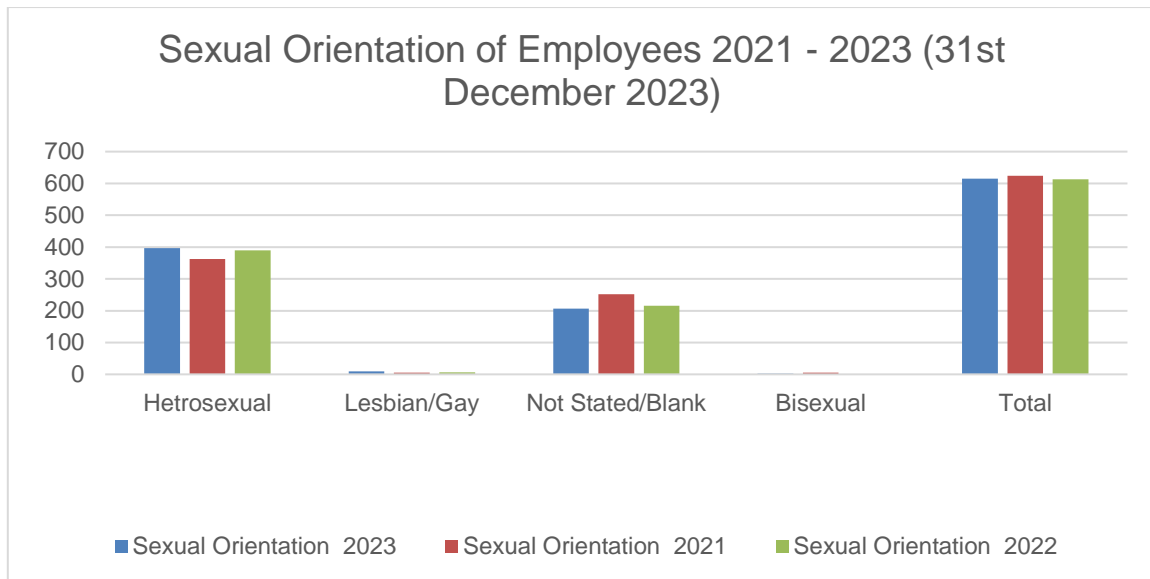
We also continue to engage with our communities through a range of activities, including promoting religious and beliefs festivals / events, to assist mutual understanding and respect for our diverse communities. All employees are required to undertake mandatory equality and diversity training every 2 years.

1.10 Sexual orientation

66% (408) of the Service's 615 employees have declared their sexual orientation, a slight increase on last year. 1.79% of the total number of employees have described themselves as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual, an increase of 0.63% since 2022.

Sexual orientation of employees 2021 – 2023 (31 December 2023)

	2021	2022	2023
Heterosexual	362	387	397
Lesbian/Gay	5	6	9
Not Stated/Blank	252	209	207
Bisexual person	5	1	2
Total	624	603	615



It is encouraging that more people feel confident to state their Sexual orientation. The majority of employees declare themselves to be Heterosexual.

However, we do recognise that sexual orientation can be a sensitive subject which may prevent some individuals from declaring this. We do endeavour to encourage a more inclusive workforce profile through positive action y and aim to create a working environment where people can be themselves.

We continue to try to increase the number of employees happy to state their sexual orientation by communicating the reasons why we need to collect the data, reassuring staff this will remain confidential and demonstrating our commitment to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), intersex, and asexual (or allies), (LGBTQIA+) employees and community members.

Section 2: Our Processes

2.1 Internal disputes and concerns

There were eight grievances raised and recorded in 2023. Two were from female members of staff and six was from male members of staff with three grievances partially upheld, two withdrawn, one not upheld, one dealt with informally and one still to be completed.

Thirteen informal grievances were raised and resolved with satisfactory outcomes in 2023.

There were 11 disciplinary investigations undertaken during 2023 resulting in various outcomes. 1 was concerning a female member of staff and 10 were concerning male members of staff.

2.2 Applications for flexible working

In 2023, there were 4 flexible working requests received and all were approved. Two flexible retirement request was received and also granted. One member of the on-call duty system applied for a 6 months unpaid leave and was authorised.

Staff entitled to do so (currently 38 agreements in place) continue to work under the hybrid working procedure. This procedure reflects our commitment to flexible working whilst enabling us to deliver a service that is agile and efficient.

Understanding the value of a healthy work-life balance, CDDFRS offer employees the opportunity to request flexible working hours, homeworking, part-time, job-share and compressed/staggered/ annualised hours. Non-operational staff (where appropriate) work on a flexitime system between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

2.3 Promotions and recruitment

A variety of internal and external recruitment and promotional processes were undertaken throughout 2023.

External recruitment processes included:

- Apprentice Firefighter recruitment
- On-going On-call Firefighter recruitment

- Various corporate support roles

2.3.1 Applications for Employment

Applications received for recruitment processes are usually broken down by Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation, Ethnicity, Religion and Disability. However, due to the jobs market being flooded and difficulty in recruiting certain roles we have needed to use different methods of recruitment during 2023 meaning equality and diversity data could not be obtained for all applicants. These have been recorded as blanks.

In 2023 the total number of applications received for all recruitment processes was 1027.

Applications received by Gender 2023

	Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Blank
Internal	51	10	0	13
External	40	59	n/a	15
Online	406	89	5	339
Total	497	158	5	367

Applicants in 2023 were predominantly Male (48%), and 15% Female which is the same as 2022. There has been an increase of 173 applicants recorded as blank, but this can be contributed to the different recruitment methods as advised above.

Applications received by Age 2023

	under 18	18-24	25-40	41-59	59+	prefer not to say / blank
Internal	0	2	19	37	0	16
External	0	9	23	15	1	66
Online	77	340	364	49	0	9
Total	77	351	406	101	1	91

CDDFRS attracts more applicants within the 25-40 (39.5%) age range than any other. However, there is a fair spread of age groups who are interested in applying for posts within the Service.

33% of applications were received by individuals aged 18-24; and 9.8% of applications received by individuals aged 41-59. Overall applications to the service have increase by 36% since 2022.

Applications received by Disability 2023

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say	Blank
Internal	7	51	0	16
External	4	43	0	67
Online	22	749	19	49
Total	33	843	19	132

3.2% of applications received regarded themselves as disabled which is an increase of 0.95% since 2022. The percentage of applications received where no indication was provided (prefer not to say or blank) was around 15%. This is significantly less than last year even though we have used different recruitment methods for some of our roles.

This does continue to highlight that the Service does endeavour to encourage transparency for the purpose of equal opportunities monitoring and execution.

Applications received by Ethnicity 2023

	White	Indian	Mixed	Blank
Internal	52	0	5	17
External	42	2	4	66
Online	762	0	12	65
Total	856	2	21	148

The percentage of applications received where ethnicity was stated as 'White' was 83% which is a considerable increase compared with last year (70%).

The percentage of applications received where ethnicity was stated as other than white was around 2.2% which is only a slight decrease from last year.

The percentage of applications received where ethnicity was stated as 'blank' was 14% which has dropped considerably from 27% last year.

Applications received by Religion 2023

	Christian	Buddhist	Atheist	Hindu	Muslim	Other	No religion	Prefer not to say / blank
Internal	33	0	15	0	0	3	1	22
External	22	0	12	2	0	6	0	72
Online	257	1	119	2	4	41	270	145
Total	312	1	146	4	4	50	271	239

The vast majority of online applications stated they were of no particular religion or belief (32%), followed by Christianity (31%) then prefer not to say / blank (17.3%).

The percentage of applications received where religion is stated as 'Hindu' or 'Muslim' is >1%.

Applications received by Sexual Orientation 2023

The majority of applicants (76%) regarded themselves as Heterosexual, whilst Lesbian and Gay accounted for 2.5% and 1.3% respectively. The percentage of

applications received where people preferred not to declare their sexual orientation was 16.5%.

	Heterosexual	Gay Woman	Gay	Bisexual person	Prefer not to say
Internal	52	1		2	19
External	40	1	2	3	68
Online	689	24	11	33	82
Total	781	26	13	38	169

Our communities remain interested and engaged with our recruitment campaigns and where opportunities for employment within CDDFRS arise, we continue to receive a significant volume of applicants within our operational roles.

We continue to host Positive Action events where applicable and hope to still attract under representative groups from these events.

Applicants and therefore prospective employees continue to be underrepresented by females and LGBTQIA+ communities, ethnic minorities communities and individuals who are disabled. Further work is required to engage with these populous to understand what is preventing or discouraging applications.

CDDFRS will continue to promote our disability confident leader status on all recruitment paperwork and ensure advertisements for vacancies are shared with the appropriate organisations. Our disability champions will assist employees to understand and appreciate diversity through disabilities within the workforce, as well as educating our communities through a variety of interventions and programmes.

2.3.2 Leavers of the Service 2023

During 2023, 60 employees left CDDFRS across all areas of the Service. 17 of those employees were wholetime operational members of staff. 7 of those wholetime employees left the organisation due to retirement, 3 left through ill health retirement, 3 transferred into another FRS and 4 other members of staff left our organisation for 'other reasons'.

14 corporate staff also left the Service; 9 resigned, 1 retired, 1 transferred to another FRS, 1 took voluntary redundancy and 2 left for other reasons / circumstances.

Number of leavers (1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023)

Reasons For Leaving	Wholetime	On-Call	Control	Corporate	Total
Voluntary Redundancy	0	0	0	1	1
Resignation	3	17	2	9	31
Transfer to another FRS	3	1	2	1	7
Normal Retirement	7	2	1	1	11
Ill Health Retirement	3	1	0	0	4
Other	1	3	0	2	6
Total	17	24	5	14	60

Age of leavers (2023)

17-24	3
25-35	21
36-45	11
46-55	18
55+	7
Total	60

Disability of leavers (2023)

Yes	1
No	52
Not stated	7
Total	60

Race of leavers (2023)

White British/Irish	54
Mixed other	1
Black/Black British	0
Not stated	5
Total	60

Religion of leavers (2023)

Christian	19
No religion	18
Other	15
Not stated	8
Total	60

Gender of leavers (2023)

Male	43
Female	15
Total	60

Sexual orientation of leavers (2023)

Heterosexual	43
Other	0
Prefer not to say	17
Total	60

All leavers are invited to undertake an exit interview with our Chief Fire Officer. During the last year the Service has also compiled an exit questionnaire which is made available to the leaver by our People and Organisational Development Team. The questionnaire covers topics such as reason for leaving, their overall experience, job satisfaction, areas of improvement and suggestions for the organisation. Any issues raised will be looked into and dealt with accordingly.

The majority of leavers fell into categories of males aged between 46 and 55, which is the retirement age for firefighters. Most leavers were heterosexual, although this was followed by people who prefer not to declare sexual orientation. We continue encouraging employees to record their data in order to produce accurate information and detect areas of unrepresented groups within the service and subsequently to intervene and improve this.

Section 3: Service User Data

The Service operates a targeted approach to identifying high risk people and properties as well as responding to partner agency referrals and direct requests from the public. Those initial calls are conducted by our local operational crews. Where the occupant is unable to install smoke alarms themselves a home visit will be arranged by a member of our operational crew.

Where the risk to the individual is high, our Community Safety Officers continue to complete face to face visits to the most vulnerable members of our communities, many of whom will fall into the over 65 category.

Age of People receiving Home Fire Safety Visits 2023 (31 December 2023)

Age	Number of People	Percentage
Under 65	12,747	70.67%
Over 65	5,291	29.33%
Total	18,038	100%

During 2023, the Service carried out 18,038 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) which was a decrease of 1,316 since 2022. The majority of visits were to those under 65, and there was a decrease of 1,130 visits to over 65 in 2023 than in 2022.

The HFSV the Service provides places a large emphasis on the overall health and wellbeing of individuals. The support offered to over 65's during and after the HFSV has helped make significant improvements in terms of their overall health and safety, not just home fire safety. As more people are made aware of HFSV via Service publicity and partner agency involvement it is expected that the number and percentage of over 65s receiving a visit will rise moving forward.

Disability of people receiving HFSV 2023 (31 December 2023)

	Number of People	Percentage
Disability	1,549	8.59%
No disability	16,489	19.41%
Total	18,038	100%

The percentage of people receiving HFSV that have declared themselves to have a disability is 8.59% which is 0.37% more than the figure reported last year. Not all disabilities are immediately identifiable during the visits and there is a subsequent reliance on an individual disclosing this information. Therefore, the actual figure of those people with disabilities may be higher than the reported figure suggests.

Race of people receiving HFSV 2023 (31 December 2023)

	Number of People	Percentage
White - British	17,008	94.29%
White - Irish	16	0.09%
White – Other White	102	0.57%
Mixed – White & Black Caribbean	2	0.01%
Mixed – White & Black African	6	0.03%
Mixed – White & Asian	10	0.06%
Mixed – Other mixed	17	0.09%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	51	0.28%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	14	0.08%
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	12	0.07%
Asian or Asian British – Other Asian	18	0.10%
Black or Black British - Caribbean	5	0.03%
Black or Black British - African	28	0.16%

Black or Black British – Other Black	13	0.07%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group - Chinese	28	0.16%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group - Other	33	0.18%
Not stated	675	3.74%
Total	18,038	100%

There has been a slight decrease in the number of individuals not stating their ethnicity this year. This has increased by 1.5% since last year showing that there has been a decline from previous year.

The figures suggest that the majority of people receiving HFSV remain to be White British, however there is also a wide range of other ethnicities that have received a visit. Community safety work in general is targeted towards the most vulnerable in the community irrespective of ethnicity and will therefore assist in steering education and services to those who need it most. Community Safety teams have access to education material in a range of languages helping them with engagement and have also used community leaders to get safety messages across to a diverse range of ethnic groups.

Gender of people receiving HFSV 2023 (31 December 2023)

	Number of People	Percentage
Female	9,341	51.79%
Male	7,024	38.94%
Blank	158	0.88%
Not disclosed	1,511	8.38%
Other	4	0.02%
Total	18,038	100%

Last year was the first year we have been able to provide this data so in 2023 visits carried out to females was 51.79% compared to 33.57% in 2022. Those leaving their gender blank or not disclosed has significantly decreased from 40.71% in 2022 to 9.26% in 2023.

Emergency Response Data (1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023)

Age group	number of victims	% of victims
0 to 4	28	5.39%
5 to 9	2	0.39%
10 to 14	27	5.20%
15 to 19	33	6.36%
20 to 24	17	3.28%
25 to 29	15	2.89%
30 to 34	21	4.05%
35 to 39	14	2.70%
40 to 44	20	3.85%
45 to 49	10	1.93%
50 to 54	16	3.08%
55 to 59	15	2.89%
60 to 64	16	3.08%
65 to 69	14	2.70%
70 to 74	21	4.05%
75 to 79	12	2.31%
80 to 84	24	4.62%
85 to 89	17	3.28%
90 to 94	9	1.73%
95 to 99	3	0.58%
Total	519	100.00%

The term 'victim' is used to describe a person who has been rescued by fire service personnel, or who are injured as a result of an incident. It can be observed that there has been an decrease in the number of victims in County

Durham and Darlington from 756 in 2022 to 519 in 2023. The largest increase lying with the threshold of 80–84-year-olds and 15–19-year-olds.

In 2023, the age group of 80–84-year-olds more frequently required the support and assistance from the Service (4.62%), which differs to 2022 as it was the 0–4-year age range.

Gender of people involved in incidents 2023.

gender	number of victims	% of victims
Female	213	41.04%
Male	275	52.99%
Not known/not specified	31	5.97%
Total	519	100.00%

The number of incidents and victims has dropped considerably in the last year and continues to be predominantly in the male gender group. The Service continues to engage in preventative activities particularly through HFSV that aim to address a wide range of issues across all sections of the community including social exclusion and isolation. This is targeted as part of Service project and station plans.

Ethnicity of people involved in incidents 2023.

Ethnicity grouping	number of victims	% of victims
Asian or Asian British	3	0.58%
Mixed	3	0.58%
Not known/stated	130	25.05%
other	2	0.39%
White - British	377	72.64%
White - Other White	4	0.77%
Total	519	100.00%

From the victims where the Service was able to establish ethnicity, 72.64% of people involved in incidents were 'White British,' which is comparable, though slightly down, on 2022 figures. The number of victims from each ethnic group is slightly up from the previous year, with the greatest difference occurring in the

'Not known/stated' category, where in the previous year there were 19.18% victims, and in the current reporting period, there were 25.05%.

The number of victims being predominately from the "White British" ethnic group is reflective of the relatively low levels of diversity across the Service area. There are no specific ethnic groups which are currently noted at higher risk from the mean. Based on current and previous data it is also likely that those who have preferred not to state their ethnicity or have ethnicity unknown are predominately from the "White British" category. We provide information in various languages and have access to an interpreter scheme to ensure that education and advice can also be given to non-English speaking members of the community if required.

Section 4: Conclusions and findings

CDDFRS endeavours to ensure that the monitoring data collated in this report is used to assist its employment practices and service delivery. As a result, this information will be used to develop significant policies and practices, key examples of which are as follows:

- Women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and LGBTQIA+ communities remain underrepresented in the workforce, particularly in operational roles. Steps continue to be taken to change this however we are aware this will take time to become embedded. One of these steps has been the positive action programme which is ongoing and developing. This includes attending community events, schools' career days, holding awareness sessions, developing online resources for potential applicants in order to raise awareness about firefighting career and encourage members of underrepresented groups to apply. We are confident this will bring positive change moving forward.
- The report shows an overall increase in the ratio of female to male employees this year even though the total number of employees has decreased.
- Data collected during HFSV will be used to inform any future developments of this scheme.
- The 'Connect' project allows us to gain knowledge through contacts within the community.

The Service is an active member of a number of external networks and working groups which enable the sharing of best practice and provide guidance and support across all strands of equality. These include:

- Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG).
- National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Inclusion Practitioners Group.
- Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA).
- Women in the Fire Service (WFS).
- North East Rainbow Alliance (NEERA).

We will continue to use any best practices and information from these groups to further develop our Equality objectives.