

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report 2023-2024



Contents

- Contents 2
- Foreword 3
- Introduction 4
- Context..... 5
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion governance arrangements..... 6
- Highlights..... 7
- Diversity of employees..... 8
- Creating a more inclusive workplace..... 12
- Creating a Great Place to Work 13
- ED&I Learning & Development..... 14
- Creating a sense of belonging through staff networks..... 19
- Investing in our Early Careers 21
- Education Outreach 24
- Inclusive recruitment 26
- Procuring a new applicant tracking system 27
- Gender Pay Report 28
- Wellbeing..... 29
- Priorities for 2024-25..... 31

Foreword



Welcome to this year's annual equality, diversity and inclusion report. Since the launch of our first EDI strategy in 2020 we have made great in roads and progress from our equality, diversity and inclusion data insights.

I am pleased to say that this data driven approach and creating long lasting sustainable building blocks to drive change this year has resulted in achieving external recognition in being accredited as a 'Great Place to Work UK' and a place on the UK's 'Best Workplace in Tech' and 'Best Workplace for Women'.

Other significant highlights this year include our early careers and work experience advances in helping us to be more representative of the communities we serve.

Driving long last change which is truly embedded is challenging and we will be looking at refreshing our equality objectives in summer 2024 reflecting this fact building on the lessons we have learnt over the last four years.



Tammy Lillie
Chief People Officer

Introduction

The Met Office is the national meteorological service for the UK. We provide critical weather services and world-leading climate science. We are here to help you make better decisions to stay safe and thrive, this means giving you the best weather and climate information when it matters to you most.

Since our foundation in 1854, we have pioneered the science of meteorology and continue to push boundaries of science and technology, so that we can meet the demands of today and the future.

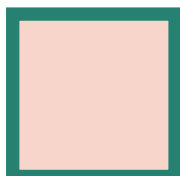
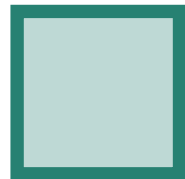
We are a key part of the weather and climate community with our team of weather and climate experts playing a critical role in interpreting our data, turning this into insight and advice which saves lives and helps people make decisions day-to-day.

We have earned a reputation for continually pushing the boundaries of scientific, technological, and operational expertise.

We are responsible for weather and climate information and severe weather warnings helping the UK government, businesses, emergency responders and public make informed decisions.

We also work in partnership with a wide variety of organisations in the UK and around the world, including academic institutions, national governments, the energy sectors, other government departments, transport sector and emergency services.

The Met Office is a government trading fund agency owned by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. Day-to-day ministerial oversight and the formal business ownership role are delegated to the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation.



Context

This report reflects on the key initiatives and achievements we have undertaken in 2023-24 and the progress we are making towards implementing the vision set out in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. It should be considered alongside the Met Office's Annual Report and Accounts as this provides further information on the diverse work of the Met Office.

It is also intended to illustrate how the Met Office is meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. As a public body, we must comply with this act and specifically the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This requires us to consider the impact of our activities and services on people who identify with one or more of the nine protected characteristics and also take proactive steps to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not; and
- Promote good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

In 2020, we launched our first Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Strategy. This sets out our approach to diversity and inclusion and includes our equality objectives. Objective 1 was amended in late 2021 to reflect that we deliver services to a wide range of customers:

- Objective 1: Engaging with and understanding the diversity of our people and those we serve.
- Objective 2: Advancing equality of opportunity.
- Objective 3: Increasing representation of under-represented groups at all levels.
- Objective 4: Zero tolerance to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

In late 2023, we started the review of our ED&I strategy and objectives and are currently focusing on refreshing our equality objectives, which will be published in summer 2024.

To support the delivery of our ED&I strategy, we have an annual ED&I action plan, this plan is informed by data and insight and is a living document which evolves in response to new insights and feedback.

We also reviewed both our strategy and action plan to ensure that it aligned with the [Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy: 2022 to 2025](#). This sets out actions to build a Civil Service that understands and draws from the communities it serves, is visible to everyone, is flexible and welcomes talent from wherever it comes.



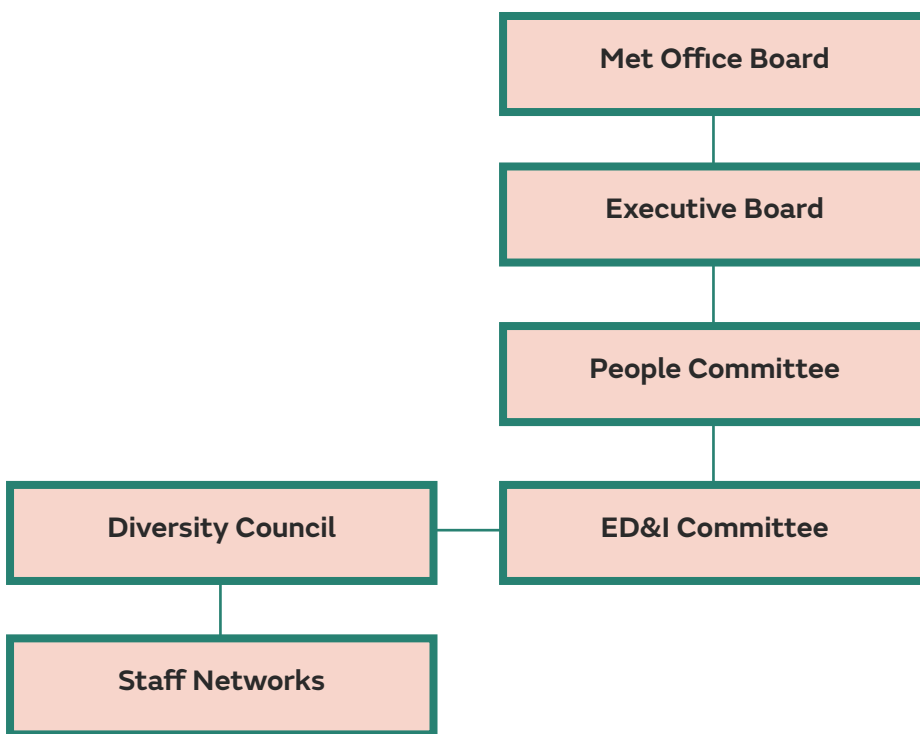
Equality, diversity and inclusion governance arrangements

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) committee provides oversight of the delivery of the ED&I Strategy and action plan across the Met Office.

Each of our directorates is represented on the committee, as well as representation from Change Management. In the last year, following changes to ED&I job roles, we advertised internally for an ED&I champion as a way of building better resilience but also to evolve our culture and role model inclusive working practices.

The ED&I Committee reports to the People Committee monthly. This committee has oversight of people related matters across the Met Office. The ED&I committee provides an update on progress and activity to the Met Office Board twice a year.

ED&I Governance Structure



Alongside the ED&I Committee, our Diversity Council is a forum for staff network leads to meet, collaborate and support each other. It provides staff networks with a stronger voice that can influence best practice across the organisation, helping to enhance ways of working. The Diversity Council can raise issues of concern or highlight good practice to the ED&I Committee.

Highlights for 2023-24

Accredited as a **'Great Place to Work UK 2023'** and achieved a place on both the UK's 'Best Workplaces in Tech' and 'Best Workplaces for Women' lists.



547 young people across a range of demographic groups nationwide completed our work experience programme.



94% of our employees have consistently shared their diversity data over the last year.

Random Coffee – our informal way of meeting colleagues across the organisation celebrated its **5th birthday.**



Launched our **workplace adjustments passport** for all employees.



Procured a new applicant tracking system for recruitment that put ED&I and artificial intelligence (AI) at the forefront.



Formed a **Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Staff Network.**

Updated our diversity data questions, so we can compare against national diversity data.



Over **400** employees have engaged with or are members of staff networks.



Our successful **'walking in my shoes'** stories continue to build awareness and empathy through employees sharing lived experiences.

Launched

Corporate Essentials



- a new way to deliver mandatory training.

115 employees participated in early careers schemes (apprenticeships, industrial placements, summer internships and graduate development programme).



Refreshed and relaunched our **Wellbeing Strategy.**

Diversity of employees

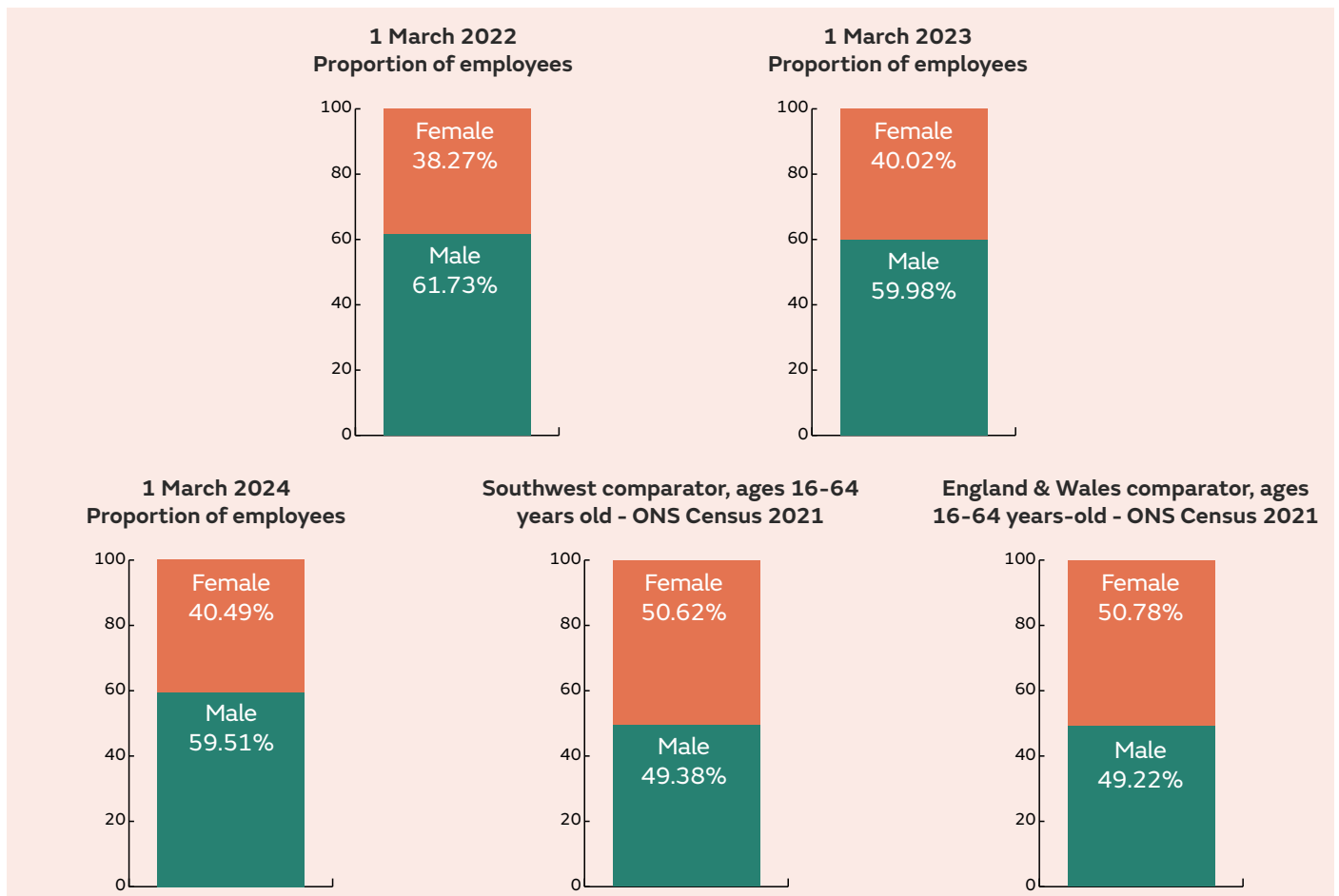
We encourage our employees to share their diversity data. This helps us understand the make-up of our organisation and how representative we are against the UK working population and in the southwest where our head office is located.

Data is collected through self-declaration via our People Management System. Whilst we encourage employees to share their data, employees can tick 'prefer not to say' or leave the question blank. As of the 1 March 2024, 94% of employees had shared their diversity data. Our data uses headcount and includes:

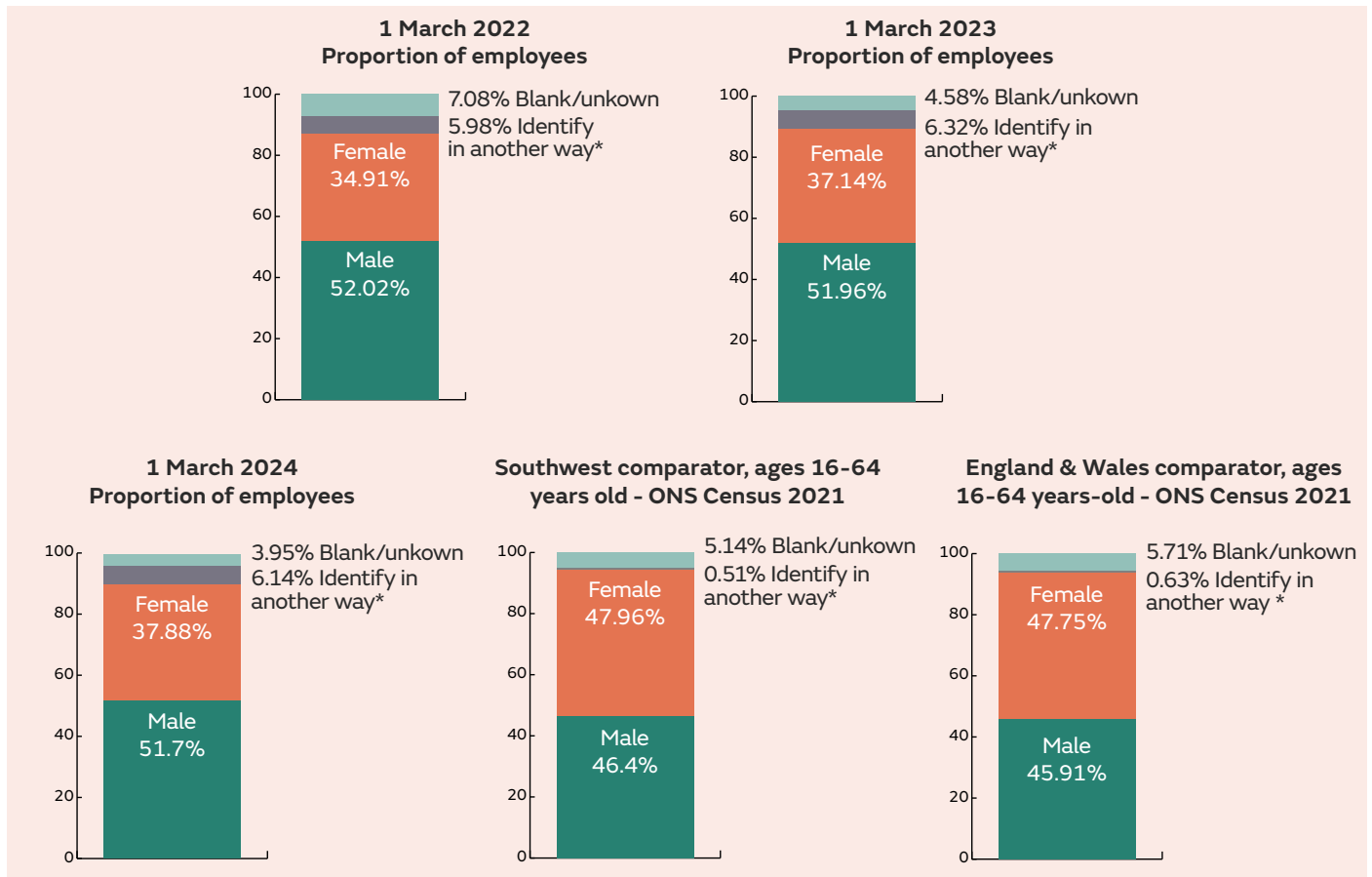
- Staff
- Apprentices
- Trainees and Placements
- Sponsored Workers – Other
- Sponsored Workers – Tier 2

Below we show our data over a three-year period and against ONS Census data to help us identify any trends. We may round up or group figures to ensure that individuals cannot be identified. Due to rounding, percentages may not always add up to 100 percent.

Sex

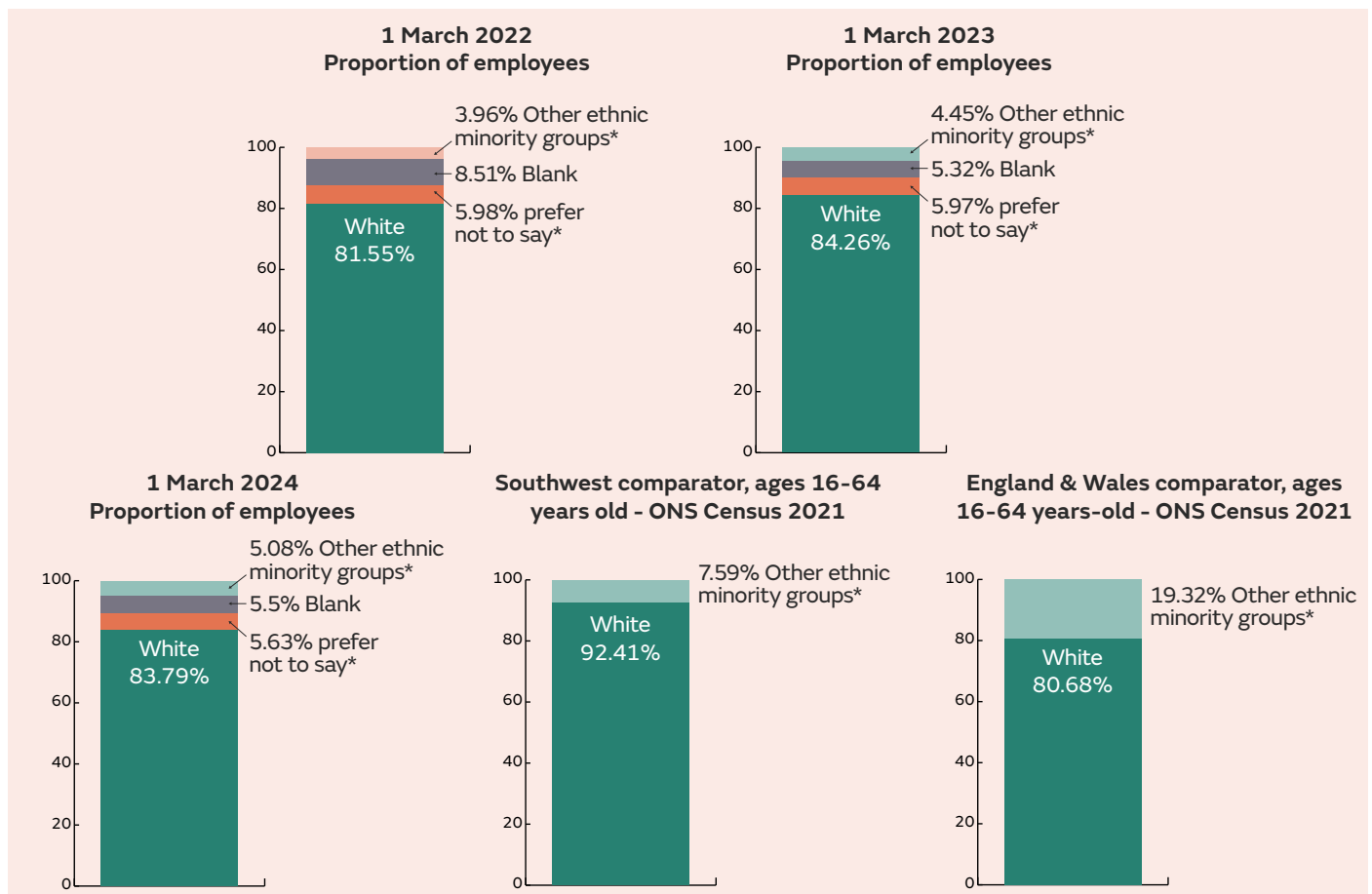


Gender identity –self reported



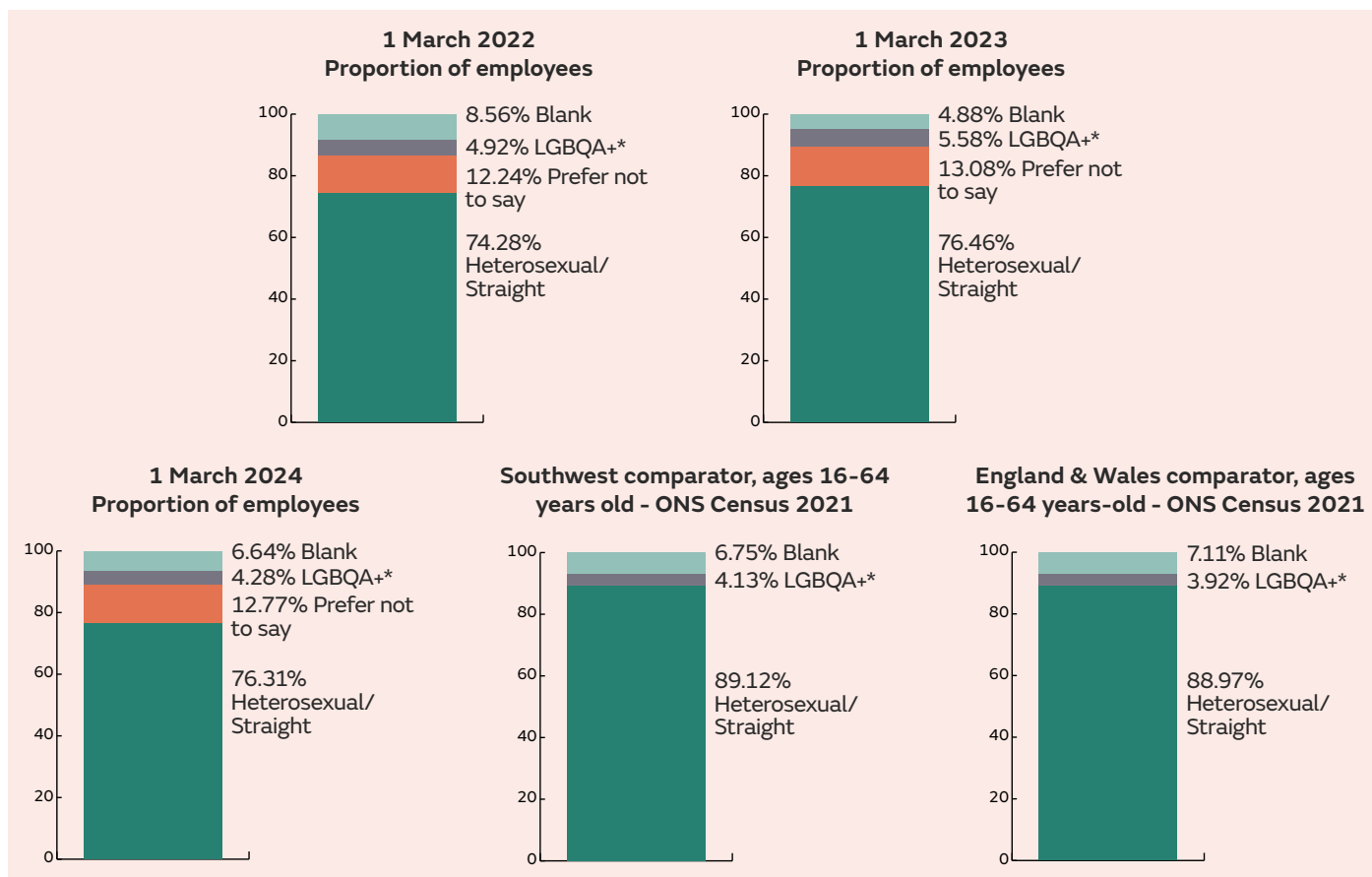
* Identify in another way also includes Prefer not to say.

Ethnicity (Grouped)



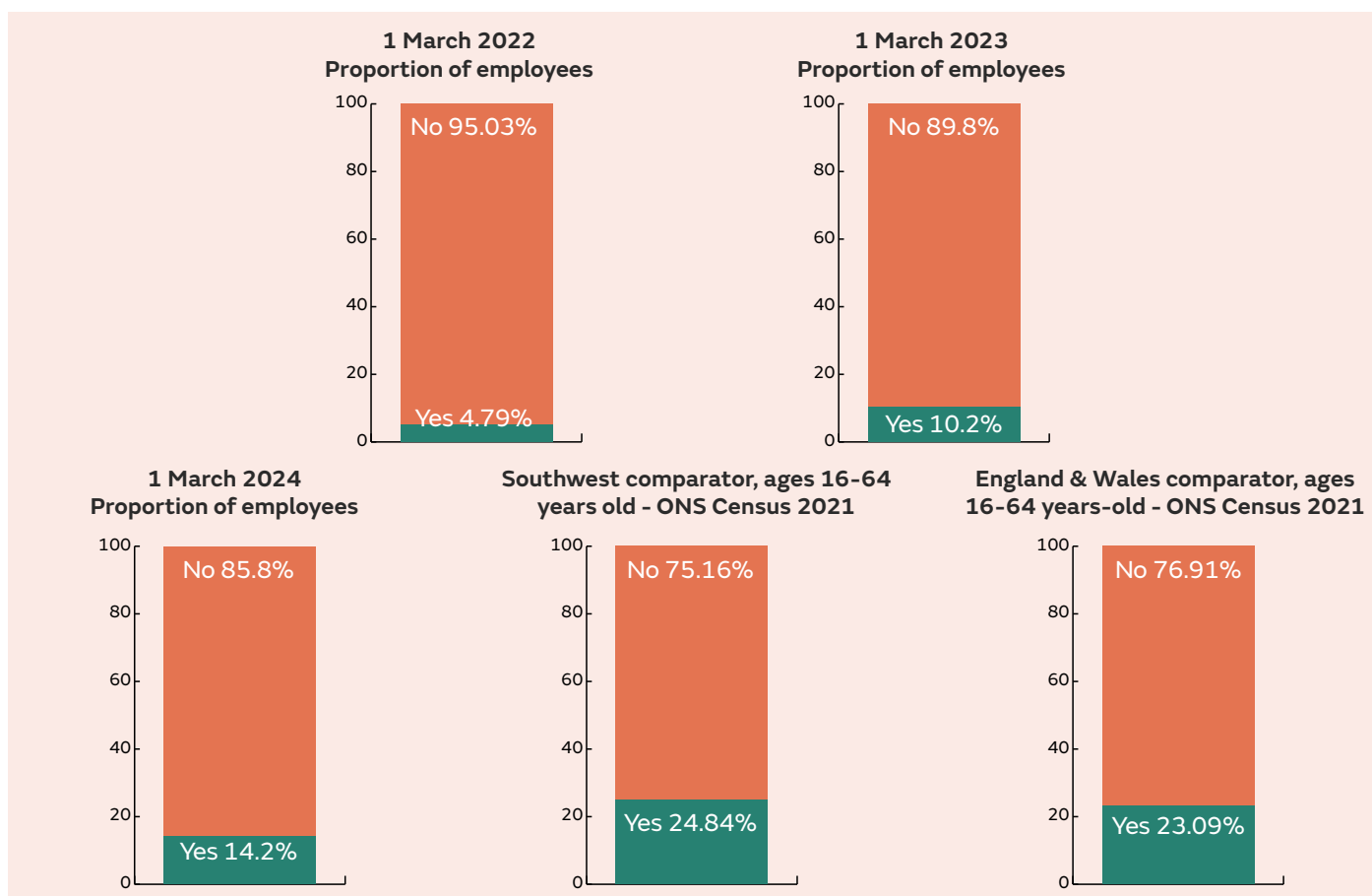
*This includes Mixed /Multiple Ethnic Groups, Asian/Asian British; Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British/Other ethnic group."

Sexual Orientation (Grouped)



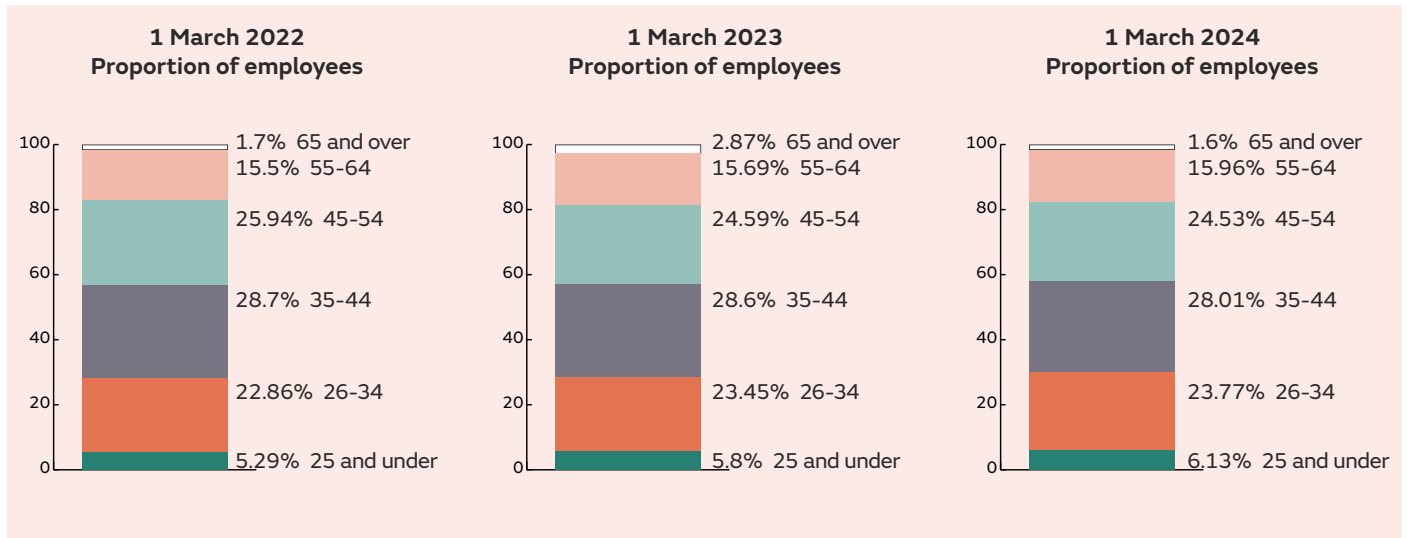
* This includes Bisexual/Pansexual, Gay/Lesbian, other Sexual Orientation.

Long Term Health Condition/Disability

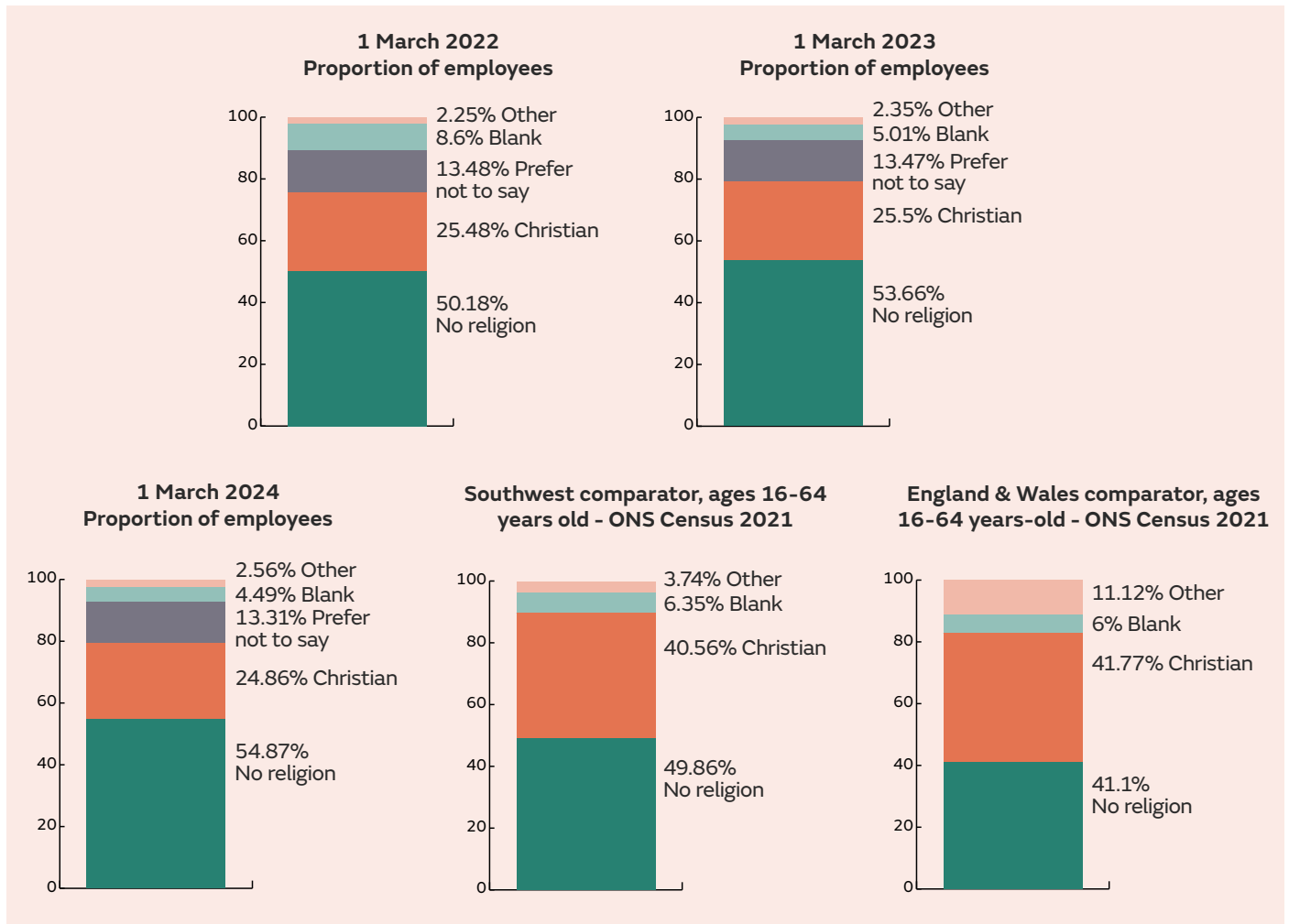


*Blank or prefer not to say has also been included within this figure.

Age



Religion or Belief



Creating a more inclusive workplace

Over the last year, we have focussed on a number of areas as we continue our work towards creating a more inclusive workplace. Below are some of our highlights.

Introducing Corporate Essentials Learning

In 2022, we began to evolve our annual training, moving away from how we have traditionally delivered statutory and mandatory training to creating shorter core modules with content that is simple, memorable, and timely, but is supported by bite size learning throughout the year and additional content provided in our Corporate Essentials Hub on our intranet.

The aim of evolving the learning was to ensure both the Met Office and its people still met their legal responsibilities as required but recognising that improving the learning experience would ensure a greater impact and return on investment is achieved.

Being better together, we established a Corporate Essentials Learning group comprising of subject matter experts from the key areas within the corporate essentials portfolio. This includes health and safety, data protection, cyber security, counter fraud and diversity and inclusion.

Our initial focus was developing the data protection essentials, which was launched in April 2023. A key component of developing this module was ensuring that it was inclusive in several ways, Firstly, ensuring the module was digitally accessible so could be completed using only a keyboard, all parts of the module were accessible by screen readers, and that closed captions followed content on the screen. Secondly, in reviewing the content of the module that one of the case studies included they/them pronouns.

Following the launch, we received positive feedback from employees who had previously found training inaccessible and also welcomed the inclusion of pronouns and characters who identified as non-binary.

As we continue our journey in developing our corporate essentials, we want to ensure that our corporate essentials continues to be inclusive and responsive to the needs of our employees.



“ It was great to see that one of the characters had they/them pronouns in the scenarios. I just thought I'd share with the group as it seemed a nice little way the Met Office was showing support and being more inclusive.”

Employee

“ Simple, easy to remember key messages and great signposting.”

Employee

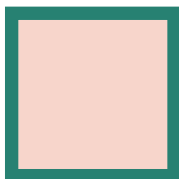
Creating a Great Place to Work

A key strategic priority for the Met Office is to be recognised as a great place to work, both internally and externally. We know the marketplace we are operating in is increasingly competitive so understanding and improving our employee offer is crucial.

In 2023, we undertook the Great Place to Work Trust Index survey. Participating in this survey, allowed us to benchmark ourselves against a number of different industries. The insights gained have been used to develop an action plan which identifies six key areas we want to focus on to strengthen our Employee Value Proposition (EVP). Our Employee Value Proposition is the promise we make to current and future employees. Our Civil Service People Survey showed that employees are proud to tell others that they are part of the Met Office (83%) and 68% would recommend the Met Office as a place to work. However, we recognise that there is more that we need to do to develop the Met Office as a great place to work for everyone.

Over the last year, we have started to implement a range of approaches to improve our Employee Value Proposition such as developing a new careers website which will be more engaging and easier to navigate. In recognition that the Met Office is a 24-7 work environment we have developed guidance to support employees to undertake international remote working for short periods. Although there are restrictions in place, we believe this guidance is a huge step forward in offering flexibility to some of our employees in being able to work overseas.

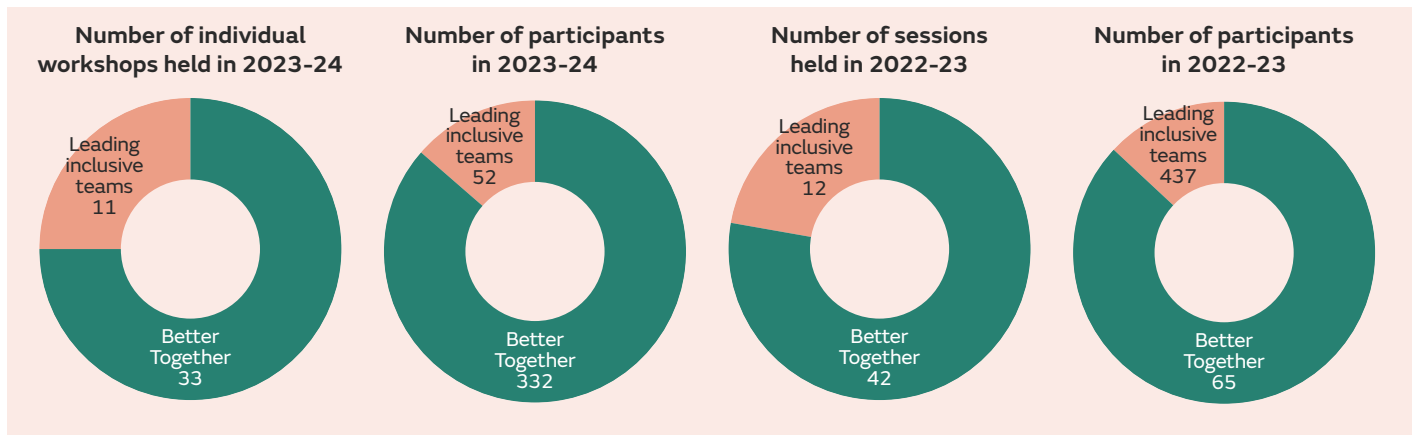
As a result of participating in the survey, Great Place to Work recognised us on their list of the UK Best Workplaces for Tech 2023 and UK Best Workplaces for Women 2023.



ED&I Learning & Development

In addition to Corporate Essentials, we offer a range of learning and development opportunities, included in this is Better Together and Leading Inclusive Teams. Both of these are interactive workshops, where the focus is on creating an inclusive workplace and recognising and utilising the diversity within the team and not just characteristics protected by the Equality Act but the wider range of human characteristics.

The table below summarises the number of sessions held and the number of participants with a comparison against data for 2022-23.



Celebrating National Inclusion Week

In September, we participated in National Inclusion Week. An opportunity to highlight the importance of inclusion in the workplace, but also time to reflect on what we have achieved so far and consider what our future focus should be.

For this year's Inclusion Week, we welcomed Lee Elliot Major from the University of Exeter, the country's first Professor of Social Mobility. His work is dedicated to improving the prospects of young people from under-resourced backgrounds focusing on research that has a direct impact on policy and practice.

Over 40 employees joined Lee's webinar as he discussed what social mobility is and shared findings from [Social Mobility in the Southwest](#). This report highlighted that the southwest has the worst educational outcomes for disadvantaged young people in the country and low social mobility compared with other areas.

Lee shared his thoughts on what steps the Met Office could take to ensure that we are open to talent from all social backgrounds, this included analysing the socioeconomic profile of the workforce, reviewing our recruitment and selection processes and language used in job adverts and offering work experiences and apprenticeships. As a result of this insightful and thought-provoking presentation, we want to focus in 2024-25 in expanding our understanding about the socioeconomic background of our employees.

We also hosted a presentation from Business Disability Forum on how to have a supportive and meaningful conversation between a line manager and employee about workplace adjustments. This was to complement the launch of our new workplace adjustments passport.

How inclusive events make a difference!

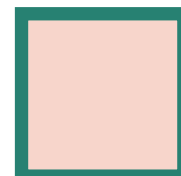
In October we hosted the NASA Space Apps challenge at our Exeter main office. This global event is an opportunity to connect, explore fascinating topics and solve complex challenges.

The event was taking place over a weekend, days when regular childcare options are not usually available. For anyone who has caring responsibilities or parenting solo, the opportunity to participate in an event like this can be challenging and for some become an exclusionary space. This can ultimately impact on career and collaboration opportunities.

For the Space Apps Challenge, we made the decision to provide free childcare for the event. By consciously thinking about inclusion when planning this event, we were able to create a more inclusive and diverse space which generated more creativity and a greater scope of ideas and experiences.

This resulted in a higher attendance and the event being fully booked with around 100 people attending.

Following the event, the key organisers developed a 'How-to Guide' which provides information on identifying a suitable location and choosing an appropriate childcare provider. The guide is being shared widely both internally and with the University of Exeter to encourage colleagues to use when organising events outside the usual working hours.



Introducing workplace adjustments passports for all

In July we launched the Met Office workplace adjustments passport. The passport can help to facilitate a conversation between an employee and their manager about what adjustments they may need to remove or reduce barriers in the workplace.

In the Met Office, we use the term workplace adjustments, and this encompasses reasonable adjustments i.e. the legal term to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles a disabled employee may face.

Changes to how workplace adjustments were funded in the Civil Service gave us the opportunity to review our workplace adjustments guidance and process. Colleagues with disabilities shared their experiences of trying to implement workplace adjustments, which for some had resulted in long waits and often having to re-tell their story.

To address these challenges, colleagues from various teams worked together to improve our workplace adjustments offer, which included centralising the costs for all workplace adjustments, developing a software catalogue of assistive technology, and developing the Met Office Workplace Adjustments Passport.

Lots of adjustments are simple and easy to implement, as often it is changing how we work, such as clear communications, flexibility in working hours, presenting information in other formats. These can all have a significant impact on employees' wellbeing, performance, and work/life balance. In creating a centralised budget, it has started to streamline the process and create the approach that adapting environments and providing equipment is the norm.

In launching our new process and passport, we wanted to be more inclusive, as we recognise that we all may need workplace adjustments at some point in our working lives. As such, workplace adjustments can also cover temporary circumstances for example a broken leg or observing religious events such as Ramadan. They can also cover other factors in employee's lives such as caring responsibilities, experiencing menopausal symptoms, transitioning, or undergoing fertility treatment.

Completion of the passport is voluntary, and the employee has control over the content, so can share as much detail as they feel is appropriate.

As part of the launch, we created a dedicated space for workplace adjustments on our intranet, which has a number of resources to support both employees and managers in making adjustments as simple as possible. We also created several avatars as case studies to highlight the types of workplace adjustments that may be put in place.

These resources aim to give both managers and employees the confidence to talk about adjustments to help break down any barriers. Our research told us that some employees feel anxious raising requests and some managers find it difficult discussing issues that they feel are personal to the employee.



Since the launch, over 200 employees have used our workplace adjustments passport. In the Civil Service People Survey for 2022, the percentage of Met Office employees who did not know what a workplace adjustments passport was 39%, the 2023 People Survey found that this had dropped to 6% and 21% of employees were using the passport and found that it was helping them to get appropriate workplace adjustments and support in place.

We are continuing to embed workplace adjustments, through regular communications, using our avatars and networks to share stories, to also developing bitesize learning for our people managers and want to spend this coming year working on how we effectively monitor the process.



Establishing Goodbye conversations

In May 2023, we introduced ‘Goodbye Conversations’ to understand why employees leave us. We are starting to develop data reporting about these conversations to provide insight into employee experiences both the positive and the negative. They also highlight changes or improvements we can make to retain talent.

It’s not just a coffee!

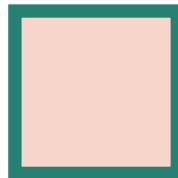
Some of the best conversations we have are unstructured, sparking ideas and building connections. Inspired by Nesta’s [Randomised Coffee Trials](#), we introduced Random Coffee in 2018, initially as a trial and in person but expanding in 2019 to a virtual random coffee so those based in locations outside head office could participate.

Each month over 400 participants are randomly arranged into small groups for a random coffee, one person is designated lead and is responsible for setting the coffee meet up, the conversation can take whatever course from work-related matters to a wide range of topics and interests. The aim is to bring people together in a relaxed and informal way, introducing people that wouldn’t ordinarily meet through work helping to make connections, find common ground and shared experiences. It helps to take down the invisible wall that can sometimes be built through misinformation and ignorance. This year, Random Coffee celebrated its fifth anniversary and was also recognised at our Annual Awards for Excellence in the ‘Better Together’ category and has been shared across the civil service as a piece of good practice.

Digital Accessibility

We have continued to develop our awareness and understanding of digital accessibility. Focusing on improving the digital accessibility of the news content on our intranet, identifying accessibility concerns, we have developed an accessibility statement to rectify issues identified. This is a huge step forward in our internal capability to provide accessibility assurance for all things digital. Working closely with Internal Communications, in the last year, the number of accessibility concerns identified in news stories has reduced by 51% and we have seen a big change in how hyperlinks are used in news stories. Accessibility testing has resulted in 98% of news pages tested having sufficient colour contrast and 93% of pages tested having images with alternative text descriptions.

We still have much work to do in embedding digital accessibility, but we are genuinely moving forward and are providing leadership and vision in this space across government departments. We recently pitched an idea to improve accessibility in digital communications to the Government Communication Services (GCS) [Project Spark! programme](#). 'Accessible by default – why 20% really matters' outlined that 1 in 5 people in the UK have a disability and could experience digital inaccessibility. Our idea focused on centralising tools and training and exploring whether artificial intelligence (AI) could be used to embed accessibility best practice. We were thrilled that we were given the go ahead to take this idea forward and are currently working with GCS Innovation Lab to develop further.



Creating a sense of belonging through staff networks

Staff networks are essential to our work and contribute to the success of the Met Office. They bring together employees with a shared characteristic or shared experience or interest.

All of them add value to the Met Office and play an important role in helping to deliver the vision set out in our equality, diversity, and inclusion strategy. However, more importantly they are there to create a sense of belonging and provide a safe and supportive space for colleagues to connect.

Our networks also provide valuable insight into the lived experiences of our employees, this informs best practice on how we can make the Met Office a more inclusive organisation for everyone.

In the last year we welcomed the Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Network, this takes our total number of staff networks to fourteen. Each of our networks has a lead, and a number of networks have adopted a co-lead model, this approach is making networks more sustainable and we are keen to support this. All leads receive an allocation of time to undertake their role and all are supported by a network sponsor.

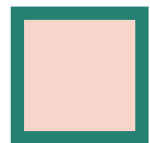
Over the last year, networks have worked with colleagues across the Met Office to:

- Provide awareness sessions at team meetings, roadshows, and the OP-MET (Operational Meteorology) conference.
- Provide advice and feedback on equality impact assessments.
- Undertake accessibility testing on IT products and SharePoint sites.
- Support Floorplate Working Groups with floorplate moves and providing advice to employees who are moving floorplates.

In addition, some have spent time reestablishing networks, focusing on roles and responsibilities. All have used a range of communications to promote their work and visibility and encourage membership.

Some network highlights include:

- To celebrate Autism Acceptance Month, our Autism Network focused on intersectionality and collaborated with the LGBTQ+ Network to write a blog on multiple diverse characteristics and the hierarchy of diversities. This was followed by a Q&A session.
- Working with Property Management, our Women's Network initiated a six-month trial of free period products in both our head office and an external location. This has resulted in period products being available permanently and across all our locations.
- As part of Inter-Faith Week, our Religion & Philosophical Belief Network presented a series of talks on 'My Belief and the Environment'. Colleagues from within the Met Office talked about their belief and how they put those beliefs into action to support the environment.
- Collaborating with Succeed with Dyslexia, the Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Network held an online webinar exploring key issues around neurodiversity and how to support employees in the workplace.



- Combining Learning at Work week and Mental Health Awareness Week. A number of events took place including crafting workshops, lunchtime walks, a men’s mental health presentation and guided relaxation sessions to manage anxiety.
- The Women in Climate Network which is a partnership with the University of Exeter celebrated its fifth birthday, during that time it has held over 75 meetings on a number of different themes. In the last year, some of those themes included dealing with difficult behaviour, balancing a career and relationships, and co-hosting an event with the Menopause Network to talk about early onset menopause.
- Our Carer’s Network lead spoke at the Carers Confident conference about his experiences of balancing caring responsibilities with work.
- EM-Power is the name for our network that represents diverse ethnic backgrounds. Following the relaunch, the network facilitated a discussion at the OP-MET conference on ‘meteorology and the empire’ with Dr Martin Mahony from the University of East Anglia.
- To mark Pride month our LGBTQ+ Network held a panel event to raise their profile and share how colleagues could be better allies.
- Our Internationals network supported the development of the new international remote working guidance and also worked with directorates to develop checklists to welcome visiting scientists.
- Our Shift Workers network has continued to raise health and wellbeing issues and how these can affect an employee’s wellness and productivity. Webinars on the importance of sleep and food choices have been shared amongst members.
- Members of the ADHD, Dyslexia & Dyspraxia and Autism networks have started mentoring members of the senior leadership team in the Science directorate.



Accessibility & Disability



ADHD



Autism



Dyslexia & Dyspraxia



Carers



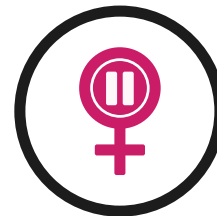
EM-Power



Internationals



LGBTQ+



Menopause



Mental Health & Wellbeing



Religion & Philosophical Belief



Shift Workers



Women in Climate



Women's

Investing in our Early Careers

We recognise the value of investing in Early Careers to help strengthen future business growth and support advancing the equality of opportunity. Our programmes include a range of opportunities such as apprenticeships, short internships, yearlong placements, and graduates.

Over the last year 115 employees participated in early career schemes - 71 on apprenticeships, 35 on industrial placements and summer internships (2023-24 intake) and 9 on our new graduate development programme.

Some key activities during 2023-24 include:

- As part of National Apprenticeship Week (February 2024) and to reflect on how apprenticeships enable and develop our people as well as ensure we have a workforce with the skills for the future. We hosted a week of internal and external events including a webinar on how apprenticeships can help neurodivergent employees thrive, joining an apprenticeship expo at Exeter College, and Q&A sessions with existing employees who shared their experience of undertaking an apprenticeship within their role.
- Encouraging case studies to share on our careers site to demonstrate the benefit of the programmes for individuals.
- Submitting bids to host interns from the Civil Service Autism Exchange Programme 2024.
- Working with external parties, such as PathwayCTM, to support our aims to improve social mobility and widen participation through our early careers programmes. Following an employer profile kick-off communications piece with PathwayCTM, 101 students registered their interest in the Met Office. Of these students, 52% were female, 34% Asian Heritage, 30% Black Heritage, 26% free school meals and 47% first generation university.

Early Careers Data

The following has been calculated based on headcount of employees who have taken part in an Early Careers scheme at any point within the 2023 - 2024 financial year.

This includes:

- externally hired apprentices
- internally hired apprentices
- summer internships
- 2022-23 industrial placement scheme employees (finished in July 2023)*
- 2023-24 industrial placement scheme (currently running, commenced summer 2023)
- graduate scheme employees

It includes apprentice employees no matter if they finished or started their apprenticeship at any time within the 23/24 financial year or if they were an apprentice throughout the full financial year.

*These employees are not included in the summary figure of 115 employees who participated in early careers schemes in the last year).

Data has been provided in tables, organised by diversity variables. Protected characteristic categories have been grouped where necessary to avoid small sample sizes or return values.

To minimise the risk of identification of individuals, data has also been anonymised where the protected characteristic return value was deemed too small to be confidential. If only one value was deemed too small on a singular row/column, another value has also been anonymised on that row/column to ensure the value cannot be identified via reverse calculations.

Sex	Proportion of Early Careers Employees (%)
Female	44.4%
Male	55.6%

Gender Identity	Proportion of Early Careers Employees (%)
Female	40.8%
Male	50.0%
I identify in another way	0.0%
Prefer not to say	<4.2%
(blank)	5.6-8.6%

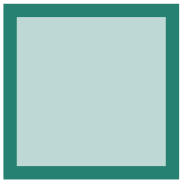
Ethnicity	Proportion of Early Careers Employees (%)
White	78.9%
Other Ethnic Group	9.9%
Prefer not to say	<4.2%
(blank)	7.7-10.6%

Sexual Orientation	Proportion of Early Careers Employees (%)
Heterosexual (Straight)	69.0%
LGBQA+	15.5%
Prefer not to say	9.9%
(blank)	5.6%

Disability or long-term health condition	Proportion of Early Careers Employees (%)
Yes	19.7%
No	65.5%
Blank	7.7%
Prefer not to say	7.0%

Age	Proportion of Early Careers Employees (%)
Under 25	64.8%
25-34	20.4%
35-44	10.6%
45-54	<4.2%
55-64	<4.2%
Over 65	0.0%

Religion or belief	Proportion of Early Careers Employees (%)
No Religion	66.2%
Christian	15.5%
Other Religion	4.2%
Prefer not to say	7.7%
(blank)	6.3%



Education Outreach

Our Education Outreach programme has two key objectives:

- To help young people stay safe and thrive during severe weather and in a changing climate by helping them to learn about weather and climate and act with confidence.
- To help young people discover the wide variety of careers at the Met Office and related sectors.

To achieve these objectives, the team work to maximise both impact and reach.

Maximising impact

A network of Met Office Partner Schools and Colleges has been established in the southwest. Working with these schools and students, we are able to trial and evaluate the education outreach programme, so we are better able to identify approaches and activities that lead to greater impact.

Maximising reach

To maximise the number and diversity of young people we reach across the UK we:

- Have a team of Education Outreach Ambassadors who volunteer their time to support the education outreach programme delivering sessions in schools, colleges, and youth groups.
- Are expanding our online provision. For example, we are currently evaluating a live linking approach with our Partner Schools and Colleges, to support curriculum delivery.
- Provide downloadable teaching materials.

As part of maximising reach, last summer, we piloted 'Forecasting your Future' an online work experience programme for 13–18-year-olds. Working in partnership with Springpod (a specialist career platform that creates interactive learning) gave us the opportunity to evolve our work experience offer. Through a series of modules, interactive communications with Met Office employees and project completion, the virtual programme offered a glimpse of what it is like to work for us and helps inform the career plans of the participants.

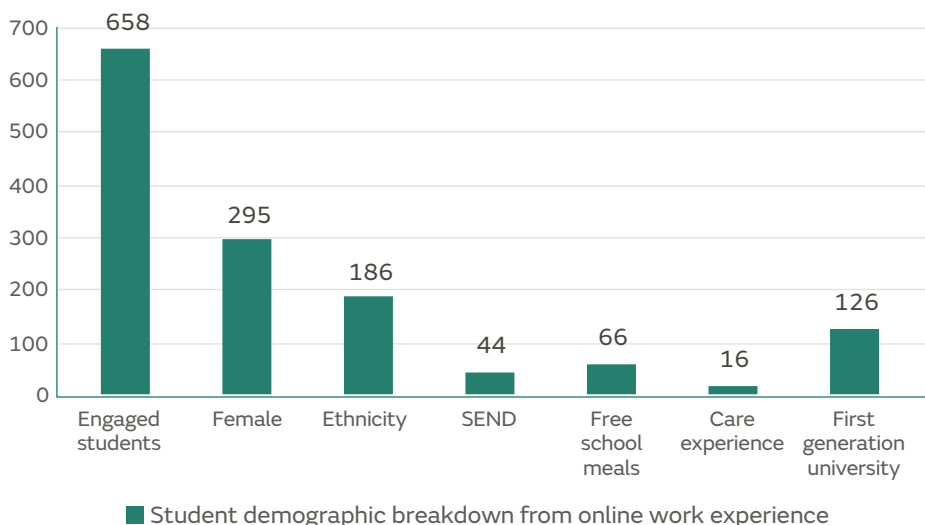
Work experience offers young people the opportunity to explore the world of work, developing employability skills as well as gathering insight into the workplace. However, access to meaningful work experience can be influenced by multitude of factors, in particular family connections and location. Additionally, young people are influenced by the types of organisations and roles that they know about, and the diversity they see in different workforces in terms of gender, ethnicity, and disability, for example.

This online work experience pilot effectively demonstrated how this approach gives a much greater number and diversity of young people the opportunity to gain work-based insight into different job roles across the Met Office. During the pilot period of 3 weeks, in July 2023, 547 young people undertook the online work experience with high levels of involvement from a range of underrepresented groups.

On completion, 91% of participants reported that they had increased their work-related skills and knowledge, and the proportion of students who felt they would be likely to consider a career within the Met Office, broader STEM sector or Civil Service increased from 45% to 67%.

Following the success of the pilot, the online programme is now available across the year and a schedule of in-person placements has been created for these students to apply for. In-person placements are 2-3 days in length, rather than a full week, making them more accessible to students less able to afford travel and subsistence costs and those who may have restricted time availability, such as young carers. Additionally, shorter placements enable us to accommodate more students.

Student demographic breakdown from online work experience*



*The above visualisation contains demographic data for FY 23/24. This includes data from the pilot scheme in July 2023 and online programme participants since the wider launch in January 2024.

“It couldn’t have been any better. I could recommend it to a lot of people. It is not just tech based or for people interested in the weather as it is so wide. If someone was into engineering and not coding it would be relevant. I would really recommend.”

Student

“Work experience in its usual form is not an equaliser between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.”

Teacher

Inclusive recruitment

In 2021, we identified the need to increase the representation of under-represented groups at all levels in the Met Office, this resulted in developing a resourcing ED&I action plan which included setting targets until the end of 2023-24. Along with developing this specific action plan, we started capturing diversity data at all elements of the recruitment process, enabling us to set a baseline.

The table below details our data for the under-represented areas since establishing the baseline in 2021.

Under-represented area	Measure	Baseline 2021	1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
Female	Applicants	37.3%	36.06%	31.72%
	Invited to interview	39.3%	41.13%	41.23%
	Hired	43.7%	42.12%	47.86%
Identifying in another way	Applicants	Data not captured	0.82%	1.5%
	Invited to interview	Data not captured	1.01%	1.31%
	Hired	Data not captured	0.41%	1.56%
Disability	Applicants	10.7%	13.98%	14.64%
	Invited to interview	11.7%	15.5%	17.48%
	Hired	14.2%	14.29%	16.7%
Any other ethnic group	Applicants	27.5%	27.03%^	39.77%^
	Invited to interview	11.6%	14.41%	16.46%
	Hired	8.9%	7.94%	8.04%

[^ We are currently unable to exclude applicants who do not meet the eligibility to live and work in the UK or our security clearance requirements.]



Procuring a new applicant tracking system

In the summer of 2023, we began the process of procuring a new applicant tracking system (ATS). We required a system that would provide a better user experience by being more accessible and offering a streamlined recruitment process, so applying for a job would be easier. We also wanted a system that would better capture diversity data enabling us to make data driven recruitment decisions allowing us to evolve our recruitment practices.

The system procured will allow anonymous applications, so removing identifying information such as names, dates of employment and place of study and helping to reduce bias in the recruitment process.

Along with a new applicant tracking system, in late 2023 we started creating the Met Office careers website, as part of our Great Place to Work strategy. Applicants will experience a modern, accessible, and user-friendly application journey, and the website will better connect with partners such as LinkedIn and Indeed enabling candidates to apply for job roles more easily.

Both the Met Office careers website and our new applicant tracking system launch in April 2024.

Accessible recruitment within the Scientific Software Engineering family of roles

In 2022, Foundation Science within our Science directorate organised an equality and diversity survey. One of the issues identified was inconsistencies in how job opportunities are created and then advertised. This led to developing a good practice guide for job opportunities, which includes guidance on length of time to advertise, using a gender decoder in job adverts and how to use interview exercises effectively. Building on this good practice, recruitment materials have been created to support recruitment within the Scientific Software Engineering (SSE) family of roles. Managers within this profession want to proactively improve the diversity by being as inclusive and supportive as possible.

The recruitment materials include a candidate pack to help manage expectations around an interview and to try and alleviate anxiety or fear a candidate may be experiencing. The pack includes the topics and the style of questions that will be covered in the interview enabling candidates to prepare and focus on specific areas and/or topics. Candidates are also given the option as to whether they would like the interview in person, virtually and if virtual whether they would prefer a no-camera interview. Feedback on the candidate pack is also being gathered from successful candidates.

The table below details the number of candidates following recruitment campaigns in 2022, 2023 and 2024. In 2022, 3 recruitment campaigns used candidate packs. These were used again in the 2023 recruitment campaign but with slight tweaks, following this campaign in late 2023 the good practice guidance was shared and used in the early 2024 recruitment campaign.

Job role	2022	2023	2024
Foundation applications	18	30	63
Scientifics Software Engineering applications	19	17	30
Senior applications	4 (3 external)	2 (0 external)	14 (12 external)
Total applications	41	42	107
Job Offers	4	8	12

Gender Pay Report

The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between all men and women in a workforce. This is different to equal pay, which deals with the pay difference between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs of work value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

Our gender pay gap for the period ending 31 March 2023 was 5.9% in favour of men, an increase of 0.30% from 5.60 % in 2022. The table details our gender pay gaps over the last four years.

Gender Pay and Bonus Gap	31 March 2020	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
Mean Gender Pay Gap	7.3%	6.5%	5.6%	5.9%
Median Gender Pay Gap	5.7%	4.0%	4.1%	4.7%
Mean Bonus Pay Gap	6.9%	4.8%	2.5%	5.4%
Median Bonus Pay Gap	1.3%	1.1%	-0.5%	1.3%

[Note: Approach changed in 2020 to align to Civil Service method using ACSES Data]

Comparison with the Civil Service

The table below compares our gender pay gap with the Civil Service (as a whole) gender pay gap.

Gender Pay	Met Office - 31 March 2023	Civil Service - 31 March 2022
Mean Gender Pay Gap	5.9%	8.1%
Median Gender Pay Gap	4.7%	9.6%

ONS report that among full-time employees the gender pay gap for the UK in April 2023 was 7.7%.

Our [Gender Pay Report 2023](#) provides more detailed analysis of our pay gap and the factors affecting the increase in our pay gap.

Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our employees continues to be critically important to us. Our wellbeing strategy first launched in 2021 sets out our commitment and our priorities. We use the Five Ways to Wellbeing to underpin our strategy and inform how we promote wellbeing across the Met Office. We all have a shared responsibility to wellbeing, from senior leaders creating a culture of wellbeing through their behaviour and role modelling to line managers and employees regularly discussing wellbeing, to us all taking responsibility for our own wellbeing.

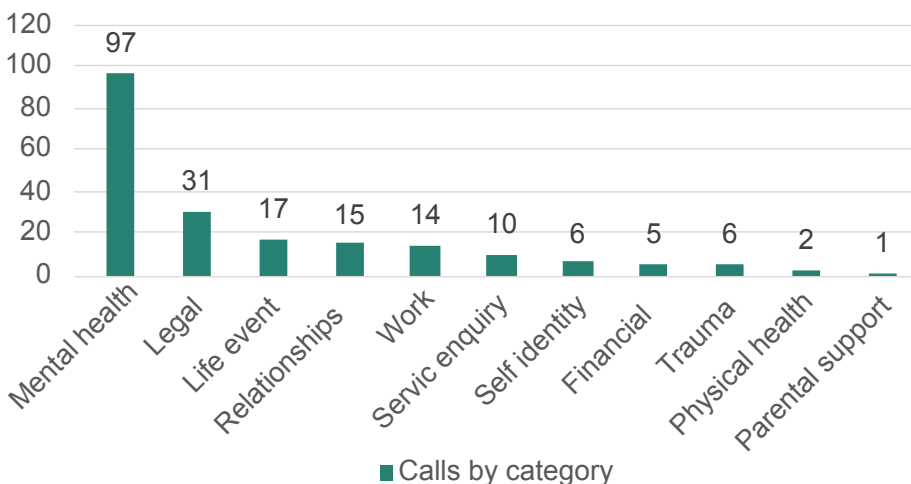
As part of Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2023, we introduced our new community of Wellbeing Advocates. Complementing our Wellbeing Champions, our advocates are the conduit between directorate senior leadership teams and wellbeing champions, supporting champions with wellbeing related conversations and activities within directorates.

In the last year, we made our Connect 5 Together workshop available to all employees. Originally only available to managers, the key goal of this workshop is to change the conversation on mental health, giving participants the skills and confidence to have enabling conversations in both their professional and personal life. The workshop has been described as both enlightening and reassuring by employees and shares knowledge and skills to build and maintain mental wellbeing.

In analysing the usage of our Employee Assistance Programme for the last financial year, the table below details that 203 calls have been logged and the categories for those calls.



Calls made to Employee Assistance Programme Helpline



- 172 of calls logged were counselling calls and this accounts for 84.7% of all calls, this sits above our benchmark of 74.0% by 10.7%.
- Anxiety was the most common reason, accounting for 30.8% of counselling engagement, this was followed by low mood (17.4%) and bereavement (9.9%).
- 31 were advice calls and this accounts for 15.3% of all calls sitting below our benchmark of 26.0% by 10.7%.
- Employment was the most common reason for advice calls, accounting for 35.5% of overall advice engagement. This was followed by divorce and separation (16.1%) and wills and probate (16.1%).

Of the 203 calls logged, 49.8% were logged by females and 49.3% by males and 1% did not share their gender identity.

In terms of formal counselling engagement in the last financial year there has been:

- 5 referrals for face-to-face counselling, with a total of 21 sessions delivered.
- 3 referrals for structured telephone counselling, with a total of 20 sessions delivered.
- 7 referrals for online counselling, with a total of 42 sessions delivered.
- 5 referrals for CBT counselling, with a total of 9 sessions delivered.

Our wellbeing activities over the last year have included:

- Reviewed and updated our Wellbeing Hub - this has a variety of resources including links to wellbeing training workshops and our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) as well as other external specialist support services.
- Delivered a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Week in September, where focus was on helping our employees stay safe and thrive through a range of activities.
- Partnered with our corporate charity The Wildlife Trusts to promote the five ways to wellbeing which has included wildlife origami to support mindfulness and volunteering opportunities.
- Promoted the new app from our Employee Assistance Programme provider. The app provides a number of wellbeing tools and resources that track wellness and improve health and wellbeing.
- Promoted key wellbeing awareness days such as World Mental Health Day where the unrelated shipping forecast phrase 'moderate or good, occasionally very poor' struck a chord with employees and encouraging them to talk about their own mental health.



Priorities for 2024-25

Our key priority for this financial year will be reviewing and setting our equality objectives for 2024-2028, ensuring that our new objectives align with the government priorities as described in the Civil Service Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2022-25.

Our new objectives will also be informed by data from our People Survey 2023, the Great Place to Work findings and the outcome of our Investors in Diversity reassessment, which commenced in late 2023.

To complement our new objectives, an equality, diversity, and inclusion Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for 2024-25 is in development and this will focus on increasing diversity in more senior job roles.

Once our equality objectives are defined and agreed by the Met Office Board, a detailed action plan with outcome measures will be developed.

In addition to setting our objectives this year, we also want to focus on:

- Improving our ED&I governance structure, so it is more joined up.
- Developing more effective monitoring and evaluation of ED&I activity.
- Continuing to embed understanding and awareness of Equality Impact Assessment (EqIAs) across the organisation.

Equality, diversity and inclusion - Met Office

If you wish to receive this report in an alternative format, please contact us:

Email accessibility@metoffice.gov.uk.

Call 0370 900 0100 (from the UK).

Call +44 330 135 0000 (outside the UK).