



**East Sussex Fire and  
Rescue Service**

**Workforce Profile**

**April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017**



## Introduction

Having a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture based on respect are key components of East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service an efficient and effective modern organisation.

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service carries out equalities monitoring in respect of its workforce Composition:

Not only does this data contribute to ensuring we are meeting our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty within the Equality Act 2010, but the analysis is essential if we are to understand the impact of our employment policies, procedures and practices on our staff.

By identifying any differences in outcomes for different staff groups, we can develop actions to support our staff and increase our diversity.

Our Equality Objectives are to:



**Equality Objective 1 - We will understand our workforce and community better**

**Equality Objective 2 - Our leadership will be visibly inclusive**



**Equality Objective 3 – We will be attractive and accessible to all. We will foster good relationships and be able to engage effectively with diverse communities**

Our workforce data helps support the work of our workplace networks and following our recent restructure will be looking to ensure equality accountability throughout our organisation through appropriate advocacy.

By ensuring equality principles are at the heart of our business and its delivery to both our external and internal stakeholders we will be able to consider better outcomes for everyone both the public that we serve and our employees.

Although ESFRS has been analysing and publishing its workforce data with the help of our staff we will be looking to expand and develop it further.

## **About disclosure**

Disclosure by staff of secondary characteristics is lower than we would wish, we aim to improve on these during 2017-18. We know that improving levels of staff disclosure can:

- Provide more accurate monitoring of the recruitment and retention of staff with protected characteristics
- Indicate the impact of policies and practices on different groups in the organisation
- Provide in-depth understanding of inequality or unfair treatment, different experiences and areas for action.

Several factors can influence an individual's decision to disclose equality information, including:

- Understanding the relevance of the information to the organisation and their experiences at work.
- The culture of the organisation – whether it is open and inclusive or if there are concerns about possible discrimination.
- Availability of information on the uses and confidentiality of their details.
- Opportunities to disclose information on an ongoing basis.
- Whether they relate to the options available on equality monitoring forms.

## **We want to cultivate a positive atmosphere**

We know staff are more likely to engage with a diversity monitoring exercise if they see it as an integrated part of the organisations strategy for promoting inclusivity and increasing accessibility.

Improving our equality monitoring is one of our three equality objectives and has high priority within our Inclusion Strategy.

## **Why is it important to gather Equality Data**

ESFRS aims to have an inclusive environment for all staff, by identifying and removing barriers in our practices. Completing equality monitoring helps us achieve this, and also helps ESFRS meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

*While it is voluntary to disclose this information, doing so will enable us to better understand the composition of our workforce and examine our practices fully.*

Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence, we are be working to a position where staff can self-service and update their own personal details. In the meantime, information is collated by HR and are administered in accordance with the systems and safeguards to safely store and analyse the data in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

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### *Case study – Incident Command Assessment Review*

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*The organisation wishes to utilise the data to inform the decisions they are making affecting all that work in the organisation. Data was analysed to identify if there was any disproportion of impact in the ICS level 2 command assessment. We wanted to know if there were any groups adversely impacted based on their identity in our current process to help inform the review. Regrettably because so few staff have disclosed their disability status we unable to identify if this had an impact. However we did identify age was a consideration, and this is being explored further.*

## Workforce Profile (as at 31 March 2017)

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service employees and reports staff statistics across 4 areas of work and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 the profile was as follows:

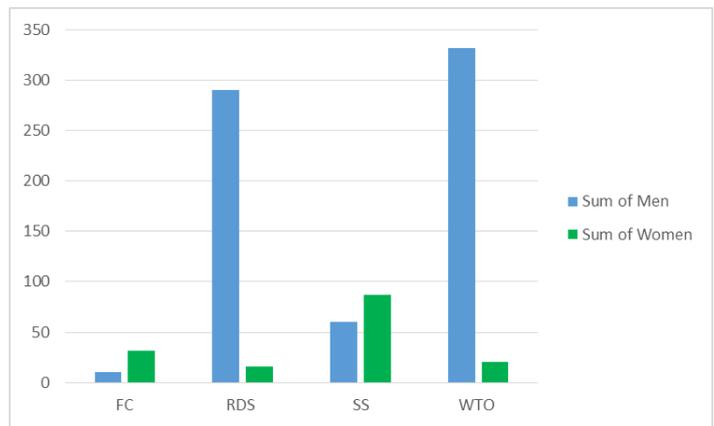
Operational Firefighters on Wholetime Contracts (WTO) = 358 staff  
 Operational Firefighters on Part time "On call Contracts (RDS) = 248 staff  
 Fire Control Operators (FC) = 48 Staff  
 Support Staff (SS) = 147 Staff

\*A number of staff to hold more than one contract or role with organisation.

### Workforce gender balance

Across the organisation gender diversity is most disproportionate amongst our operational firefighting staff.

Over all 18.3% of our employees are women, mainly working as part of our Control Room and Support Staff.

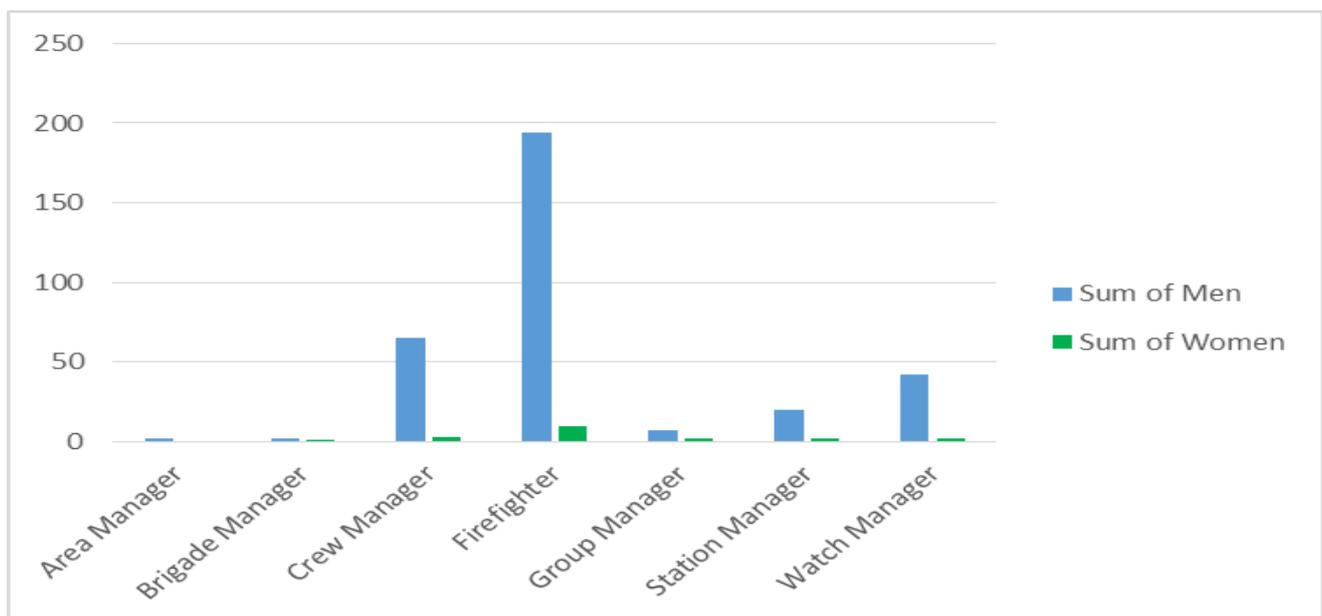


### **Wholetime Firefighters**

The graph below reflects (A-Z) operational roles.

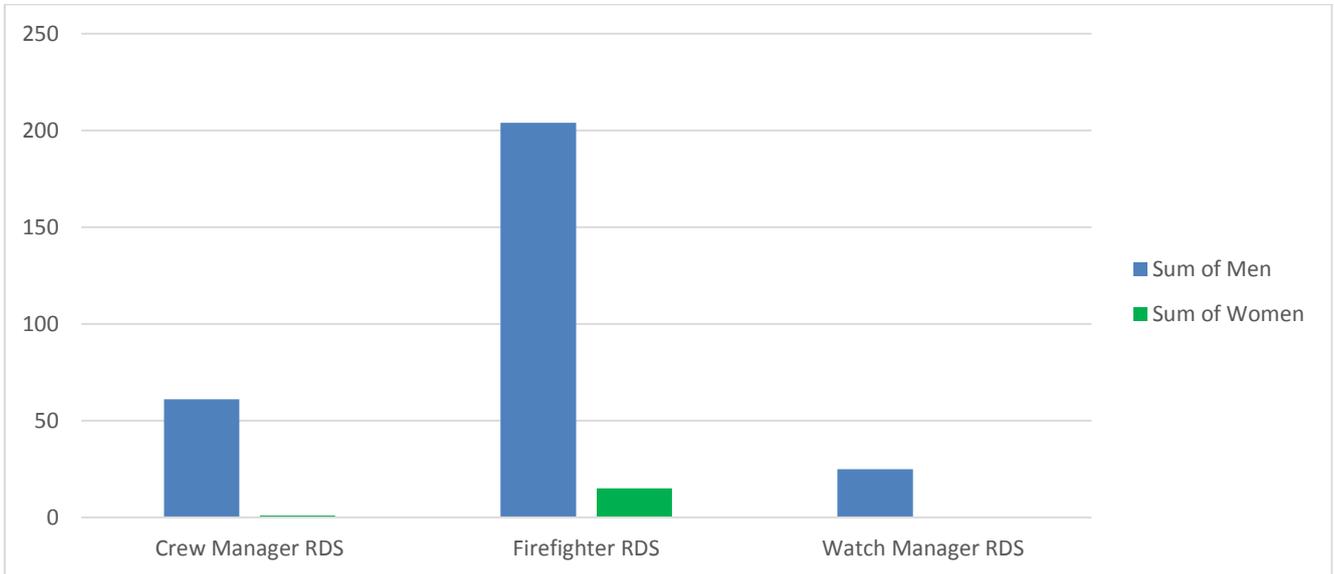
The hierarchical structure of firefighting roles is Firefighter, Crew Manager, Watch Manager, Station Manager, Borough Commander/Group Manager, Area Manager and Brigade Manager.

Currently the percentage of our Wholetime firefighting staff identifying as female is 5.7%.



## On Call Firefighters

Our “On-call” firefighters work to a retained duty system (RDS) ensuring we provide cover across East Sussex in our more rural areas. We currently employ on call firefighters up to and including the role of Watch Manager. Within our on call firefighters 5.2% are women.



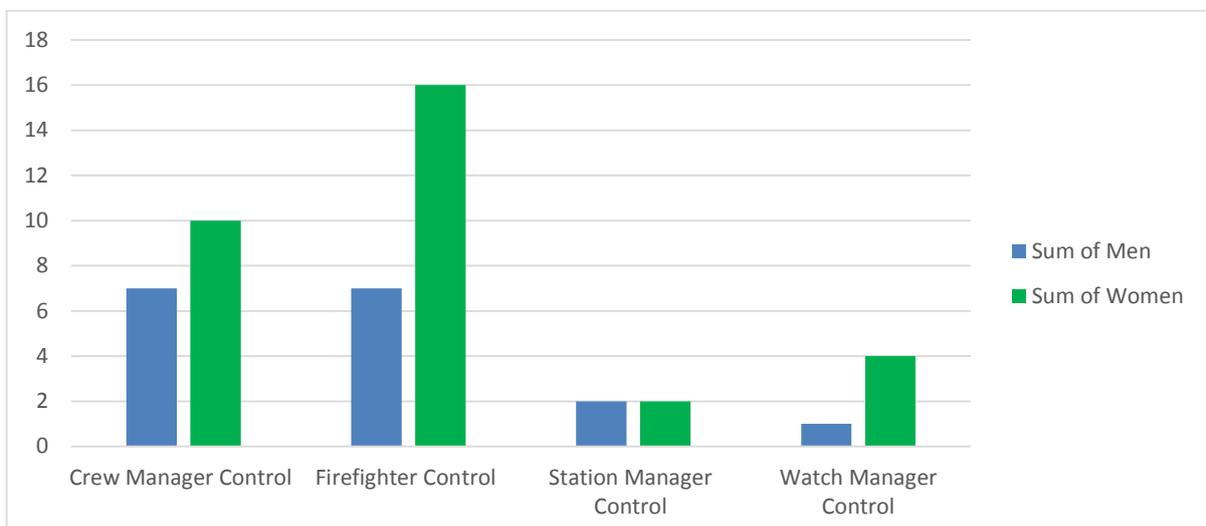
The national average is for female Operational Firefighters is 5%.

ESFRS has not recruited for Wholetime firefighters for over 8 years. Although our figures for female firefighters are slightly higher than the national average and we are looking to enhance this further in our proposed recruitment later this year.

## Control Room Staff

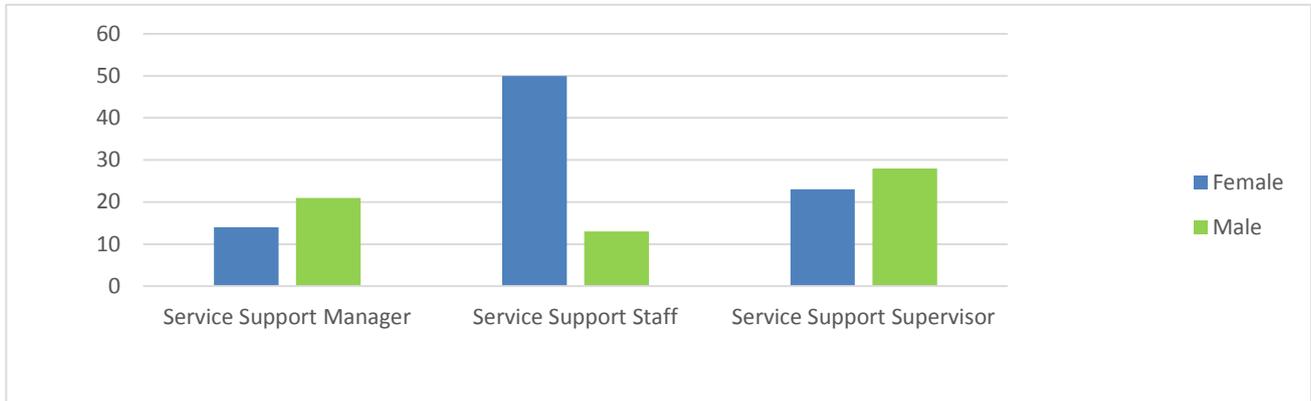
Our Fire Control Operators respond to all 999 emergency calls for the Fire & Rescue Service within East Sussex & West Sussex based at our Sussex Control Centre in Haywards Heath.

Across roles our control room gender diversity is 65.3% female, this is down from 67.8% last year. At the most senior level of the department, Station Manager, we have achieved gender balance.



## Support Staff

The majority of our 147 support staff employees are now based in Lewes at our jointly shared HQ with Sussex Police.

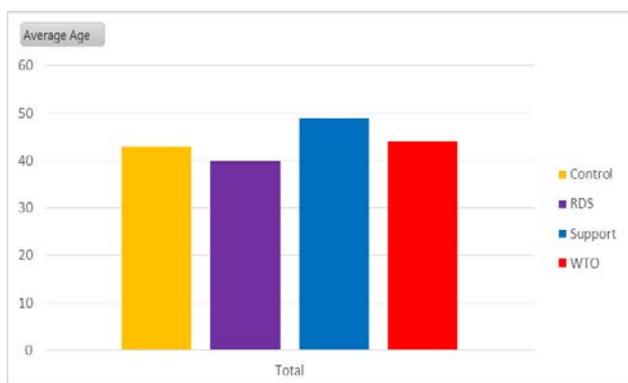
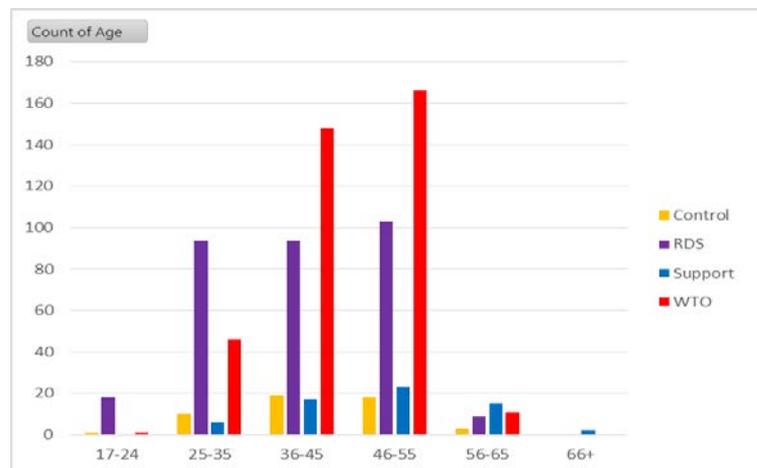


58.4 % of our support staff are women. As with control room staff this is down on last year (60.8%) and although males are under-represented overall our reporting shows that Support Staff Manager level (Grades 8-11) 60% are men. We will therefore be looking at gender in relation to promotion and succession as part of our Inclusion Strategy.

## Age

As life expectancies and pension terms in the UK increase, we have nationally seen steady increase in the average age of the UK workforce.

A pattern mirrored in our workforce which has increased in age annually since 2012.



The average age of an ESFRS Wholetime operational member of staff is 44 years (higher than the national average of 40 years). For On-Call it is slightly lower at 40 years.

Our Support staff are the oldest average work group with an average age of 48 years.

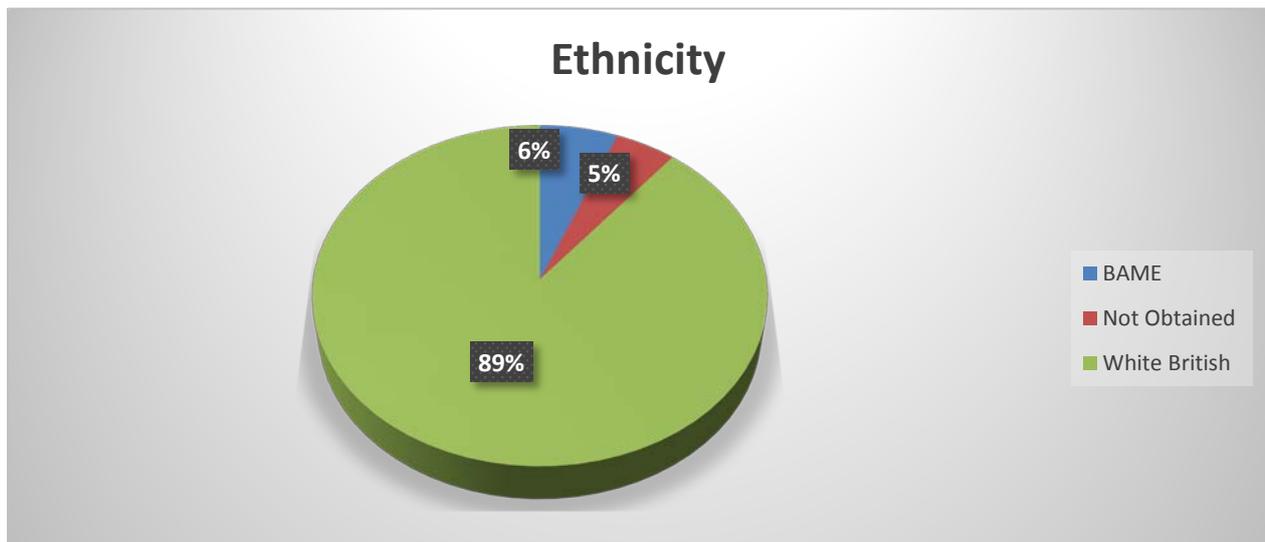
Whilst we can attribute the average age of wholetime fighters to the lack of recruitment and

support staff in part to austerity. We have work to do with engaging young people in being “On-Call” Firefighters.

### **Ethnicity**

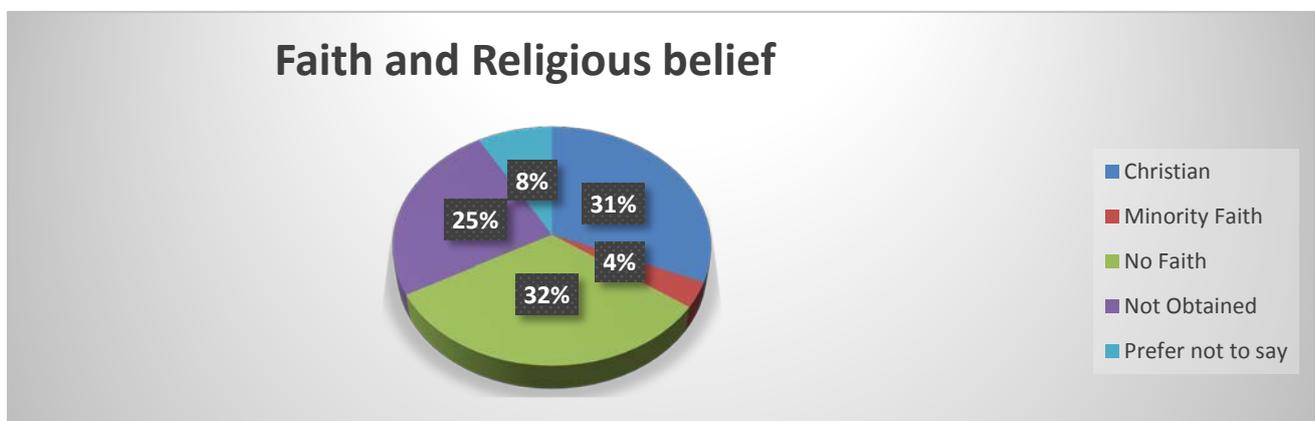
4.7% of our staff have not disclosed their ethnicity, 89.2% identify as White British and 6.1% identify as Black and Ethnic Minority.

Nationally the proportion of firefighters that were from an ethnic minority group has increased slowly since 2011 (from when consistent data are available) to 3.9% in 2017. This compares with 14.6 per cent of the English population and more locally 10.6% in East Sussex and 18% Brighton and Hove (Census 2011). Therefore although representation is above the national average for firefighters, we have some way to go to be representative of our communities.



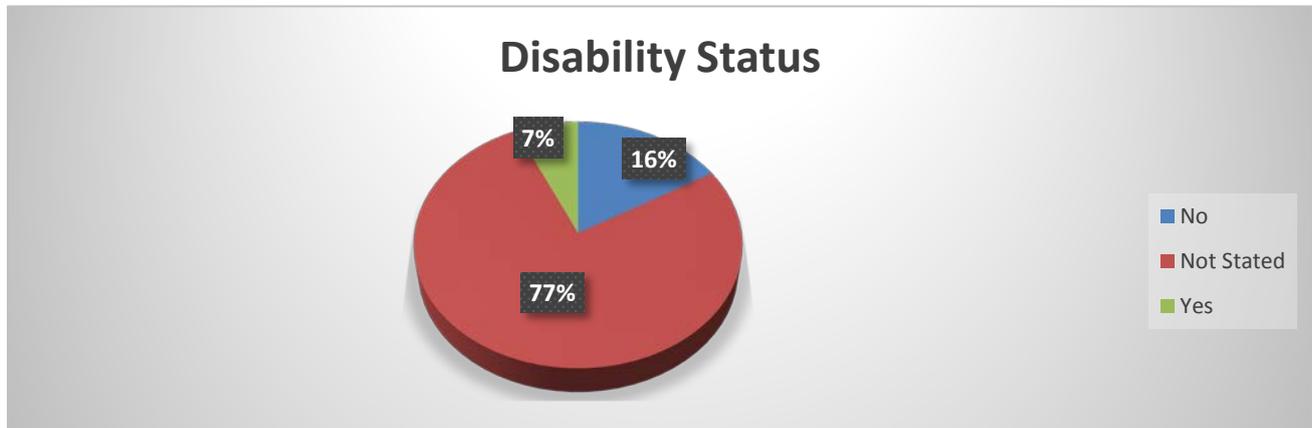
### **Faith and Religious Beliefs**

25% of employees have not disclosed their religious belief, 32% identified as being of no faith, 31% identified as Christian and 4% are representative of minority faiths.



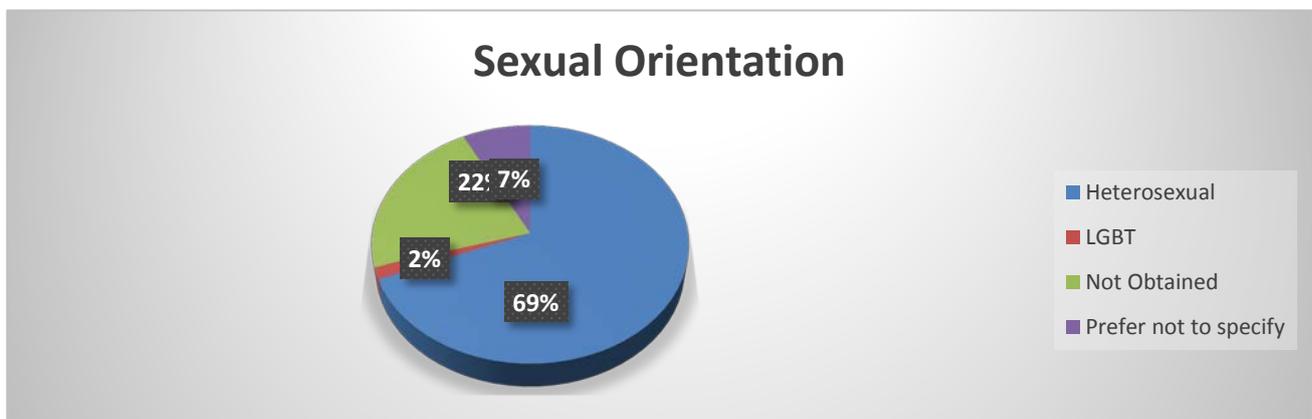
## Disability

77% still do not state disability status. Within the remaining 33% there is a slow but steady trend to disclose particularly amongst our firefighting staff whose disclosure of a disability has nearly doubled since 2013.



## Sexual Orientation

The number of staff who have not completed monitoring information regarding their self disclosed sexual orientation is 22%, 7% have a preference not to say. Of those that have disclosed 2% identify as LGBT\* and 69% have disclosed a self-identified heterosexual sexual orientation.



## New Starters

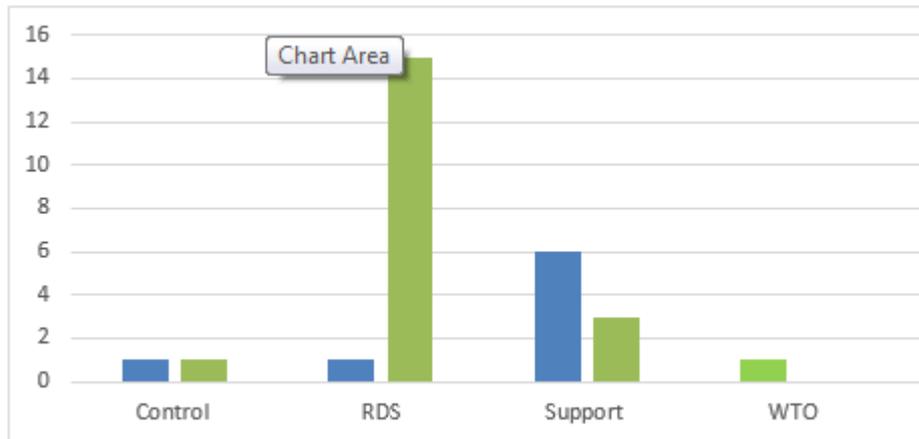
Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 there were 31 new starters.

New Staff	Men	Women	Total
Retained or on call firefighters	21	1	22
Wholetime firefighters	1	0	1
Support staff	0	6	6
Control room staff	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>31</b>

One member of staff was employed on a Wholetime contract this was a re-engagement.

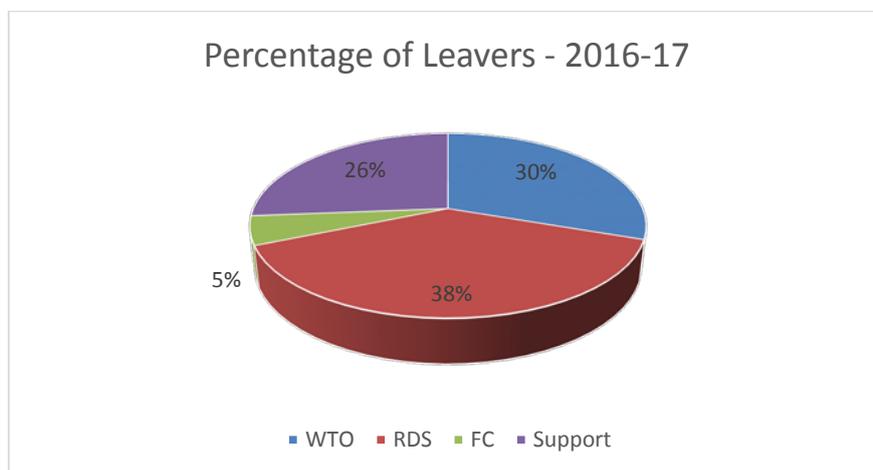
4% of our new employees identified as BAME and 74% of our new employees were men.

These statistics are disappointing and we are working to develop positive action and engagement across our recruitment practices.



### Leavers

Between April 2016 and March 2017 – 76 Staff left the organisation. 23 were Wholetime Operational staff, 29 On-call Operational Staff, 4 Fire Control Operators and 20 Support Staff.



Staff can opt to leave from the age of 50 years having fulfilled a full firefighter career if they have sufficient length of service this influences the age of retirement amongst operational staff.

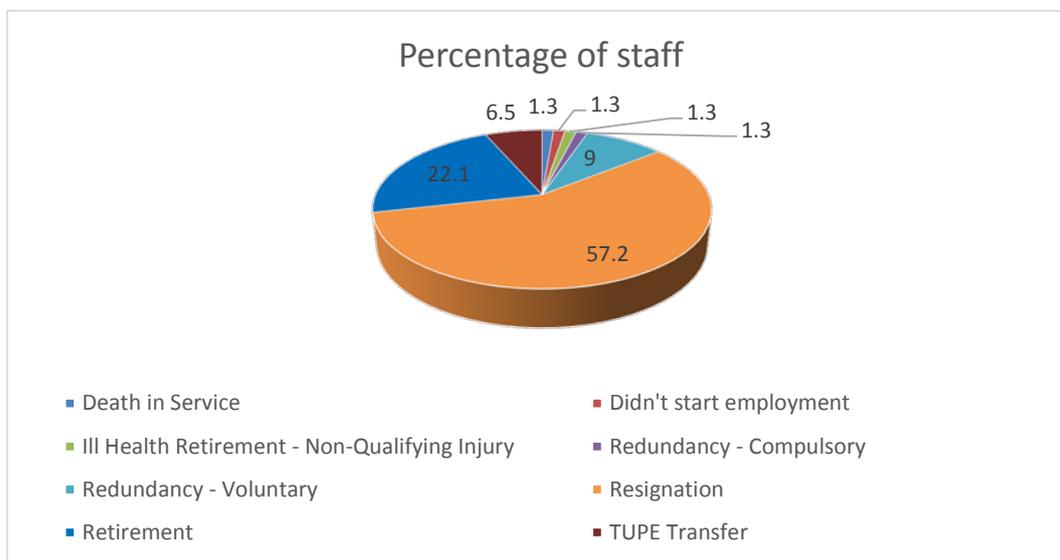
The diversity profile of those leaving the organisation:

84.4% were men and 2.6% were BAME

Of those who declared their sexuality, faith and disability status:

100% were heterosexual, 21% had a disability, 38% were of Christian faith and 45% were of no faith

### **Reasons for leaving the organisation**



The high level of resignations (57.2%) is concerning, a move to a new headquarters may have been a contributory factor but the organisation will be looking at our exit interviews in more details to understand more about why our staff are leaving.

### **Monitoring Equality Data improvements for 2017-18**

#### **Participation**

The organisation recognises the value of accurate and complete data, we would encourage staff to complete equality monitoring and will be taking steps to encourage staff particularly amongst secondary characteristics and this will be considered as part of our Inclusion Strategy.

#### **People and Performance**

We are currently enhancing our performance monitoring mechanisms so that we will be able to report accurately on the demographics of the training delivered to our staff we hope to be able to report on this at next year's profile.

#### **Recruitment and Retention**

We offer opportunities for temporary promotion to higher graded role to cover temporarily the absence of the substantive post holder or to undertake a secondment in a different role often provide employees with learning and development opportunities. As part of our enhancement of equality data we will publishing the equality profile of our staff who undertake temporary appointments in 2017-18.