



Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

2023/2024





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Introduction

At Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, we are committed to promoting Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and making a positive difference for all our employees and the wider community that we serve. But this is more than just a statement – it's about how we can work towards the society we want to see, both within and outside our organisation.

For us, this means valuing every employee as a unique individual. We want to recruit, develop and retain the most talented people and make the best use of their skills and experience to deliver effective services to our communities, recognising the value that a diverse workforce brings.

We aim to identify, understand and eliminate all barriers that prevent access to services, information, and employment. The services we deliver are risk based according to the needs of particular groups.

We also want to work together to create a truly inclusive work environment, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and whose contributions are recognised and valued equally.

Legislation

The Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, public bodies have a general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people sharing different protected characteristics. The 9 protected characteristics are

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race / Ethnicity
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty was introduced from The Equality Act 2010. The aim of the general duty is to integrate considerations of the advancement of equality into the day-to-day business of public authorities.



Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share characteristics and those who don't.
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't.
- The action plan below will support our organisation to carry out the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Demographic Overview

The demographic profile varies across Berkshire particularly when comparing on a local authority level. The below gives an overview of the demographic breakdown for each of the 6 local authority areas in Berkshire. As an organisation it is important, we strive to represent the community that we serve.

Age Profile

Local Authority	15 and under	16-64	65 and over
Reading	21%	67%	12%
West Berkshire	20%	61%	19%
Bracknell Forest	21%	65%	15%
Wokingham	21%	61%	18%
Slough	26%	64%	10%
Windsor and Maidenhead	20%	61%	19%

Disability

Local Authority	% with a disability
Reading	13%
West Berkshire	13.2%
Bracknell Forest	12.3%



Wokingham	11.9%
Slough	13.4%
Windsor and Maidenhead	12.7%

Ethnicity

Local Authority	White	Asian/Asian British	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Other ethnic group
Reading	74.8%	13.6%	4.0%	6.7%	1.0%
West Berkshire	94.8%	2.5%	1.6%	0.9%	0.2%
Bracknell Forest	90.6%	5.0%	2.0%	1.9%	0.4%
Wokingham	88.4%	7.4%	2.1%	1.4%	0.7%
Slough	45.7%	39.7%	3.4%	8.6%	2.6%
Windsor and Maidenhead	86.1%	9.6%	2.3%	1.2%	0.8%

Language

Local Authority	English	Polish	Punjabi	Urdu	Nepalese	Any other language
Reading	85%	3%	1%	1%	2%	9%
West Berkshire	97%	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Bracknell Forest	94%	1%	0%	0%	1%	4%



Wokingham	95%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Slough	73%	6%	6%	5%	0%	10%
Windsor and Maidenhead	93%	1%	1%	0%	0%	5%

Religion

Local Authority	Christian	No religion	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Other
Reading	50%	30%	4%	7%	1%	2%
West Berkshire	58%	38%	1%	2%	0%	2%
Bracknell Forest	61%	28%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Wokingham	60%	26%	2%	3%	1%	1%
Slough	41%	12%	6%	23%	11%	1%
Windsor and Maidenhead	62%	22%	2%	4%	2%	1%

Index of Multiple Deprivation

England average 16,422 (the lower the number the more deprived)

Local Authority	Rank
Reading	16,551
West Berkshire	24,962



Bracknell Forest	24,498
Wokingham	29,227
Slough	13,064
Windsor and Maidenhead	26,476

Equality Objectives

Under the Equality Act 2010, public bodies have a general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people sharing different protected characteristics. To meet the general duty RBFRS have a Specific Duty to develop Equality Objectives every four years.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service has set out 4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives for 2022-2026 to ensure that as an organisation we provide opportunities for everyone to reach their potential to be able to deliver effective services to our communities. This means objectives are not just based on processes and policies but focussed on improving outcomes for our employees and people in our community.

Objective 1 – **Increasing the diversity of staff at all levels:**

We recognise the value that a diverse workforce brings and will take action to increase the diversity of job applicants, seeking individuals with the right behaviours and skills to help us reflect and engage with our local communities.

Objective 2 – **Leadership and corporate commitment:**

We will support our organisational leaders to understand their role in tackling inequalities and demonstrating inclusive behaviours, in line with our Behavioural Competency Framework. This commitment means we will be strong and visible in our leadership and ensure that all staff and members of our local communities have confidence in our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Objective 3 – **Improving our service delivery by creating strong links with our community:**

We will connect and communicate with our diverse local community to develop meaningful and sustainable links, which help us to increase our understanding of their needs. We will ensure that we tailor our prevention, protection and response activities accordingly and target the most vulnerable people with the greatest risk.



Objective 4 – **Building on our inclusive culture:**

We will continue taking action to ensure we have a culture where everyone feels valued and is treated with dignity and respect and support all staff to contribute to the creation of an inclusive working environment.

Governance

The EDI action plan is overseen by the EDI Steering Group which is made up of a number of colleagues across RBFRS who all have key roles to play in improving the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at RBFRS. The group meets regularly as defined in the terms of reference and has a responsibility to review the actions within the action plan during each meeting. Information is fed up through the EDI forum and other networks into the EDI Steering Group. The necessary items are then fed up from the EDI Steering Group into the Senior Leadership Team.

A separate monitoring spreadsheet has been created and action leads are responsible for updating their own actions and feeding back to the group and highlighting any risks that may have arisen since the previous meeting. Reporting will also come from service delivery and other relevant departments across the organisation.

Quarterly reporting against the EDI objectives are also completed as part of the Strategic Procurement Board reporting. Updates from the EDI Action Plan will also feed into the Annual Member Champion Report.

In March 2024, a full Action Plan review will be completed identifying the successes and challenges throughout the completion of the action plan. The learnings from this will support us with the creation, delivery and implementation of the EDI Action Plan for the following year.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

Objective 1 – Increasing the diversity of staff at all levels.

Ref	Action	Measure	Lead	Due Date	Associated strategies
1.1.1	Review the equality monitoring data	Creation and implementation of an EDI data action plan.	Head of HR and L&D	Dec 23	EDI Data Action Plan
1.1.2	Review the equality monitoring data	Identify data sets to be presented to steering group on a quarterly basis.	Head of HR and L&D	Ongoing	EDI Data Action Plan
1.2.1	Continue the Summer Internship scheme to support individuals from ethnic minority groups.	Complete year 2 of the pilot scheme.	Democratic Support Lead	Sept 24	Change 100 Internship
1.2.2	Continue the Summer Internship scheme to support individuals from ethnic minority groups.	Produce an evaluation report for year 2 of the pilot.	Democratic Support Lead	Oct 24	Change 100 Internship
1.3.1	Implementation of an ongoing programme of positive action events.	Steady flow of Have a Go Days spread across Berkshire in the 23/24 financial year.	AM R&R AM P&P	Mar 24	Local Safety Plans
1.3.2	Implementation of an ongoing programme of positive action events.	Evaluation of positive action have a go days and how they translate to recruitment.	EDI Coordinator	Mar 24	
1.3.3	Implementation of an ongoing programme of positive action events.	Steady flow of community engagement events being hosted/attended across Berkshire in	AM R&R AM P&P	Mar 24	Local Safety Plans



the 23/24 financial year.

Objective 2 – Leadership and Corporate Commitment

Ref	Action	Measure	Lead	Due Date	Associated strategies
2.1.1	Maintain Disability Confident Leader status.	Renewed Disability Confident Leader in April 2024.	EDI Coordinator	Mar 24	Disability Action Plan, Disability Policy
2.1.2	Improve opportunities for recruitment and retention of disabled staff.	Complete all actions within disability action plan.	EDI Coordinator	Nov 23	Disability Action Plan, Disability Policy
2.2.1	Senior Leadership Team to host EDI activities.	3 coffee/tea breaks hosted by SLT annually.	Chair	Mar 24	Annual Staff Surveys
2.2.2	Senior Leadership Team to host EDI activities.	Collate qualitative feedback from attendees.	Chair	Mar 24	Annual Staff Survey
2.3	Develop an open and fair process to identify, develop, and support high potential staff and aspiring leaders.	Creation of a project plan.	Head of HR and L&D	Mar 24	HMICFRS Report Development Programme
2.4	Identify further gaps within RBFRS EDI offer.	Completion of the NFCC EDI Maturity model.	EDI Coordinator	Dec 23	
2.5.1	Introduce face to face EDI Training to RBFRS.	Training specification for RBFRS developed.	EDI Coordinator	Jun 23	
2.5.2	Introduce face to face EDI Training to RBFRS.	Training provider procured for the 23/24 financial year.	EDI Coordinator	Mar 24	



2.6	Demonstrate commitment of EDI to Berkshire Community.	Update RBFRS EDI pages with relevant EDI information.	EDI Coordinator Comms	Dec 23
2.7	Review EIA Guidance for staff.	Updated pages on Siren.	EDI Coordinator	Nov 23

Objective 3 – Improving our service delivery by creating strong links with the community.

Ref	Action	Measure	Lead	Due Date	Associated strategies
3.1	Introduce Community Inclusion Advocates across stations.	Minimum of 1 advocate operating within each hub.	West Hub Manager	Dec 2023	Local Safety Plans
3.2.1	Review the internal Community Contacts list.	All contacts on the community contacts list contacted to reconfirm their commitments.	Comms	Feb 24	
3.2.2	Review the internal Community Contacts list.	New contacts from hubs added.	Hub Managers	Ongoing	
3.3.1	Provide positive action information for both internal and external awareness.	Completion of an events planning guide on siren.	EDI Coordinator	Dec 23	Local Safety Plans
3.3.2	Provide positive action information for both internal and external awareness.	All events data captured within monitoring form.	Hub managers	Ongoing	



Objective 4 – Building on our Inclusive Culture

Ref	Action	Measure	Lead	Due Date	Associated strategies
4.1	Improve the accessibility of RBFRS technology.	Sign up to the Accessible Technology Charter.	Comms Head of BIS	April 2024	
4.2	Provide supportive material for individuals accessing RBFRS buildings.	Creation of visual guides for RBFRS HQ and stations.	ACFO Director of Service Delivery	Jan 24	Local Safety Plans
4.3.1	Embed the Equality of Access into the organisation.	Develop business as usual approach to embedding Equality of Access.	Chair	Ongoing	Local Safety Plans
4.3.2	Raise the awareness of Equality of Access to the organisation.	Documents shared with all staff and linked on Siren.	Chair	Dec 23	
4.4	Introduce accessible bathroom signage.	All accessible bathroom signage reviewed and replaced where necessary.	Facilities Rep	Oct 23	Disability Confident Accreditation
4.5.1	Expand support for Neurodivergent staff.	Revised guidance produced for staff and managers for the use of Do-It Profiler.	Head of HR and L&D	June 23	
4.5.2	Expand support for Neurodivergent staff.	All staff aware they can complete the Do-It profiler.	Head of HR and L&D	Ongoing	
4.5.3	Expand support for Neurodivergent staff.	Updated Neurodiversity pages on siren.	Head of HR and L&D	Aug 23	

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