

Shropshire Council

Annual Workforce Diversity Report

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023



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We are pleased to present our Annual Workforce Diversity Report for 2022/23. This report provides an overview of diversity within our workplace and highlights key findings, initiatives, and areas for improvement to ensure an inclusive and equitable work environment.

Produced in conjunction with the Annual Service User Diversity Report we can ensure that equality is continually monitored and remains in focus, not just for Shropshire Council employees, but also for the people of Shropshire.

The workforce data used in this report is based on employee headcount as of 31 March 2023 and is comparable with other workforce reporting such as the ONS (Office for National Statistics) quarterly surveys and HR (Human Resources) balanced scorecards.

Figures for the local population are taken from the 2021 Census.

A snapshot of our workforce on 31 March 2023

5,776 employees (4,318.77 full-time equivalent)	2,452 full-time	3,324 part-time
	4,678 females	1,098 males
	2,223 school-based employees	3,553 corporate employees

Gender

Our current workforce

Our local population

All

Female - 81%
Male - 19%

Age 16-64

Female – 81%
Male – 19%

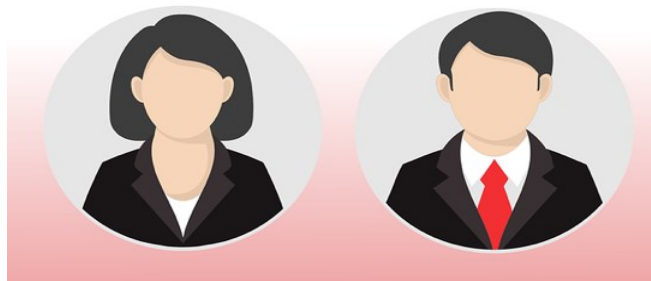
All

Female – 51%
Male – 49%

Age 16-64

Female – 50%
Male – 50%

We have in place a range of initiatives to promote a gender diverse workplace – unbiased recruitment processes to attract a broad range of candidates, flexible working practices to support the work-life balance of both men and women, a job evaluation scheme to ensure equal pay for equivalent roles and family friendly policies to promote employee wellbeing and flexibility.



When analysing the relationships with our workforce the gender split of employees who have been through a disciplinary process is female (71%), male (29%) – similar to the previous year and comparable with the gender split of the organisation. All grievances raised during 2022/23 were by female employees, an increase compared to 89% the previous year.

Shropshire Council has always employed a high proportion of female staff. This is attributed to the positions in our structure – cleaning/catering staff, care workers and teaching assistants, as well as a large proportion of part time roles all of which are predominantly undertaken by women.

62% of our most senior earners are female. This is a similar figure to previous years and continues to show an excellent representation of women in more senior roles.

5,739 job applications were received in 2022/23, of which 69% were female. 81% of the successful candidates were female, a similar figure to previous years and proportionate to the gender composition of our current workforce.

Other news...

- **Gender Pay Gap** - Shropshire Council continues to move in the right direction with the mean average shrinking by a further 2% from last year, making an overall reduction of over 8% since we first started reporting in 2018. See the full report here ([Equality, diversity and social inclusion | Shropshire Council](#)).

Disability

Our current workforce

Our local population

All
1.8%

Age 16-64
1.8%

All
18.5%

Age 16-64
15.4%

98% of employees who left Shropshire Council during 2022/23 were of 'unknown' disability status. This lack of data hugely affects our ability to understand our employment practices relating to disability (and other ED&I strands) and if any action is needed to change.



6.6% of our recruitment applicants declared that they considered themselves to have a disability. This is compared to 1.4% of our new starters. There is a high percentage of missing disability data for our new starters, particularly from our school-based employees, which makes it difficult to meaningfully analyse this data.

Relationships with our employees – without a full picture of our workforce disability data it's difficult to assess whether disciplinary action has been disproportionately taken against this group of employees. There is currently missing disability data for 93% of those who have been through a disciplinary process and 100% missing data for those who have raised a grievance.

We are taking steps to improve our data in this area to reduce the amount of missing information by encouraging staff to record their disability status, along with other diversity details. Employees have been invited to check that their personal data is accurate and to update accordingly.

Other news...

Good news! Shropshire Council continues to be a 'Disability Confident' organisation. Being a member of the scheme helps us to recruit and retain great people, challenges attitudes and increases understanding of disability.

Click here for more information about what it means to be a Disability Confident employer – [Disability Confident – Are you disability confident? \(campaign.gov.uk\)](https://www.campaign.gov.uk/disability-confident-are-you-disability-confident/)

Ethnicity

	<u>Our Current Workforce</u>		<u>Our Local Population</u>	
	All	Age 16-64	All	Age 16-64
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%	1.7%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%	0.5%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	0.5%	0.5%	1.2%	1.1%
Not Specified	18.3%	18.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Other Ethnic Group	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.6%
Prefer not to say	2.5%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
White	77.3%	77.0%	96.7%	96.2%

The ethnic composition of our workforce and of the local population remains largely unchanged. The most notable differences for the Shropshire area include an increase in mixed/multiple ethnicities from 0.5% to 1.2% and 'other' ethnicities from 0.1% to 0.4%. Again, it's difficult to fully analyse this data within our workforce due to the 18.3% of employees for whom we do not hold any ethnicity details.

Of the total number of disciplinary casework dealt with in 2022/23, 71.4% of employees were white and 28.6% not specified. Formal grievances were raised by 80.0% white employees and 20% from mixed/multiple ethnicity (representing 1 employee).

Ethnic minority groups (excluding white) continue to increase within our senior earners group of employees, from 3.4% in 2021/22 to 3.7% 2022/23, a further move in the right direction. We do not hold ethnicity data for 11.9% of our senior earners.

During 2022/23, 8.9% of our recruitment applicants were from other ethnic groups (excluding white). This is compared to a similar figure of 8.6% the year before. Our successful candidates from other ethnic groups (excluding white) have seen an increase from 2.4% to 3.4%. However, there are gaps in the data for 36.8% of our new employees making it difficult to fully analyse the figures in this category.

Other news...

The national Race Equality Matters #MyNames initiative was implemented on Stephen Lawrence Day, 22nd April, supported by SCARF (Shropshire Council Anti Racism Forum). This seeks to ensure that everyone pronounces people's names correctly, with conversations encouraged alongside the voluntary use of phonetic email signatures. The Council also marked Africa Day in May and South Asian Heritage Month July-August with information pieces for the workforce. Black History Month took place in October, the theme this year being 'time for change; action not words'. The centrepiece for the workforce was the Show Racism the Red Card Day campaign supported every year, through which individuals and teams are encouraged to share pictures of themselves along with something red, in order that a collage may be created on the Council-wide lock screen in the week leading up to the day itself. The message 'change hearts, change minds, change lives' also appeared on employee payslips. SCARF meets every two months, with everyone committed to values including providing 'A safe enough space to engage in conversation, reflection, and mutual learning' and 'a place to celebrate diversity'.

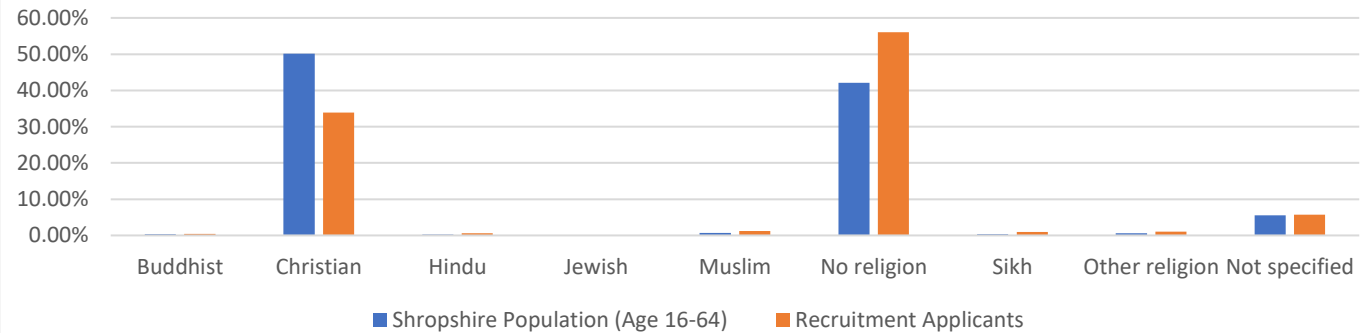
Religion

	<u>Our Current Workforce</u>		<u>Our Local Population</u>	
	All	Age 16-64	All	Age 16-64
Buddhist	0.12%	0.13%	0.28%	0.35%
Christian	41.57%	41.11%	55.47%	50.17%
Hindu	0.07%	0.07%	0.17%	0.22%
Jewish	0.03%	0.04%	0.06%	0.06%
Muslim	0.03%	0.04%	0.53%	0.67%
No religion	22.32%	22.79%	36.95%	42.06%
Sikh	0.21%	0.21%	0.24%	0.30%
Other religion	2.27%	2.27%	0.46%	0.61%
Not specified	33.38%	33.34%	5.85%	5.56%

The new Census figures for Shropshire show a huge change in the Christian population (previously 70%, now 50%) and those of No Religion (previously 21%, now 42%). This once again highlights the importance of our religious workforce data being current and complete to accurately compare data.

Our recruitment applicant figures show a similar comparison to the Shropshire working age population, with Christian and of No Religion being the dominant faiths.

Our recruitment applicants compared to the working age (16-64) population of Shropshire



Other news...

Shropshire Council has continued to highlight the different religious events celebrated throughout the year, providing information to all employees about the diverse religious festivals and observations that take place. This included Diwali in October 2022, a Hindu festival to observe the victory of light over darkness. Inter Faith week took place in November 2022 with employees having the opportunity to join online sessions to learn about a diverse range of faiths and beliefs. Hanukkah was celebrated in December 2022, the festival of lights observed by our Jewish colleagues. And in March 2023 Muslim colleagues observed Ramadhan, with information being shared across the workforce on how to support colleagues when fasting, praying, working and socialising.

Age

15 years and under
16 to 24 years
25 to 34 years
35 to 44 years
45 to 54 years
55 to 64 years
65 years and over

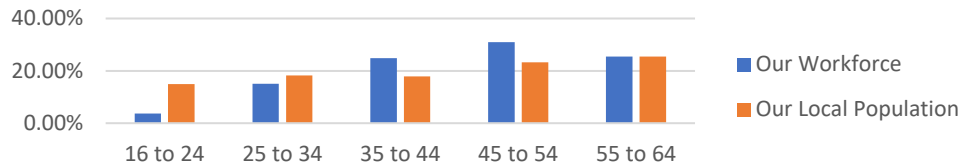
Our current workforce

All	Age 16-64
0.0%	n/a
3.5%	3.7%
14.6%	15.1%
24.1%	24.9%
29.9%	30.9%
24.5%	25.4%
3.3%	n/a

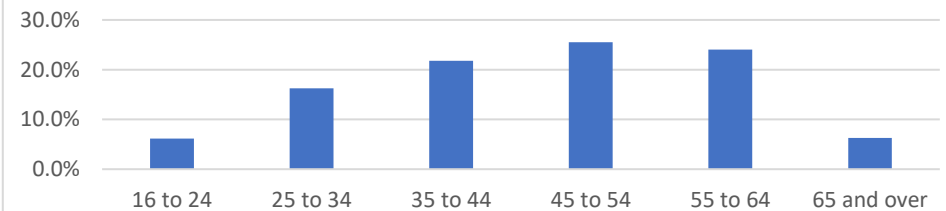
Our local population

All	Age 16-64
15.9%	n/a
8.8%	15.0%
10.8%	18.3%
10.5%	17.9%
13.7%	23.3%
15.0%	25.5%
25.4%	n/a

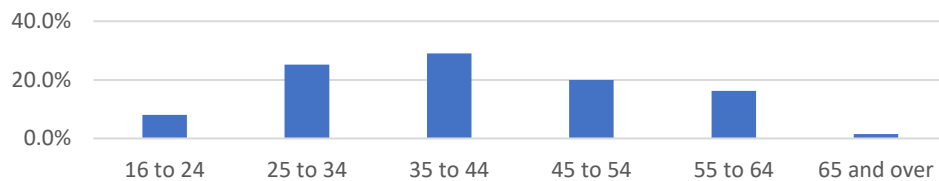
Age profile of our workforce and local population (Age 16-64 years)



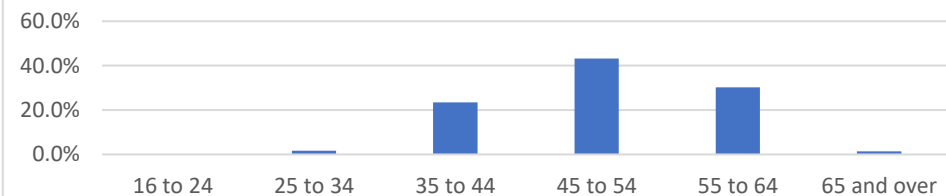
Age profile of our leavers



Age profile of our new starters



Age profile of our senior earners



Our data shows that the 16-24 age band is the least representative of our local population. 15.0% of the working age population is within this age band, with Shropshire Council employing 3.7%. We understand that an age-diverse workforce presents opportunities for us and by better matching the profile of our local population we can improve the services we provide.

Shropshire Council continues to work with both national and local Apprenticeship Training Providers to offer a wide range of apprenticeships including Higher, Advanced and Degree level qualifications for all ages of the workforce and our engagement with schools and colleges continues to increase.

Sexual Orientation

	<u>Our current workforce</u>	<u>Our local population</u>
	<u>Age 16 and over</u>	<u>Age 16 and over</u>
Bisexual	0.3%	1.0%
Gay or Lesbian	0.6%	1.2%
Not specified	38.8%	7.1%
Other	0.1%	0.2%
Prefer not to say	6.1%	n/a
Straight/Heterosexual	54.1%	90.6%

When comparing the sexual orientation of our workforce to the previous year we have seen a small change, with 1.0% declaring their sexual orientation as bisexual, gay, lesbian or other. This is in comparison to 2.4% of the local population.

The number of senior earners for whom we hold no sexual orientation data has continued to reduce, 49.0% in 2020/21, 44.5% in 2021/22 and 37.9% in 2022/23 - a change in the right direction.

The number of recruitment applications from bisexual, gay, lesbian and other sexual orientation candidates has increased from 5.6% in 2021/22 to 7.8% in 2022/23 – again, a positive step in the right direction.



Without a full picture of our workforce sexual orientation data it's difficult to assess whether disciplinary action has been disproportionately taken against this group of employees. There is currently missing data in this category for 43% of those who have been through a disciplinary process and 40% missing data for those who have raised a grievance.

Other news...

- **Employees were invited to celebrate LGBT+ month in February 2023 with a host of information available and an overall aim to “eliminate prejudice by educating people”.**
- **For LGBT+ Pride Month in June, Shropshire Council flew the Rainbow Flag, highlighted community initiatives and hosted quizzes during this month-long global celebration.**

Employee Engagement

Throughout the year the Chief Executive has continued to keep staff informed via his weekly e-mail. From important updates to awards and applause, this communication is also a tool for keeping the workforce updated on any policy changes, equality matters and training and development opportunities.

In addition, the 'Amplify Good News' bulletin was launched. From celebrating colleagues' achievements to highlighting the great work taking place across the Council to deliver vital services to our community, this is all about applauding our collective achievements.

HR Policies and Guidance

A suite of information is available on the staff intranet, providing guidance on a range of employment matters for employees and managers. We strive to ensure that all our policies are inclusive and are regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date with any changes in legislation and are relevant to the organisation. Some of the new and updated guidance and policies recently launched by the HR team include Grievance, Domestic Abuse, Recruitment, Special Leave, Pensions, Family Friendly, Employer Supported Volunteering Scheme, Notice Periods, Smoking at Work, Capability and Probation.

Employee Development

Through its online learning management Shropshire Council has continued to promote the development of staff, making learning accessible and flexible to all through face-to-face, virtual and online delivery and ensuring that the content of the learning has an ED&I thread to it.

We have and will continue to work with our colleagues in the NHS to progress relevant training and other actions to tackle issues such as ageism and sexism, and discrimination on grounds of religion and belief, as well as experiences of racism amongst the workforce, including from those who use our services.

Working with Wolverhampton and Telford & Wrekin Councils, there was significant success in providing education around Black History Month and on the safeguarding of black children. The ongoing 'Getting Leadership Right' programme is also supporting the Council's ED&I agenda and this will continue as the programme develops and is rolled out to a wider audience.

The Council's Leadership Development Framework supports career development by offering the opportunity to gain new skills, knowledge and experience, with equality and diversity recognised within the programme's modules.

Early Careers, Apprenticeships and Access to Vacancies

Shropshire Council continues to work with both national and local Apprenticeship Training Providers to offer a wide range of apprenticeships including Higher, Advanced and Degree level qualifications. We work closely with training providers to ensure that they are able to offer flexible training to meet the needs of the organisation as our services follow a remote first policy. Shropshire Council continues to work with these providers to develop apprenticeships for the future, providing greater flexibility to all employees in accessing apprenticeships.

Shropshire Council has championed an Apprenticeship First approach, ensuring that apprenticeship training is considered for all training needs in the first instance for both professional development and new recruits. Enabling an increase in recruited apprenticeships will endeavour to increase social mobility and diversity of the workforce, creating opportunities and entry-level access to roles within the organisation and allowing new recruits to develop and enhance their skills and knowledge whilst in paid employment.

In addition, Care Leavers and Children Looked After (CLA) are supported through an internal apprenticeship scheme, offering our care leavers the opportunity to work in a paid role for Shropshire Council whilst completing an apprenticeship, gaining skills and confidence within the workplace and demonstrating our continued commitment to our corporate parenting role.

Shropshire Council provides opportunities for Supported Internships through Enable (Supported Employment Services) and when appropriate, we enable opportunities for Supported Interns to move on to Apprenticeships or advice to other employers who wish to support.

Shropshire Council have recently updated information around work experience opportunities, making placements easier to access and the opportunity open to more applicants. We work closely with local Department for Work and Pensions colleagues, supporting and attending jobs fairs and offering training sessions which enable job seekers to understand how they can enhance their CVs, job applications and interview techniques when applying for roles at Shropshire Council.

The Council is a member of the National Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network which commits to making a change to the diversity and inclusion of apprenticeships both internally and externally, improving social mobility while building a skilled, diverse workforce.

Shropshire Council are currently part of an Apprenticeship Trailblazer group looking at the creation of a Level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship route; the level 2 apprenticeship will enable a large number of apprentices who require an “inclusive apprenticeship” to participate in an apprenticeship. If the Institute of Apprenticeships agree to the creation of this standard, it would create an opportunity for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Special Educational or Additional Needs to access employment through an apprenticeship opportunity.

Summary and Next Steps

Through our diversity monitoring we continue to demonstrate our commitment to understanding, valuing, and incorporating difference to ensure a fair and inclusive workplace. Whilst progress has been made, there are still areas that require attention and improvement.

Workplace diversity should ideally reflect the demographics of the local population to ensure representation and inclusivity. Any disparities can be an indication of potential issues in the recruitment process or in the culture within the workplace. We now have the latest Census data for analysis, with the gaps in our workforce equality data once again making it difficult to compare the two data sets. This ongoing issue is again taken forward as an objective for the upcoming year. Our data shows that new employees are providing the required information at the recruitment stage, with gaps in existing employee data being the most prevalent. This is particularly challenging within our School and Cleaning/Catering service areas where staff are not centrally based and do not always have access to the ERP. Our ED&I project team will continue to meet to identify where further improvements can be made and to communicate the importance of workforce equality data to help create a more inclusive workplace.