



**Ombwdsmon
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Cymru • Wales

Annual Equality Report 2022/23

September 2023



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Annual Equality Report 2022/23



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Foreword

I am pleased to present this annual report on our equality, diversity and inclusion work during 2022/23.

During the year, we worked to develop our new strategic priorities. Given that, we decided to continue to work under our Equality Plan 2019 – 2022 for one more year, with a view to develop a new one once our new Strategic Plan was also in place.

Again, we can report this year on several notable successes. For example, 87% of our complainants that we asked said that it was easy to contact us – compared to 80% last year. We were glad to see our work to promote equality and human rights publicly acknowledged by the House of Commons and House of Lords Joint Committee on Human Rights, in the context of that Committee's inquiry into the merits of establishing a Human Rights Ombudsperson. We had no median gender pay gap this

year, with the mean gender pay gap also reduced. In another positive trend, representation of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds among our workforce improved compared with previous years. We have also appointed the first Black member of our Advisory Panel.

However, as always, there remain areas for us to work on. For example, although we were generally able to offer our complainants any additional support they needed to use our service, some people told us we could have done more. Some groups, such as disabled people, remained under-represented in our workforce. We undertook very extensive recruitment this year and, considering the high number of applications we received,

we were not able to secure a sufficient response rate to our equality monitoring from people looking to join our organisation.

We will address these and other areas as we put to work our new Strategic Plan. Although the Plan features equality, diversity and inclusion issues throughout, its second aim - to increase accessibility and inclusion - will help us to focus our efforts especially on raising awareness of the office and ensuring that our service is accessible to all who need us. As we publish this Report, we are also consulting on our new Equality Plan to further explain how we will embed a focus on the needs of diverse communities in everything we do.

Michelle Morris

**Public Services
Ombudsman for Wales**
September 2023



Background



About us

We have three main roles.



We investigate complaints about public services.

We can look at the services provided by devolved public bodies in Wales such as local councils, Health Boards, social landlords and others. We can also look at complaints about private social care and end-of-life care, as well as some private healthcare.

We consider complaints about councillors breaching the Code of Conduct.

We look at complaints about councillors at local councils, fire authorities, national park authorities. We also look at complaints about police and crime panels. We are also a “prescribed person” under the Public Interest Disclosure Act for raising whistleblowing concerns about breaches of the Code of Conduct by members of local authorities.



We drive systemic improvement of public services and standards of conduct in local government in Wales.

We can investigate on our own initiative, even if we have not received a complaint. We can also set complaints standards for public bodies in Wales, monitor how they handle complaints and provide training to them.



Our Equality Objectives

As we develop our new Equality Plan, we continue to work to these 11 Equality Objectives:

Deliver Justice



1.1: Capture comprehensive and meaningful equality data from PSOW service users



1.2: Effectively target under-represented complainant groups



1.3: Ensure that PSOW's services are accessible to all public service users in Wales who need them

Promote Learning, Work to Improve Public Services



2.1: Ensure that PSOW casework staff can identify and adequately respond to equality and human rights issues



2.2: Publish more information about how PSOW casework takes account of equality and human rights considerations.



2.3: Ensure that equality is embedded in the planning and implementation of PSOW's new powers

Use Resources Wisely and Future-proof the Organisation



3.1: Capture, analyse and act on comprehensive and meaningful equality employment data



3.2: Act to improve the representation of protected groups in PSOW workforce



3.3: Address PSOW Gender Pay Gap



3.4: Promote staff wellbeing and awareness of equality and diversity issues



3.5: Ensure that the consideration of equality is embedded in PSOW decision making

Our Race and Ethnicity at Work Charter

We also continue to work to the aims and objectives of our Race and Ethnicity at work Charter:

We will listen	We will engage proactively with ethnic minority communities to determine and break down the barriers to access our service, recognising intersectionality.
	We will continue to be an inclusive organisation and will provide ethnic minorities staff with support, listen to their experiences and learn to make positive changes.
	We will listen to our staff, including ethnic minority staff and allies and use their knowledge and experience to support a positive organisational culture. We will support staff wishing to establish or be part of staff networks at PSOW and support their development.
We will learn	We will ensure continued anti-racism learning and awareness for all staff.
	We will hold events throughout the year to celebrate ethnic minority cultures, increase learning and raise awareness of differences, including the issues of racism and discrimination.
	We will reinforce our learning from the unconscious bias training.
We will act	The Ombudsman will become the Executive Sponsor from the Leadership Team to provide visible leadership on race and ethnicity in our organisation.
	We will ensure ethnic minority representation on our Advisory Panel and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee by April 2022.
	We will take proactive measures to secure a more diverse workforce that is more representative of the communities we serve. We will do this by increasing awareness of our role and recruitment opportunities to potential ethnic minority candidates, with the aim of achieving that 8% of those shortlisted for interview are from ethnic minorities.



Our equality duties and commitments

We must comply with general and specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to protected characteristics. We are also committed to acting in the spirit of the socio-economic duty and to supporting the Welsh language.

General equality duty

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a public sector equality duty (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality.

Under the general duty, we must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The **general duty** covers the following protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- race (including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality);
- religion or belief (including lack of belief);
- pregnancy and maternity and
- marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination).

Specific equality duties

The general equality duty is not prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take in order to comply with their legal obligations. Listed bodies in Wales also have specific duties to help them in their performance of the general duty.

Under the specific duties in Wales, we must set Equality Objectives and prepare Strategic Equality Plans.

We must also

- collect and monitor equality data (including in relation to employment and pay differences);
- assess impact of our policies and procedures on equality;
- engage with protected groups;
- provide training on equality to staff and
- consider equality in procurement.

Socio-economic duty

Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010 requires specified public bodies to consider how their strategic decisions may help to reduce socio-economic inequalities – resulting, for instance, from differences in occupation, educational opportunities or place of residence. This is referred to as the socio-economic duty.

Welsh Government published Guidance on the Socio-Economic Duty in March 2022. The duty requires public bodies to consider how their strategic decisions can help reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. Strategic decisions are those key decisions that affect how a public body fulfils its statutory purpose.

We are not bound by the Act; we are committed to its principles and have already taken steps to strengthen the consideration of socio-economic inequalities in our work.



Welsh language

We are committed to ensuring that the Welsh language is welcomed and treated no less favourably than English in all aspects of our work and that we meet the needs of Welsh speakers.

Under our new Act, we are required to comply with Welsh Language Standards. The details of the Standards that we are required to comply with can be found on our website ([click here](#)). You can read our [updated Welsh Language Policy here](#).

We give more details of our performance under the Standards during 2022/23 in a separate Welsh Language Report.

How we manage our Equality Plan

Our **Management Team** has the overall responsibility for the strategic direction and governance of the office and ensures that operational management complies with all legal, statutory and good practice guidance requirements. The Management Team receives quarterly reports on the implementation of the Plan and planning, moving forward.

The **Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** is responsible for the coordination of the implementation of actions under the Plan; the evaluation and review of the Plan; the preparation of annual equality reports and the formulation of new actions, moving forward. They also assist staff in completing Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs).

All staff assigned responsibilities for actions are responsible for completing the actions assigned to them, with progress monitored on an ongoing basis at team level.

All staff receive information about actions under the Plan and are encouraged to contribute ideas and feedback and participate, as relevant.

The Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is supported by an internal **staff Equality Group**. The Group:

- helps monitor the implementation of the Equality Plan
- helps to formulate proposals for actions under the Plan
- acts as a sounding board for equality projects and initiatives within the office
- offers feedback and advice on Equality Impact Assessments.



How we prepared this Report

In developing this Report, we drew on our own performance and equality data about our service users, staff and people who apply to join us.

We analysed this data in the context of broader statistics available through the Office for National Statistics; the Welsh Government; the UK Government Equalities Office; Stonewall (an LGBTQ+ charity); Chwarae Teg (a gender equality charity) and many others.

References to the data informing our analysis can be found in the Appendices. In preparing this Report we consulted with the Equality Group and the Management Team.



We must comply with general and specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to protected characteristics. We are also committed to acting in the spirit of the socio-economic duty and to supporting the Welsh language.

Our performance in 2022/23



Strategic Aim 1: Deliver justice



Objective 1.1: Capture, analyse and act on comprehensive and meaningful equality data from PSOW's service users.

Equality monitoring

We have continued to gather equality data from our service users. As in previous years, most people share their equality information with us when they complete our online complaint form. In 2022/23, the response rate to our equality monitoring was 41% - only slightly lower than 43% in the previous year.

We analyse and monitor the data for our complainants every quarter and act responsively when we see changes in complainants' data profiles.

Equality and human rights tags

Equality and human rights tags allow us to identify equality and human rights themes in our casework.

In 2022/23, we intended to evaluate how the tags are being used and organise more training if needed. However, due to pressures on our capacity we did not manage to complete this task and will aim to look at this again in 2023/24.

The equality profile of our complainants and its analysis can be found in Appendix 1.





Objective 1.2: Effectively target under-represented complainant groups.

We use the equality monitoring data collected from our service users to shape our outreach strategy. During 2022/23, we worked on our new Communications and Engagement Strategy. This Strategy will shape how we seek to raise awareness of the office over the next 3 years among our target communities:

- young people
- people from diverse ethnic and national backgrounds
- disabled people
- Welsh speakers
- people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

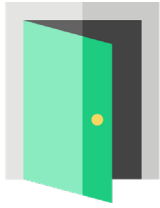
Under the Strategy, we intend to undertake more face-to-face outreach with these communities. We also want to work much more closely with advice and advocacy bodies across Wales, as well as develop a directory of relevant organisations, which we intend to publish on our website.

In April, we held a Sounding Board session with advice and advocacy bodies to gather feedback on our accessibility. The session was attended by 14 organisations. We received a lot of valuable feedback. For example, we heard that our process is too difficult for a person with a learning disability.

In addition, during the year, we continued to ensure presence on social media, with a focus on positive content, tying our work to equality, diversity and inclusion issues. Our content has helped us build a better following – we gained 223 new followers on LinkedIn and 46 new followers on Twitter.



Sounding Board session with advice and advocacy bodies was attended by 14 organisations.



Objective 1.3: Ensure that PSOW's services are accessible to all public service users in Wales who need them.

We are dedicated to ensuring that our services are equally accessible to all users and are of equal quality, regardless of the format and communication channels used.

Additional needs

We are committed to asking all people who complain to us if they need help and support. We ask anyone who contacts us how they would want us to communicate – by phone, email or by post. In addition, this year, 79 people asked us to make some additional adjustments to help them use our service.

We also asked in our telephone survey whether, where people needed such support, we met their needs. Only 4% of people said they needed such support. Of those, 37% said that we met their needs. Although the number of people who said that we did not was very small (6), we will look to improve how we make our complainants aware of the additional support that we can offer.

Complaints other than in writing

Most people complain to us online, by email or by post. However, since 2019, we can also accept complaints that are not in writing. This year, we took 160 oral complaints – compared to 221 last year. We know that this service is demand led. However, we will be highlighting the option to complain to us other than in writing as part of our future communications and engagement work.

Assessing our accessibility

Some people may find it more difficult to complain than others and there are many ways in which we can help. During 2022/23, we again conducted a telephone survey of a representative sample of our complainants to scope their satisfaction with our service. We were glad to see that 87% of our complainants that we asked said that it was easy to contact us – compared to 80% last year.



Strategic Aim 2: Promote learning, work to improve public services



Objective 2.1: Ensure that PSOW casework staff can identify and adequately respond to equality and human rights issues arising in casework.

Attention to equality and human rights issues in our complaints

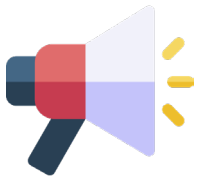
We routinely consider equality and human rights issues as we handle complaints. We have in place an internal Equality and Human Rights Advice Group (EHRAG), which meets frequently to support the consideration of equality and human rights in complaints casework.

During the year, the House of Commons and House of Lords Joint Committee on Human Rights sought public views on whether there should be a Human Rights Ombudsman. We responded to that inquiry explaining the work that we already do to embed attention to human rights and equality into how we look at complaints ([click here to see our response](#)). The Committee's Report acknowledged the work that we do in that respect,

including our attention to these issues in our own initiative investigations. It concluded that creating a new Human Rights Ombudsman would likely lead to duplication of work already undertaken by us and other offices, and ultimately would not help people to enforce their human rights.

'Lunch and Learn' events

We continued to look at opportunities to organise two 'Lunch and Learn' events with staff during the year on ethnic minority and disability issues. During the year, we organised two sessions in the office. In September, we invited staff to an Autism Wellbeing Training Session. In October, Bernie Davies, an award winning speaker on diversity, gave a talk about her experiences of racism and the meaning of allyship. We will continue to look at opportunities to organise similar events in 2023/24.



Objective 2.2: Publish more information about how PSOW casework takes account of equality and human rights considerations.

This year we published our fourth Equality and Human Rights Casebook.

We do not make definitive findings about whether a public body has breached an individual's human rights. However, if we find that something has gone wrong in the delivery of public services, we consider whether a person's human rights may have been engaged. If we think it is relevant, we comment on how the body providing the service considered those rights.

Our Equality and Human Rights Casebook assembles a selection of cases where human rights or equality issues have either been raised as part of the complaint or have been central to our findings. To read the Casebook, [click here](#).



We published our fourth Equality and Human Rights Casebook.





Objective 2.3: Ensure that equality is embedded into the planning and implementation of PSOW's pro-active powers.

Since 2019, we have a set of proactive powers to drive systemic improvement. This includes the power to investigate even when we have not received a complaint. We have continued to look at ways to embed equality considerations in how we used this power.

During the year, we consulted on our next own initiative investigation. Our initial plan was to look at accessibility of complaints processes and needs assessments for unpaid carers. We identified this as the potential area for investigation after engaging closely with Carers Wales and taking soundings from other regulatory and audit bodies. We received 76 responses, with almost half of those respondents being unpaid carers.

In preparation for the investigation, we completed an Equality Impact Assessment. This helped us to identify what local authorities we could focus on to ensure that the investigation has as much impact as possible on carers but also on other equality groups. To find this Assessment, [click here](#).

After reviewing those responses, we decided to narrow the focus of our investigation to access to needs assessments only. We then consulted on the detailed investigation proposal with the specific local councils that we planned to investigate - Caerphilly, Ceredigion, Flintshire and Neath Port Talbot. That consultation closed in May 2023 and we launched the investigation at the beginning of June.



We looked at the equality impact of our next own initiative investigation - into accessibility and use of carers needs assessments.

Strategic Aim 3: Use resources wisely and future-proof the organisation



Objective 3.1: Capture, analyse and act on comprehensive and meaningful equality employment data.

We have continued to monitor the equality profile of our workforce and job applicants (those who applied and those who were successful). We also again analysed the profile of different groups within our workforce - for example, based on the use of disciplinary or grievance procedures and access to training.

In 2022/23, there were 2 members of staff who went through our disciplinary process. No one used the grievance procedure. One of the members of staff going through the disciplinary process was offered the opportunity to do so in Welsh, including their meetings, but they declined. Given the small numbers, we cannot offer any meaningful analysis of the equality profile of the staff who used those procedures.

We also compared this year the equality profile of all our staff with the equality profile of those staff members who completed the recommended number of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) hours (see overleaf).

As last year, people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, people identifying with diverse sexual orientations and diverse religions appeared to be less likely to complete the recommended number of CPD hours. People with caring duties appeared to be also less well represented among the group that completed the recommended hours. We will consider any barriers affecting these groups as we implement our Training Strategy.



Equality characteristic	Representation among all staff	Representation among the staff who completed the recommended number of CPD hours
Age (under 25)	1%	1%
Age (over 55)	17%	15%
Gender (female)	74%	82%
Caring duties (yes)	58%	46%
Diverse ethnic backgrounds	7.5%	4%
Diverse national backgrounds	4%	4%
Disability	5%	4%
Diverse sexual orientations	4%	1%
Diverse religions	6%	3%

The full equality profile of our workforce can be found in Appendix 2.





Objective 3.2: Act to improve the representation of protected groups in PSOW's workforce.

Our workforce

We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and we seek to ensure that, in our recruitment, we do not discriminate against any group in society.

In 2022/23, some groups were well-represented among our workforce:

+ 7.5% of our staff said they identified with diverse ethnic backgrounds. For comparison, 5.3% of the Welsh population of working age identified with diverse ethnic backgrounds, whilst 4% identified with diverse ethnic backgrounds and were economically active (StatsWales 2023).

+ 74% of our staff were female. This continues to be a positive trend, since men in Wales are more likely than women to be in employment (StatsWales 2020).

+ At 17%, the proportion of staff between 55 and 64 was well above the Welsh average of 13%.

+ 4% of our staff told us that they identified with diverse sexual orientations. This significantly exceeded the representation of this group according to the 2021 Census (3%), though 7.6% of people did not respond to this Census question.

+ 6% of staff told us that they identified with diverse religions. This was higher than the Welsh average of 4% (2021 Census).

+ 14% of our staff told us that Welsh was the first language of their household. However, the proportion of people who had fluent or fairly good Welsh language skills was much higher – between 26% and 30%.



However, some groups remained under-represented:

- Only 5% of our staff identified as disabled – compared with 4% in 2019. For comparison, in 2023, about 37% of Welsh people of working age identified as disabled, and 15% identified as disabled and economically active (StatsWales 2023).
- Only 4% of our staff identified with diverse national backgrounds (this measure is different to ethnic backgrounds). This was compared to 6.9% of Welsh residents estimated to be born outside of the UK (Welsh Government) and 7.5% of Welsh full-time workers (Wales Centre for Public Policy 2019).
- Only 1% of our staff were under 25 - compared with 6% of the Welsh population aged 20-24 (Statista).
- No staff member identified as trans.

We know that for us to truly represent the diversity in society, our aim is to attract more applicants from diverse backgrounds. Under our new People Strategy, we will take steps to ensure better representation of target groups among our workforce.

Our job candidates

This year we have undertaken extensive recruitment, receiving 1590 applications through a wide range of recruitment channels.

The equality monitoring data shared with us by the candidates is unfortunately very inconsistent, with a response rate of only 12%. Because of that, the data does not accurately reflect the profile of our candidates this year. For this reason, we decided not to publish this data this year. In the future, we will work to offer people who apply to join us more accessible options of completing our equality questionnaire.

Advisory Panel appointments

In 2020, we set a long term aspirational target to achieve greater ethnic diversity on the Advisory Panel and/or Audit and Risk Assurance Committee by March 2022. Although later than planned, we delivered on this pledge in 2023, with Bernie Davies officially appointed as the first Black member of our Advisory Panel.



Objective 3.3: Address PSOW’s Pay Gap.

In line with the trends in the previous years, women among our job applicants and workforce consistently outnumber men by a significant margin. 75% of our current staff identified as female (compared to 76% last year).

We continue to see an improvement with our gender pay gap. We are glad to see the reduction in our mean gender pay gap, from 17% to 12%. We are also delighted to report that we no longer have a median gender pay gap. For comparison, Chwarae Teg [estimated](#) that the median Gender Pay Gap in Wales in 2021 was 12.3%.

Our median gender pay gap figure reflects the fact that more senior appointments were filled by women. However, the higher mean figure shows that male staff are still less represented in positions that are lower paid and more so in positions that attract a higher salary.

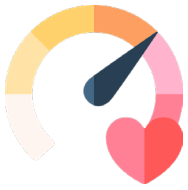
During the year, we developed a new Menopause Policy. We also celebrated the Menopause Month in October by offering training to our managers and staff, as well as signing the Menopause Pledge.

	March 2022	March 2023
% of staff female*	76%	75%
Median Gender Pay Gap	3%	0%
Mean Gender Pay Gap	17%	12%

*The information presented in this table is based on assumed gender identity so that it reflects the full workforce.

Gender breakdown by salary and role, contract type and working arrangement can be found in Appendix 4.





Objective 3.4: Promote staff wellbeing and awareness of equality and diversity issues.

We want to create an environment where everyone feels that they are treated fairly and have equal access to opportunities. We also want our staff to be healthy and well.

Our caseload has continued to increase. This has put our staff under immense pressure. However, we have continuously looked for ways to support their health and wellbeing and to raise awareness of equality issues.

Wellbeing

We worked hard to support our staff during this difficult year. We continued to offer staff some wellbeing support, for example discounted gym membership. We also kept offering Mental Health First Aider support to staff. We will continue to look for ways to process work more efficiently and continue to recruit excellent staff when vacancies arise.

Awareness

We have continued to draw attention during the year on our social media to dates and occasions linked to equality, diversity and inclusion and we replicated the external posts internally. Particularly during National Inclusion Week, we stepped up our communication efforts, releasing during that week our annual Equality Report, our Welsh language report and many other messages related to our equality work.

Appraisal process

We again revised and re-issued a guidance note for all line managers to encourage their staff to assess equality training needs and consider setting one equality objective as part of the staff appraisal process. We were delighted to see that many staff set such objectives.



Objective 3.5: Ensure that the consideration of equality is embedded in PSOW decision making.

We strive to ensure that the general equality duty is an integral part of policy development and high-level decision making in the office.

We use our Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) Procedure to check how our policies or projects impact different groups. When we undertake an EIA, we first identify a range of possible negative or positive impacts.

We then make sure that we mitigate negative impacts and strengthen positive impacts.

We now publish all full EIAs that we completed during the year. They can be found [on our website](#), but we also include summaries below:

Wider Own Initiative investigation – accessing complaint procedures for Unpaid Carers

Summary: The investigation aims to examine the accessibility of public service complaint processes for Unpaid Carers in Wales with a view to make recommendations if evidence of maladministration or service failure is found to share learning and drive improvement. The investigation will also highlight any evidence of good practice to share such practice across public services in Wales.

Impact: The EIA helped us to identify what local authorities we could focus on to ensure that the investigation has as much impact as possible on carers but also on other equality groups – disabled people, people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. The public consultation on this investigation did not point to clear impacts on the Welsh language. Nevertheless, the EIA identified that the investigation could dedicate attention to the availability and use of carer needs assessment process in Welsh.



Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026

Summary: Our previous Corporate Plan covered the period from 2019 to 2022. Through this project we developed a new set of strategic aims to deliver our ambition for the office.

Impact: The EIA identified a potential general positive impact of the Plan, given that it includes a specific Strategic Aim in relation to accessibility and inclusion, as well as further commitments in relation to the diversity of our workforce. As a high-level strategic document, assessment of the Plan did not allow to capture detailed anticipated impact on each equality group, though we noted that we expect the actions under the Plan to particularly benefit disabled people, older people, people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, and people who identify as LGBTQ+. The evidence we received through public consultation on the Plan helped us to identify ways in which the Plan could have more positive impact on Welsh speakers.

Disciplinary Policy & Grievance Policy (revised)

Summary: The Disciplinary Policy ensures that there is a clear and fair approach to disciplinary matters within our organisation that reflects good practice and Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) guidance. The Grievance Policy sets out a clear and fair process to allow staff to raise grievances and for grievances to be handled in a way that is fair to those involved and complies with ACAS guidance.

Impact: The EIA identified the groups that could experience disadvantage when using or being subject to these processes (disabled people, pregnant people, people of diverse ethnic backgrounds and religions, Welsh speakers, people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage). The EIA established that some of these risks are already mitigated in our policy and identified some further steps for us to take to ensure a neutral impact on all groups.

Equality Impact Assessment Policy & Procedure (revised)

Summary: The policy aims to ensure that EIAs of our policies are conducted consistently; in a timely manner; to a high standard and in line with our statutory duties and voluntary commitments.

Impact: The EIA identified a general, high positive impact of this policy on how we embed EDI considerations across our work. It also identified additional positive impacts on Welsh speakers and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, as attention to the needs of those groups was integrated into our EIA procedure.

Flexible Working Policy (revised)

Summary: The policy sets out our understanding of flexible working, the criteria and procedure for staff requesting flexible working, as well as the appeal procedure.

Impact: The EIA identified positive impacts on older people and disabled people, people who are trans, pregnant people, people of diverse religions and Welsh speakers (to the extent that the processes under the policy can all be used in Welsh). It also identified steps to mitigate some possible negative impact on women and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

Menopause Policy

Summary: This policy intends to ensure that our staff are more knowledgeable about the menopause, including the support available, and have confidence that we can meet their needs.

Impact: We identified a general, positive impact, with additional attention and resources being dedicated to the needs of groups likely to be affected negatively by the menopause. This included older people, women, disabled people (to the extent that the menopause may affect health) and LGBTQ+ people. No specific impact on other groups was identified.



Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure (revised)

Summary: The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all vacancies are filled through fair and open competition and to fulfil the general equality duty under the 2010 Equality Act; specific equality duties under the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and other voluntary equality commitments.

Impact: The EIA identified potential general positive impact of this policy, as it strongly and consistently states our equality duties and commitments. It identified specific positive impact on disabled people and (after changes) to people of diverse ethnicities, with commitment that we would offer interviews to people identifying with those characteristics when the essential criteria are met.

Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy (revised)

Summary: This policy aims to ensure that every staff member is treated with dignity and respect and that a working environment which is safe, healthy and harmonious is created and maintained.

Impact: The EIA identified the groups that could be at particular risk of bullying and harassment (disabled people, women, people from LGBTQ+ community, people in civil partnerships, pregnant people, people of diverse ethnic backgrounds and religions) and provided reassurance that the policy would allow to adequately deal with issues experienced by those groups. We added an additional reference to religion to the grievance and disciplinary policies. The EIA also identified the opportunity to strengthen references to the use of the grievance procedure in Welsh.

Procurement Policy (revised)

Summary: This policy aims to ensure that we always undertake a competitive process which aims to provide the best opportunity to procure goods or services with value for money.

Impact: We undertook a very detailed EIA of this policy in 2021. The only additional step we identified this time to improve the accessibility of our procurement process was to add a statement in the tender template informing that we can offer additional accessibility support.

Organisational Change Policy (revised)

Summary: This policy provides a framework for the implementation of significant changes to the nature, size and structure of our organisation.

Impact: The EIA identified general positive impact as this policy underlines and reinforces our commitment to ensuring equality and equity in the organisational change process. It identified some potential negative impacts on some groups (older people, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, pregnant people, people of diverse ethnicities and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage) and explained how the policy would mitigate those impacts.

Annual Report 2021/22

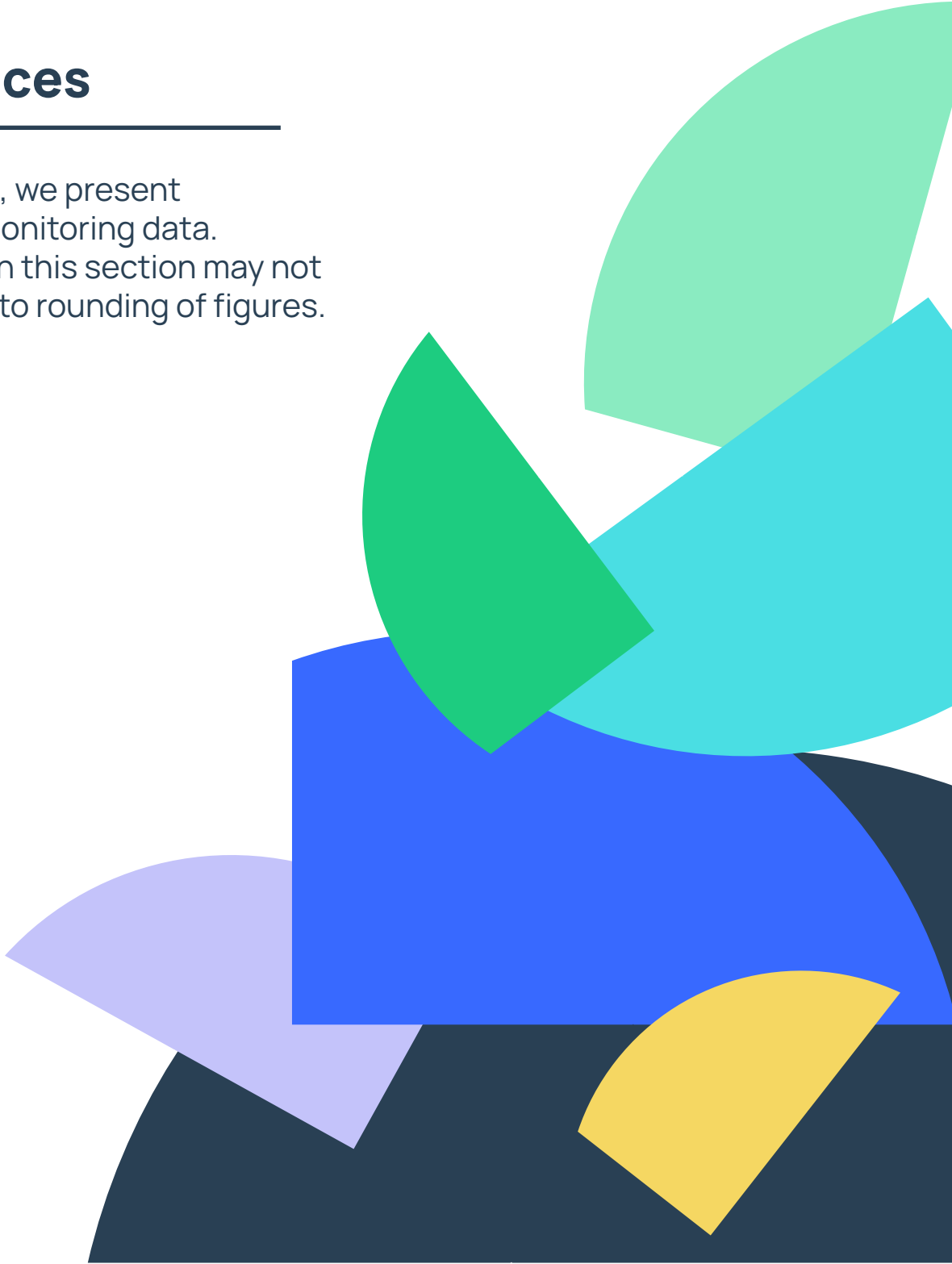
Summary: The report presents our work during 2021/22. It is one of the main ways in which we are held to account by the Senedd. It is also one of the main channels through which we publicise our work more generally. Accordingly, the EIA looked at how we would disseminate the Report to make sure that it is accessible to all groups.

Impact: The EIA identified some actions to mitigate possible barriers to access for some groups (older people, younger people, disabled people, people of diverse ethnic backgrounds and religions, people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and Welsh speakers) and ensure neutral or positive impact on these groups.



Appendices

In this section, we present our equality monitoring data. Percentages in this section may not total 100, due to rounding of figures.



1: Equality profile of our complainants

The following tables present the equality profile of our complainants in 2022/23, compared to 2021/22. In 2022/23, 41% of our new complaints were accompanied by equality data.

Age	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 25: 3.1% • 25-34: 17% • 35-44: 22.4% • 45-54: 19.4% • 55-64: 16.9% • 65-74: 9.8% • 75 or over: 3.9% • PNS (prefer not to say): 7.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 25: 2.8% • 25-34: 15.7% • 35-44: 20.7% • 45-54: 22.9% • 55-64: 17.5% • 65-74: 11.9% • 75 or over: 2.5% • PNS: 6.1%

People under 25 remained significantly under-represented – compared with 12% of the Welsh population aged 15-24. Although others may complain on behalf of young people, we would expect this group to be better represented.

The proportion of older people remains low, as this age group comprises 21.3% of the Welsh population. The representation of this group was about the same as in 2021/22 (13%). Although others may complain on behalf of older people, we would expect this group to be better represented—especially given that people in this age group are more likely than average to access health services ([National Survey for Wales 2018/19](#)).



Gender	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female: 50.9% Male: 40.6% PNS: 8.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female: 49.0% Male: 45.3% PNS: 5.7%

The proportion of females amongst our complainants was in line with the Welsh average.

Gender reassignment	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified with the gender assigned at birth: 86.6% Did not identify with the gender assigned at birth: 2.0% PNS: 11.4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified with the gender assigned at birth: 89.1% Did not identify with the gender assigned at birth: 1.5% PNS: 9.3%

Reassigning your gender does not require any specific treatment as this is considered a personal process rather than a medical one ([EHRC 2019](#)). Population data about people who have undergone gender reassignment is limited ([Diverse Cymru](#)). The scarcity of data makes it difficult to assess the representation of this group among our complainants. However, the representation of this group was higher than in 2021/22 (1.5%). It also significantly exceeded the representation of this group according to the 2021 Census (0.4%) although 6.3% of people did not respond to that Census question. Also, note a very high 'prefer not to say' response rate to this question.

National identity	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh: 50.2% • English: 11.6% • Scottish 0.4% • British: 24.3% • Other: 2.5% • PNS: 10.9% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh: 51.89% • English: 12.34% • Scottish 0.23% • British: 24.36% • Other: 2.7% • PNS: 8.17%

The representation of people of diverse nationalities was in line with the figures in 2021/22. This group is under-represented, compared to 5.4% of the Welsh population according to the 2021 Census. We would expect this group to be better represented, given the research indicating that migrants may face barriers in accessing healthcare ([2016 EHRC](#)). Also, note a very high 'prefer not to say' response rate to this question (11%).

Ethnicity	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White (all backgrounds): 86.9% • Mixed or multiple ethnic group: 1.8% • Black, African, Caribbean or Black British: 0.5% • Asian or Asian British: 1.3% • Other: 0.5% • PNS: 9.1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White (all backgrounds): 88.97% • Mixed or multiple ethnic group: 1.62% • Black, African, Caribbean or Black British: 0.69% • Asian or Asian British: 1.31% • Other: 0.69% • PNS: 6.71%

The representation of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds was the same as in 2021/22. It remains well below the demographic profile of Wales (6.3% according to the 2021 Census). Note a very high 'prefer not to say' response rate to this question (9%).

Main language	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English: 85.9% Welsh: 3.8% Other: 1.4% PNS: 8.9% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English: 87.59% Welsh: 4.16% Other: 1.31% PNS: 6.94%

At 4%, the proportion of people who state that Welsh is the first language of their household is in line with the figures at the end of 2021/22. This group is under-represented compared to 17.8% of people in Wales who identified as Welsh speakers in the 2021 Census. However, this question as currently asked is flawed as Welsh is not the first language of many Welsh speakers. The representation of users of other languages remains very low.

Disability	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 29.6% No: 55.4% PNS: 15% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 25.3% No: 63.92% PNS: 10.95%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited by a health problem or disability a lot or a little: 41.6% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited by a health problem or disability a lot or a little: 36.85%

We would expect to see a higher representation of disabled people among our complainants, given that this group is more likely to access health services and to face difficulties in access ([National Survey for Wales 2018/19](#); [Welsh Government 2015](#)). Research conducted for us by Beaufort Research (2020) suggested also that disabled people found it more difficult than average to complain to public bodies. The proportion of our complainants who identified as disabled remained much higher than the Welsh average (21%). The proportion of people who said that they were limited, a lot or a little, because of a health problem or disability was higher again.



Marriage and civil partnership	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am married: 37% • I am single: 31.6% • I am in a civil partnership: 3.7% • Other: 8.7% • PNS: 19.1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am married: 39.09% • I am single: 32.07% • I am in a civil partnership: 3.16% • Other: 9.18% • PNS: 16.42%

The proportion of our complainants who were married or in a civil partnership has decreased slightly compared to last year. Still, it appears to be lower than the Welsh average of 46.6% in 2011 (2011 Census), and falls short of later estimates of 50% ([National Survey for Wales 2018/19](#)).

Sexual orientation	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heterosexual or Straight: 77.7% • Gay or Lesbian: 3.3% • Bisexual: 1.7% • Other: 0.7% • PNS: 16.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heterosexual or Straight: 78.80% • Gay or Lesbian: 4.09% • Bisexual: 1.23% • Other: 0.54% • PNS: 15.19%

The proportion of our complainants who identified with diverse sexual orientations was about the same as last year. At 5.7%, it significantly exceeded the representation of this group according to the 2021 Census (3%), although 7.6% people did not respond to this Census question. However, it falls short of the other available estimates of the size of this population in the UK (10%) ([YouGov 2019](#)). Note also the very high 'prefer not to say' response rate to this question.

Research in 2018 suggested that 13% of LGBTQ+ people have experienced some form of unequal treatment from healthcare staff because of their sexual orientation ([Stonewall 2018](#)). [Stonewall data](#) also shows that people who identify as LGBTQ+ are often apprehensive of disclosing their identity in the workplace or when using services for fear of discrimination. The high rate of no responses to this question points to concerns around sharing this information that we need to address.

Religion or belief – including lack of belief	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian (all denominations): 34.1% • No religion: 44.7% • Muslim: 1.3% • Buddhist: 0.3% • Hindu: 0.1% • Jewish: 0.2% • Other: 2.1% • PNS: 17.2% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian (all denominations): 37.24% • No religion: 42.25% • Muslim: 1.46% • Buddhist: 0.62% • Hindu: 0.15% • Jewish: 0.23% • Other: 4.16% • PNS: 13.80%

The proportion of our complainants who identified with 'no religion' is nearing the Welsh average (47%) ([StatsWales 2017-19](#)). The proportion of people who identified with diverse religions matched the results of the 2021 Census (4%). However, note a very high 'prefer not to say' response rate to this question.



Working status	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed or self-employed: 48.9% • Retired from paid work: 16.6% • Otherwise not in paid work: 15.3% • PNS: 16.6% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed or self-employed: 54.66% • Retired from paid work: 17.12% • Otherwise not in paid work: 15.88% • PNS: 12.34%

Education	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree as the highest qualification: 38.1% 	

Just over 54% of our complainants were in employment. This was lower than the Welsh average of 72.8% in December 2020 for people aged 16-64 in Wales (73.5%) ([StatsWales 2021](#)) but higher than in 2019/20.

People with education qualifications at degree level or above were over-represented, compared to the Welsh average of 31%.

Pregnancy and maternity	
We do not currently monitor this characteristic for complainants.	



2: Equality profile of our workforce

Our workforce equality monitoring is conducted through an anonymous, voluntary internal staff survey. In 2022/23, 94% of our employees completed the survey.

The figures in this section account also for staff on maternity leave and bank workers. As a result, the representation of staff from diverse ethnic backgrounds and whose first language is Welsh varies slightly compared to the figure in our Annual Report 2022/23.

Age	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 25: 1% • 25 to 34: 12% • 35 to 44: 36% • 45 to 54: 35% • 55 to 64: 14% • 65 and over: 3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 25: 3% • 25 to 34: 24% • 35 to 44: 27% • 45 to 54: 27% • 55 to 64: 18% • 65 and over: 1%

Compared to the previous year, in 2022/23 the proportion of our staff who were under the age of 25 has decreased. This group remained much under-represented compared with 6% of the Welsh population aged 20-24 ([Statista](#)).

Gender	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female: 74% • Male: 24% • PNS: 1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female: 73% • Male: 27% • Prefer to use own term: 0%

The proportion of females in our workforce significantly exceeded the proportion of this group in the Welsh population overall. This continues to be a positive trend, since men in Wales were more likely than women to be in employment ([StatsWales 2020](#)).

Gender reassignment	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not identify as trans: 97% • PNS: 3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not identify as trans: 100% • PNS: 0%

Reassigning your gender does not require any specific treatment, as this is considered a personal process and not a medical one ([EHRC 2019](#)). Population data about people who have undergone gender reassignment is limited ([Diverse Cymru](#)). Of the LGBT or intersex respondents to a [UK Government survey](#) in 2019, 13% said they were transgender. The scarcity of data makes it difficult to assess the representation of this group among our workforce. Arguably, in a small organisation, it is not unlikely that no one will identify as trans. Nevertheless, we know that we need to continue to create at PSOW an inclusive environment where colleagues feel they can talk about their gender identity, should they wish to do so.

National identity	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh: 55% • English: 5% • British: 33% • Other: 4% • Prefer not to say: 3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh: 61% • English: 3% • British: 34% • Other: 3% • Prefer not to say: 0%

Only 4% of our staff identified with diverse national backgrounds (this measure is different to ethnic backgrounds). This was compared to 6.9% of Welsh residents estimated to be born outside of the UK ([Welsh Government](#)) and 7.5% of Welsh full-time workers (Wales Centre for Public Policy 2019).



Ethnicity	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White (all backgrounds): 90% • Asian / Asian British: 2.5% • Black, African, Caribbean or Black British: 2.5% • Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: 2.5% • Other: 0% • PNS: 2.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White (all backgrounds): 92% • Asian / Asian British: 3% • Black, African, Caribbean or Black British: 3% • Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: 1% • Other: 1% • PNS: 0%

7.5% of our staff said they identified with diverse ethnic backgrounds. For comparison, 5.3% of the Welsh population of working age identified with diverse ethnic backgrounds and 4% identified with diverse ethnic backgrounds and were economically active ([StatsWales 2023](#))

Main language	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English: 83% • Welsh: 14% • Other: 1% • PNS: 1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English: 82% • Welsh: 14% • Other: 3% • PNS: 1%

Welsh language skills - fairly good or fluent	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking: 26% • Reading: 31% • Writing: 27% • Understanding: 32% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking: 26% • Reading: 29% • Writing: 26% • Understanding: 30%

The proportion of people in our workforce with main language as Welsh remained the same as last year. It remained lower than the percentage of Welsh speakers in the population, overall (2021 Census). However, the proportion of staff who had fairly good or fluent Welsh language skills was higher than the Welsh figures from the [National Survey for Wales 2019/20](#) and increased, compared to last year.



Disability	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 5% • No: 90% • PNS: 5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 3% • No: 96% • PNS: 1%

5% of our staff identified as disabled – a higher proportion than 3% last year. Still, for comparison, in 2023, about 37% of Welsh people of working age identified as disabled, and 15% identified as disabled and economically active ([StatsWales 2023](#)). Research showed that the Welsh disability employment gap stands at 32.3 percentage points ([Senedd Research](#)), and we know that we need to do more to attract disabled people to join our organisation.

Marriage and civil partnership	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 62% • No: 36% • PNS: 3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 56% • No: 44% • PNS: 0%

The proportion of people who were married or in a civil partnership among our workforce has increased slightly, compared to 2021/22, but still exceeds the Welsh average of 46.6% in 2011 (2011 Census) and 50% in 2018/19 ([National Survey for Wales 2019/20](#)). This is overall a positive trend, since in 2018, single people were more likely to be employed than married people ([EHRC 2018](#)).



Sexual orientation	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gay or Lesbian: 3% • Heterosexual or Straight: 88% • Prefer to use own term: 1% • PNS: 8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gay or Lesbian: 4% • Heterosexual or Straight: 90% • PNS: 6%

The proportion of people who identified with diverse sexual orientations has remained the same as last year. It equaled the estimates of 4% in the [National Survey for Wales 2019/20](#), though was lower than other available estimates of this population in the UK (10%) ([YouGov 2019](#)). However, note the high level of no responses to this question.

Religion or belief – including lack of belief	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No religion: 49% • Christian (all denominations): 38% • Muslim: 3% • Other: 3% • PNS: 8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No religion: 45% • Christian (all denominations): 44% • Muslim: 3% • Other: 1% • PNS: 7%

The proportion of people in our workforce who identified with no religion has decreased since last year and is now below the Welsh average - 47% ([StatsWales 2017-19](#)). The proportion of people who followed diverse religions increased to 6% and was higher than the Welsh average of 4% (2021 Census).

Caring duties	
2022/23	2021/22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 58% • No: 37% • PNS: 3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 61% • No: 38%

Most of the staff who indicated that they had caring duties were carers for a child or children. 15% percentage of carers indicated that they were primary carers for someone because of disability, health condition or problems related to old age.



3: Gender breakdown by salary and role, contract type and working arrangements

As we have a large number of grades, some with a single post holder, the table below provides the gender breakdown of staff by salary and role:

Role	Salary (FTE)	Male	Female	Total	% Male	% Female
Administrative and frontline staff	£20k - £31k	3	15	18	17%	83%
Investigation Officers and Support Service Managers	£32k - £47k	7	31	38	18%	82%
Team Managers	£48k - £57k	5	10	15	33%	67%
Senior Managers	£58k +	3	3	6	50%	50%
	Total	18	59	77	23%	77%

* The total number of employees in this table does not include the Ombudsman

Since last year, we updated the roles and salary bandings to reflect our internal restructuring and pay awards. For this reason, it is difficult to directly compare our current gender breakdown by salary and role with last year. Overall, women were far better represented than men across all roles within our organisation, apart from at the Senior Manager level, where the representation was equal.

At 31 March 2023, 6 members of staff were on fixed term contracts and 77 on permanent contracts. 24 members of staff worked part-time (22 female and 2 male).



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