

CDDFRS Equality Data Report 2025



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service



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 2024 to 31 December 2024. 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

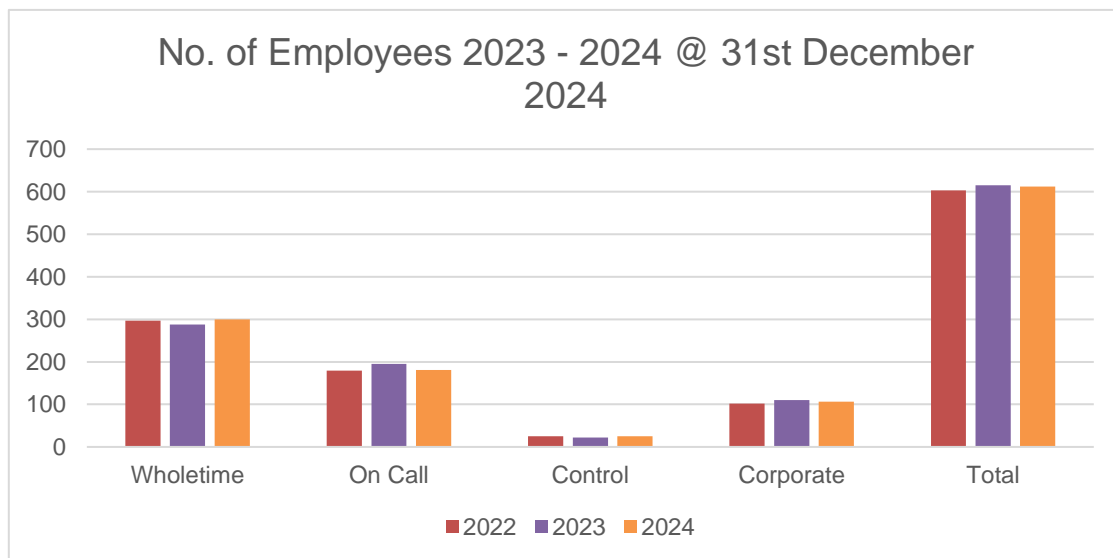
1.1 Workforce Profile

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 2024 and December 2024 was 612.

There has been a decrease of 3 employees in 2024 which is explained below.

Number of employees in post 2022 – 2024 (31 December 2024)

Year	Wholetime	On Call	Control	Corporate	Total
2022	297	179	25	102	603
2023	288	195	22	110	615
2024	300	181	25	106	612
Change 23/24	12	-14	3	-4	-3
% Change 23/24	4.2%	-7.2%	13.6%	-3.6%	-0.5%



1.2 Staffing Strength (FTE) by role (31 December 2024)

	Wholetime	On Call	Control	Corporate	Total
Principal Officers	2	0	0	0.61	2.61
Directors	2	0	0	2	4
Group Manager/Grade 14	4	0	0	1.69	5.69
Station Manager/Grade 10-13	17	0	2	14.27	33.27
Watch Manager/Grade 8-9	44	10.48	5.22	25.24	84.94
Crew Manager/Grade 7	54	21.2	3	21.39	99.59
Firefighter/Grade 6 & below	177	80.05	12	14	283.05
Apprentice	0	0	0	1	1
Total	300	111.73	22.22	80.2	514.15

The number of staff employed by CDDFRS has decreased by 0.5% over the last 12 months.

This is mainly in the on-call category where the Service sees a higher turnover of staff because it is a big commitment balancing primary employment, home life and working on-call and can have a detrimental effect on work life balance.

The Service is also continuing with changes made to the structure in 2023 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).

The modification of crewing appliances with 4 continued into 2024 with retirements and leavers not being replaced initially until the Service gained back the 16 posts removed from the establishment in 2023. Continuing with this safeguarded the Service further 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 4.2% increase in wholetime employees is as a result of forward planning via the retirement profile of the Service which shows that several uniformed personnel will reach retirement age in 2025 / 26. The Service continues to run a successful firefighter apprenticeship programme to assist to alleviate shortfalls with the seventh cohort of apprentices joining stations in permanent firefighter roles from December 2024. Also as advised last year the Service carried out a wholetime recruitment campaign resulting in 10 recruits being taken on and passing out in December 2024 ready to conduct station rotations from January 2025.

The Service continue to carry out ongoing recruitment of on-call employees (Retained Duty System (RDS)) the number of employees has unfortunately decreased this year by 7.2% going from 195 to 181. 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 absolute best talent we can in this area.

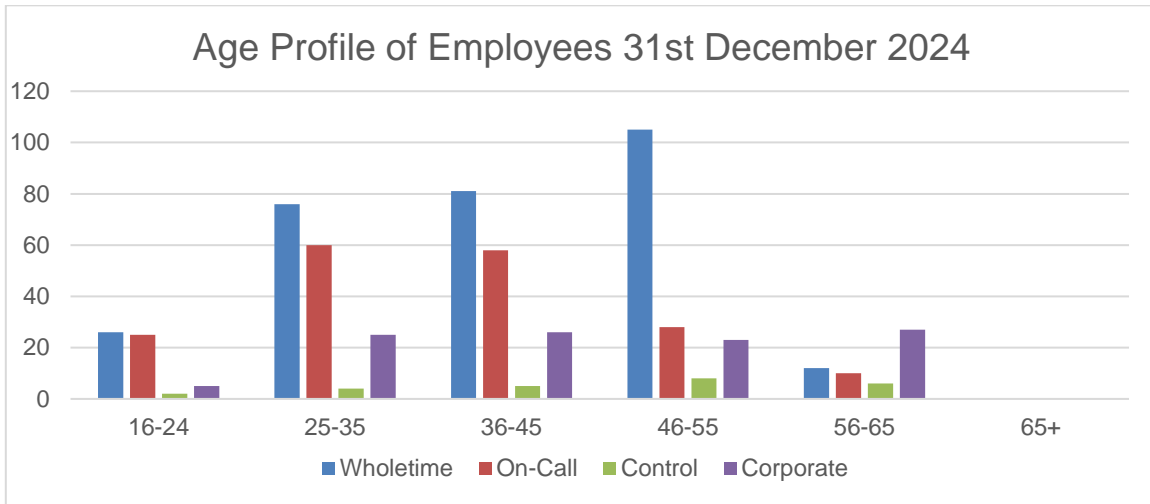
1.3 Age profile

The age profile of the workforce shows most staff are still aged between 36 and 45 (27.8%) where has decreased slightly from 2023 where it was 28%. Unlike previous years those aged 25 to 35 is a close second (27%) and those aged between 46 and 55 is third (26.8%).

Age of employees (31 December 2024)

	16-24	25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	65+
Wholetime	26	76	81	105	12	0
On-Call	25	60	58	28	10	0
Control	2	4	5	8	6	0

Corporate	5	25	26	23	27	0
Total in each age bracket	58	165	170	164	55	0
	9.5%	27.0%	27.8%	26.8%	9.0%	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 16-24 bracket has risen slightly to 9.5% 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 within 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 held a number of Positive Action events over the year and will continue to do so to encourage under-represented groups to apply to the Service in operational roles. We have also begun working with Teakisi this year to assist with recruiting from underrepresented groups.

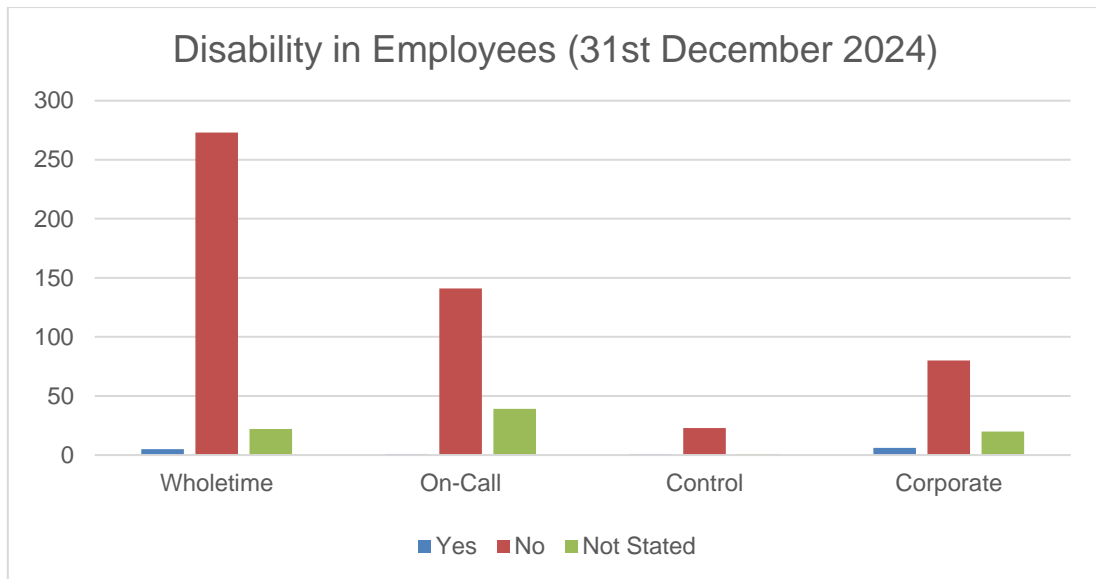
We are also committed to carrying out community events; open days, school visits where we can further demonstrate the vast variety of employment opportunities available. We continue to progress the Services 'Connect' campaign which helps us understanding the communities we serve.

1.4 Disability

The disability profile of the workplace has decreased by 1 in 2024. Of the 13 employees stating they are classed as having a disability, 5 were in support roles. In operational roles, 5 are from wholetime, 1 in on-call and 1 in control have declared themselves as having a disability. This represents 2.1% of the total workforce declaring themselves as having a disability in 2024.

Disability in Employees (31 December 2024)

	Yes	No	Not Stated	Total	Yes %
Wholetime	5	273	22	300	1.7%
On-Call	1	141	39	181	0.6%
Control	1	23	1	25	4.0%
Corporate	6	80	20	106	5.7%
Total	13	517	82	612	2.1%



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. The Service is also working with individuals who have highlighted a diagnosis / disability to build personal health passports which documents any agreed reasonable adjustments.

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 recruited and trained another 5 members of staff to assist in delivering this service.

We also have ongoing access for employees to an employee assistance programme (Care first); 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.

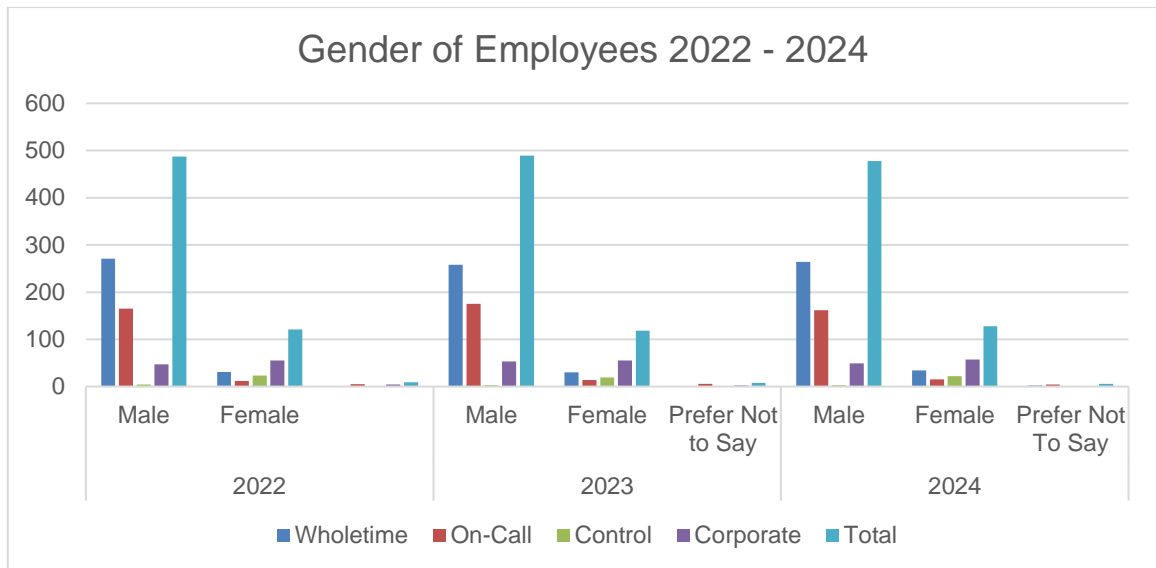
All new buildings across our estate are fully accessible and underwent an Equality Impact Assessment at various stages of planning and build. We aim to ensure adequate support and reasonable adjustments are supported whenever possible.

1.5 Gender

Even though there has been a decrease in the total number of employees there has been a slight increase in the ratio of female employees to male within the workforce. Almost 78.1% of employees within our organisation are male and 20.9% are female this has increased by 0.4% from 2023. 11.3% are female in an operational capacity which is a slight increase of 0.9% from last year.

Gender of employees 2022 – 2024 (31 December 2024)

	2022			2023			2024		
	Male	Female	Prefer Not to Say	Male	Female	Prefer Not to Say	Male	Female	Prefer Not to Say
Wholetime	271	31	0	258	30	0	264	34	2
On-Call	165	12	5	175	14	6	162	15	4
Control	4	23	0	3	19	0	3	22	0
Corporate	47	55	4	53	55	2	49	57	0
Total	487	121	9	489	118	8	478	128	6



As of 31 March 2024; 9.3% (3,184) 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 11.3%.

Within the operational roles, higher paid roles are occupied by males. Further details on the impact of Gender Pay Gap can be located within our Gender Pay Gap report.

In operational roles, women represent 11.3% of the workforce, an increase of 0.9% on the previous year. Women account for over 53% of support roles (corporate). The percentage of women in senior roles (Director / Grade 15 and above) within the Service has remained the same during 2024 as there was no changes within SLT.

As a Service we are aware that our gender split is primarily male dominated within uniformed roles, and we continue working with our local communities to help us address this. Throughout our recruitment programmes, we look to run "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

Four people took maternity leave in 2024. One returned during 2024 and three are expected to return in 2025. The staff member who returned in 2024 has returned on flexible working to a part-time role to assist with work life balance. A further staff member who returned in 2023 has applied for and been granted flexible working to assist with their work life needs. This is a positive statistic as it is a first for operational staff within our Service and 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 several types of leave to employees to be as family friendly as practicable.

Pregnancy and maternity in employees 2022 – 2024 (31 December 2024)

	2022	2023	2024
Number expected to return	2	3	2
Total number returned	1	3	2

The Service reviewed their Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) allowance during 2024/2025 following national pay negotiations. 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 (553). 42 people had not declared their ethnicity and 6 people had declared their ethnicity as ‘Asian or Asian British’.

White British ethnicity remains the same as last year at approx. 90%. Asian or Asian British denomination have increased by 1 since 2023. The percentage of staff who identify as being from an ethnic minority group has risen to 2.78% this year from 2.28% last year. This is even closer to the results of the 2021 Census which advises the communities, we serve in County Durham has just over 3% of the population identifying as people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Race of employees 2022 – 2024 (31 December 2024)

	2022	2023	2024
White British/Irish	557	552	553
White other	3	3	6
Mixed	1	3	2
Asian/Asian British	4	5	6
Black/Black British	3	3	3
Chinese	0	0	0
Other ethnic minority	0	0	0
Not stated/blank	42	49	42
Total % ethnic minority employees	2.15%	2.28%	2.78%

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 2.78% 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>

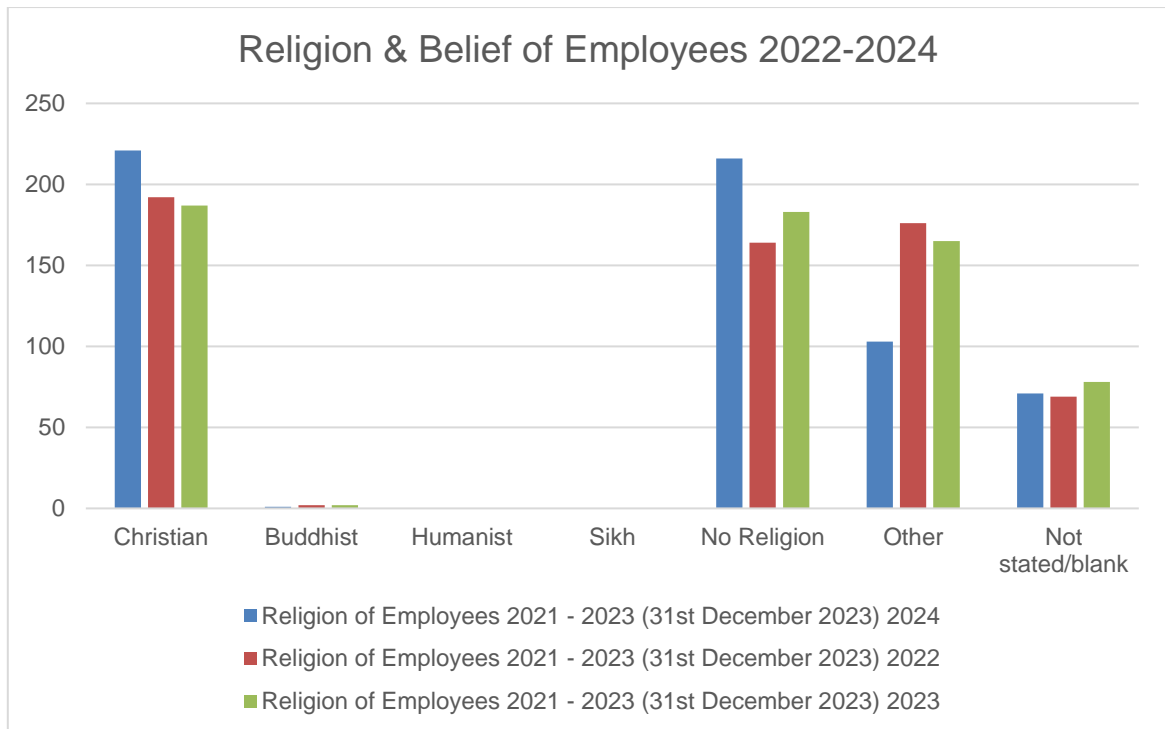
We continue to work with ethnic minority groups within the community to build relationships, understand challenges and opportunities and continue with further positive action events throughout our recruitment campaigns to encourage more members of under-represented communities to come into our organisation 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 2023; those with no religion has increased by 5.49% and those claiming other has decreased by 9.97%.

Religion of employees 2022 – 2024 (31 December 2024)

	2022	2023	2024
Christian	192 (31.8%)	192 (31.2%)	221 (36.1%)
Buddhist	2	2	1
Humanist	0	0	0
Sikh	0	0	0
No religion	164 (27%)	183 (29.8%)	216 (35.29%)
Other	176 (29%)	165 (26.8%)	103 (16.83%)
Not stated/blank	69 (11%)	78 (12.7%)	71 (11.6%)
Total	603	615	612



We continue to encourage all personnel to complete all aspects of equality data however 11.6% of staff have not stated or have left their religion blank which is a decrease 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.

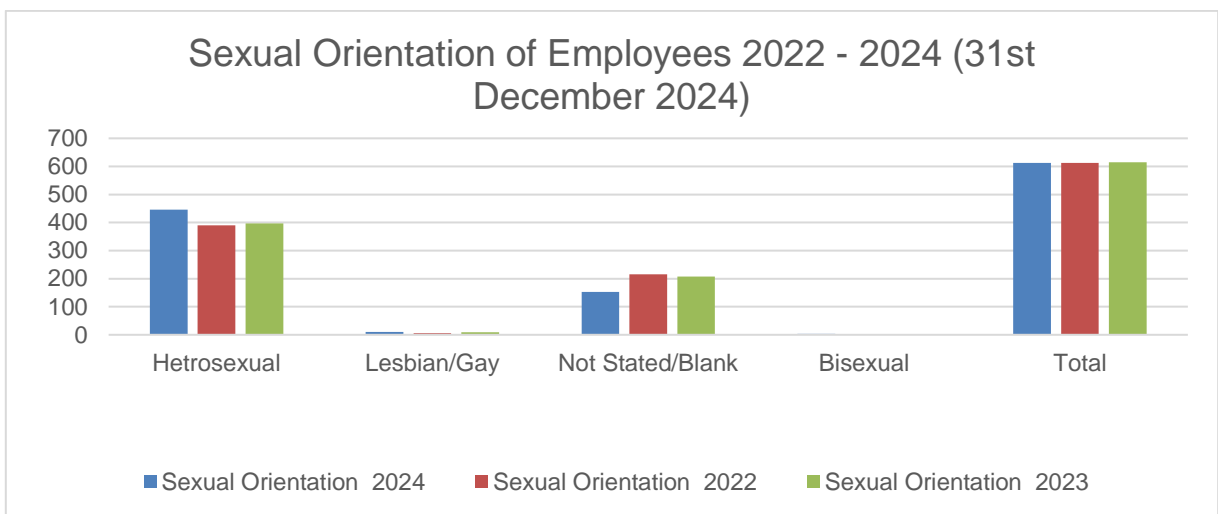
We also continue to engage with our communities through a range of activities, including promoting religious and beliefs festivals / events, to assist mutual understanding and respect for our diverse communities. All employees are required to undertake mandatory equality and diversity training every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

1.10 Sexual orientation

75% (459) of the Service's 612 employees have declared their sexual orientation, an increase on last year where it was only 66%. 2.12% of the total number of employees have described themselves as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual, an increase of 0.33% since 2023.

Sexual orientation of employees 2022 – 2024 (31 December 2024)

	2022	2023	2024
Heterosexual	387	397	446
Lesbian/Gay	6	9	10
Not Stated/Blank	209	207	153
Bisexual person	1	2	3
Total	603	615	612



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

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 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 3 fairness at work grievances raised and recorded in 2024. All were from male members of staff with one grievance partially upheld and two not upheld. All three were appealed against with final outcomes being two remained not upheld and one upheld. Various policies, procedures and practices were changed due to learning received from these grievances.

Ten dignity at work grievances were raised and recorded in 2024. All were from male staff members with 2 having no action taken, three partially upheld and five not upheld.

Five informal grievances were raised and resolved with satisfactory outcomes in 2024.

There were six disciplinary investigations undertaken during 2024 resulting in various outcomes with one still to be completed. All disciplinaries were concerning male members of staff.

2.2 Applications for flexible working

In 2024, there were 4 flexible working requests received, and all were approved. There was no flexible retirement request received but five members of staff, one wholetime and four from our on-call duty system applied for career breaks with two being approved and three being declined. Two further members of staff on the on-call duty system applied for a 6-month unpaid leave which was authorised.

Staff entitled to do so (currently 45 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 7am and 7pm.

2.3 Promotions and recruitment

A variety of internal and external recruitment and promotional processes were undertaken throughout 2024.

External recruitment processes included:

- Apprentice Firefighter recruitment.
- Wholetime 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.

In 2024 the total number of applications received for all recruitment processes was 2392.

Applications received by Gender 2024

	Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Blank
Internal	38	10	0	0
External	86	104	1	27
Online	1774	320	28	3
Total	1900	434	29	31

Applicants in 2024 were predominantly Male (79%), and 18% Female which is an increase on 2023. There has been a decrease of 336 applicants recorded as blank, but this can be contributed to the Service using the same recruitment platforms as previous where equality & diversity information is not collected as standard.

Applications received by Age 2024

	under 18	18-24	25-40	41-59	59+	prefer not to say / blank
Internal	0	1	12	10	0	24
External	1	20	60	29	0	108
Online	60	772	1122	159	0	12
Total	61	793	1194	198	0	144

CDDFRS attracts more applicants within the 25-40 (49.9%) 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 8.3% of applications received by individuals aged 41-59.

Applications received by Disability 2024

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say	Blank
Internal	1	22	0	25
External	8	100	2	108
Online	70	1997	27	31
Total	79	2119	29	164

3.3% of applications received regarded themselves as disabled which is a slight increase of 0.1% since 2023. The percentage of applications received where no indication was provided (prefer not to say or blank) was around 8%. This is just over half of last year where it was 15%.

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 / Prefer not to say
Internal	20	0	3	25

External	101	0	7	110
Online	1686	4	21	361
Total	1807	4	31	496

The percentage of applications received where ethnicity was stated as 'White' was 75.5% which is a decrease of 7.5% from last year where it was 83%.

The percentage of applications received where ethnicity was stated as other than white was around 1.46% which is a decrease of 0.74% from last year.

The percentage of applications received where ethnicity was stated as 'blank / prefer not to say' was 20% which has increased by 6% since last year.

Applications received by Religion 2024

	Christian	Buddhist	Atheist	Hindu	Muslim	Other	No religion	Prefer not to say / blank
Internal	13	0	4	0	0	3	1	27
External	45	0	33	2	0	13	2	123
Online	626	2	0	0	17	22	1346	112
Total	684	2	37	2	17	38	1349	262

The vast majority of online applications stated they were of no particular religion or belief (56%), followed by Christianity (29%) then prefer not to say / blank (11%).

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

Applications received by Sexual Orientation 2024

The majority of applicants 81% regarded themselves as Heterosexual, whilst Lesbian and Gay accounted for 2% and 1.1%, respectively. The percentage of applications received where people preferred not to declare their sexual orientation was 11.3%.

	Heterosexual	Gay Woman	Gay	Bisexual person	Blank / Prefer not to say
Internal	22	1	0	0	25
External	97	1	3	4	113
Online	1814	45	23	110	133
Total	1933	47	26	114	271

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 as well as form our new relationship with Teakisi.

Applicants and therefore prospective employees continue to be underrepresented by females and LGBTQIA+ communities, ethnic minorities communities and individuals with disabilities. Further work is required to engage with these populations 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 2024

During 2024, 59 employees left CDDFRS across all areas of the Service. 19 of those employees were wholetime operational members of staff. 14 of those wholetime employees left the organisation due to retirement, 2 transferred into another FRS and 3 other members of staff left our organisation for 'other reasons'.

11 corporate staff also left the Service; 9 resigned and 2 left for other reasons / circumstances.

Number of leavers (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024)

Reasons For Leaving	Wholetime	On-Call	Control	Corporate	Total
Voluntary Redundancy	0	0	0	0	
Resignation	2	25	1	9	
Transfer to another FRS	2	0	0	0	
Normal Retirement	14	1	0	0	
Ill Health Retirement	0	0	0	0	
Other	1	2	0	2	
Total	19	28	1	11	

Age of leavers (2024)

17-24	7
25-35	21
36-45	6
46-55	12
55+	13
Total	59

Disability of leavers (2024)

Yes	2
No	44
Not stated	13
Total	59

Race of leavers (2024)

White British/Irish	53
Mixed other	0

Black/Black British	1
Not stated	5
Total	59

Religion of leavers (2024)

Christian	12
No religion	21
Other	16
Not stated	10
Total	59

Gender of leavers (2024)

Male	50
Female	9
Total	59

Sexual orientation of leavers (2024)

Heterosexual	40
Other	0
Prefer not to say	19
Total	59

All leavers are invited to undertake an exit interview with our Chief Fire Officer and asked to complete 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 25 and 35, which is a change from last year where it was 46 to 55. This could be attributed to on-call firefighters accounting for over half of the total of leavers. Most leavers were heterosexual, which 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 2024 (31 December 2024)

Elderly	number of jobs	%GT number of jobs
Over 65	5770	27.52%
Under 65	15198	72.48%
Total	20968	100.00%

During 2024, the Service carried out 20,968 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) which was an increase of 2,930 since 2023. The majority of visits were to those under 65, and there was an increase of 479 visits to over 65 in 2024 than in 2023.

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 2024 (31 December 2024)

Disability	number of jobs	%GT number of jobs
Disability	1977	9.43%
No disability	18991	90.57%
Total	20968	100.00%

The percentage of people receiving HFSV that have declared themselves to have a disability is 9.43% which is 0.84% 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 2024 (31 December 2024)

Ethnicity	number of jobs	%GT number of jobs
White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish-British	17729	84.55%
Not Stated	2451	11.69%
Not Disclosed	447	2.13%
White - Any other white background	104	0.50%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	42	0.20%
Black or Black British - African	31	0.15%
Asian or Asian British - Any other Asian background	21	0.10%
Mixed - Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background	18	0.09%
Asian or Asian British - Chinese	16	0.08%
White - Irish	16	0.08%
Black or Black British - Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	15	0.07%
British	13	0.06%
Mixed - White and Asian	10	0.05%
Black or Black British - Caribbean	9	0.04%
Mixed - White and Black African	9	0.04%
Other Ethnic Group - Any other ethnic group	9	0.04%
White - British	9	0.04%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	7	0.03%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	5	0.02%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	4	0.02%
White - Gypsy or Irish traveller	3	0.01%
Total	20968	100.00%

There has been a significant increase in the number of individuals not stating / not disclosing their ethnicity this year (13.82). This has increased by more than double since 2023 where it was 3.74%.

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 2024 (31 December 2024)

Gender	number of jobs	%GT number of jobs
Female	9618	45.87%
Male	7273	34.69%
Not stated	4061	19.37%
Other	16	0.08%
Total	20968	100.00%

We only started recording gender data in 2022, so the history of this statistic is extremely limited. Visits carried out to females in 2024 was 45.87% compared to 51.79% in 2023. Those leaving their gender blank or not disclosed has significantly increased from 9.26% in 2023 to 19.45% in 2024.

Emergency Response Data (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024)

Age group	number of victims	% of victims
0 to 4	32	4.13%
5 to 9	6	0.77%
10 to 14	42	5.42%
15 to 19	31	4.00%
20 to 24	25	3.23%
25 to 29	40	5.16%
30 to 34	26	3.35%
35 to 39	39	5.03%
40 to 44	23	2.97%
45 to 49	25	3.23%
50 to 54	27	3.48%
55 to 59	44	5.68%
60 to 64	32	4.13%
65 to 69	30	3.87%
70 to 74	35	4.52%
75 to 79	38	4.90%
80 to 84	20	2.58%
85 to 89	23	2.97%
90 to 94	7	0.90%
95 to 99	3	0.39%
not stated	227	29.29%
Total	775	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 increase in the number of victims in County Durham and Darlington from 519 in 2023 to 775 in 2024. The largest increase lying with the threshold of 55-59-year-olds and 10-14-year-olds.

In 2024, the age group of 55-59-year-olds more frequently required the support and assistance from the Service (5.68%), which differs to 2023 as it was the 80-84-year age range.

Gender of people involved in incidents 2024.

gender	number of victims	% of victims
Female	314	40.52%
Male	436	56.26%
Not known/not specified	25	3.23%
Total	775	100.00%

The number of incidents and victims has considerably increased 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 2024.

Ethnicity grouping	number of victims	% of victims
Asian or Asian British	4	0.52%
Mixed	1	0.13%
Not known/stated	134	17.29%
other	6	0.77%
White - British	623	80.39%
White - Other White	7	0.90%
Total	775	100.00%

From the victims where the Service was able to establish ethnicity, 80.39% of people involved in incidents were 'White British,' which is comparable, and up on last year where it was 72.64%. The number of victims from each ethnic group is down from the previous year, with the greatest difference occurring in the 'Not known/stated' category, where in the previous year there were 25.05% victims, and in the current reporting period, there were 17.29%.

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 and another is the work we are carrying out with Teakisi. This includes attending community events, schools' career days, holding awareness sessions, developing online resources for potential applicants in order to raise awareness about firefighting careers 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).
- Northeast Rainbow Alliance (NEERA).
- Armed Forces Covenant

- Disability Confidence
- NEREO Equality Network

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