

# PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

11<sup>th</sup> Annual Report  
2022-23



**Bedfordshire**  
Fire & Rescue Service



# CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3	JOB APPLICATIONS, RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTIONS.....	20
BACKGROUND TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY REPORT .....	4	PROMOTIONS – ALL STAFF.....	21
ABOUT US .....	5	GENDER PAY GAP.....	23
OUR VALUES & MISSION .....	6	GRIEVANCES.....	24
THE PEOPLE WE SERVE.....	6	COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS .....	24
OUR PRACTICE.....	7	WORKFORCE PROFILE BY CHARACTERISTIC .....	25
OUR ACHIEVEMENTS .....	8	WORKFORCE PROFILE BY PAY BAND.....	26
OUR WORKFORCE.....	11	JOB APPLICATIONS – SUPPORT STAFF.....	27
REPORTING CATEGORIES .....	12	JOB APPLICATIONS – UNIFORMED STAFF.....	29
AGE.....	14	EXTERNAL TRAINING .....	31
GENDER.....	14	OUR COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES.....	33
ETHNICITY.....	15	NEXT STEPS.....	34
FAMILY LEAVE.....	15	YOUR VIEWS COUNT .....	35
STARTERS.....	16	CONNECT WITH BFRS.....	35
LEAVERS.....	18		



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to delivering the best Fire and Rescue services to meet the needs of the diverse population it serves. We are dedicated and committed as a public sector service to embed and mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI).**

Our initiatives over the year have been;

- 🔥 To continually work towards improving the representation of our workforce by driving forward our positive action initiatives; and
- 🔥 To continually review the quality of our policies, practices and services to ensure access to employment opportunities and services consider the individual needs of our staff and the people that receive our services.
- 🔥 To measure our work against external standards that continually improve the policies, practices and functions we deploy.
- 🔥 To improve the experiences of our service users and staff; aligning them to the organisational objectives and shaping them to help us be the best Fire and Rescue Service.
- 🔥 Continuing to measure our activity against the HMICFRS requirements and the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion to meet our legal obligation against the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty, as well as our moral duties.

🔥 To work continuously to embed the 'due regard' considerations to address barriers and disadvantages faced by groups of people.

Our focus for the coming year will be to ensure the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda is established as the '**golden thread**' in all we do.

We recognise the challenges ahead, however, our efforts to continuously involve, engage and consult our service users and staff will be invaluable in achieving our ambition to be the best Fire and Rescue Service.



# BACKGROUND TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY REPORT

The Equality Act 2010 established the general duty which aims to ensure people are not excluded, discriminated against, or otherwise treated less favourably than others, due to their protected characteristics; and consists of three fundamental aims which are:

- 🔥 **Eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- 🔥 **Advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- 🔥 **Foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

For listed public sector authorities with 150 or more employees the **Equality Act 2010** introduced a specific requirement to publish information relating to the protected characteristics of employees. Technical guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission states that the information published needs to include:

- 🔥 The profile of staff at different grades, levels and rates of pay, including any patterns of occupational segregation and part-time work;

- 🔥 The profile of staff at different stages of the employment relationship, including recruitment, training, promotion, and leavers, and the numbers of complaints of discrimination and other prohibited conduct;
- 🔥 Details of, and feedback from, any engagement exercises with staff or trade unions;
- 🔥 Any records of how it has had due regard in making workforce decisions, including any assessments of impact undertaken and the evidence used.

The present report aims to fulfil Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service's duty to publish information relating to the protected characteristics of its employees, whilst ensuring that the Service also has 'due regard' to the aims of the Equality Act with respect to its workforce by using equality monitoring information in decision-making and planning.

Throughout this report, headcounts of staff members in different protected characteristics and workforce subgroups are given, with the aim of anonymising information about individuals by aggregating counts into large groups. Where this has not been possible, and the headcount within a group is small enough to pose a risk of identification for individual staff members, the figure has been redacted (alongside any other figures that would allow the initially redacted figure to be deducted).

# ABOUT US

## We cover:

- 🔥 477 Square miles
- 🔥 274,600 Households
- 🔥 3 Unitary authorities

## We have:

- 🔥 291 Wholetime positions
- 🔥 146 On-Call positions (including those on dual contracts)
- 🔥 197 support positions
- 🔥 27 control positions
- 🔥 40 Appliances (23 fire engines and 17 special appliances)
- 🔥 14 Stations

## We've dealt with:

- 🔥 7,735 Number of incidents
- 🔥 280 Primary dwelling fires
- 🔥 2,771 Special Services  
e.g. water rescue, road traffic collision etc.
- 🔥 2,123 Fires

## We undertook:



- 🔥 8,126 Home Fire Safety Visits
- 🔥 2,811 Audits and inspections of premises  
to which the Fire Safety Order applies

Source: BFRS Annual Report 2022 - 2023  
BFRS Community Risk Management Plan 2023-2027

# OUR VALUES & MISSION

Our Mission is to **provide outstanding fire and rescue services that help to make Bedfordshire safer.**

Our Values have been developed with our staff and our communities to ensure that the values support our mission and priorities.

-  **We are accountable** – We are transparent, trustworthy, and responsible for our actions.
-  **We've got your back** – Striving to keep us all safe, while being supportive and inclusive.
-  **Every contact counts** – Making a positive difference each and every time, with respect and professionalism.
-  **We dare to be different** – We are bold, we welcome challenge, and we are open to innovative ideas.

# THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

The population for Bedfordshire, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census 2021: Bedford: 185,300, Central Bedfordshire: 294,200 and Luton: 225,300.



# OUR PRACTICE

We collect and monitor the Service workforce profile to enable us to take equality considerations in our policies and practices and meet our responsibilities under the **Public Sector Equality Duty**.

We have published our equality objectives as part of our **Corporate Risk Management Plan**, embedding the Inclusion agenda;

We have established our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group** to drive our EDI agenda forward.

We have revised our **People Impact Assessment** (previously known as equality impact assessment) process and guidance to understand and ensure we mitigate any adverse impact on groups of people.

We have revised our **equality, diversity and inclusion training** to provide staff with an awareness of equality considerations and we have refreshed our Unconscious Bias awareness training.

We have established our **mental health and well-being programme** to support the well-being of staff through our in-house Occupational Health, Mental Health and Well-being Steering Group and Employee Assistance Programme.

We publish and report annually on our **gender pay gap** and will look to enhance this by reporting on the Ethnicity Pay Gap.

We have established our **Workplace Support Steering Group** to support reasonable adjustments for our Neurodivergent colleagues and for those who may need any form of additional support or adjustments to enable them to perform effectively in the workplace.

We continue to review and develop initiatives to improve the **work-life balance** of staff by offering opportunities such as **flexible working hours**, home-working, part-time, job-share and compressed/staggered/ annualised hours. Staff in support roles (where appropriate) can also work a flexitime system between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

We have a dedicated and committed **Corporate Management Team comprising Principal Officers and Senior Managers** ensuring EDI is embedded and main-streamed across the organisation, with progress monitored by the **Fire and Rescue Authority**.

We have maintained our **Level 2 status against the Disability Confident standard**.

We are **members of key organisations** that can support and enhances our work around the EDI agenda such as Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA), Women in the Fire Service (WFS) and Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI).

We have successfully launched an **LGBTQ+ Allies Staff Network**.

We launched a **Women's Network** in collaboration with Bedfordshire Police.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

We recognise that we have a long road ahead to embed and mainstream the EDI agenda. However, we have worked hard through the many challenges faced during the past year. Please see below some of our achievements during 2022.

## Preventative and Protection Initiatives

Monitoring the profile of our Community Safety initiatives such as Home Fire Safety Visits to enable us to target the most vulnerable. For example, the launch of our new Home Fire Safety PowerApp is ensuring that improved data is being captured which highlights how effectively our visits are targeted to those most vulnerable in the community. We have also seen a significant rise in Safeguarding referrals and referrals to other agencies that can provide specific support based on an individual's specific needs.

Engaging and working with our partners to raise awareness such as the development of community partnerships in diverse demographical areas to target groups, raise our profile and engage with those least likely to access Fire and Rescue Services. All referrals provide face to face contact within people's homes. Our prevention team works in collaboration with community groups and other organisations where two-way dialogue occurs and then work in partnership. The Prevention team attend a number of community events to highlight our work and provide an opportunity for people to arrange a home fire safety visit, for example, engagement with all communities at Eid festival, Diwali celebrations and Bedford River festival.

Our safeguarding function Intervention supports children and young people who are engaged in risk-taking behaviours. We also mentor on a 1:1 basis, those disengaging with essential protective factors such as education and community. The work takes a person-centred approach that considers elements such as a young person's self-image, their mental health and well-being, education and any special educational needs they may have.

Through careful consideration and sound relationship building, we're also able to give thought to a young person's family and cultural background, beliefs and faith, environmental and economical situation and aspirations and goals.

At the heart of our commitment to EDI is continual self-learning, and respect.

We are continuing to develop our volunteer's initiative which includes the design and development of a volunteers programme to support the delivery of initiatives in the community. Our key aim is to ensure that our volunteers are diverse, reflecting the population, we serve.





# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

We monitor and evaluate initiatives comparing to the demographic population of Bedfordshire to ensure our services are reaching out to all areas in the community, particularly those most vulnerable in society. For example, before the summer, one of our fire stations held an open day purely for special educational needs and disabled children. The crews were able to show the work we do and equipment we use and made it engaging and interesting without too much over stimulation, plus discussing any fire safety needs these children and their families may have.

We monitor all comments, compliments and complaints process to understand issues affecting groups of people and engage open dialogue and feedback to ensure that our communities are receiving Fire and Rescue Services that meet their needs.

## Protecting People and Property

Our protection team have developed diverse fire and safety initiatives that protect people in their homes. Our engagement strategies ensure we take account of the diverse needs of people and use interactive ways of communicating. For example, the prevention team operates a community network email group which serves to provide news, updates on campaigns, seek service user feedback and to seek out new partnerships or collaborations. The network is interactive, and members are able to provide material, news or any other content which carries a community health, well-being or safety theme. The network members represent a wide variety of cultural,

business, community, health, social care and lifestyle choices groups. It is very inclusive and offers a wide and diverse collective. We served all time high numbers of enforcement notices, served 42 Prohibition Notices, 9 Enforcement Notices. This enforcement action helps to protect the community, particularly those who are vulnerable or living in multi occupancy accommodation, from rogue landlords.



## Inclusive

Our Fire and Rescue Service hosted a Black History Month event with other Fire Service colleagues from across the region engaging a host of community figures from Bedfordshire and other neighbouring counties. The event provided a strong example of an inclusive event open to all members of the community and of interest to all members of the community.

Our local stations held open days to engage with those attending the event. They raised awareness of our services enhancing our connection with communities and increasing our understanding of their needs.

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## Empowering our people

We have designed, developed and implemented initiatives to improve the outcomes for staff. These include:

- Adopting the National NFCC Maturity model to assess out EDI performance and inform our EDI improvement plan.
- Adopting the National NFCC People Impact Assessment Process and embedding the process into everything we do.
- Published Modern Slavery Statement.
- Reviewed our EDI awareness training programme in line with our Culture Change plan. 65.5% of BFRS staff have completed the EDI awareness training during the 2022/23.
- Reviewed our People Impact assessment process and guidance.
- Reviewed our EDI Policy.
- Implemented initiatives to improve staff experience such as embedding our values, professional behaviours and our code of ethics.
- Embedding EDI consideration into our procurement, tendering and contract processes.
- Monitoring and reporting on our workforce profile to improve representation across the Service by setting targets and the ongoing development of an Instagram page WIRE (Wellbeing, Inclusion, Recruitment and Engagement) to improve our reach in the community.
- The introduction of the EDI Steering Group and staff networks to engage with staff and improve experiences for protected groups of people such as the LGBTQ+ Allies Staff Network.
- Working regionally with our colleagues to improve EDI outcomes and improve representation across the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Health and well-being initiatives to improve awareness of accessible resources to staff. For example, Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Health services, Fire Fighters Charity services.



# OUR WORKFORCE



↑ WE DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

📞 EVERY CONTACT COUNTS

🛠️ WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK

📌 WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE



# REPORTING CATEGORIES

Our reporting categories are captured on the Service's workforce database which allows for people to self-classify based on their:

## Age

Staff members are placed into one of six age groups and one other category:

- 🔥 17-24
- 🔥 25-35
- 🔥 36-45
- 🔥 46-55
- 🔥 56-65
- 🔥 66+
- 🔥 Prefer not to say

## Gender

This is currently recorded as male or female.

## Disability

Staff members are asked whether they consider themselves to be categorised as disabled or non disabled under the definitions of the Equality Act 2010:

Section 6(1) of the Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if:

- A) that person has a physical or mental impairment, and*
- B) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*

## Sexual Orientation

- 🔥 Heterosexual
- 🔥 Gay woman/lesbian
- 🔥 Gay man
- 🔥 Bisexual
- 🔥 Other
- 🔥 Prefer not to say

# REPORTING CATEGORIES

## Ethnicity

### White British

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Irish/Northern Irish/British

### Minority Ethnic:

#### Dual Heritage

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background

#### Asian/Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

#### Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black/African/Caribbean background

## Ethnicity cont...

### Other Ethnic Groups

- Arab
- Any other ethnic group
- Any other white background
- Gypsy/traveller

## Religion or Belief

- No religion
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Any other religion
- Prefer not to say

# AGE

The table below illustrates that almost half of BFRS Wholetime firefighters are aged between 36–45. The On-Call figures demonstrate BFRS has a wider age distribution than Wholetime. Looking at the average age column, BFRS’s has a higher average age amongst support and control, this reflects the age demographic across local government, which has an aging workforce.

BFRS	17-24	25-35	36-45	46-55	56+	Average Age
Wholetime	3.1%	25.8%	45.9%	25.1%	0.7%	40
On-Call	16.8%	17.9%	34.7%	23.3%	7.4%	39
Support	3.6%	10.4%	24.9%	22.8%	38.3%	49
Control	3.7%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	18.5%	42
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>36.6%</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>43</b>

2023 n = 606

# GENDER

In 2021/22 the percentage of female staff was 23.3%. The table below shows the percentage of female staff in 2022/23 is 27.9%. This indicates that BFRS has increased total female staff by 4.6%. This show BFRS has been more successful in recruiting female staff during the year 2022/23.

BFRS	WT FF	On-Call	Total FF	Control	Support	All Staff
Female	6.5%	11.6%	7.8%	81.5%	60.6%	27.9%

2023 n = 169



# ETHNICITY

In 2021/22 the percentage of minority ethnic staff was 6.1% Wholetime, 3.5% On-Call, 5.2% total firefighters. 4.8% Control, 11.3% Support and 6.8% all staff. The table below indicates a decrease in minority ethnic staff in Wholetime and On-Call, but shows an increase in Control and Support. The overall all staff figure has increased.

BFRS	WT FF	On-Call	Total FF	Control	Support	All Staff
Minority Ethnic	5.5%	3.2%	4.9%	7.4%	11.4%	7.1%

2023 n = 43

# FAMILY LEAVE

As part of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service's commitment to diversity, we support employee's balance between home and work through offering flexible employment policies and provide enhanced pay and leave for adoption, maternity and paternity. In 2022/23, 14 staff members went on paternity leave of which all returned. Seven members of staff went on maternity leave five returned from maternity and two are due to return in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

Year	Staff starting Maternity Leave	Staff returning to work from Maternity Leave	Staff on Paternity Leave	Staff returning to work from Paternity Leave	Staff starting Shared Parental Leave	Staff returning to work from Shared Parental Leave
2022/23	7	5	14	13	0	0
2021/22	5	4	17	17	0	0
2020/21	3	3	11	11	0	0

# STARTERS

During 2022/23, 83 employees joined Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service compared with 64 in 2021/22. Those in the 46-55 age category decreased, however those aged 56-65 increased. The percentage of those who are 66+ increased from 0.0% to 7.2%. The percentage of people who declared their disability decreased significantly from 2021/22 to 2022/23. 47% of our new starters were female in 2022/23 compared to 28.1% in the previous year. There was a decrease in minority ethnic communities joining the Service from 2021/22 to 2022/23. The percentage of people who declared their religion or belief also decreased. More starters declared their sexual orientation from 0.0% in 2021/22 to 10.8% in 2022/23.

Age	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
17-24	10.8%	28.1%	8.9%
25-35	28.9%	23.4%	35.6%
36-45	30.1%	23.4%	24.4%
46-55	9.6%	18.8%	22.2%
56-65	13.3%	6.3%	8.9%
66+	7.2%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Disability	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Disabled	4.8%	17.2%	2.2%
Non-disabled	74.7%	67.2%	88.9%
Not declared	20.5%	15.6%	8.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



2023 n = 83   2022 n = 64   2021 n = 45

# STARTERS

Gender	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Male	53.0%	71.9%	73.3%
Female	47.0%	28.1%	26.7%
Not declared	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnicity	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Black and ethnic minority	8.4%	10.9%	20.0%
White	69.9%	75.0%	73.3%
Not declared	21.7%	14.1%	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Religion or belief	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Religion or belief	34.9%	40.6%	46.7%
No Religion or Belief	34.9%	40.6%	40.0%
Not declared	30.1%	18.8%	13.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Sexual Orientation	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other	10.8%	0.0%	4.4%
Heterosexual	65.1%	82.8%	91.1%
Not declared	24.1%	17.2%	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

2023 n = 83   2022 n = 64   2021 n = 45





# LEAVERS

During 2022/23, 64 employees left the Service compared with 60 in 2021/22. The percentage for those aged between 45-54 decreased but there has been an increase of people leaving in age between 25 – 34. The number of Disabled leavers was lower. 2022/23 saw an increase in female leavers compared to the previous year. Leavers from ethnic minority background increased. Those declaring religion or belief decreased compared to the previous year. There has been an increase of people leaving from LGBTQ+ backgrounds. The data shows that BFRS needs to increase its efforts to encourage staff to declare their protected characteristics. The Service conducts exit interviews to gather the reason(s) people are choosing to leave. This identifies any patterns, ensuring data is provided to enable research to focus attention on any areas that can be improved.

Age	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
17-24	1.6%	3.3%	5.8%
25-35	21.9%	8.3%	15.4%
36-45	12.5%	31.7%	17.3%
46-55	25.0%	28.3%	30.8%
56-65	26.6%	28.3%	21.2%
66+	12.5%	0.0%	9.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

These figures are based on anyone who has left BFRS completely; they do not include individuals who left one of multiple contracts.

Disability	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Disabled	4.7%	6.7%	1.9%
Non-disabled	71.9%	83.3%	86.5%
Not declared	23.4%	10.0%	11.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

2023 n = 64   2022 n = 60   2021 n = 52



# LEAVERS

Gender	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Male	59.4%	76.7%	76.9%
Female	40.6%	23.3%	23.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnicity	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Black and ethnic minority	6.3%	3.3%	3.8%
White	73.4%	90.0%	92.3%
Not declared	20.3%	6.7%	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Religion or belief	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Religion or belief	45.3%	48.3%	42.3%
No Religion or Belief	26.6%	30.0%	32.7%
Not declared	28.1%	21.7%	25.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Sexual Orientation	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other	4.7%	1.7%	1.9%
Heterosexual	62.5%	81.7%	75.0%
Not declared	32.8%	16.7%	23.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

2023 n = 64   2022 n = 60   2021 n = 52



# JOB APPLICATIONS, RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTIONS

Recruitment to BFRS is through fair and open competition based on merit, with individuals assessed for their ability to demonstrate the required competences, knowledge and skills for the role.

BFRS is committed to ensure that all recruitment is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. Reasonable adjustments for disabled people are made at all stages of the recruitment process, as required.

In 2022/23, 50 people aged 17-24 applied for support posts within BFRS, an increase of 2.5% from 2021/22. 36 people aged 56-65 also applied for support posts, a drop of 2.2% when compared to 2021/22. There was a significant increase of 18.9% in the number of females who started roles in BFRS in 2022/23. Applications from females for uniformed staff posts (Wholetime, On-Call and Control) increased during 2022/23. Of the 270 applicants in total, 75 were female applicants, an increase of 17.4% from 2021/22.

During 2022/23, there was a decrease of 10.26% in applications from ethnic minority individuals for support posts compared to 2021/22, with 102 (26.7%) out of 382 of those applying being minority ethnic. Of the 83 starters in 2022/23, 8.4% were minority ethnic. A further 18 (21.7%) starters in 2021/22 did not declare their ethnic origin.

The Service has internally promoted 33 staff all of which are uniformed employees during 2022/23. The percentage of promotions for female employees was 15.3% and the promotion of employees from a minority ethnic background at 7.6% compared to workforce figure of 7.1%. Employees who were promoted and had no disability was at 92.3% during 2022/23. None of the staff promoted had a disability and one of the promoted staff did not declare their disability status. Most promotions occur in the 36-45 age range which is to be expected taking into consideration the average length of time required for uniformed staff to become fully competent at each role. 38.4% of promoted staff declared their religion as Christian and Roman Catholic and 53.8% declared as having no religion/belief. 7.6% of promoted staff didn't declare their religion. 92.3% declared their sexual orientation as heterosexual. A small number of employees have not declared their religion, faith or belief and sexual orientation.

# PROMOTIONS - ALL STAFF

Age	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
16-24	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
25-34	19.5%	18.2%	3.1%	5.9%
35-44	36.6%	48.5%	68.8%	52.9%
45-54	23.9%	30.3%	28.1%	41.2%
55-64	12.4%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%
65+	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not declared	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Disability	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Disabled	5.6%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%
Non-disabled	87.3%	90.1%	96.9%	94.1%
Not declared	7.1%	9.1%	0.0%	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Male	72.1%	0.0%	90.6%	100.0%
Female	27.9%	84.8%	9.4%	0.0%
Not declared	0.0%	15.2%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

2023 n = 33    2022 n = 32    2021 n = 17





# PROMOTIONS - ALL STAFF

Ethnicity	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Black and ethnic minority	7.1%	3.0%	6.3%	5.9%
White	86.8%	97.0%	93.8%	88.2%
Not declared	6.1%	0.0%	1.4%	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Religion or belief	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Religion or belief	47.9%	24.2%	31.3%	41.2%
No Religion or Belief	37.0%	60.6%	53.1%	23.5%
Not declared	15.2%	15.2%	15.6%	35.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sexual orientation	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.6%
Heterosexual	83.7%	81.8%	84.4%	90.4%
Not declared	12.7%	18.2%	15.6%	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

2023 n = 33   2022 n = 32   2021 n = 17

# GENDER PAY GAP

The Service has three sets of employee groups whose terms and conditions of employment are nationally negotiated through relevant joint councils that contain representatives from the employers' side and recognised trade unions.

The Service gender median pay gap for 2022 is 0%, compared with the provisional UK Gender pay gap of 14.9%, taken from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings survey 2022 conducted by the Office for National Statistics. The zero percentage has been achieved by the recruitment of more females within the lower and upper middle quartiles. This has had a further impact on reducing the mean pay gap to 4.00%, with more progress expected in the year to 31 March 2023.

The Service has clear policies and pay structure in place to pay employees equally regardless of gender. The gender pay gap reflects the limited number of women in operational firefighting and senior roles. This is illustrated by the distribution of women in the pay quartiles, with more than half of the women in the lower pay quartile. For more information, please see our latest Gender Pay report.

Hourly Wages Pay Gap	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2020
Comparison between median hourly wages	Women earn £1 for every £1 that men earn	Women earn £1 for every £1 that men earn	Women earn 91p for every £1 that men earn
The median hourly wage	0.0% lower than men's	0.0% lower than men's	9.1% lower than men's
The mean hourly wage	4.0% lower than men's	6.2% lower than men's	12.7% lower than men's

Hourly Wages Pay Gap	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2020
Top quarter	29%	28%	26%
Upper middle quarter	12%	15%	12%
Lower middle quarter	14%	10%	16%
Lower quarter	45%	45%	40%

# GRIEVANCES

Six formal grievances were submitted during 2022/23. This compares to five grievances raised the previous year. Of the six formal grievances submitted in 2022/23 one was upheld, three were not upheld, one was partially upheld, and one was withdrawn. Of those who raised a grievance, 50% were male and 50% female, 66.7% were White British, 16.6% were from a minority ethnic background and 16.6% preferred not to state their ethnic background.

# COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS



During 2022/23, the Service received 51 compliments from members of the public by letter, email or through social media this is compared to 36 in 2021/22 and 98 in 2020/21. The Service received 16 complaints, compared to 28 in 2021/22 and 13 in 2020/21. Currently the Service does not capture equality information about the person making a complaint or compliment, so we are not able to report on this.

	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Compliments	51	36	98
Complaints	16	28	13



# WORKFORCE PROFILE BY CHARACTERISTIC

Age	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
17-24	5.4%	5.6%	3.5%
25-35	19.5%	20.6%	23.5%
36-45	36.6%	34.8%	33.8%
46-55	23.9%	27.0%	28.8%
56-65	12.4%	11.1%	9.5%
66+	2.1%	1.0%	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Disability	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Disabled	5.6%	4.4%	3.2%
Non-disabled	87.3%	89.7%	90.7%
Not declared	7.1%	5.9%	6.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Male	72.1%	76.0%	76.4%
Female	27.9%	24.0%	23.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Religion or belief	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Religion or belief	47.9%	46.3%	46.1%
No Religion or Belief	37.0%	40.6%	40.2%
Not declared	15.2%	13%	13.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnicity	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Black and ethnic minority	7.1%	6.7%	8.0%
White	86.8%	88.9%	88.3%
Not declared	6.1%	4.4%	3.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sexual Orientation	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/21
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other	3.6%	3.0%	3.4%
Heterosexual	83.7%	85.2%	84.1%
Not declared	12.7%	11.7%	12.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

2023 n = 662 2022 n = 630 2021 n = 622  
(these figures are by positions)

# WORKFORCE PROFILE BY PAY BAND

Age	Support: Apprentice - Grade 13	Support: Grade 14 - Grade 18	Uniformed: Fire-fighter, Crew Manager & Watch Manager	Uniformed: Station Manager & Group Manager	Senior Management Tier	31/03/23 BFRS Profile
17-24	5.7%	0.0%	6.8%	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%
25-35	11.5%	9.0%	25.7%	0.0%	0.0%	19.5%
36-45	22.1%	31.3%	41.5%	57.7%	10.0%	36.6%
46-55	20.5%	22.4%	22.8%	38.5%	80.0%	23.9%
56-65	32.8%	31.3%	3.1%	3.8%	10.0%	12.4%
66+	7.4%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	Support: Apprentice - Grade 13	Support: Grade 14 - Grade 18	Uniformed: Fire-fighter, Crew Manager & Watch Manager	Uniformed: Station Manager & Group Manager	Senior Management Tier	31/03/23 BFRS Profile
Male	32.8%	50.7%	86.9%	96.2%	80.0%	72.1%
Female	67.2%	49.3%	13.1%	3.8%	20.0%	27.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnicity	Support: Apprentice - Grade 13	Support: Grade 14 - Grade 18	Uniformed: Fire-fighter, Crew Manager & Watch Manager	Uniformed: Station Manager & Group Manager	Senior Management Tier	31/03/23 BFRS Profile
Black and ethnic minority	9.0%	16.4%	5.0%	3.8%	10.0%	7.1%
White	74.6%	80.6%	91.3%	92.3%	90.0%	86.8%
Not declared	16.4%	3.0%	3.7%	3.8%	0.0%	6.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

n = 606 (these figures are by people)

# JOB APPLICATIONS – SUPPORT STAFF

Age	Support Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
17-24	3.6%	13.1%	10.6%	8.9%
25-35	10.4%	33.8%	33.2%	30.4%
36-45	24.9%	25.7%	21.9%	22.5%
46-55	22.8%	17.0%	21.9%	24.9%
56-65	31.6%	9.4%	11.6%	12.4%
66+	6.7%	0.5%	0.3%	0.7%
Not declared	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Disability	Support Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Disabled	7.3%	7.1%	5.3%	4.5%
Non-disabled	80.3%	89.5%	90.4%	91.9%
Not declared	12.4%	3.4%	4.3%	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	Support Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Male	39.4%	44.5%	36.9%	37.8%
Female	60.6%	54.2%	62.8%	61.2%
Not declared	0.0%	1.3%	0.3%	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Applications 2023 n = 382 2022 n = 301 2021 n = 418 (workforce profile as at 31 March 2023 = 197)



# JOB APPLICATIONS – SUPPORT STAFF

Ethnicity	Support Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Black and ethnic minority	11.4%	26.7%	36.9%	37.8%
White	77.2%	72.0%	62.8%	61.2%
Not declared	11.4%	1.3%	0.3%	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Religion or belief	Support Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Religion or belief	53.9%	63.9%	58.5%	56.7%
No Religion or Belief	28.5%	29.8%	35.9%	33.3%
Not declared	17.6%	6.3%	5.6%	10.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sexual orientation	Support Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other	2.1%	9.4%	5.6%	4.6%
Heterosexual	82.4%	84.0%	91.0%	90.4%
Not declared	15.5%	6.5%	3.3%	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Applications 2023 n = 382   2022 n = 301   2021 n = 418 (workforce profile as at 31 March 2023 = 197)

# JOB APPLICATIONS – UNIFORMED STAFF

Age	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
17-24	6.3%	32.2%	18.4%	31.8%
25-35	23.7%	40.7%	50.9%	42.6%
36-45	42.1%	18.9%	25.8%	19.1%
46-55	24.5%	5.9%	3.7%	5.0%
56-65	3.4%	1.9%	0.6%	1.2%
66+	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%	0.0%
Not declared	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Disability	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Disabled	4.8%	5.9%	3.1%	2.9%
Non-disabled	90.6%	93.0%	96.3%	95.0%
Not declared	4.6%	1.1%	0.6%	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Male	87.4%	72.2%	89.6%	78.2%
Female	12.6%	27.8%	10.4%	20.9%
Not declared	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

# JOB APPLICATIONS – UNIFORMED STAFF

Ethnicity	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Black and ethnic minority	5.1%	16.3%	22.1%	22.4%
White	91.3%	83.7%	77.9%	76.5%
Not declared	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Religion or belief	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Religion or belief	45.0%	56.7%	48.5%	35.6%
No Religion or Belief	40.9%	40.7%	48.6%	59.4%
Not declared	14.0%	2.6%	2.9%	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sexual orientation	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other	4.4%	6.7%	8.6%	6.8%
Heterosexual	84.3%	91.5%	87.1%	89.1%
Not declared	11.4%	1.9%	4.3%	4.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Applications 2023 n = 270 2022 n = 163 2021 n = 340 (workforce profile as at 31 March 2023 = 413)



# EXTERNAL TRAINING

Age	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
16-24	5.4%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
25-34	19.5%	11.6%	12.6%	11.4%
35-44	36.6%	38.0%	46.7%	21.4%
45-54	23.9%	21.0%	28.1%	38.6%
55-64	12.4%	19.7%	9.8%	28.6%
65+	2.1%	1.0%	1.4%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Disability	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Disabled	5.6%	3.4%	6.6%	1.4%
Non-disabled	87.3%	4.6%	89.5%	94.3%
Not declared	7.1%	1.0%	3.9%	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Male	72.1%	56.6%	80.7%	68.6%
Female	27.9%	35.0%	19.3%	31.4%
Not declared	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

2023 n = 86   2022 n = 80   2021 n = 70

# EXTERNAL TRAINING

Ethnicity	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Black and ethnic minority	7.1%	3.4%	8.8%	4.3%
White	86.8%	84.8%	87.9%	94.3%
Not declared	6.1%	5.8%	3.3%	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Religion or belief	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Religion or belief	47.9%	61.0%	48.4%	47.1%
No Religion or Belief	37.0%	17.4%	39.5%	30.0%
Not declared	15.2%	36.0%	12.1%	22.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sexual orientation	Workforce Profile 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/23	Applications 31/03/22	Applications 31/03/21
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other	3.6%	3.4%	3.7%	4.3%
Heterosexual	83.7%	68.6%	84.0%	84.3%
Not declared	12.7%	12.7%	12.3%	11.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

2023 n = 86   2022 n = 80   2021 n = 70

# OUR COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to delivering inclusive and accessible services to the diverse communities we serve. We continued to build on the improvements and progress made in the Service including actively engaging with the communities and improving on the collation of data to focus our activities on the most vulnerable groups. Some of our key achievements are detailed below:

- 🔥 We demonstrated our support and commitment to a variety of diversity events including LGBTQ+ month, Black History Month and Windrush Flag Flying event.
- 🔥 For Neurodiversity Week members of staff shared their stories on social media including useful tools and support materials that are available.
- 🔥 Attended numerous College and Sixth Form events to promote the Fire Service as an Employer of Choice.
- 🔥 Used social media channels to promote the Service and deliver targeted safety messages.
- 🔥 Held Station Open days engaging with the local community.
- 🔥 Engaged with local authorities in and outside of Bedfordshire, with police and other agencies such as housing associations, schools, children's homes, foster parents, to support young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Amongst other activities, we delivered safety awareness sessions and provided learning resources which included posting BFRS fire safety leaflets, selecting and recommending StayWise resources.

Youth initiatives included:

- 🔥 Working with partners, raising awareness in home fire safety workshop for 15–19-year-olds with SEND needs.
- 🔥 Holding Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Disability Open Days at Fire stations.
- 🔥 Took positive action initiatives to actively engage with under-represented community groups to enhance diversity in our workforce.
- 🔥 Provided opportunities to have a go at some of the more practical activities performed by operational firefighters.

# NEXT STEPS

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## Step 1

Seek to establish a community partner panel for targeted communication and engagement methods to engage with a wider cross-section of Bedfordshire's local communities, providing them with a voice and opportunity to shape how our services support their needs.

Review our translation and interpretation service and designing and developing information in different formats to meet the needs of our community such as those who are visually impaired.

## Step 2

Ensure that as an organisation we are compliant with our public sector equality duties, with Bedfordshire Fire Service Authority taking the lead in scrutinising our performance as an organisation and advancing our pledge to reduce inequality and challenge discrimination in Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Assess the equality impact our policies have on people from different protected characteristics by ensuring our People Impact Assessments are robust.

## Step 3

Work in partnership to promote an inclusive Bedfordshire by working closely with our local partners in health, the Police, the Local Authorities, Voluntary Sector and the private sector.

Deliver a collaborative and combined approach to narrowing the equality gaps in Bedfordshire and helping to ensure we collectively champion equality and inclusion in everything that we deliver.



# YOUR VIEWS COUNT

Your views are very important to us and having had an opportunity to feedback on our annual Public Sector Equality Duty Report. We would welcome your feedback by e-mailing us at [diversity@bedsfire.gov.uk](mailto:diversity@bedsfire.gov.uk).

## CONNECT WITH BFRS



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**WE ARE  
ACCOUNTABLE**



**WE'VE GOT  
YOUR BACK**



**EVERY CONTACT  
COUNTS**



**WE DARE TO  
BE DIFFERENT**