

**Tyne and Wear Fire  
and Rescue Service**



# **ANNUAL EQUALITY DATA REPORT & GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2021-2022**



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# Contents

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<b>Our Equality Commitment</b>	Page 3
<hr/>	
<b>Introduction</b>	4
<hr/>	
<b>Equality Developments in 2021/22</b>	5
<hr/>	
<b>Our approach to Gender Pay Gap Reporting</b>	10
<hr/>	
<b>Retention - creating an inclusive workforce</b>	13
<hr/>	
<b>Community Engagement 2021/22</b>	25
<hr/>	
<b>Conclusion and Objectives</b>	28
<hr/>	

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# Our Equality Commitment

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## Welcome to Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority's Annual Equality Data and Gender Pay Gap Report for 2021/22.

At Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of the services we provide to our communities.

Delivering services that meet the needs of our communities through a workforce that is committed, representative and engaged is paramount to achieving our vision of 'Creating the Safest Community'.

As a team, we strive to ensure equality is embedded across the whole organisation by continuously promoting inclusive principles, through the work of our elected members, our leadership teams, our partners and our exceptional employees and volunteers. We see equality as a fundamental part of each of our core values.

Our aim is to deliver a service that is innovative, a service that is transparent and inclusive, and a service that embraces the diversity of our communities. To achieve these aims, we work hard together to remove inequalities, eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity through positive working relationships between our workforce and our communities.

We have recently received our second formal Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report, where we received a rating of 'good' across all three inspection pillars. The report once again makes reference to the ongoing great work of our staff who work within our communities and also our ongoing commitment to continually improve the working environment for all employees.

We want to continually ensure that the services we provide are accessible to everyone and that we have a workforce that reflects the unique diversity of Tyne and Wear's communities. As a Service, we are on a journey of continuous improvement and we would appreciate any comments that you may have in relation to this report.

In writing this report, I can confirm that the published information contained within it is accurate.



**Chris Lowther QFSM**

Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive  
Clerk to Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

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# Introduction

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**The Annual Equality Data Report and Gender Pay Gap Report provides data and information about our employees and the people who we provide a service to within Tyne and Wear. The findings enable us to identify equality priorities and development areas which inform our equality objectives.**

This combined report also helps us to ensure we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which require us to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics and
- foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Public authorities are required to publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the PSED annually. Data and information has been collated for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 The Authority is also required to publish Gender Pay Gap data under The Equality Act 2010 (specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 and for this, the data is collated for a snapshot at 31 March 2022.

We actively work towards eliminating inequalities, discrimination, harassment and victimisation by promoting equality of opportunity and fostering positive working relations through our work within equality, diversity and inclusion. We strive to ensure that the service we provide is accessible to everyone and that we have a workforce that reflects the diversity of Tyne and Wear's communities.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) undertakes a regular, formal inspection programme against which our Service is assessed. The programme and framework focuses on three main themes:

- how effective each Fire and Rescue Service is at preventing, protecting against, and responding to fire and other risks;
- whether the Fire and Rescue Service provides value for money; and
- how well the Fire and Rescue Service looks after its people and ensures fairness and diversity.

On our last assessment in 2021-22, we were confirmed as a "Good" service, across each of the three inspection pillars of Effectiveness, Efficiency and People. Full report can be found on the following link:

[Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2021/22 – Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service - HMICFRS \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/effectiveness-efficiency-and-people-2021-22-tyne-and-wear-fire-and-rescue-service-hmicfrs)

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# Equality Developments in 2021/22

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## **Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is central to our culture, behaviours and core values.**

Since the pandemic and lifting of the restrictions, the Service continues to adapt its service delivery to the Community. We adapted our working practices to incorporate a new way of working to enable the Fire Service to continue to provide a service and respond to incidents.

Many of the support services departments continued to deliver their service by the enhanced office/agile working practices. We played a key role in supporting the community of Tyne and Wear and partners, to help the most vulnerable people in our area.

Our elected Fire Authority Members are also supported with understanding the Service's core values. The Service ensures the strategies, plans and processes we use enhance the delivery of our vision and embeds equality, diversity and inclusion within our Service and community.

We have made positive progress to further diversify the workforce, particularly through Operational Firefighters and Corporate Staff recruitment. The Service ensures diversity has continued to enhance our workforce; and by developing talent of existing employees, we have provided development opportunities that benefit both individuals and the Service. Our Community Volunteers support employees in the delivery of fire safety messages and assist our Community Advocates in their work with community groups.

Our positive culture and active promotion has continuously improved, helping to embed equality and diversity in everything we do. The feedback from the previous report has allowed us to focus on our inclusion outcomes, challenging us to improve upon an already impressive body of achievement in this field and will help to shape our priorities and set the direction of travel going forward.

Following the level 3 Disability Confident Leader Award in August 2019, the Service has resubmitted their commitment for the period 2021-2022.

The Service continues to support communities, creating an inclusive workplace by maintaining our Stonewall Diversity, Women in the Fire Service and the Asian Fire Service Association Champion memberships. Such national membership highlights our consistent and continuous improvement to diversity within our workforce.

Actively leading equality, diversity and inclusion in our workforce and communities highlights a range of benefits and will help us to further improve diversity within our sector.

Our long history of collaboratively working with Partner Organisations is a key aspect of our continuous improvement drive towards all areas. We actively promote and enhance diversity, through supporting and attending events such as Pride, Diwali and the Mela. The events were adapted to meet the pandemic restrictions, with most events being on line. This has continued and has made events more accessible to more employees and reaching a wider audience.

This year also saw the continued support for employees within our existing employee network groups; Disability, LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Gender and BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic). We introduced a neurodiversity network group in October 2021. The network groups work to champion our ongoing commitment to greater employee involvement in the decision-making process and further increase personal development opportunities.

We continued to demonstrate our commitment to equality and inclusion with the groups hosting online awareness conferences events to promote and gain a greater understanding of underrepresented groups and the protected characteristic they represent.

The introduction of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 promoted collaborative working with other emergency services sharing best practice in all areas of health and wellbeing.

Building upon this, we continued to develop partnership and collaboration between Emergency Services and stakeholders, creating a multi-agency approach to equality to support shared delivery of key community safety themes at events and initiatives.

We are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our employees both physically and mentally. Evidence has shown that providing high quality health promotion to employees leads to positive attitudes about workplace equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Occupational Health Manager and Trauma Support and Welfare Manager are trained Mental Health First Aid instructors (MHFA). A series of MHFA courses are being delivered across the Service to develop our staff to support those with mental health issues.

The Occupational Health and Human Resources functions, work in collaboration to support individuals when they are absent from work. The aim of this approach is to enable an individual to return to and/or remain at work. With the introduction of a Health and Fitness Advisor the Service has seen an improved attendance for those employees with injuries.

Health and Wellbeing sessions are delivered to all employees by the Trauma Support and Welfare Manager in conjunction with the FBU. Each year the topic delivered is developed from the feedback from those attending these sessions.

In 2021/22 the service obtained the Better Health at Work Award Gold Award status. Occupational Health continue to be the lead in this project and they are currently working towards the next level – Continuing Excellence. As always the focus of the Award relates to how the organisation supports the health and wellbeing of its staff and the wider community.

## Work Force Data

Throughout the year, the Service has taken a more evolved approach to the collection of equality data to encourage and allow employees to identify themselves with more descriptive and relevant terms.

Our employee management information system enables employees to update their own personal information using a self-service system. All employees have access to the system so enable them to amend their own data whenever they want. All employees have been encouraged to declare and update their characteristics on the self-service system.

In compiling this report, the Fire Service has used the approved head count of 884 employees as the baseline comparator, as of 31 March 2022.

Each characteristic is reported below:

Gender	Count 2020 / 21	2021 / 22
Female	199	209
Male	634	675
<b>Total</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>884</b>

Religion	Count 2020 / 21	2021 / 22
Atheist	155	155
Buddhist	3	3
Christian	359	350
Hindu	1	1
Islam	3	4
None	132	165
Not Stated	11	31
Other	5	21
Prefer Not To Say	155	147
Spiritualist	9	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>884</b>

Sexual Orientation	Count 2020 / 21	2021 / 22
Bi	2	4
Gay	6	7
Heterosexual	725	758
Lesbian	6	7
Prefer Not To Say	88	83
Prefer To Use My Own Term	5	2
(Add To Notes)		
Not stated	1	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>884</b>

Age	Count 2020 / 21	2021 / 22
17-24	27	35
25-35	129	166
36-45	290	306
46-55	289	278
56-65	95	95
66+	3	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>884</b>

Disability	Count 2020 / 21	2021 / 22
No	510	576
Not Stated	292	274
Prefer not to say	7	9
Yes	24	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>884</b>

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Count 2020 / 21</b>	<b>2021 / 22</b>
Arab	2	2
Asian Or Asian British - Indian	1	2
Asian Or Asian British - Pakistani	2	3
Asian Or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0	1
Black Or Black British - African	1	0
Black Or Black British - Caribbean	1	1
Gypsy Or Traveller	1	1
Mixed - White And Asian	5	5
Mixed - White And Black African	2	2
Mixed - White And Black Caribbean	1	2
Not Known	3	6
Other Asian Background	2	1
Other Mixed Background	2	2
Other White Background	5	7
Prefer Not To Say	26	25
White - British	775	808
White - Other	1	0
White - Irish	0	2
Not stated	3	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>884</b>

## Authority Members

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority (TWFA) is the democratically accountable body that oversees the activities of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS). The Authority is comprised of 17 members, 16 of which are elected members, nominated by the five constituent councils of Tyne and Wear, the seventeenth being the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria. Fourteen members of the Authority have provided their equality data:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Sexual</b>	
16-25	1	<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Count</b>
26-35	1	Bisexual	2
36-45	1	Heterosexual	12
46-55	4	<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>
56+	7		
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>		



<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Count</b>
White British	13
White Irish	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

<b>Religion / Faith</b>	<b>Count</b>
Atheist	7
Christian	4
Humanist	1
Not stated	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Count</b>
No	13
Not stated	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Count</b>
Female	4
Male	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

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# Our approach to Gender Pay Gap Reporting

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**In addition to the Public Sector Equality Duty reporting requirements, the Authority is also required to publish Gender Pay Gap data under The Equality Act 2010 (specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.**

The gender pay gap differs from equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. The gender pay gap shows the differences in the average pay between men and women.

For the purposes of gender pay reporting, the definition of who counts as an employee is defined in the Equality Act 2010, in this case all our employees and volunteers. The information is a snapshot on 31 March 2022. Our report includes the following calculations:

- The mean pay gap
- The median pay gap
- The proportion of males and female employee in each salary quartile band
- The mean bonus pay gap
- The median bonus pay gap
- The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment.

Following a review of the guidance, detachments and over time payment are included. For the purposes of this report, ordinary pay includes the following information before tax and any deductions for employee pension contributions:

- Basic pay (pay attributed to responsibilities of the role of which is applied equally)
- Allowances (additional responsibility over and above the basic responsibilities of the role)
  - Instructors Allowance
  - Continuous Professional Development
  - Flexible Duty Officer Rota Allowance
  - Strategic Rota Allowance
  - Day Crewing Close Call Allowance
  - Essential Car User Allowance
  - Urban Search and Rescue Allowance
  - Detachment and Acting Up Payments.

For the purposes of calculating the hourly rate of our employees the following hours per week have been utilised:

- Employees in roles governed by the 'National Joint Council for local government services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service', (The 'Green Book') - 37 hours
- Firefighter to Watch Manager roles conditioned to Fire Stations - 42 hours
- Firefighter to Area Manager Day Shift conditioned roles - 42 hours
- Firefighters aligned to the Day Crewing Close Call system - 52.87hrs
- Officers conditioned to the Flexible Duty Rota – 48 hours
- Area Manager roles conditioned to the Executive Rota - 48 hours
- Principal Officers conditioned to the Executive Rota Continuous Cover pattern - 78 hrs.

## Mean and Median pay gap

At 31 March 2022, we employed a total of 884 employees however due to the reporting requirements, the actual number of employees who were paid in March 2022 was 861; 199 (23%) were female and 662 (77%) were male.

The mean pay gap is 12.91% (\*13.11%), equating to an hourly rate difference of £2.05 (\*£2.08), and the median pay gap is 1.21% (\*1.21%).

To explore the gender pay gap difference, further analysis of the data is required.

Grey Book Employees	No Employees	Mean	Mean Pay Gap
Male	563	£15.82	1.13% (*-1.13%)
Female	54	£15.61	
Grey Book Employees - Control	No Employees	Mean	Mean Pay Gap
Male	7	£15.67	4.12% (*0.27%)
Female	23	£15.02	
Green Book Employees	No Employees	Mean	Mean Pay Gap
Male	92	£16.27	21.23% (*19.20%)
Female	122	£12.82	
Total	No Employees	Mean	Mean Pay Gap
Male	662	£15.88	12.91% (*13.11%)
Female	199	£13.83	

\* Figures relate to previous year.

For all of our Green Book roles, a grade structure that uses the National Joint Council Pay Scales. This year has seen an increase in the mean pay gap for these roles, this can be attributed to amendments to department structures and a number of increases in grades for current post holders arising from increased responsibilities.

The Green Book pay gap can be attributed to the number of women employed in lower paid roles. 41% (43%) of our female Green Book employees are paid at the lower end of our pay points (Scale 3 and below), these include administration, cleaning and catering roles. The data has shown that our pay gap is more evident in our Green Book (corporate) employees, which has increased slightly in comparison with the previous year.

The data has shown that our Grey Book (Operational) workforce has a positive gender pay gap of 1.13% with males being paid slightly more than females. This is in contrast with last years figures, where females were paid more than males (-1.13%).

With women occupying only 14% of higher level management posts, compared to 86% occupied by male employees, this helps to explain the gender pay gap with in our Service.

## Salary Quartile Bands

The quartile distribution detailed below gives an indication of the proportion of females and males and in each quartile band.

	Female	% Female	Male	% Male
Top	29	14% (*16%)	184	86% (*84%)
Mid Upper	32	15% (*15%)	182	85% (*85%)
Mid Lower	50	23% (*20%)	168	77% (*80%)
Lower	88	41% (*43%)	128	59% (*57%)

\* Figures relate to previous year.

The high quartile salary band consists of 86% male employees, indicating they are the highest earners within the organisation. The composite of the salary bands for these employees are disproportionate to non-operational roles due to allowances attributed to Grey Book operational roles, resulting in our operational employees being paid at a higher rate of pay from entry (Firefighter) level through to strategic leaders (Chief Fire Officer).

Our progressive approach to equality and inclusion is not solely measured by equality data, but also in our approach to continually improve our equality, diversity and inclusion activities.

## Bonus Payments

We do not offer a bonus scheme and do not make bonus payments; therefore, the following calculations are not applicable:

- The mean bonus pay gap
- The median bonus pay gap
- The proportion of males receiving a bonus payment
- The proportion of females receiving a bonus payment

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# Creating an inclusive workforce

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## **Our commitment to equality and inclusion is central to our culture, behaviours and core values.**

This is delivered through the Service's strategic plans, supported through our Leadership, which supports our employees, managers and Members in understanding the behaviours that enable our core values. The focus of our strategy and plan is to ensure that the processes we use enhance the delivery of our vision and embeds equality, diversity and inclusion within our service and community.

Leadership of equality, diversity and inclusion is set out in our Organisational Development (OD) Strategy and new People and OD Plan.

## **Network Groups**

2021/22 saw the continued support for employees within our existing employee network groups; Disability, LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Gender, BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and Diversity of Thought). Our network groups work to champion our ongoing commitment to greater employee involvement in the decision making process and further increase personal development opportunities.

The network groups aim to help the Service continue to improve our position with regard to equality and diversity and improve the position as an employer of choice, as it is important to ensure that the services TWFRS provide are reflective of the needs of all staff and of the wider community we serve.

With the introduction of online meeting facilities, this gave a platform for our network groups to continue to meet with their members, run online events. Using this different platform allowed more people to attend for different locations. Our fire crews attended the event from their Station, therefore increasing the reach to the organisation.

## **BAME Network Group**



The BAME Network was established in 2015 and was launched to provide advice and support to staff, the organisation and stakeholders on all BAME related matters.

This includes a diverse range of areas including how we support BAME staff, how we engage with our communities and how we strive to improve our understanding of the diverse make-up of Tyne and Wear.

The group have recently broadened the languages that the Fire Safety Booklet's are published in, the new languages are; Arabic and Farsi. This is to help enable any person of any ethnicity to understand safety in the home.

Members of the Network group have attended many awareness and celebrations including:

- Vaisakhi
- Refugee Week
- Understanding Spirituality, Culture and Mental wellbeing with Raza Rahman – Lunch and Learn Session
- South Asian Heritage Month – Event organized by AFSA
- AFSA Conference in Liverpool

## Disability Network Group



The Disability Staff Network Group (DNG) supports employees and visitors across the Service in respect of disability awareness, education, access, reasonable adjustment and general support as required.

A Menopause Procedure was published in October 2021, which provides Menopause guidance for management, coupled with an awareness session delivered to our Senior and Executive Management Teams.

Tyne and Wear are proud to be the first Fire and Rescue Service to become an Endometriosis Friendly Employer. This has enabled the service to drive positive change in the workplace for the 1 in 10 women with endometriosis. With female employment rates higher than ever before and endometriosis costing the UK economy £8.2 billion a year in loss of work, treatment, and healthcare costs, it is absolutely vital that the service take the lead in the scheme.

The Endometriosis Friendly Employer scheme, led by Endometriosis UK, provides guidance on how to support employees with endometriosis, with employers committing to providing those with the condition the necessary support to thrive at work. The service now has several employees volunteer as Endometriosis Champions.

Work is ongoing by members of the DNG to provide both online and physical information and awareness media, for employees to access at any time.

The DNG has worked jointly with Occupational Health, Learning & Development and ICT departments, to introduce accessible software. This has enabled dyslexic members of staff to be able to continue their development and work to keep the high standards of the service. This has benefitted not only new recruits into the service but also, well established members of staff who have not had access to this kind of help previously.

## Gender Network Group



The Service continued to support the White Ribbon Campaign in partnership with Northumbria Police and The Police and Crime Commissioner.

The White Ribbon logo was displayed on appliances to facilitate the press release for the 2021 White Ribbon Campaign. CFO Lowther alongside PCC McGuinness called for communities to come together and say no to violence against women and girls. The press release was featured in local and national press along with publications in UK Fire & International Fire Magazine.

The service showed their support for the 16 days of action campaign working with Local authority partners, Rape Crisis Tyneside & Northumberland, Changing Lives, Harbour, Westend women & Girls, Newcastle NHS, Places for People, Northumberland Domestic Abuse Service, Your Homes Newcastle, Thirteen Group and Workie Tickets Theatre.

Some of the events included:

- A Don't Ignore Violence and Abuse (DIVA) Walk – hosted by Julie McManus at North Tyneside Council.
- #16Days Workie Ticket Theatre Company hosted a premiere of a short film made by North East Women entitled 'Her Primal Scream'
- Online lunch and learn hosted by TWFRS looking at Violence against Women and Girls, facilitated by Joanne Douglas of Safe Newcastle.

The Service continues to be an accredited organisation, supported by our Senior Leadership Team as the Chief Fire Officer signed the White Ribbon promise on behalf of the Service "a promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women".

On International Women's Day, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Lynsey McVay, hosted a virtual conference to help break the bias around women in the fire service and welcomed speakers from across our service along with external speakers to share their experiences of women in the workplace.

## LGBT+ Network Group



The LGBT+ Network Group aim to create an environment where people can be themselves at work, allowing them to perform at their very best. This means employees feeling able to bring their whole-selves to the workplace. It is recognised that sexual orientation can be a sensitive subject, which may prevent some individuals from 'coming out' at work and fully respect it's a personal choice to disclose such information.

The network group continue to demonstrate commitment to LGBT+ employees and wider community by continuing to be a 'Diversity Champion' member of Stonewall. The Service took part in the Workplace Equality Index (WEI) employers in 2021, to measure performance against other organisations and to celebrate achievements, achieving a bronze award.

The network group has ensured continued support to staff and their family members, providing confidential and practical support to a number of individuals and their families around LGBT+ issues. The staff network has a confidential and secure email address and the growing confidence in the network co-chairs has contributed towards this objective. This essential and primary provision continues to form a significant and crucial part of the work in the coming year. This will also include work around mentoring and supporting our LGBT+ allies, as well as increased cross network working and collaboration both internally and externally.

In March, our Co-Chair presented their real-life case study in the "Break the Bias" online event for International Women's Day 2022, held by the Service, receiving positive and supportive feedback.

The network group works hard to promote the Service as a fully inclusive employer and service provider. The group takes part in all types of engagement events and online lunch and learn sessions, as well as actively supporting LGBT+ visibility and remembrance days.

Although Newcastle Pride was a virtual event in 2021 due to the pandemic the Service, the Network and Northern Pride joined forces to create a virtual 'Bring Your Own Breakfast' event to continue the long held tradition of hosting the Pride Blue Light Breakfast. The breakfast explored our LGBT+ journey and was well attended by both internal and external participants and proved to be incredibly successful. Breakfast was delivered to all operational watches and workshops staff on duty on the day as recognition that sometimes on duty staff are often unable to attend these celebrations due to the nature of their roles. This year has offered us a unique opportunity for our staff to join in the Pride Breakfast. The highlight of the online event was the reading of three real life case studies provided by three members of staff which were incredibly thought provoking and hard hitting.

In March the network group and the Service supported the Hadrian Cup. This is an annual rugby 10's tournament organised by the Newcastle Ravens which is the biggest inclusive rugby tournament in Europe, with 36 Teams attending, and for the first time a touch tournament was included which has facilitated the event to be even more inclusive as these games are mixed, allowing females to take part. The network group and the Service were proud to provide and sponsor the match balls for all games, again showing our support for equality, diversity and inclusion.

The use of social media again has been widespread, particularly in 2021 as the pandemic continued to affect face to face engagement, with the network Twitter account now having 722 followers.



## Diversity of Thought Network Group



Diversity of Thought is a new staff network for Neurodiversity.

***“Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid” Albert Einstein.***

Neurodiversity refers to the natural range of difference in human brain function, the various ways the brain can work and interpret information. It highlights that people think about things differently, have different interests and motivations. We all have talents and things we struggle with, but for some the variation between strengths and weaknesses is more pronounced.

Diversity of Thought - The Staff Network for Neurodiversity was launched on 1st October 2021 to coincide with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) awareness month. The first meeting was held on 1st November 2021. This was a walking meeting to facilitate more natural introductions and conversations. Neurodiversity is a huge topic, it was therefore decided that the group would focus our efforts on a few areas as agreed by the members.

These include;

- Scaffolding Support
- Raising Awareness
- Improving Understanding

Neurodiversity is a relatively new term, so this is very much the beginning of a journey. The network group's involvement with different aspects of the service has so far been organic. It has stemmed from natural conversations around particular issues. This has proved to be a very successful way of empowering people and departments to make changes in a manner and pace that they are comfortable with. The value of this can be seen and fully expect these conversations to become more widespread as awareness increases.

The group aim to understand what barriers currently exist for people with a Neurodiversity, work with Senior Leaders to remove those barrier's in order to introduce amendments that are accessible by everyone and move away from the term 'reasonable adjustments'. For some, this infers a disability and the decision as to what is reasonable lies with someone else. The group also recognize the difficulties in obtaining a specific diagnosis so will work to ensure this is not a barrier to anyone getting the help they need.

Change can happen when we see enough value in doing so. Therefore the Neurodiversity Network Group will continue to raise awareness and help the workforce understand the positive impact these changes will have on the service. If you improve things for people with a Neurodiversity, you improve things for everyone.

The group and the service will continue to work towards a goal of ensuring that everyone can bring their whole selves to work. This will improve performance, retention and well-being of employees.

## Recruitment and Promotion

During 2021/22, the service been actively recruiting for permanent, temporary and fixed term posts. The service is promoted as an Employer of Choice, encouraging applicants from underrepresented groups to apply, across all recruitment campaigns, ranging from managerial roles to a variety of support roles.

The service has undertaken promotion processes at Crew Manager, Watch Manager, Station Manager, Group Manager and Area Manager Level, filling current vacancies and creating candidate pools to furnish future vacancies.

## Firefighter Recruitment

The recruitment of Firefighters is crucial to ensuring the effective management of operational deployment in line with budget and risk critical activities to support the delivery of the Strategic Community Safety Plan. Fire and Rescue Services from across the United Kingdom continue to face challenges in the diversification of their workforce, in particular within operational roles, i.e. Firefighters.

Since 2018 when Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service resumed Firefighter recruitment for the first time after a period of 9 years, the service has continued to strive towards having a workforce that reflects the communities we serve. The service acknowledges that there is some way to go in achieving this aim, there are continuing development plans on how we can attract candidates from diverse backgrounds. During 2021/22 3 trainee courses have taken place, the diversity of the Trainee Firefighters in terms of our under-represented groups within those courses was as follows:-

- Sexual Orientation: 4.2% of trainees identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or in another way.
- Female: 11.1% were female.
- Ethnicity: 6.9% were from a BAME background.

Building on our successful recruitment of Wholetime Firefighters from our 2020 campaign, the recruitment of individuals from under-represented groups has remained at the forefront of our campaigns. In February 2022 a new campaign launched with the Corporate Communications Teams developing a promotional campaign that featured Firefighters from diverse backgrounds and this was widely promoted via social media, local radio and billboard advertising.

Prior to the launch of the campaign we enabled perspective candidates to pre-register their interest in the role of a Firefighter. The pre-registration information was used to inform positive action activities comprising of webinars, have a go sessions at Service Headquarters and station visits.

1267 applicants applied for the 2022 campaign with the following diversity breakdown:-

- Sexual Orientation: 11.4% of applicants identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or in another way.
- Female: 14.8% were female.
- Ethnicity: 4.9% were from a BAME background.

The service will continue to utilize pre-registration for future campaigns and further positive action initiatives will be adopted, particularly focusing on under-representation from those from BAME communities.

## Appointments and Promotion

Throughout 2021/22, we have recruited for various roles across all departments resulting in 104 new appointments and 40 internal promotions.

## Applicant Information

Gender	Total
Female	261
Male	470
Not stated	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>

Age Range	Total
16-24	62
23-35	273
36-45	226
46-55	142
56+	31
Not stated	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>

Sexual Orientation	Total
Bi	18
Gay	12
Lesbian	12
Heterosexual	681
Prefer not to say	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>

Disability	Total
No	662
Prefer not to say	47
Yes	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>

Religion	Total
Athiest	88
Buddhist	2
Christian	258
Hindu	3
Islam	10
None	330
None stated	2
Prefer not to say	27
Sikh	1
Spiritualist	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>

Ethnicity	Total
Arab	1
Asian Or Asian British - Bangladeshi	2
Asian Or Asian British - Indian	6
Asian Or Asian British - Pakistani	7
Black Or Black British - African	10
Black Or Black British - Caribbean	1
Chinese	1
Mixed - White And Asian	3
Mixed - White And Black Caribbean	2
Other Asian Background	1
Other Mixed Background	2
Other White Background	15
Prefer Not To Say	4
White - British	674
White - Irish	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>

## Promotion Information

Age Range 2021/22	Total
16-24	0
23-35	4
36-45	22
46-55	14
56-65	0
66+	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

Gender 2021/22	Total
Female	5
Male	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

Religion 2021/22	Total
Athiest	14
Christian	13
None	6
Prefer not to say	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

Ethnicity 2021/22	Total
White - British	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

Sexual Orientation 2021/22	Total
Heterosexual	35
Prefer not to say	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

Disability 2021/22	Total
None	23
Not stated	15
Prefer not to say	1
Yes	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

## Training and Development Opportunities

The Learning and Development Department continues to support all staff, to promote high performance and continuous improvement. Working collaboratively and inclusively, it ensures its people and their performance is the best it can. By supporting staff to acquire, maintain and continuously develop the appropriate technical and professional skills and underpinning knowledge specific to their role.

Key areas of focus for this period (and moving into the rest of 2022 & 2023) are:

- Redevelopment of the training facilities here at Barmston Mere Training Centre
- Implementation of a new LMS for all staff
- Revision of content and delivery of management development.
- Development of training staff in the delivery of adult education
- Review of evaluation of training and return on investment

Competency Recording Matrix (CRM). Working in conjunction with an external provider, TWFRS ICT and L&D teams have designed and built a new, bespoke in-house competency recording system that will provide staff with a new way to document their competence against risk critical activities.

L&D continue to contribute to national working groups, including management development, Incident Command, driver training and Firefighter apprenticeship delivery. Wherever possible, the department look to help shape the approach to development across the fire sector as a whole.

## Gender Reassignment

We are unable to publish specific employee data to ensure anonymity. Members of our LGBT+ Network Group have continued to assist us in developing our policies, procedures and training in conjunction with our Gender Network Groups.

We have provided advice and guidance for managers and employees with the publication of our transgender policy and revised guidance. This supports information in other Service policies such as the Equality and Diversity Policy and Dignity at Work Policy.

We continue to offer transgender awareness training to our employees. We have provided opportunities for employees, including members of the LGBT+ Network Group, to attend specialist transgender training, delivered by the LGBT charity Stonewall, in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of transgender issues.

In addition to this training we have also arranged, and facilitated, a Transgender awareness workshop for internal staff. We also actively supported Trans Awareness week, raising our Trans flag at Service Headquarters, and staff showed their support by displaying their Trans epaulettes.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Feedback from our employees has shown that our flexible approach has enabled them to continue to work in a rewarding career within Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. We currently have 7 employees who have taken maternity leave, 4 of those have returned and 3 who we expect to return to their role.

Shared Parental Leave is available to our employees, this enables eligible mothers, fathers, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work to care for their child. The policy allows parents more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. This provides a wider range of options for women, men and partners in managing the demands of both the workplace and home.

100% of women who have taken maternity leave within the reporting period have returned to their respective roles. This is very positive and can be attributed to our work-life balance policies and flexible working options, available to all employees. Our overall package supports employees to return to work with flexibility and balance.

## **Flexible working applications and success rates**

The scheme of flexible hours for personnel forms part of the Employee Friendly Work/Life Balance policy, integral to the Authority's Diversity and Equality Policy. This is part of a range of areas including formal schemes of flexible working hours, job sharing, part-time working, term time working, seasonal working, home working and, in some instances, combinations of these arrangements, which are kept under constant review.

The ultimate aim of these schemes is to address the needs of personnel and the Authority in providing a service to the community that we serve. Within the period of 2021/22, 5 employees requested flexible working which was successfully implemented. These include 3 Operational and 2 Support Staff employee working various shift patterns and hours across a variety of roles.

## **Reasonable Adjustments**

During 2021/22 our Health and Wellbeing team facilitated 39 alternate duties, phased return to work and/or reasonable adjustment assessments, enabling employees to be present at work or return to work sooner following an absence or injury. Our experienced Health and Wellbeing team take a proactive approach to reasonable adjustments, with each individual assessed on a case by case basis and bespoke support provided.

To ensure that all employees and managers have an understanding of reasonable adjustments, a flow chart has been published highlighting each person role. This includes how access to work applications are conducted. Our employees have successfully completed these applications and their requirements have been implemented.

## **Grievances and Dismissals**

There were 7 grievances recorded in 2021/22, which is a decrease in comparison to 16 recorded in 2020/21. Of the grievances raised, there was 1 grievance which involved discriminatory behavior and 1 included a claim of bullying and harassment. Of all the grievances heard, 5 were not upheld, 1 was partially upheld and 1 was no further action required.

There were 17 disciplinary cases recorded in 2021/22 with nil dismissals following a disciplinary process.

## **Leavers from the Organisation**

The Service collects and monitors leaver information enabling us to learn from feedback and trend data and ensures compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty requirements.

Our employee's views are important to us, with suggestions or feedback being considered to continually improve the Service. Leavers are invited to undertake a face to face exit interview with the Chief Fire Officer and to complete an online questionnaire which provides us with feedback reports.

<b>Ethnicity 2021/22</b>	<b>Total</b>
Not stated	6
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1
Black or Black British - African	1
Other Asian Background	1
Prefer not to say	2
White - British	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

<b>Sexual Orientation 2021/22</b>	<b>Total</b>
Not stated	5
Gay	1
Heterosexual	80
Lesbian	1
Prefer not to say	8
Prefer to use my own term	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

<b>Disability 2021/22</b>	<b>Total</b>
Non stated	34
No	54
Yes	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

<b>Religion 2021/22</b>	<b>Total</b>
Not stated	7
Atheist	7
Buddha	1
Christianity	47
Islam	1
None	14
Prefer not to say	18
Spiritual	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

<b>Gender 2021/22</b>	<b>Total</b>
Female	24
Male	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

<b>Age Range 2021/22</b>	<b>Total</b>
25-35	13
36-45	22
46-55	24
56+	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

## Fire Safety Visits by Ethnicity

The aim of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Fire Safety Department is to undertake a large programme of engagement with the business community within Tyne and Wear. This engagement focuses on the building risk and previous compliance within the built environment and not on the ethnicity of those that operate, own or use a certain premises type.

A large part of the usual ways of working for the department is face to face engagement, however due to the obvious restrictions brought about by the Covid pandemic the department embraced and developed new ways of working. This included remote Fire Safety Audits over the telephone, the use of new technology such as MS Teams and Zoom meetings and updating staff equipment to allow remote working to promote continued engagement.

The engagement the department undertake is usually driven by the Services Risk Based Inspection Programme, which assesses the known risks within the built environment to ensure our workload is directed to those most at risk or those most likely to be non-compliant. The workload was generated differently, as the team identified and engaged with those premises who would be more impacted by the pandemic, this meant the focus was largely on the care sector, schools and food suppliers.

In addition to this programmed work we also undertook a large programme of engagement with those responsible for high rise residential premises. The main aim was to ensure that they were compliant following the Grenfell Tower Inquiry outcomes and to provide assurances to the National Fire Chiefs Council that TWFRS are aware of the buildings and risk from fire in these buildings.

The Fire Safety Department continued to interact with our community via social media and by other means such as press releases and working closely with regional business groups and forums such as the Federation for Small Businesses, Better Business for All, the Growth Hub and North East Chamber of Commerce. These methods were especially important given the restrictions on visiting premises.

The activities of the Fire Safety Department that are delivered in accordance with the Service Enforcement and Engagement Policy, which is underpinned by the Regulators' Code, to ensure that all enforcement action is delivered fairly and in all enforcement action is delivered fairly and in a transparent manner relative to the risk identified.



# Community Engagement 2021/22

## Safe and Well Checks

Prevention and Education activities continued to be affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, including the delivery of our Safe and Well checks. The delivery of checks was limited to the prevention team until September 2021, when operational crews began to deliver them for the first time since the start of the pandemic. As such this has had an effect on the volume of completed checks for this reporting period.

Although the service no longer records ethnicity as part of a Safe and Well check, the service does record details of the vulnerabilities of our occupiers and this is pertinent to our equality recording. Over 60% of our Safe and Well checks were delivered in premises with at least one vulnerability.

### Safe and Well Checks 2021/2022

Overall visits conducted	14562
Premises where a vulnerability was encountered	8841
Vulnerabilities recorded*	
65 and over	5115
Cognitive loss	151
Dementia	252
Frailty / falls	297
Hearing loss	733
Heart / Lung disease	353
Immobile	197
Language	65
Learning disability	122
Mental Health / illness	237
Not stated	6132
Physical disability	230
Restricted mobility	1519
Sight loss	178

\* There may be more than one vulnerability per household.

## Community Engagement Team

During lockdowns the team continued to support to the logistics cell, as the Service as a whole responded to the needs of the public during the coronavirus pandemic. During the periods where they were not able to physically visit vulnerable groups, the department were aware that people were spending more time in their homes where the potential risk of fire was increasing and there were less opportunities to communicate with them.

To address this increased risk the team developed their own set of literature using mainly illustrative pictures to convey fire safety messages. These were designed to target the hard to reach members of the various sectors. The team worked with individuals who have limited language skills, for instance, those living with Dementia, those who have learning support needs, and those from ethnic communities where English is not their main language.

The team were able to distribute these electronically via our many partner organisations in all sectors of society, who were more than happy to share the information with their service users. The team have been able to reach many 1000s of people this way and convey the information to those who needed it most. This work continues through the translation of materials into other languages to benefit the community.

To support our communications, the team have produced multiple information videos to convey many general fire safety messages which can be used on our social media platforms. These have coincided with specific multi-cultural celebration events such as Ramadan, Eid and Diwali, Valentine's Day and others, increasing to the risk of fire in the home.

Once it was safe to do so, physical engagement with all of our communities and partner organisations was reintroduced. Building on the hard work and continued engagement through COVID the team are engaging fully through a range of events, talks and initiatives.

## Youth Engagement / Safeguarding

The Prince's Trust Team Programme supports unemployed young people aged 16-25 into employment, training, education or volunteering. Face-to-face delivery on fire stations resumed in autumn 2021, to ensure TWFRS remains a key partner in supporting young people across the region. The young people on the Team Programme improved their confidence and employability skills. Through cooperation with Firefighters and the Phoenix Project, Prince's Trust students also received education on the consequences of anti-social behaviour, arson and attacks on Firefighters.

The Juvenile Firesetters Education Programme (JFEP) continued during 2021. Plans to increase our number of facilitators, with each newly appointed District Team Member having responsibility for delivering the programme in their respective communities, have been made.

The total number of Safeguarding referrals rose from 290 in 2020/21 to 448 in 2021/22. This 54% increase is the result of increased awareness among frontline practitioners due to improved training, engagement sessions with a number of operational watches and the introduction of the Safeguarding Fire Standard in February 2022.

The Safeguarding Fire Standard is set by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and aims to ensure that fire and rescue services are doing all that they can to support safeguarding. Its desired outcome is that services work proactively to promote the safeguarding of those within their communities as well as employees and volunteers, reducing the risk of abuse, harm and neglect.

The Service currently has 4 cadet units located across the service area, providing a training and development programme for young people aged between 11 and 17 years of age. Through the use of fire service activities young people are encouraged to make the most of their physical and mental capabilities and become more responsible, safe and caring members of their communities. Fire cadets are also encouraged to take part in social action activities in the community for the benefit of their community.

The Phoenix Project uses the positive role model of a Firefighter to provide a life-changing programme for young people who are the most challenging and disadvantaged in local society. During 2021/22, the team are reviewing and relaunching the original 3 programmes Aspire, Respect and Pride. The team have also been developing some new bespoke shorter courses, following market research.

There will be a continuation of signposting the young people into Fire Cadets, Sunderland Community Hub, Prince's Trust courses, or partner organisation as suitable. Supporting them to continue to engage with youth organisations helps keeps them out of trouble and are able to meet new people with likeminded interests. This has an impact on the community as it reduces anti-social behaviour, with less young people on the streets.

The Safetyworks! centre reopened fully in September 2021. Due to Covid, the centre had to temporarily close in March 2020. However, the Safetyworks team continued to deliver the important home fire safety and anti-social behaviour messages to pupils in KS2 Year 6s; initially this was undertaken by MS Teams, followed by some school visits when restrictions would allow.

Safetyworks! continues to deliver key safety messages with the support of partners including Nexus, Local Authority Road Safety Teams, Northumbria Police, the Royal National Lifeboats Institution (RNLI), 2021/22 saw the return of the key safety campaigns with the aim of improving safety and reducing accidents as well as reducing the impact of deliberate fires and anti-social behaviour.

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# Conclusion and Objectives

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**During 2021/22 we have made positive progress to further diversify the workforce, particularly through Operational Firefighters, Corporate Staff and Community Volunteer recruitment. The Service ensures diversity has continued to enhance our workforce; and by developing talent of existing employees, we have provided development opportunities that benefit both individuals and the Service. Our Community Volunteers support employees in the delivery of fire safety messages and assist our Community Advocates in their work with community groups.**

We will continue to monitor our recruitment processes to ensure that they assess skill-based selection process, assessing the candidate's suitability for the role. These processes ensure fairness across all candidates, showing transparency throughout the recruitment process with objective and evidence-based decisions.

Our leadership programme aims to develop our managers' skills and self-confidence with a range of training including mentoring and coaching.

Our senior leaders champion flexible working and job sharing, with this benefit being available to all employees, including operational Firefighter roles. We will continue to enable our employees to work more flexibly, creating a better work/life balance for all.

Our core values guide all staff to promote and embrace inclusivity and foster positive working relationships. We continue to support our employees with our five employee network groups; Disability, LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender), Gender, BAME (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic) and Diversity of Thought.

We continue to support our network groups work to champion our ongoing commitment to greater employee involvement in the decision making process and further increase personal development opportunities.

To help the Service to achieve an inclusive workforce, we are refreshing our Inclusion Policy which includes objectives that specifically contribute to equality, diversity and inclusion of our service.

The inclusion objectives will help to further diversify our workforce to ensure we reflect the whole community; to have clear, fair and transparent routes to both employment and progression and to have a positive culture where everyone is valued and takes pride and ownership of their actions and behaviour.