



Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report

April 2018 to March 2019

Alternative Formats

We are committed to ensuring that all our information is fully accessible for all communities across Merseyside, we have included this document on our website which can be accessed from our Webpage <http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/equality & diversity>

If you would like a copy in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French or Somali please contact us at Diversity Team, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road , Bootle, Liverpool L30 4YD. Telephone 0151 296 4422 or email diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk.

Arabic

Diversity: على بنا الاتصال يرجى، الصومالية أو، الفرنسية أو، الصينية أو، البنغالية أو، العربية باللغة نسخة أردت إذا
Team, MF&RS Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle, Liverpool, L30 4YD والمينيكوم الهاتف
diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk 4422 296 0151 الإلكتروني البريد أو
كبيرة طباعية بحروف أيضًا متوفر.

Bengali

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Chinese

如果你想复制的阿拉伯语，孟加拉语，中国，法国或索马里，请联系 我们多元化的团队，MF & RS总部，马勒路，布特尔，利物浦L30 4YD。电话和小型机0151 296 4422 或电邮diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk。在较大的打印也可以。

French

Si vous souhaitez obtenir une copie en arabe, bengali, chinois, contactez s'il vous plaît français ou en Somalie nous à la diversité équipe, siège de MF & RS, Bridle Road, Bootle, Liverpool L30 4YD. Téléphone et minicom 0151 296 4422 ou par courriel diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk. Egalement disponible en gros caractères.

Somali

Haddii aad rabtid nuqul Carabi, Bangaali, Shinees, Faransiis ama Soomaali fadlan

la xiriir kooxda Diversity, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, Headquarters Service
Bridle Road, Bootle Liverpool L30 4YD.
Telefoonka: 0151 296 4422 ama Email: diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk
Sidoo Kale waxaa heli kartaa iyadoo far waaweyn ah.

This Document is also available in larger print and can be reproduced in Braille on request.

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Foreword

I am really pleased to introduce our 2018/19 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) report. This report provides a detailed account of how we have progressed against our ED&I strategic objectives and how we have implemented our plans during the last year.

It has been a busy year, during which we:

- Delivered of a number of high profile fire safety reassurance campaign to Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities in Merseyside
- Successfully developed a faith network “Making Merseyside Safer and Stronger – the Faith Forum” was created to support work of the Fire and Rescue Service – and has been developed in conjunction with Merseyside Police.
- Supported Liverpool Pride in even larger numbers than previously and signing up many more FireProud Allies
- Supported staff at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) in understanding the impact of menopause and providing free support to our Female staff through the lead in women’s health advising National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), Dr Paula Briggs.
- Became Dementia Friends
- Introduced policies and procedures which reflect the diversity of our Service.
-

Here at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority we are committed to developing a culture that recognises, supports and celebrates diversity, equality and inclusion. Our annual equality report demonstrates our work towards ensuring we are an inclusive employer and that we support the needs of our diverse communities to help keep people safe and well.

The report highlights our achievements over the last year and provides a spotlight on what we have achieved through the use of statistics, case studies, narrative and infographics.

During 2018/19 we have successfully completed the implementation of the ED&I Action Plan 2017-2020, notably:

- Developed practices to understand and address the Gender pay gap.
- Further developed our Knowing our Communities project, ensuring we are engaging with diverse communities in an inclusive way
- Delivered a Positive Action strategy to increase the number of people from underrepresented groups in our workforce
- Ensured we are delivering Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and Safe and Well visits proportionately to reflect our diverse communities.

As the most senior sponsor for ED&I, I am particularly proud of the ongoing support and priority that our staff give to this ambitious agenda and we make sure that we take time to celebrate ED&I in many different ways. This year in particular our support of:

- Liverpool Pride
- Black History month
- International Women's Day
- Dementia friends

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is an integral part of all our strategy development and we shall continue to mainstream cultural and systematic change in our organisation so that ED&I is embedded within day-to-day activities across all functions. Staff and community engagement will also remain a core element of our ED&I agenda, to ensure that we recognise and respond to the diverse needs of our people.

We have much to be proud of at MFRA, for example we have increased diversity amongst operational staff and now have 55 female and 38 BAME firefighters out of a total workforce of 611. We have also seen an increase in the number of staff who have disclosed their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay bisexual or transgender (LGBT); an increase from 15 to 22 staff since 2016/17 and an increase of staff (including prefer not to say) who have declared their sexual orientation, from 37.3% to 55.1%.

We remain committed to inclusivity through the removal of barriers and bias wherever it exists.

Chief Fire Officer

Phil Garrigan – Senior Sponsor for ED&I

Aims of this report

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is pleased to publish this report as a reflection on the work delivered across the organisation in pursuit of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) excellence. This report presents the public and other stakeholders with many success stories about the work we do on a day to day basis to ensure that the services we deliver provide our diverse communities with confidence that we are addressing their needs.

This year's report provides an overview of:

- Progress made for the second year of our Equality Objectives 2017 - 2020
- Highlights from the delivery of our Equality & Diversity Action plan 2017 – 2020
- A summary of our Equality Analysis of Workforce and Employment Data report 2018/19.
- Our Gender Pay Gap reporting for 2018/19

This report also demonstrates our commitment to ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in relation to:

1. Publishing, at least annually, information to demonstrate our compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED.
2. Preparing and publishing one or more specific and measurable objectives that help to achieve the aims set out in the PSED.
3. Publishing equality information and the objectives in a manner that is accessible to the public.

ED&I is driven by a comprehensive and well monitored Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action [Plan](#), underpinned by an Equality & Diversity Policy. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out on policy and strategic documents and when these are approved by the Authority they are published on our website www.merseyfire.gov.uk with Authority papers. Each area of the organisation also develops ED&I priorities in relation to their plans and this ensures that ED&I is

consistently considered and is embedded as part of organisational planning and development.

This report also provides an internal reflection on the ED&I work that has been delivered. As an employer it is important that we are embedding ED&I to achieve fairer outcomes for our employees and that we work towards reflecting the diverse communities we serve.

Governance and Performance Management

The governance structure for the delivery of the ED&I Action Plan changed in June 2018, the plan is now monitored and progress reported on through each department's functional plan updates. The remaining core ED&I actions relating to the delivery of the five ED&I objectives are monitored through updates delivered to the Strategy and Performance Board quarterly, prepared by the Diversity and Consultation Manager

Performance against the Equality & Diversity Action Plan has been scrutinised by the Strategy and Performance Board chaired by the Chief Fire Officer and made up of Senior Managers representing all departments of the organisation, and ultimately by the Fire & Rescue Authority. To support the governance we have introduced a staff ED&I Steering Group, made up of volunteers from each department with an interest in ED&I and working in positions where they can influence their colleagues. This group meets quarterly to discuss the progress made with ED&I, provides feedback from staff on any issues arising and supports the Diversity and Consultation manager with the delivery of the ED&I agenda.

The Diversity and Consultation Manager also holds regular equality engagement meetings with the Representative Bodies (trade unions and staff associations), to ensure that they are aware of the ED&I developments and have an opportunity to contribute to the consideration of the ways in which ED&I influences the provision of our services.

MF&FA Members have received EIA training to support their scrutiny role and help them make significant decisions on changes to services provided by the Authority.

Equality & Diversity performance reports scrutinised by the Fire & Rescue Authority are made public via the MF&RA website:

www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/asp/pages/fire_auth/authorityContent.aspx

Our Equality Objectives 2017-2020

As part of our commitment to delivering services and employing staff in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and in line with the responsibilities placed on the Authority by the Act, we have established five Equality Objectives that are both inward looking (staff related) and outward looking (community and service delivery related)

The reviewed and updated objectives below demonstrate how we show due regard to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

The following sections outline our progress in relation to meeting our objectives.

MFRS WORKFORCE PROFILE BY GENDER



BASED ON AN EQUALITY ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE & EMPLOYMENT DATA OF 31ST MARCH 2019

OPERATIONAL STAFF HAVE A GENDER SPLIT OF

91% MALES

-----TO-----
9% FEMALES

HIGHER THAN THE UK FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE FEMALE FIREFIGHTER AVERAGE OF **6.15%**



POSITIVE ACTION IN RECRUITMENT WILL HELP:

- ATTRACT MORE FEMALES TO FIREFIGHTER ROLES
- FEMALE PROGRESSION TO HIGHER RANKS
- ATTRACT MORE MALES TO FIRE CONTROL ROLES

PEOPLE STRATEGY WILL FOCUS ON:

- ATTRACTING FEMALE STAFF
- DEVELOPING FEMALE STAFF INTO MORE SENIOR ROLES



WE HAVE **55** FEMALE FIREFIGHTERS

CONSISTING OF:

47 FIREFIGHTERS
4 CREW MANAGERS
3 WATCH MANAGERS
1 STATION MANAGER

MFRS HAS:

30 FEMALE

4 MALE

CONTROL OPERATORS



THIS IS GENERALLY IN LINE WITH SECTOR AVERAGES



THERE ARE HIGHER PROPORTIONS OF FEMALES IN ROLES AT

MFRS COMPARED TO BENCHMARK FIGURES (With the exception of support staff)

SUPPORT STAFF HAVE A GENDER SPLIT OF **50.7%** (180) FEMALES TO **49.3%** (175) MALES

BUT THERE ARE MORE FEMALES IN LOWER PAID JOBS

FEMALES MAKE UP **26.5% (265)** OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE

AN INCREASE ON THE **23.9%** SEEN DURING 2016/17



Equality Objective 1 – Create a strong cohesive organisation that is positive to rising to the future challenges we face:

This objective measures the diversity of MF&RA's workforce, which aims to better represent the makeup of communities, and staff will work to encourage applications from underrepresented groups when carrying out any internal or external recruitment. Progress so far includes:

There were 1000 staff employed at MF&RA, as at the end of 2018/19, compared to 999 in 2017/18. We are required to publish these figures based on a headcount not on full time equivalent posts, so some of these staff (particularly support staff) will be part time.¹

- There were 611 Operational posts, representing 61.1% of the total workforce population (headcount).
- 355 staff were in Support posts, representing 35.5% of the total workforce population (headcount)
- 34 were Fire Control staff, representing 3.4% of the total workforce population (headcount).

When reviewing the gender equality data by position the following observations were made:

- Overall, females make up 26.5% (265) of the total staffing at MF&RA, an increase on the 24.8% seen during 2017/18.
- Support staff have an approximate 50% split between male and female. There are more females in the lower paid roles – including staff working grades 1-5 (65.9%, 58 out of 88). Within medium pay bands (grades 6-11) 47% (104 from 221) are female
- Uniformed/operational staff had a gender split of 90.9% (556) male and 9% (55) female

¹ These figures include part time post mainly for within support staff roles and does not include additional operational posts covered by the retained contracts. These figures do not reflect the actual number of post, but is based on head count.

- Fire Control has a gender split of 11.8% (4) male to 88.2% (30) female, which is a slight increase in male staffing. Due to the traditional nature of Fire Control work, this is generally in line with sector averages, as the Fire Control was historically a female dominated occupation. The service is taking action to encourage more men to consider Fire Control as a career of choice.
- 54.3% of the total staff employed at MF&RA are aged 46 and over
- 4.2% of staff had declared a disability (lower than the UK average population at 20%)
- 93% of the total staff population at MF&RA were White British/White other, 4.9% (49) being BAME (which includes Any Other White background) - which is marginally lower than the Merseyside BAME population Figure at 5.5%.

MFRS WORKFORCE GENDER PAY GAP

BASED ON AN EQUALITY ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE & EMPLOYMENT DATA OF 31ST MARCH 2019

MEDIAN* GENDER PAY GAP

-4.8%
DIFFERENCE -
OVERALL

-0.2%
DIFFERENCE -
OPERATIONAL

-9.2%
DIFFERENCE -
SUPPORT

* MEDIAN = THE MIDDLE VALUE OF A DATA SAMPLE



THE NEW GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING OBLIGATIONS ARE NOW INCLUDED IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

MEAN* GENDER PAY GAP

-11.7%
DIFFERENCE
OVERALL
(£1.80 PER HOUR)
EQUAL TO 2017/18

-11.1% DIFFERENCE
FOR OPERATIONAL
STAFF
(£1.73 PER HOUR)
UP FROM -11.8% IN
2017/18

-9% DIFFERENCE
FOR SUPPORT STAFF
(£1.34 PER HOUR)
UP FROM -9.2%
IN 2017/18

* MEAN = SUM OF ALL THE NUMBERS DIVIDED BY THE AMOUNT OF NUMBERS



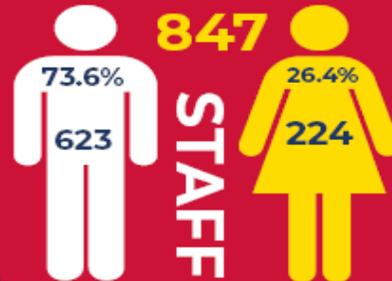
THE NATIONAL PICTURE

THE UK MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP USING OFFICE OF NATIONAL STATISTICS DATA SHOWS AN AVERAGE PAY GAP FOR ALL EMPLOYEES TO BE -8.6% DURING 2018.

MEAN VS MEDIAN:
OUR GENDER PAY GAP (DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALE & FEMALE STAFF PAY) IS **NARROWER** WHEN MEASURED BY MEDIAN



GENDER PAY GAP FIGURES BASED ON



PROPORTIONS OF MALE & FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN THE LOWER, LOWER MIDDLE, UPPER MIDDLE & UPPER QUARTILE PAY BANDS:

PAY BAND	% MALE	% FEMALE
LOWER	49.76	50.24
LOWER MID	77.36	22.64
UPPER MID	83.96	16.04
UPPER	83.41	17.06

FOR ALL MFRA STAFF, DATA SUGGESTS THAT MALE PAY TENDS TO BE MORE CONSISTENT THAN FEMALE

WHY IS THERE A PAY GAP?



IS IT THE IMPACT OF HAVING A LOW NUMBER OF FEMALE STAFF AT HIGHER GRADES?



DO WOMEN TAKE LONGER TO REACH THE TOP OF THEIR GRADE IF THEY TAKE TIME OUT FOR MATERNITY OR CAREER BREAKS, AS RESEARCH SHOWS?



TYPICALLY, MEN HAVE LONGER SERVICE WITH RESULTING INCREMENTAL PAY RISES

THIS IS MFRS' 3RD GENDER PAY GAP EXERCISE

WE ARE ADDRESSING ISSUES THROUGH OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 1 - RELATING TO POSITIVE ACTION

Gender Pay Gap

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 came into force on 31st March 2017. The regulations stipulate that organisations that employ more than 250 people must publish a report on their gender pay gap. There is a slight difference in the regulation for public sector organisations, in so much as we must publish an annual “snapshot” of our gender pay as at the 31st March each year in our annual report.

Calculations for MF&RA as at 31/03/2019

Gender pay gap figures are based on a total of 847² qualifying staff in scope for this gender pay exercise, 623 (73.6%) were male and 224 (26.4%) were female.

Mean gender pay gap

This measure is the difference between the mean (average) hourly rates of pay for male and female full pay relevant employees

Staff group	Male hourly pay £	Female hourly pay £	Pay gap £	2018/19 Pay gap %	2017/18 Pay gap %
All staff	£15.39	£13.59	-£1.80	-11.7%	-11.7%
Operational Staff (inc Fire Control)	£15.57	£13.84	-£1.73	-11.1%	-11.8%
Support staff	£14.82	£13.48	-£1.34	-9.0%	-9.2%

Across the organisation, the mean gender pay gap is -11.7% or £1.80 per hour this compares well to the UK mean Gender Pay Gap using Office for National Statistics

² A number of employees weren't included in the Gender Pay Gap Figures because they were not “Full Pay Relevant” as defined by the Government regulations for inclusion in the gender Pay Gap reporting. This means that for some reason, detailed below an individual did not receive a full month's salary for the reporting period.

- Staff who joined the service part way through the pay period
- Staff who left the service part way through the pay period
- Staff in receipt of childcare vouchers
- Staff on maternity leave
- Staff with deductions for unpaid leave / jury service
- Staff with deductions for half/no pay due to sickness

The calculations also do not take into account retained FF posts that are filed by whole time Freighters

data average pay gap for all employees being 17.9 % during 2018. For just operational personnel the gender pay gap is -11.1% and for Support Staff the gap is narrower at -9%.

Measure 2. Median gender pay gap

This is the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male and female full-pay relevant employees

Staff group	Male hourly pay £	Female hourly pay £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %	2017/18 Pay gap %
All staff	£14.25	£13.56	-£0.69	-4.8%	-3.9%
Operational Staff (inc Fire Control)	£14.25	£14.22	-£0.03	-0.2%	-0.1%
Support staff	£13.94	£12.65	-£1.29	-9.2%	-9.2%

The difference between male and female staff is much narrower, with a -4.8% difference at a MF&RA level, a 0.2% difference for operational staff and -9.2% difference for support staff. The UK median Gender Pay Gap using Office for National Statistics data shows the average pay gap for all employees was 8.6% during 2018³.

A copy of our full Annual Workforce Equality Analysis report including our Gender Pay Gap Analysis can be found on our website. [\(insert link\)](#)

³

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2018>

Equality Objective 2 – To ensure that people from diverse communities receive equitable services that meet their needs.

By understanding the needs of people from different protected groups and carrying out engagement with and monitoring of those groups, we can ensure that people are fully supported to reduce fire and rescue related risk.

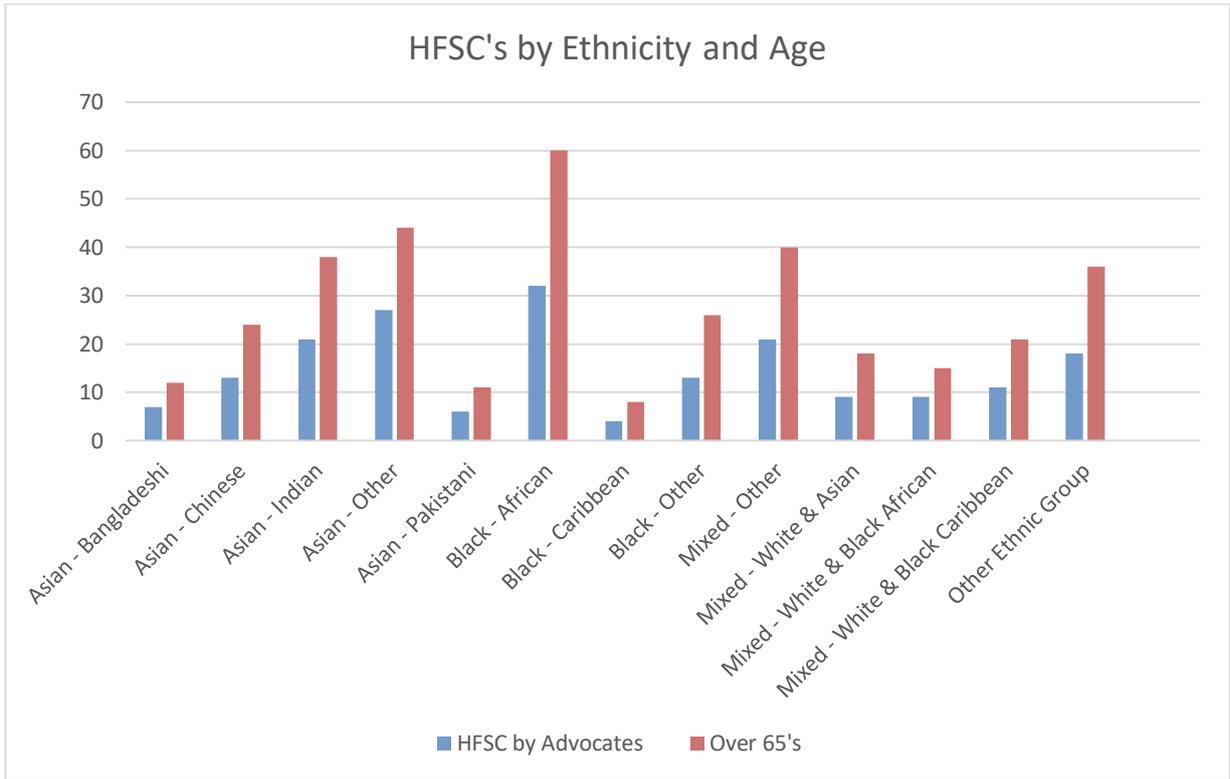
Progress is as follows:

We carry out home fire safety checks with at risk people (most often those aged over 65).

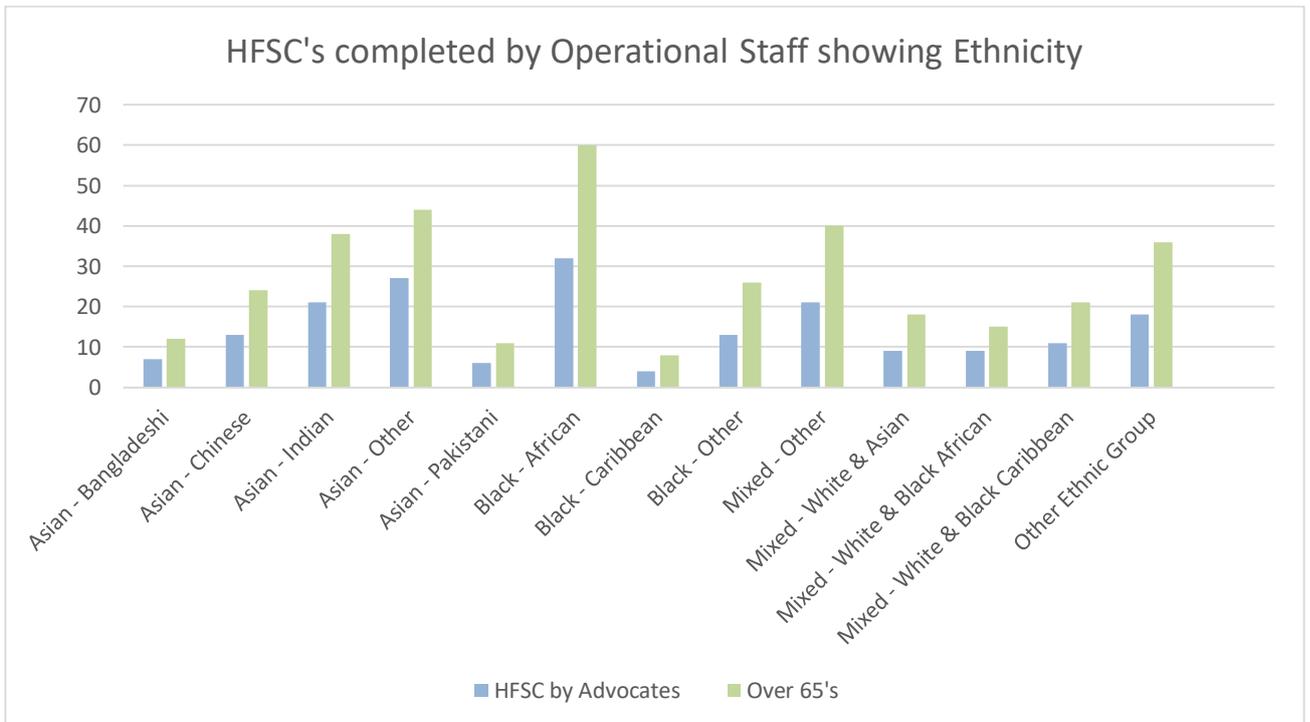
HFSC Equality Monitoring data

- Our operational crews have delivered 1.36% of HFSCs to over 65's across Merseyside in the Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community. This compares well to the overall over 65's BAME population which is currently 1.6% in Merseyside, when looking at the 2011 census data. During 2018/19, the occupier's ethnicity was not recorded when delivering HFSC's on 20.4% of occasions.
- Using the figures for 2017/18 there has been an improvement of 0.73% in relation to the number of HFSC's but the overall figure for HFSC's where ethnicity has not been recorded has in fact risen by 1%

The charts below show that during 2018/19 our community safety advocates carried out a total of 8,200 Home Fire Safety Checks across Merseyside. The chart below shows that of those 8,200, 267 recipients or 3.26% identified themselves as BAME, and of those 117 or 1.42% were people over 65.

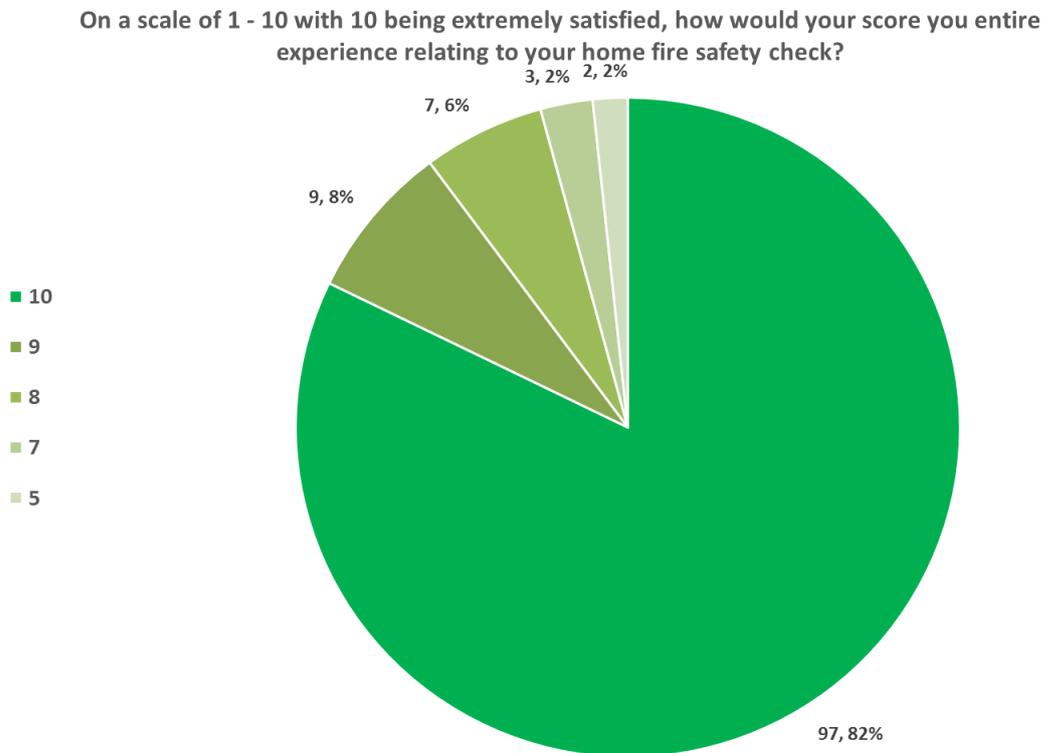


The chart below shows that of the 37,318 HFSC's carried out by operational staff, 530 or 1.42% were delivered to people who identified themselves as BAME. Of those, 437 or 1.14% were delivered to people over the age of 65.



HFSC Satisfaction Survey

We have begun to carryout HFSC satisfaction surveys. The summary below shows the overall HFSC customer satisfaction – based on approximately 100 responses.



The chart above identifies that the vast majority of responders (82%), gave the HFSC service 10 out of 10 – the highest level of satisfaction available. In general, the levels of satisfaction were very positive with response scores of 8 to 10 accounting for 96% of valid responses. Two respondents scored their HFSC with a score of 5, which was the lowest score for this particular question.

Prince's Trust equality monitoring data

We offer 12 week Prince's Trust development programmes. There were a total of 186 Prince's Trust students attending courses during 2018/19. The equality monitoring data below shows there is a high level of diversity amongst the students who attend the programmes:

Of the 186, 164 completed the course:

- Of those who completed the course 106 have continued their development in employment, education or training, a positive outcome of 57%
- A further positive outcome is volunteering, data for which is being collated and will be included in future reports.
- 186 who started the programme with Princes Trust, 59% of those were Education underachievers.

- A further breakdown shows of the 186 – 131 where from either Homeless (5%), Ex-offenders (10%), Asylum Seekers (3%), in care/leaving care (11%) or part of a homeless household (42%).
- 70% were male and 30% were female
- 3.26% were from a BAME background
- 4.89% did not provide information about their Ethnicity
- All teams have students who have a mix of Asperger's, Dyslexia, Epilepsy, Learning Difficulties, Autism, ADHD, Dyspraxia, Scoliosis, PTSD, Diabetes, Myopathy, Alexander's Disease and Neurofibromatosis
- 55% have declared they have no religion and 19.5% prefer not to say or didn't provide information. Christian and Islamic faiths make up 24% of those attending.

MFRS Cadets equality monitoring data

There were a total of 46 students taking part in the MFRS cadets programme during 2018/19.

- 19% were Female and 81% Male
- 15% were from a BAME background
- 2% declared having a disability or long term health condition.
- Most populated age group is 16 (cadet's intake is 13 to 17 age group)

Complaints and Compliments

Currently we do not collect equality data for either of these as often they are anonymous and is not something we are in a position to provide at this time.

After the Incident satisfaction data

The data was sourced from After the Incident survey for Domestic Dwelling property fires during 2017/18. The results of which were provided by Opinion Research Services (ORS) during June 2018.

Participants when asked the following question:

- **Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you received from the Fire & Rescue Service (FRS)?**

Overall 99.3% of respondents were satisfied with the overall level of service provided at the scene of an incident.

- **Thinking about your initial contact with the FRS on the telephone, do you agree or disagree that they were...Reassuring?**

Overall 100.0% of home owners / occupiers felt reassured by the initial contact with Fire Control.

After the Incident surveys for Domestic Dwelling property fires during 2018/19, are expected later in the year and will be reported on at a later date.

MFRS WORKFORCE PROFILE BY ETHNICITY

BASED ON AN EQUALITY ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE & EMPLOYMENT DATA OF 31ST MARCH 2019



MINORITIES BY GROUP

- 22 MIXED RACE
- BLACK / BLACK BRITISH 10
- 9 OTHER WHITE
- CHINESE 3
- 3 OTHER MINORITY ETHNIC
- ASIAN / ASIAN BRITISH 2

*10 staff members preferred not to state ethnicity & 11 others did not give any data

MINORITIES BY ROLE

----- BY ROLE -----



38
OPERATIONAL

0

CONTROL STAFF



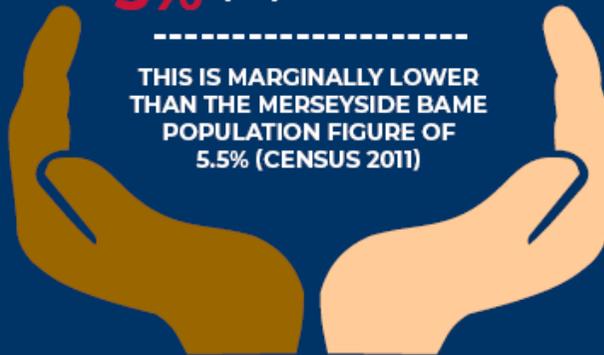
11
SUPPORT STAFF

93%

(930) OF STAFF AT MFRA ARE OF **WHITE** BRITISH OR IRISH ORIGIN, WITH

5% (49) BEING **BAME**

THIS IS MARGINALLY LOWER THAN THE MERSEYSIDE BAME POPULATION FIGURE OF 5.5% (CENSUS 2011)



OBJECTIVE 1
IS DESIGNED TO **INCREASE THE DIVERSITY** OF OUR WORKFORCE & VOLUNTEERS AT ALL LEVELS ACROSS THE ORGANISATION. **POSITIVE ACTION** WILL SUPPORT **BAME** STAFF TO APPLY FOR **DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTION**

(They are currently under-represented in operational, supervisory & management roles)

THE NATIONAL PICTURE

ON FACE VALUE...

MERSEYSIDE HAS PROPORTIONALLY FEWER BAME PERSONNEL IN ALL ROLES COMPARED TO THE METROPOLITAN AND ENGLISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES...

HOWEVER...

THIS IS MISLEADING AS MERSEYSIDE HAS A FAR LOWER BAME POPULATION THAN MANY AREAS OF ENGLAND.

INDEED

COMPARING THE PROPORTION OF BAME EMPLOYEES TO THE LOCAL BAME POPULATION, IT APPEARS THAT MERSEYSIDE IS CLOSER TO ACHIEVING PARITY THAN EITHER THE METROPOLITAN OR ENGLISH FRS AS A WHOLE.



Objective 3 – Reducing fires and other incidents amongst the vulnerable protected groups. By better understanding the impacts for diverse communities in terms of fires and other incidents, we can measure whether there are any disproportionate outcomes for relevant protected groups.

Progress is as follows:

Accidental fires in the home

As of 30th April 2019, there was a total of 899 Accidental Dwelling Fires attended across Merseyside for the period 2018/19. Which means 2018/19 will have seen the **lowest** count of incidents on record. The majority of such incidents take place in the most deprived areas of Merseyside, with 46% (412) taking place in the 1-10% deprivation decile. The Service intend to focus activity in this area over the forthcoming year.

Objective 4 - To ensure that staff are better equipped to deliver their roles whilst:

- **Showing due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.**
- **Advance equality of opportunities for underrepresented groups**
- **Foster good relations between people who share protected groups and those who don't.**

Progress is as follows:

Bullying and Harassment claims, Disciplinary and Grievance data

There were a total of 20 disciplinary proceedings (including one bullying and harassment case) during 2018/19, a reduction of 13 on the previous year. The equality monitoring breakdown is summarised as:

- 16 involved male members of staff and 4 females. (including the bullying and harassment case)
- 19 were submitted from White British (including the bullying and harassment case)

There were also a total of 39 grievances of which:

- 35 involved male members of staff and 4 females.
- 35 were White British / Irish, and 4 were from a BAME background

Of the 39 grievances logged 26 relate to a collective grievance.

Eleven [11] of the grievances were upheld by the Service.

Employment Tribunals

A National (All FRA'S) Sex Discrimination Claim is still ongoing in relation to Pension issues and is partly agreed but subject to appeal by Fire and Rescue Authorities, the Local Government Association and the Government to the Supreme Court.

There have been two claims to the Employment Tribunal during 2018/19 both are still on going.

Equality Objective 5 – to continue to aspire to achieving excellence, or equivalent in a Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework

Taking part in assessment helps us to benchmark and continuously improve in relation to the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda and provides an external viewpoint on our progress in relation to our equality objectives.

A self-assessment desktop exercise was completed prior to the Framework being revised during 2017/18 (Which has resulted in the Framework being in development phase for some time). The Diversity and Consultation manager is reviewing the current arrangements for the Framework along with other frameworks and

benchmarks including the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI), Stonewall and Disability Confident to establish the best framework for Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority in the future.

MFRA underwent an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire and Rescue Services in late 2018, the results were published in June 2019 and at the time of writing this report the ED&I implications are being considered and any resulting actions will be included in future reports.

2019/20 will focus on reviewing those specific areas of the inspection report which are ED&I related and the Authority's People Strategy includes actions that will help us focus on those areas specific to culture and fairness.

Looking at all aspects of ED&I across the Service, there are a number of areas where we benchmark and seek assessment to ensure the services we offer are of the highest standard.

Our Annual Workforce Equality Analysis report can be found on our website and it provides a more detailed breakdown on staff diversity. We produce this data annually to help us monitor the trends relating to the number of staff in different protected groups across all groups and levels of the organisation. The information also assists senior officers when developing Positive Action to encourage people from more diverse groups and communities to apply for roles where they are most under represented. The data also assists the organisation in completing its duty to have due regard to the needs of different groups when developing employment practices and our services. This is done through our Equality Impact Assessment process.

MFRS WORKFORCE PROFILE BY AGE

BASED ON AN EQUALITY ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE & EMPLOYMENT DATA OF 31ST MARCH 2019

THE MAJORITY OF STAFF
WITHIN MFRA (466 OR **43.1%**)
ARE AGED **46-55...** WITH MORE
PERSONNEL **ABOVE THE AGE OF 46** THAN
BELOW, THE STAFFING STRUCTURE IS
TOP HEAVY

WITH AN AGING POPULATION
THE REMOVAL OF THE
DEFAULT RETIREMENT
AGE* COULD LEAD TO A
HIGHER AVERAGE AGE
FOR EMPLOYEES - THE
ISSUE IS BEING
ADDRESSED

* without significant recruitment

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES WILL NEED
TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THIS
AS PART OF ONGOING
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
& FOR WORKFORCE
SUCCESSION
PLANNING

HOW OLD ARE STAFF?

CONTROL	AGE 46-55 - 35.3%	AGE 56-65 - 23.5%	
OPERATIONAL	AGE 25-35 - 19.2%	AGE 36-45 - 23.9%	AGE 46-55 - 53.2%
SUPPORT	AGE 36-45 - 18.6%	AGE 46-55 - 26.5%	AGE 56-65 - 22.5%

THE MAJORITY OF EMPLOYEES IN THE 16-24 AGE GROUP (41 OF 51) ARE SUPPORT STAFF.

HOW DOES MERSEYSIDE COMPARE?

SUPPORT STAFF
MERSEYSIDE HAS PROPORTIONALLY MORE MEMBERS OF SUPPORT STAFF THAN OTHER METROPOLITAN FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES, PARTICULARLY WITHIN THE **16-24 AGE GROUP.**

CONTROL STAFF
PROPORTIONS APPROXIMATE EACH OTHER.

OPERATIONAL STAFF

- FAR FEWER STAFF AGED **16-24** IN MERSEYSIDE COMPARED TO THE COLLECTIVE METROPOLITAN FRS
- PROPORTIONALLY SLIGHTLY FEWER STAFF IN OTHER AGE GROUPS IN MERSEYSIDE THAN NATIONALLY.

Delivery of our Equality & Diversity Action Plan 2017 - 2020

The Equality & Diversity Action Plan was first introduced in April 2013, to help MF&RA progress its long term Equality & Diversity objectives, to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and to reflect the fact that Equality & Diversity was embedded and delivered across all areas of the Organisation.

Our latest plan was developed for 2017-2020 and is aligned to the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan and ED&I Objectives.

This section of our Annual Report provides highlights of some of the exceptional work undertaken by our staff and volunteers during 2018-19.

Supporting our staff

Reasonable adjustment support has been identified and delivered on two of the last four recruit courses. Particularly around time allowed for Dyslexia and for Dyslexia assessments. Collaborative working between the Training and Development Academy, the People and Organisational Development Department and the Diversity team has ensured that people have been given appropriate levels of support to mitigate any disabilities they have declared.

Positive Action

The number of male Control Operators has increased this year from two to four. Positive Action is considered important in recruitment to Control roles to improve the gender balance within this traditionally female area of the organisation and ensure that boys and men see a career in Control as appropriate for them in the future.

There has been an increase of 25% points in BAME candidates being recruited for firefighter roles; from 39 to 49. This is a result of the Positive Action work carried out by the Service to help members of diverse communities have an equal chance to apply for roles within MFRA.

International Women's Day.

At our International Women's Day event in March 2018 we launched our Small Change – Big Impact jars, the idea being that anyone wishing to support one of the charities could take a jar and put small change into it throughout the year. The Equality and Diversity Team collected the jars at the end of the year and we have been able to donate over £500 to our chosen charities; Camfed, Blackburne House, Maggie's Centre Merseyside and the Firefighters Charity.

Camfed (Campaign for Female Education), is an international non-profit organisation tackling poverty and inequality by supporting marginalised girls to go to school and succeed, and empowering young women to step up as leaders of change. "The money raised is enough to buy 11 vulnerable girls in rural Africa the essentials they need to go to school".

Blackburne House Group helps women from disadvantaged backgrounds into employment within technical professions. They said:

" We would like to thank you for choosing Blackburne House as part of your nominated charities and just to inform you that we will put the donation towards our graduation ceremony, which is the highlight and culmination of our academic year where we celebrate the achievements of our female learners"

Maggie's Centre, Merseyside, offers free practical, emotional and social support to people with cancer and their families and friends. Help is offered freely to anyone with any type of cancer. "Maggie's is entirely funded by generosity of our supporters. You are the reason we are able to deliver our wide range of life-changing services.

Fire Safety Reassurance Campaign

During the weekend of 15th – 17th March (Following the terrorist attacks in Christchurch New Zealand on the 15th March), staff from the Arson Reduction Team and Home Safety Advocates, visited 16 Mosques across Merseyside to offer

reassurance and practical advice on fire safety. The visits were well received and appreciated.

Operational response crews also visited properties in the areas surrounding the Mosques. In total: -

1196 properties were visited

387 Home Fire Safety Checks were completed

167 smoke detectors were installed

13 high risk properties identified

1 Potential arson target was identified and referred to the Arson Reduction Team.

Crews from Liverpool City Community Fire Station attended a vigil held in remembrance of the victims of the terrorist attacks in New Zealand at the Abdullah Quilliam Mosque in Liverpool on Sunday 17th March.

Supporting vulnerable members of our community

At MF&RA our Advocates, working in the Community Risk Management Prevention team, deliver a wide range of help and support to members of the community across Merseyside, including Home Fire Safety Checks, Safe and Well visits, Stop Smoking advice, and sign-posting to other agencies for help and support in the home. Below are a few examples of how our Advocates and other members of our prevention teams have been able to support vulnerable members of our community to ensure they are safe from the risk of fire in their home.

Wirral Prevention Team

A member of our Wirral Prevention Team visited a property following a referral from our operational crews, due to concerns over hoarding. The resident is registered disabled, and has mobility issues, these issues were made worse due to the condition of the property. We had previously tried to make contact with the occupier, but had been unsuccessful.

When our advocate was able to carry out the Home Fire Safety Check, at the property they decided that an additional smoke alarm should be fitted. Our advocate spent some time talking to the occupant, about his lifestyle, and the importance of fire safety and not hoarding. During the conversation, she was able to find out that the occupant was previously a member of the armed forces. As part of our Home Fire Safety Checks/Safe and well visits we work with partners such as Registered Social Landlords (RSL), Social Services, and other agencies who can provide further help and support should it be required. On this occasion, our advocate was able to speak to the RSL regarding further support. The occupant also to agree for referrals into smoking cessation as well as SSAFA, the armed forces charity and the Royal British Legion for further support.

Sefton Prevention

In January 2019 our Sefton Prevention Team visited a man from an minority group (ethnicity), following a referral by Sefton Social Services. The occupant had been left paralysed following an accident.

Sefton Social Services had concerns for the man and a care package was in place. Due to the trauma of the accident, the man had turned to alcohol and smoked heavily. The visit was carried out with other agencies including Sefton Ambition Team (Drug and Alcohol Support Agency), who were engaged with the gentleman regarding his alcohol consumption and smoking and the man's carer's, were also there when we arrived for our Home Fire Safety Check.

The Home Fire Safety Check showed evidence of burn marks on his bedding, empty alcohol bottles and the occupier took strong medication, which made him drowsy.

Our team provided advice on smoking safely in bed, the dangers where highlighted, and consequences discussed on the potential possibilities of having a fire through smoking/dropping ash on bedding, when under the influence of drowsy medication and alcohol.

A fire retardant bedding pack and fire retardant throw were fitted on the occupier's bed by his carers. A metal bin was placed by the occupier's bed for his cigarette butts and a smoke alarm installed in the bedroom. Carers were advised on safe disposal of cigarette butts. The man was very open to the information and wanted to help himself with the alcoholism and smoking.

The man has now joined a local AA group, he has reduced his alcohol intake and now smokes on average about 5 to 10 cigarettes a day. Joining the group has increased his social circle and offers him further support he needs. Dial-A-Ride was suggested to assist with attending other group activities and which will reduce his social isolation further.

The man informed us he was in a very different frame of mind and feeling very positive towards his life now. He is able to move around his property using his wheelchair and opened the door to our team for his Home Fire Safety Check where we provided him with an additional fire retardant throw and bedding due to the man being confined to bed, for long periods of time.

Liverpool Prevention

One of our prevention team advocates was asked to complete a Home fire Safety Check with a family of asylum seekers from Bangladesh, as a member of the family was using oxygen. When she arrived at the property, she found that the family had moved from Bangladesh several months previously and no one in the family could speak any English. Our advocate who is bilingual was able to complete the visit with them in Bengali. Whilst speaking with them she discovered that as no one in the family could speak English, they were unable to access services and amenities for themselves. Our advocate decided to spend some extra time with them to write down all the information they needed to be able to do the most basic things for themselves and advise them how they can access services, and access a support worker. Our advocate said, "The family were so grateful as they didn't know how they were going to carry on as they were."

Road Safety

MFRA staff have commenced work with the Liverpool Football Club Foundation and Everton in the Community Blue Base. Both organisations work with groups of young adults from a wide range of backgrounds and protected groups from across Merseyside. Monthly engagement sessions on road safety and water safety are using new technology such as virtual reality, to engage with younger and older age groups. It is also possible to use “SATSAFE”, which is “black box” telematics technology that can be used to analyse senior road users driving styles, to help evaluate and deliver specific driver training to improve road safety.

Ramadan 2018

In May, ahead of this year’s Ramadan period, the Authority held a targeted fire safety campaign, providing residents with tailored fire safety advice in the Birkenhead and Tranmere ward. This area of Birkenhead has an increasing Muslim population and so the campaign focused on a small area surrounding two Mosques, the Wirral Islamic Cultural Centre in Whetstone Lane and the Wirral Deen Centre on Borough Road. The morning’s campaign saw fire crews deliver 48 HFSC’s, engage with 14 Muslim families, and deliver 224 bespoke leaflets, including to properties where Muslim families are known to live. It was also arranged for the crew from Birkenhead to visit the Mosque on Whetstone Lane the following week to deliver further fire safety leaflets to the congregation following lunchtime prayers. The advice provided in the leaflets includes:

- **Cooking safety tips**’, especially as cooking takes place after sunset for Iftar and before dawn for Suhoor, so there may be an increased risk of fire.
- **Bukhoor, Incense, and Shisha Candle Safety**; these can help create a nice atmosphere, but they can be a fire hazard.
- The importance of **GET OUT, STAY OUT and PHONE 999**.

Collaboration Project with Merseyside Police

As part of an ongoing commitment to developing collaborative ED&I and community engagement opportunities with Merseyside Police, MF&RA has been instrumental in the development of two new initiatives, detailed below. We have a number of key

projects which are specifically targeting vulnerable communities and delivering staff education and cooperation. The following outlines the progress made.

Dementia Pledge

As part of our commitment to the Emergency Services Strategic Commitment on Dementia, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service's People and Organisational Development function has been working across the organisation to review our policies and procedures to ensure that they support staff if they have the responsibility of caring for a family member who may be disabled, or suffering from a long term illness, including dementia. Staff in the People and Organisational Development function are considering how to gain information about the number of staff affected by dementia and this may take the form of an online survey.

Our Community Risk Management Team has ensured that The Herbert Protocol, (the vulnerable adults missing people's profile) has now been embedded in the delivery of Safe and Well visits. The Protocol is a national scheme which encourages carers, family members and friends to compile information which could be used in the event of a vulnerable person going missing, such as medication required, mobile numbers, places previously located, a photograph etc. In the event of a family member or friend going missing, the form can be easily sent or handed to the police to reduce the time taken to gather information that will help the missing person be found.

Interfaith Faith Week 2018 (11th -18th November)

An Interfaith round table collaboration event was organised and hosted by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and Merseyside Police, as part of Interfaith week 2018 (11th – 18th November 2018).

The aim of the event held on Monday 12th November, at Merseyside Police Headquarters, was to bring together representatives from as many different faiths as possible along with the chaplains who support both organisations to celebrate how **“Faith makes our communities of Merseyside stronger”**, and was an opportunity to hear how other faiths are working together.

In total, 20 faith representatives from across Merseyside representing the Islamic, Jewish, Christian, Sikh and Buddhist faiths attended the event.

All attendees found it helpful to make new contacts, learn about each other's organisations' work and welcomed the openness from all to share and engage. Everyone favoured another meeting, to have more than one a year and to sustain the progress made from the first meeting. Suggestions were made to hold future meetings at different places of worship, potentially linked to different celebrations. Faith organisations said they would like to be given an opportunity to present at future meetings in more detail and have more time to network. Supporting and engaging with younger people from different faiths will be a key focus going forward.

It should be noted that the meeting has been particularly helpful for the Muslim communities across Merseyside; as a result of the interfaith round table meeting the Imams across the five districts have come together for the delivery of a cultural faith event at the Pier Head called "**Share Ramadan, Share Food, and Share Friendship**". Previously the Mosques were not very well connected and this meeting has enabled relationships to develop further and support the wider communities of Merseyside. MFRS staff attended the event and said it was spectacular to see so many people from different backgrounds coming together to break the fast.

A further event was held in June 2019 at the Wirral Deen Centre which included a celebration to mark the end of Ramadan.

Blue Light Services Black History Month Event

On 16th October 2018, MFRS hosted the first Blue Light Black History Month event jointly with Merseyside Black and Asian Police Association. The event opened by Assistant Chief Fire Officer Mottram, brought staff together from both Police and Fire to celebrate the many diverse cultures which form the foundations of the communities in which we work and live. 2018 was the 30th anniversary of Black History Month in the UK and was the perfect opportunity to celebrate diversity and the contributions members of the emergency services make to the wider communities of Merseyside.

The event was an informal opportunity to meet with colleagues and guests, some who shared their personal stories with us about what being a member of the BAME community is like working in the emergency services.

Key guest speakers include:

- Yasmin Bukhari from Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue and Chair of the Asian Fire Service Association
- Dominique Walker, Merseyside Police- discussing personal story about her work within Merseyside police
- ACC Ian Critchley, Merseyside Police, talking about the importance of a diverse workforce, which reflects the communities we service and supporting those staff through staff networks.
- Positive action representative, from MFRS & Merseyside police, talking about our Positive action programmes.

Youth Engagement

Our Youth Engagement teams continue to ensure that activities and programmes are fully inclusive for all young people. They endeavour to make modifications to enable children and young people from different protected groups to take part in all activities and have the same opportunities as their peers to move their lives forward. The Youth Engagement recruitment strategy actively invites children and young people who need additional support and this consideration is included when staff are planning and putting together their programmes.

As part of continuing work to support the children and young people who participate in our youth engagement programmes, all relevant staff are receiving a programme of specialist training. Mental health training is now embedded within the Prince's Trust programmes. This ensures that all young people taking part in the programme are fully supported and all leaders are equipped with mental health first aid knowledge.

Deaf Awareness Week 2018 (14th – 20th May 2018)

Fire Cadets from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service showed their support for Deaf Awareness Week. Cadets from our groups from our St Helens, Wallasey and Bootle and Netherton Community Fire Stations visited Joseph Lappin Centre in Old Swan in Liverpool, where they learnt basic sign language. The session also included the cadets learning to sing a song using sign language.

MF&RA Volunteers

We currently have 39 volunteers and expect to have more joining during 2019/20.

The diversity of our current volunteers in 2018/19 was as follows:

- 64.1% (25) were male and 35.9% (14) were female. A slight increase on 2017/18 when 31% were female
- The majority of volunteers; 41% (16), were in the 22-30 age group. Followed by the 18-21 age group with 23.1% (9), then the 31-40 age group with 18% (7) volunteers and 41-60 age group with 12.8% (5) volunteers. There was a single volunteer in each of the 51-60 and 60+ age groups.
- Based on valid data, 59% (23) of the volunteers were White British – the remainder being unknown.
- The number of volunteers who have declared a disability is 15.4%, (6).

Our aim is to ensure that all our volunteers are able to join in the campaigns they wish to participate in. Our volunteers take part in a wide variety of events and campaigns, such as assisting our arson advocate, with arson and anti-social behaviour campaigns, and the water safety campaign and events with local schools. They assist in ensuring that the public understand the importance of having smoke alarms, and provide information to communities about how to contact the fire service, for a home fire safety check. Our team of volunteers are a great asset to our district prevention teams and help increase the fire service presence at community events, while still allowing our staff to attend high risk visits.

Training

Each year we work with our staff and managers to identify where we can support our staff with additional training needs around the 9 protected groups⁴. This year we have continued to deliver Islam and Muslim Awareness training, delivering a further five sessions for Fire and Rescue staff and Authority members and staff from Merseyside Police.

We have arranged Dyslexia Awareness training for our Youth Engagement teams and staff from our People and Organisational Development function.

We also made significant progress in relation to the development of our new ED&I training package during the second half of the year. The decision was made previously to move away from the on-line training package and develop a face to face facilitated training sessions in order to fully explore the issues affecting people within the Service. By the end of the year we had completed the following:

- The ED&I Training Plan was approved by Strategy & Performance Board in January 2019 following consultation with key stakeholders.
- The ED&I Advisor has been recruited and started with MFRA on 6th March 2019
- The development of the essential ED&I training package started in March 2019 and was completed in quarter one of 2019/20 for delivery to all staff from May 2019.

This year our Community Risk Management staff have also completed Level 2 Safeguarding training and Safeguarding Awareness training is being developed for our operational staff.

Menopause Support for staff at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

In recent years we have been supporting our staff around the menopause.

⁴ the 9 protected groups as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 are, Sex, Age, Race, religion and belief, Disability, Maternity and Paternity, Gender reassignment, Sexual Orientation and Marriage and civil partnership

We hold an International Women's Day coffee and conversation event every two years and in March 2018 we were lucky enough to be able to have a leading consultant in sexual and reproductive health, Dr Paula Briggs attend and give a 30-minute talk about the myths of the menopause and HRT.

Following on from the International Women's day event we arranged for Dr Briggs to attend and hold a workshop for our staff. We received so many responses from staff that she kindly held two one hour' workshops for our staff, all of which have been well received.

In December we purchased 150 copies Fast Facts: Menopause booklets written by Dr Paula Briggs to provide to female staff over the age of 45. We also understand that some Women may be going through the menopause earlier than 45 or due to other medical issues, so extra copies have been made available for our Occupational Nurse to issue as required.

As well as providing all women age 45+ in the service with a copy of this book, the Service is also offering the opportunity to access additional support from Dr Briggs through our own occupational health team.

We have received really positive feedback from the staff who have taken part in the event, workshops, and received the booklet and although what we have done are only small things, we have been told they have made a big difference to them personally.

Events and Awards

Liverpool Pride 2018

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority staff, apprentices and Authority Members, along with family, friends (and a few family pets) attended the Liverpool Pride event in July. Nearly 140 people attended and started the day with breakfast at our Liverpool City Community Fire Station, before walking to St George's Plateau to join the main march. The breakfast event was hosted by our Fire Proud LGBT Staff Network, and our Fire Proud Allies.

Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Awards 2018

Four of our apprentices were shortlisted for the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Awards in June and we were pleased that Jess Burrows won the award for Apprentice of the Year for St Helens.

The other apprentices shortlisted for their fantastic contributions were Alice Laybourne, from our Occupational Health Team, Jade Griffiths, who had been a Community Safety Apprentice based in Knowsley and Chloe Redmond, from our Finance department.

Jess was nominated by her line manager Sara Garside, following her contribution to the St Helens Prevention team over the 12 months of her apprenticeship as a Community Safety Advisor, which ultimately resulted in Jess being successful in gaining a full time position as a Vulnerable Persons Advocate.

During her 12-month apprenticeship Jess was chosen to represent MFRS for a National Cadet Project, which included travelling to Montserrat to take part in a Climate Change Project.

Sara provided the following comments on Jess's application and this was highlighted during the event when Jess was presented with her award.

"Jess has always had a passion for work within the uniform services she was chosen to represent MFRS for a National Cadet Project and was successful. It was an

International Environmental and Climate Change Project and it involved travelling to Montserrat. She has been involved in some very complex cases throughout her time as an apprentice and her confidence is growing daily including a safeguarding issue which enabled to arrange multi agency meetings to address these issues at a strategic level. Jess has been a pleasure to manage as part of her apprenticeship and continues to be so into her career as an advocate.”

Looking Forward to 2019/20

In 2019/20 our ED&I team will be working to further embed ED&I excellence into the organisation. ED&I remains a key focus for the organisation and good progress has been made in recent years. We will continue to do this in the following ways:

- We will deliver a robust ED&I training and development programme to all staff and members of the Authority.
- We will continue to work in collaboration with partner organisations to maximise the opportunities for effective community engagement with shared at-risk groups. This will enable us to continue delivering effective diverse community engagement with limited resources to ensure that MF&RS knows and understands its communities and can respond with appropriate services.
- We will take part in Merseyside Police forums to ensure we engage with as many community representatives as possible to help us develop and deliver services that meet the needs of our communities.
- We will contribute to improve as a result of the Fire & Rescue Service inspection in relation to ED&I.
- We will investigate the concept of unconscious bias in conjunction with the inclusive leadership work we are undertaking as part of our People Strategy.
- We will continue to develop staff network/diversity champions to support diverse groups within the organisation and the diverse communities in Merseyside.
- We will continue to support Positive Action for recruitment and progression to increase the number of underrepresented applicants in various areas of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service including, increasing the number of men within our Fire Control, and Recruitment of bi-lingual Business Safety Advisors.

Conclusion

I am really proud of the hard work that our staff across MFRA have carried out to help make our employment practices and fire service delivery more inclusive and respectful of difference and diversity.

I hope that you have enjoyed reading this report and now have a greater understand about how we are supporting needs of different groups, fostering good relations between different equality groups and ensuring that there is equality for all in our services and employment practices.

Whilst we are pleased with our progress being made, there is still more work to be done around providing our staff with effective ED&I training, working more closely with managers to help them be more inclusive in their leadership and management practices and improving on the number of BAME members of the community being attracted to MFRA as an employer of choice.

If you would like to learn more about our work, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Diversity and Consultation Manager:

Wendy Kenyon FCIPD, Diversity and Consultation Manager

Email: wendykenyon@merseyfire.gov.uk

Telephone 0151 296 4000

Website: www.merseyfire.gov.uk