



Scottish
Forestry
Coilltearachd
na h-Alba

Scottish Forestry Equality Mainstreaming Report – 2019-2021



Scottish Forestry is the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulation

Is e Coilltearachd na h-Alba a' bhuidheann-ghnìomha aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba a tha an urra ri poileasaidh, taic agus riaghladh do choilltearachd



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Foreword

Welcome to the first Scottish Forestry (SF) Equality Mainstreaming Report for 2019-2021.

In 2019 Scottish Forestry became a new Scottish Government executive agency, created by around 170 former staff of Forestry Commission Scotland, responsible for developing forestry policy, advising Ministers, and for regulating and supporting Scotland's growing and vibrant forest sector.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan has been developed with our colleagues and Forestry Trade Unions Scotland (FTUS) to identify and help us plan how to address the issues most critical to our people, organisation and the sector.

I am passionate about mainstreaming diversity and equality across Scottish Forestry and to making our sector attractive to people of all ages, backgrounds and communities. This report shows that we are making progress and it also highlights key areas where we need to improve, such as gender equality, attracting and retaining younger people, and, underpinning everything, fostering a culture where everyone is valued and feels respected.

On creating that inclusive environment, one of the things I am most proud of is the work we have done collectively to define and articulate our Corporate Values and Behaviours, and what it means to be a part of Scottish Forestry. These have been developed from feedback from staff surveys and staff focus group meetings, which is why they are so powerful and so important. These are our values, and these are the standards we should all live up to and expect to see in our working lives.

We have taken positive action on age and gender, working in partnership with the private sector to take advantage of new employment and training grant schemes. We have also doubled Scottish Forestry's annual intake of students by offering four new students practical training whilst they complete their studies, with a job at the end. Whilst we have made huge strides in attracting women into traditionally male-dominated roles, there is a lot more we want to do and can do.

Through the COVID 19 pandemic we have kept our colleagues and partners safe and supported, closing our offices, provided equipment and regularly updating guidance to allow our staff to adjust to the new ways of working. We recognised the disproportionate impact COVID has had on our workforce and society in general – and have placed a huge importance on support, well-being and flexible working to support our colleagues during this unpredictable period. This has been enormously challenging, but I am extremely proud of how Scottish Forestry staff have adapted and for all they have delivered despite the disruptions and difficulties. To them I am extremely grateful.

This first report is an important milestone, showing exactly where we stand and the work we have to do. We must regularly assess progress, review the plans and make sure we are taking the positive actions that will create an environment which fosters inclusivity, creativity and respect, and an organisation where everyone feels valued.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Signorini".

Dave Signorini
Chief Executive Office

Summary

Scottish Forestry employs nearly 200 people, all highly committed to delivering good quality forests, woods and trees. Currently however the workforce does not reflect Scotland's population as a whole.

Today brings the publication of first Scottish Forestry Equality Mainstreaming Report. It summarises information on the composition of the workforce as well as recruitment, development, and retention policies and practices. This gives a good idea of the diversity of our workforce and summarises not only the position at the end of 2020 but actions to move the organisations towards having a greater diversity of staff.

Reporting on equality is not new. When we were part of the Forestry Commission, there was an annual Equality Monitoring Report, which covered the composition of the workforce, recruitment and leavers, and other related issues on four protected characteristics: age, disability, ethnicity (race) and sex. Now the scope has been extended and strengthened to come into line with the reporting requirements of the Scottish Government. In Scotland, public authorities are required to gather and use detailed information on nine protected characteristics: age, disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. This means that, for example, they must show what steps they are taking to address an issue brought to light by its employee monitoring data. In Scotland, there is also a specific duty to develop and publish a set of evidence-based equality outcomes every four years.

Let me go off at a bit of a tangent. At university I studied plant ecology. On one hand it introduced me to the science of forestry and on the other opened my eyes to the connections between all the organisms that make up an ecosystem, each species having its own niche according to its inherited properties and each individual having their lessons learned from previous experience to add to these genetic traits. In these respects, people are just the same – everyone has a particular set of skills and strengths, inherited and learned, that can be put to good use in many different jobs.

The forestry workforce in Scotland is predominantly made up of white men. They make an invaluable contribution to the creation and management of today's forests in Scotland. But the workforce could be strengthened if we took steps to make it more typical of Scotland's population. The increased workforce needed to meet the increasing woodland creation targets gives us an opportunity to recruit a wider range of staff. Over time this should ensure that the full breadth of abilities, skills and experience can be brought to bear on increasing and improving Scotland's woodland resource and that's the outcome we should be working towards.

The Equality Mainstreaming Report focusses on actions during the recruitment process and after recruitment on our ways of working and career development. But we also need a wider cross section of people applying to join in the first place. Scotland's forests are a resource for us all – provided we use them in a considerate and responsible way – so logically we have all some relevant views of what these resources should be like and how they're managed. Moreover each of us has different skills to offer. What better way to contribute than to become involved in the creation and management of this resource.

Last but not least, although the focus tends to be on removing barriers to women, all areas of discrimination need to be tackled so that the forestry sector can tap into the full range of talent, skill and experiences available in Scotland.



Helen McKay
Chief Forester for Scotland

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen McKay".



1.0 Introduction – Who we are

On 1 April 2019 new Scottish Government agencies were formed to take forward the work previously undertaken by Forestry Commission Scotland and Forest Enterprise Scotland along with the new responsibilities gained following the full devolution of forestry to Scotland.

As **Scottish Forestry**, we are responsible for the sustainable management and expansion of forests and woodlands to deliver more for Scotland. We will do this by ensuring that sustainable forest management is an integral part of public policy, by protecting and enforcing standards and forestry regulations and by helping to achieve woodland creation targets.

1.1 What we do – our purpose, strategic objectives and our values

There are around 1.4 million hectares of forests in Scotland, covering about 19% of the total land area. The forestry sector contributes nearly £1 billion Gross Value Added to Scotland's economy every year and supports over 25,000 jobs.

Forestry makes a substantial contribution to the economy at both local and national level through the production of timber and other wood fibre, and the provision of recreation and tourism assets. The forestry sector is particularly important for rural communities, where the majority of economic activities associated with woodland creation, management, harvesting and transportation take place.



1.2 Our Strategic Objectives

Our Corporate Plan 2020-2023 sets out our corporate outcomes and priorities for the next three years. We will work on the following strategic objectives to help us to deliver on our purpose:

Strategic Objective 1: Ensure that sustainable forest management is an integral part of public policy, particularly through leading and co-ordinating the delivery of Scotland's Forestry Strategy.

Strategic Objective 2: Develop our people and culture to improve performance and resilience, building a dynamic, flexible and modern workforce which serves the forestry sector and wider Scotland well.

Strategic Objective 3: Become a more innovative, efficient and accessible organisation by delivering process improvements, and harnessing digital and technological solutions.

1.3 Our Values and Behaviours

We are proud to launch our new BRAVE Values and Behaviours Approach

- Be Professional
- Respect Others
- Act with Integrity and Honesty
- Value Teamwork and Collaboration
- Encourage Innovation and Creativity

These have been developed with staff and reflect the type of organisation we are proud to work in.

Our values and behaviours define who we are and the high standards we expect in our working environment. This allows our staff and customers to feel safe, valued, included and respected. They are a statement not only about how we treat others but how we expect to be treated.

Our organisation is inclusive and welcoming and where we see behaviours that appear to go against our values we should feel enabled to speak up.

Our approach aligns with the Civil Service values and Scotland's National Performance Framework. You are encouraged to be BRAVE. You have a responsibility to remember that "the standard you walk past is the standard you accept"

You can read more about how we have developed our values on page 25.

1.4 Who we are

As of 31 March 2021, Scottish Forestry employs 192 people, up by 11% since we were created in 2019. Our colleagues work across Scotland, with five regional conservancies and a head office in Edinburgh.

We have achieved a 50:50 gender split across our organisation in the last 12 months and have also welcomed a new Chief Executive Officer, Dave Signorini and a new Chief Forester for Scotland, Helen McKay.

Our workforce is predominantly white (95%) with only 1% of staff disclosing that they are from an Ethnic Minority (EM) group. Similarly, only 1% of employees are LGBT+, with the majority disclosing that they are heterosexual. 4% of our colleagues are disabled but 6% have still not shared their disability status with us.

We have an ageing workforce in Scottish Forestry, with 71% of staff aged over 40 years. Less than 1% of our colleagues are under the age of 25 years and almost 7% over the age of 60 years.

Further detailed data on the demographic data that colleagues have shared with us is presented in the Appendix.



2.0 2020 – A year like no other

For everyone across Scotland, the UK and the rest of the world, 2020 has been a year like no other. Almost overnight, many of us found ourselves living and working in drastically different ways because of COVID-19. At the height of lockdown in March 2020, many of Scottish Forestry’s employees set up a work station from their homes, commandeering kitchen tables, spare bedrooms and even hall cupboards for what we thought would be short period.

Now, more than a year on, we’ve all had to embrace day-to-day restrictions on our lives in order to ensure the health of our friends, families and local communities. We’ve been thrust into the virtual world of Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Skype, both for working and socialising, and the words “you’re on mute” has become a daily catchphrase for many.

With the majority of colleagues still working from home and others carrying out outdoor work such as tree health surveys, regulatory inspections and site visits to support woodland creation applications, mental health and well-being have been a constant area of concern and focus over the last 12 months. Activities such as daily check-in calls, weekly team coffee mornings and well-being staff pulse surveys, have resulted in more open, honest and supportive conversations about mental health across the organisation.

Colleagues know what support is available to them, either through Scottish Forestry or other outlets, how to access it. The focus on physical activity and taking a break “away from the screen” has helped people manage their mental health better.

From an organisational perspective, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our staff, and on how they work. Despite the restrictions, Scottish Forestry has continued to deliver on woodland creation targets and has supported the industry by continuing to process felling permission and forest plan applications. During the most restrictive periods, we have worked to ensure the continued flow of essential wood-based products such as pallets and wood-packaging to support the delivery of essential goods. We have also continued to undertake tree health surveillance activities.

Scottish Forestry has changed the way applications and claims are processed. We have adapted to electronic-only processes and made greater use of technology. We’ve deferred on-site claim inspections so as to continue to ensure that

applicants have received grant funding even though we were unable to make site visits.

We have worked in different, innovative and flexible ways with our teams, using video conferencing on new platforms to keep in touch. We’ve facilitated a flexible approach to the working day, especially where colleagues have had home schooling or caring responsibilities and we’ve suspended core hours to enable colleagues to work at times that suit them best.

Above all, we have prioritised keeping our staff safe and supported. We closed our offices and ensured staff had the right equipment to help adjust to new ways of working. We increased frequency of our communications and engagement to ensure staff were informed, connected and able to inform us of their needs.

We recognised the significant impact COVID-19 has had on staff home and working lives. In response to this we increased flexible working opportunities to enable staff to balance work and home commitments, without impacting their pay.

We provided training and well-being support through the EAP and launched a package of well-being training and promoted access to well-being support through our weekly staff briefing.

What do the next 12 months hold? For Scottish Forestry, our recovery and renewal in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic will be used as an opportunity to re-address equality, diversity and inclusion, to continue to focus upon our woodland creation targets and to drive forward our Improvement programme. We have shown just how flexible we can be, and how committed we are to delivering against our objectives. The challenge now is to build on that, maintaining that spirit of improvement and innovation, and using our recently articulated Values to create an organisation that is more inclusive, more diverse and more resilient.



3.0 Our Approach to Mainstreaming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Promoting and supporting diversity in the workplace is an important aspect of good people management – it's about valuing everyone in the organisation as an individual.

Our aim is to have an inclusive, diverse sector and workforce, representative of the communities of Scotland and we want to be an exemplar for equality across the forestry sector. We will continue to improve diversity and inclusivity in our organisation and facilitate and promote the fair work agenda across the wider sector.

Forestry has traditionally been seen as a male profession, and the workforce of Scottish Forestry and particularly across the wider sector continues to some degree to reflect that. However, in the last two years we have made huge strides in attracting women into Woodland Officer roles. Now, for example, around half of our Woodland Officers are female.

We will build on these improvements, continuing to break stereotypes around gender specific roles.

We will also work with partners including Equate Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) to promote the opportunities that a career in forestry can deliver for young people. Since transitioning into Scottish Forestry, we have continued to work with partners in education such as Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and the University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) to support the development of the next generation of foresters and land managers.



Case Study – Assistant Woodland Officer Hub: Fantastic Four – New Young Faces For Forestry



Scottish Forestry has established a new development programme for Assistant Woodland Officers (AWO), which is a new entry route to technical forestry roles within the organisation. It aims to attract more young people into forestry by providing flexible, part-time work arrangements for forestry undergraduates who are still studying, or full-time positions for recent graduates.

The programme started in 2019 with five part-time AWOs working across Conservancies in North Scotland, assisting Woodland Officers and enabling the Conservancy teams to catch up on legacy work from previous grant schemes and felling licences. In the two years that the AWO Hub has been operating, nine students from forestry higher education institutions across the UK have joined the programme as part-time AWOs, working on a flexible basis to fit around their studies.

From its beginnings involving only the Scottish Forestry Conservancies, the Hub is evolving to include participation from several other partners, including Scottish Forestry's Tree Health and Woodland Carbon Code teams, as well as working with Forestry and Land Scotland. In future it hopes to include FLS' Newton Nursery and Forest Research's Technical Services Unit.

The Hub is run by a part-time Skills Development Manager, who supports the AWOs' training and development, coordinates the joint working with the team leads, and seeks to act as a mentor, using his own experience as a Woodland Officer and former Forest Manager, to provide first hand advice and support.

The ambition is to attract more young people into forestry in Scotland, to provide them with real work experience as they study, and to provide a career path and progression into both Scottish Forestry and the wider forestry sector on graduating.

Welcoming the new students, Rural Economy Secretary Fergus Ewing said:

"This is brilliant news and I'm so pleased for each of the students who will get a first class grounding to start their career.

"It is a fantastic time to be working in forestry. The benefits that trees bring to our environment, our economy and our communities have never been so important.

"I wish all the new recruits the very best."

The Scottish Government increased the budget for forestry next year which enabled Scottish Forestry to double its intake of students to their training programme.

We continue to engage with under-represented groups in our local communities through our engagement programme, promoting forestry and ensuring that people from all backgrounds can enjoy the benefits and opportunities that our woods and forests provide.

Case Study – Branching Out: Positive Mental Health Through Nature



Scottish Forestry set up the Branching Out programme in 2007, as then Forestry Commission Scotland, in collaboration with Glasgow Centre for Population Health and the Scottish Association of Mental Health. The aim of the Branching Out programme is to promote the use of Scottish woodlands as a place of mental health recovery for mental health patients accessing services within the healthcare and charity sector. The Branching Out programme directly addresses social health inequalities and lack of access to woodlands for people from lower socio-economic groups.

In a good year there are up to 50 groups running across all of Scotland's mainland health board areas. 2020 however was a year of many challenges. Running mental health support groups could have put our vulnerable participants at risk of contracting COVID-19. Therefore, in line with Government guidance, many of our groups could not go ahead.

The late summer of 2020 saw some easing of restrictions, and specifically, mental health support groups could re-commence. During this window, one of our key delivery partners, Forestry and Land Scotland, successfully delivered some Branching Out programmes. These did not come without challenges. Numbers of participants had to be reduced. Social distancing needed to be upheld. No equipment could be shared. Solutions had to be found about how hot drinks and snacks could be provided. Waterproofs had to be issued personally. Leaders issued participants with their own thermal mugs to take home and wash each week. Transport for participants to sites also proved challenging, as minibuses could not run to full capacity.

One successful group was run by Eilidh Malcolm (FLS) and co-leader Ali Lawson from The Conservation Volunteers. Participants were recruited from the NHS Glasgow Restart project, for people with severe and enduring mental health conditions. This project was vital for those who took part. Leaders Ali and Eilidh had to think quick on their feet to ensure participants could attend, particularly with COVID-19 regulations changing with short notice during the 10 weeks of the project. However six participants successfully completed the programme before Christmas and achieved their John Muir Discovery awards. Participants were eager to come along each week, the project for some being their only connection to others. Tasks each week included shelter building, woodland art, wood carving and conservation work. One of the favourites was the application of their newly acquired carving skills to create wooden reindeer.





4.0 Our People

Our workforce is changing and becoming more diverse. In 2019, Scottish Forestry came into being with an overall workforce of 173 people. Over the last two years, we have grown by 11%, now employing 192 people across Scotland. Despite an initial pause on recruitment due to the pandemic, we have adapted quickly to ensure fair and open recruitment can be done virtually and we are once again taking on new staff.

Of those 173 employees that transitioned over to Scottish Forestry with us on 1 April 2019, 48% were female and 52% were male. At that time, our gender diversity had been fairly static since 2017 but we knew we needed to do more to attract and retain women, not just within Scottish Forestry but across the forestry sector. Now, in 2021, our gender split is 50:50 and we have welcomed 20 new women into the organisation over the last 12 months. Many of them have joined us in frontline technical roles such as Assistant Woodland Officer and/or Woodland Officer. You can find out more about the changes we have made to our attraction and engagement activities on page 22 which has enabled us to attract more women.

Although we have achieved a 50:50 gender split in general across the organisation, we have not yet achieved this gender diversity at the senior level of the agency. Currently, only 21.7% of our senior managers are women, none of the Senior Executive Team and only two members of the Strategic Advisory Group are female. Our Gender Pay Gap is currently over 20%, and has not shifted significantly in the last year, despite growing proportions of female employees in the upper two pay quartiles. So 2021-2023 will see us focus on ensuring that women across Scottish Forestry have equal and fair access to development opportunities, are supported by senior role models and that we promote flexible working, enabling all staff to strike a better work/life balance, at all levels.

Over the last two years, we have encouraged our colleagues to share their diversity information with us. Our disclosure rates across all protected characteristics were very low and there was concern that the figures did not always give an accurate picture. Helpfully many more staff now feel able to share this data. In 2019, 3% of employees

were disabled and less than 1% were from an Ethnic Minority group. However, Currently, disabled staff make up 4% of our workforce but we still have 6% that have not shared their information. We know that across the working population in Scotland, 1 in 5 people are disabled but they are far more likely to be unemployed or in temporary, part-time work. The disability employment gap has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and closing that gap is something we hope to support in Scottish Forestry over the next four years. Our first goal is to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive working environment that supports those disabled colleagues that are already employed in the agency.

Youth unemployment is likely to rise significantly in the wake of COVID-19 and the public sector must do what it can to support young people to access opportunities to increase their skills, knowledge and experience of the world of work. In Scottish Forestry, our age profile has stayed static for the last two years. In 2019 and in 2021, 71% of our workforce were over the age of 40 years. Less than 1% of current employees are under the age of 25 years. Despite having increased the number of entry level roles across Scottish Forestry, we have not yet managed to increase the number of young people in the organisation. We know from our recruitment data that under 25's account for 14% of all our applications in the last two years; however, only 5% progress past the application stage. This is something that requires more exploration and we will look at our recruitment processes and practices with regards to youth employment in detail over the next 12 months. We will also continue to increase the number of work-based learning opportunities across Scottish Forestry to support youth employment, Green Jobs recovery and Corporate Parenting.

Statistics for the Equality Mainstreaming report infographic

* The figures here represent the total workforce figures for Scottish Forestry as of 31 March 2021. To protect anonymity, figures <5 have been replaced by * to prevent disclosure of personal data.

1. Overall workforce number - Split by gender, age, disability and ethnicity



In 2019, Scottish Forestry came into being with an **overall workforce of 173 people.**

Over the last two years, we have grown by **11%**, now employing 192 people across Scotland.

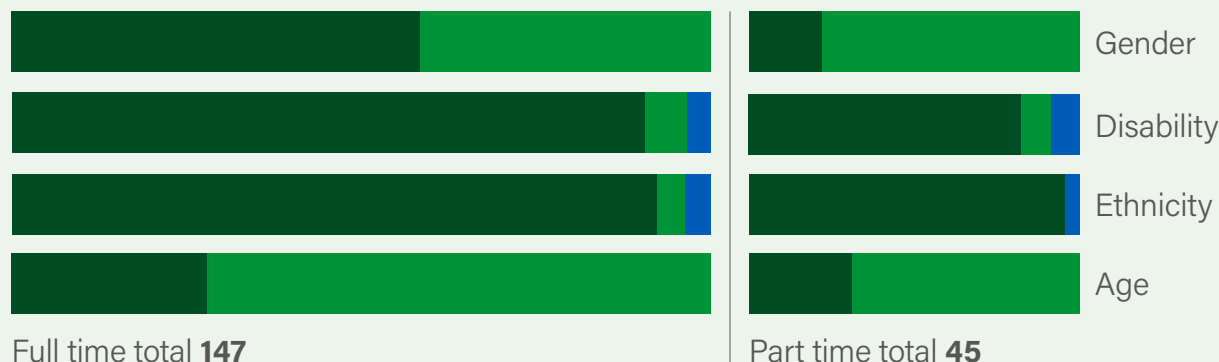
In 2021, our gender split is **50:50** and we have welcomed 20 new women into the organisation over the last 12 months.

In 2019,
3%
of employees were disabled and less than 1% were from an Ethnic Minority group.

Disabled staff make up
4%
of our workforce but we still have 6% that have not shared their information.

In 2019 and in 2021,
71%
of our workforce were over the age of 40 years. Less than 1% of current employees are under the age of 25 years.

2. Contract type (full time/part time) - split by gender, age, disability, ethnicity



Gender
 Disability
 Ethnicity
 Age

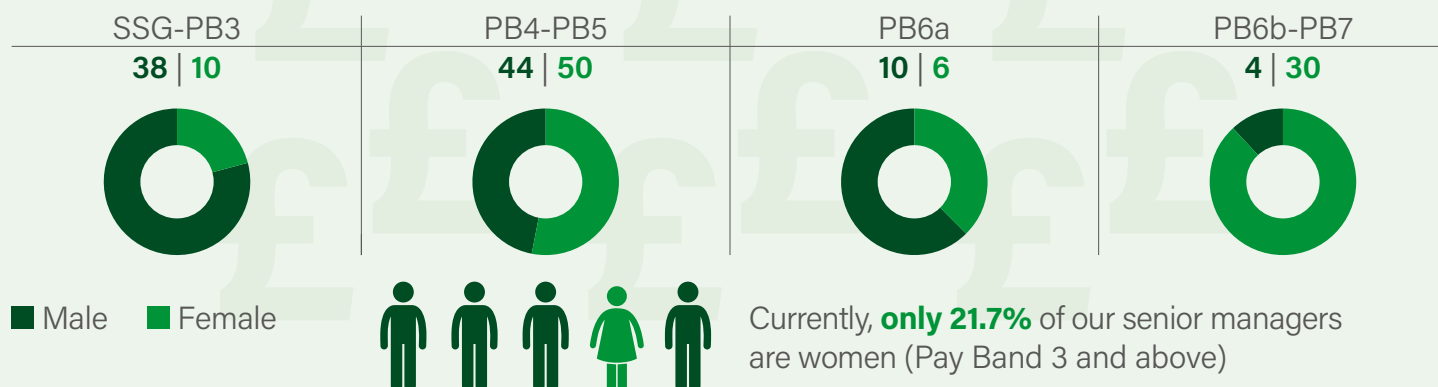
Male
 No
 White
 39 or under

Female
 Yes
 BAME
 40+

Not known
 Not disclosed



3. Pay Band data



4. L&D/Training course attendance - split by gender, age, disability



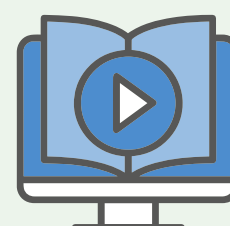
Total attendance **3,279**

Gender
 Disability
 Ethnicity
 Age

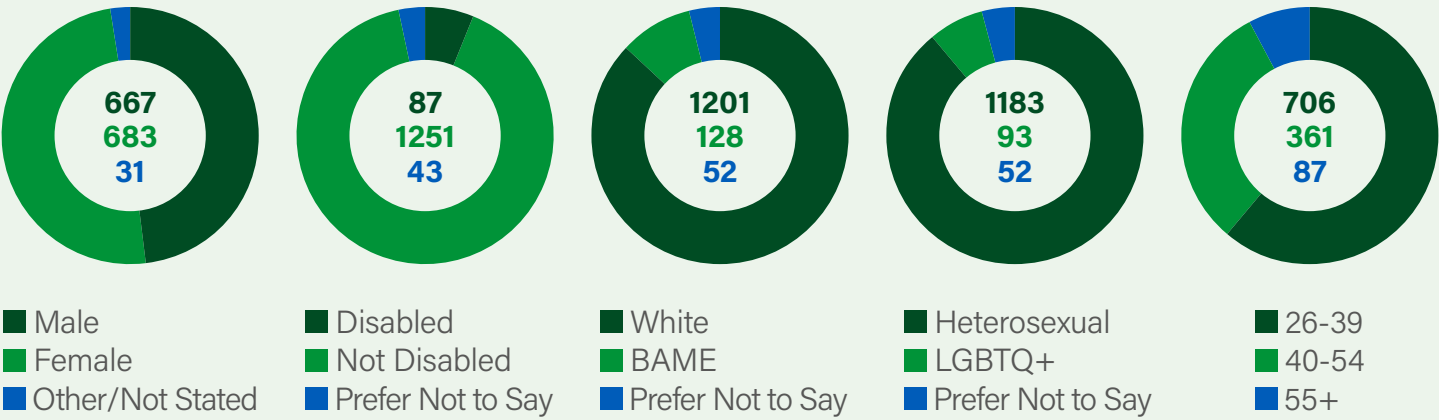
Male
 No
 White
 34 or under

Female
 Yes
 BAME
 35-54

Not known
 Not disclosed
 55 or over



5. New starts and leavers – split by age, gender, disability and ethnicity



New Starts

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021



Gender
Disability
Ethnicity
Age

Male
No
White
39 or under

Female
Yes
BAME
40+

Leavers

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021



Not known
Not stated



6. Maternity Leave data

employees which had some maternity leave

6

7. Grievance and Disciplinary data

Grievance and/or Disciplinary cases

0

8. Gender Pay Gap

Gender Pay Gap is currently over

20%



5.0 Our Progress – Equality Outcomes

When Scottish Forestry was created in April 2019, we set interim equality outcomes for the period 2019-2021 which were consulted and agreed by our colleagues, partners, stakeholders and Scottish Government.

The interim outcomes were:

1. to reflect the diverse communities we serve by building a more diverse workforce;
2. our people understand, support and are accountable for diversity and inclusion; and
3. Scottish Forestry is an inclusive organisation that values the contribution everyone can make.

The above equality outcomes were designed to ensure we retained a focus on some significant issues as we transitioned into a new Executive Agency of Scottish Government and to help increase the capacity and performance of the Scottish Forestry as both a regulator and an employer. Long-standing and deep-rooted problems will not be remedied swiftly.

Our progress, internally and externally, has also been significantly impacted the COVID-19 pandemic, which has seen our day-to-day working lives and our home lives turned upside down. So while we are pleased to report progress across all of the outcomes set in 2019, we acknowledge that

there is much more still to do before inequalities are eradicated once and for all.

The following section of this report gives an update on progress towards these outcomes using case studies to demonstrate the activities that have been undertaken.

5.1 Outcome 1: To reflect the diverse communities we serve by building a more diverse workforce

As an employer, Scottish Forestry is determined to be an exemplar. We are strongly committed to equality and diversity, which we demonstrate through our workforce policies and practices, our support for staff and our drive for continuous improvement in this area.

Over the last two years, we have seen a significant increase in declaration rates across all protected characteristics. This has significantly increased during 2020 when we launched a diversity monitoring campaign across Scottish Forestry called 'Including You'.



Case Study – Including You: Diversity Monitoring Campaign



In October 2020, we launched an ongoing staff campaign called 'Including You'. The campaign encouraged staff to complete their diversity information on our online HR system, sharing important information about themselves including race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any disabilities or long-term health conditions.

The campaign focused on raising awareness amongst our colleagues of the importance of sharing their diversity data with us as an organisation, what we did with the information and how we would use the data to better support our workforce, now and in the future.

Campaign collateral included a guidance booklet and instructional video to help staff complete their information and reassure them of the confidential nature of the information they provided. We also issued targeted communications to all cost centre managers across Scottish Forestry, including a personal video message from the CEO to all staff.

As a result, for many protected characteristics, our declaration rates are over 80%. There is still some work to do in 2021 for areas such as sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity and gender re-assignment.

[Here](#) is the link to the Including You step-by-step video guide.

Over the last two years, a temporary cessation on internal and external recruitment, firstly to transition into an agency and secondly during the initial COVID-19 lockdown, has restricted the pace at which we have been able to influence change in the shape and composition of our organisation.

However, we have been able to review many aspects of our recruitment processes and make improvements to the candidate journey when applying for a role in Scottish Forestry. This has been mainly focussed on removing barriers for under-represented groups such as women, young people and disabled candidates and using positive action statements in job adverts, where appropriate, in order to engage and encourage a wider pool of talent.

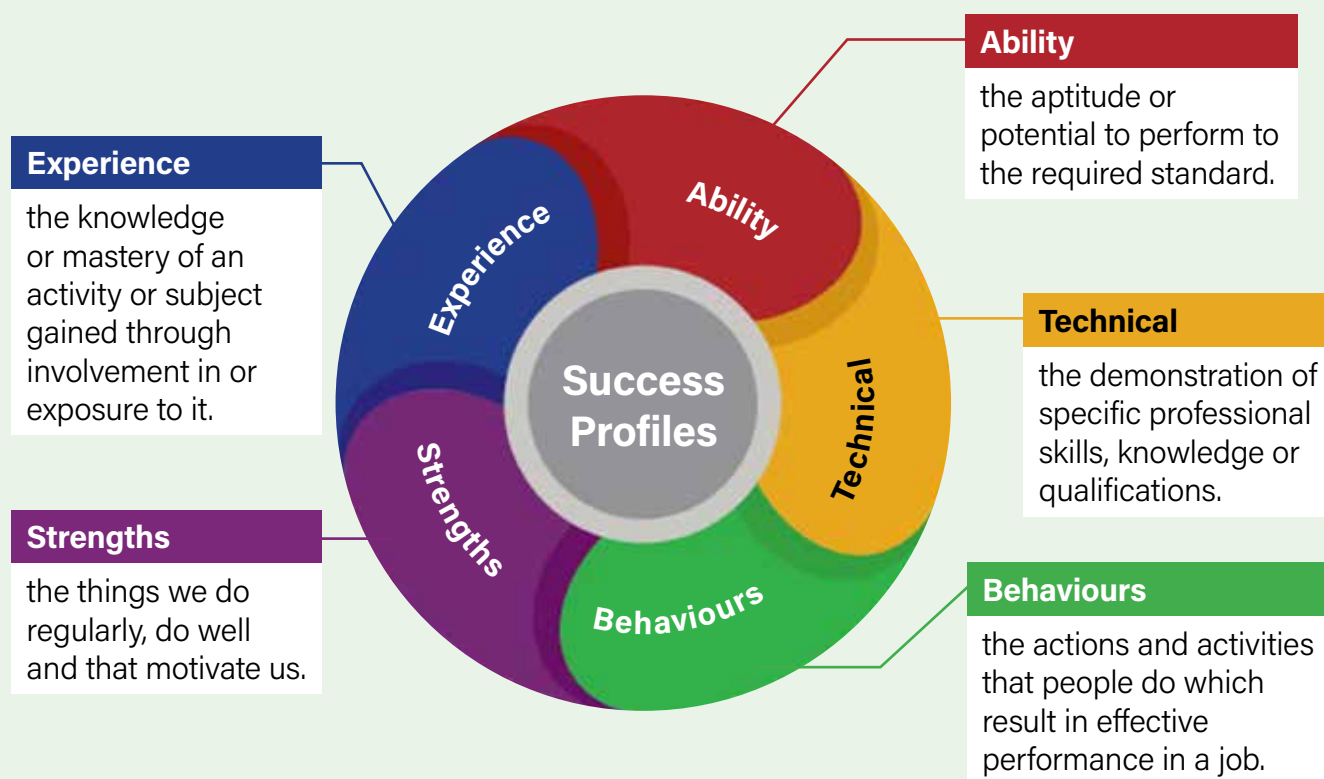
Case Study – Resourcing and Talent: Attracting A Diverse Pool Of Talent



In 2020 we formed our new Resourcing and Talent Team within HR. The aim of the team is to look at the agency as a whole and review how we recruit, who we recruit and the improvements we can make to support and retain our current workforce.

Throughout the past two years, we have made improvements to our recruitment processes and practices with the implementation of Success Profiles. This Civil Service wide framework enables Scottish Forestry to attract and retain people of talent and experience from a range of sectors and all walks of life.

The framework moves recruitment away from using a purely competency-based system of assessment and introduces a more flexible framework which assesses candidates using a variety of selection methods. This will give the best possible chance of finding the right person for the job, driving up performance and improving diversity and inclusivity.



Alongside the implementation of Success Profiles, we have also reviewed and updated our job adverts, role descriptions and how we utilise social media and other platforms to engage a wider, more diverse audience. Here are some of the improvement we have made.

- **Positive Action** – we now use positive action statements in our adverts to engage potential applicants from under-represented groups and directly appeal to them to consider Scottish Forestry as an employer of choice.
- **Gender-Neutral Language** – to ensure we aren't excluding anyone before they have even applied, we review all of our job adverts and the language or phrases we use for gendered terms or business jargon. We use an online tool to help us to do this as well as utilising Equate Scotland's 'Recruitment Language Guide.'

- Happy to Talk Flexible – in 2019, we signed up to Working Family-Friendly Scotland’s ‘Happy to Talk Flexible’ campaign and now use their logo on all job adverts to promote our commitment to striking a better work/life balance for all our colleagues and to ensure potential candidates know that we are happy to discuss flexible working options during the recruitment process.
- Social Media – we are continuing to explore how we can make better use of our social media pages to better engage our target audiences. Advertising in this way can open the advert up to a wide audience who then have easy access for sharing the advert with others who may be interested.
- Jobs Page on our Website – we’ve created a specific section of our website that is dedicated not only to advertising our vacancies but also giving potential candidates an insight into what it is like to work in Scottish Forestry on a day-to-day basis, what the career pathways into forestry are and a chance to meet some of our current employees through blogs or case studies. The pages also contain further information on our application process and top tips on preparing for interview, and reinforce our commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion by providing further information on our Guaranteed Interview Scheme.
- Exit Surveys – we have updated our exit survey allowing us a better way to look for any trends when people leave the agency, allowing us to see where improvements can be made. On the other side, we are currently looking at a new starter survey. This will cover topics from the recruitment process to stepping through the door on their first day. This will allow us to look at how we can continue to improve our processes.

At present we are implementing a new recruitment system via iTrent. This will allow us to completely overhaul the format of our job adverts, with more freedom to re-structure and edit advert templates, making them more appealing and accessible to applicants. As well as the new system being more user-friendly and specifically built for our needs, it will also enable us to provide better support to candidates with additional support needs and track any reasonable adjustments that need to be put in place through a candidate’s journey with us. As this new recruitment functionality will be embedded into our current HR system, there will be full integration, giving us the ability to track and report on all protected characteristics throughout the employee lifecycle.

You can find out more from our recruitment and retention data on page 36.

When it comes to equality, our workforce policies help us to implement good equality practices across the organisation, which reduces the likelihood that we will unlawfully discriminate against a colleague, or group of colleagues, from a protected-characteristic group. Not only is it good practice to consider equalities in policy making but by embedding equality into all our policies from recruitment to pay to performance, we are demonstrating our commitments to equality and putting our people at the centre of what we do.

In 2019, when we transitioned into Executive Agencies, our new Policy Team was formed. They set about planning a full policy review and prioritising which policies needed to be updated. It was agreed that a focus of this review would be to truly embed equality and diversity into all of our policies and not just have a single Equality Policy that many colleagues viewed as being a “bolt-on”.

5.2 Outcome 2: Our people understand, support and are accountable for diversity and inclusion

Case Study – Community Engagement Programme: International Women’s Day Event



The event was delivered on 8 March 2020 at Lang Craig’s Woodland. Scottish Forestry worked in partnership with Gilded Lily CIC, an organisation that delivers a range of women’s-only services in Glasgow. The events theme was ‘Women in Forestry’ and each of the activities on the day of the event were delivered and led by women, highlighting a range of different skills and workshops delivered by women throughout the forestry and creative industries. We choose to deliver the event on the same day as the world event, International Women’s Day, which is celebrated all around the world. Our event was one of many, which were included on the International Women’s Day global website as a list of world events to celebrate the day.

On the day, we had activities ranging from upcycling, arts and crafts, climate change awareness, quizzes, outdoor cooking and pyrography, as well as a fire performer, a herbalist and a range of organisations who were present to highlight some of the work they were doing either in the world of Forestry or with women in Scotland. The event was delivered at Lang Craig’s, in West Dunbartonshire, which is a Woodland Trust site. The Woodland Trust kindly gave us permission to use the space and were present on the day with their own staff to highlight some of the work they were doing in the area.

We wanted to use the event to highlight some of the work women were doing in the world of forestry and the creative arts. Scottish Forestry provided their own information stall where we had staff from the social forestry team to woodland officers who explain the role they play in the organisation. We brought together 6 different groups, 120 participants, from Glasgow and further afield, and for all of these groups it was their first time visiting the woodland as well as the first time trying many of the activities on offer. We encouraged the groups to network and we purposefully chose not to widely advertise the event to the public on the lead-up to the event to ensure each participant from the attending diverse groups got a chance to really try each of the activities and did not feel overwhelmed by a much larger attendance. The event was still open to the public and we welcomed many people on the day who were out in the woodland and stumbled upon the event.

The event went well, with people coming together from various ethnicities and different areas of Scotland, allowing us to bring people together to share in this world celebration. Many participants had not taken part in a woodland event before and did not know much or anything about the woodland space or opportunities available to them in terms of outdoor activities and careers in the Forestry sector.



5.3 Outcome 3: Scottish Forestry is an inclusive organisation that values the contribution everyone can make

Inclusion and developing a welcoming working environment has been a priority for Scottish Forestry over the last two years and will continue to be an area of focus well into 2021. We first started to examine our workplace culture, values and behaviours back in 2018 as we geared up to create a new agency. Colleagues reflected on the positive and negative aspects of working in Forestry Commission Scotland and attended focus groups and planning sessions to start building a picture of what an “inclusive culture” would mean to them as part of Scottish Forestry.

This work has continued, albeit with some delays due to COVID-19, and below you can find out more about how we’ve turned those reflections into a new set of people-centred values for Scottish Forestry.

Case Study – Developing People-Centred Values



Scottish Forestry’s desire to develop a new set of values came initially from the structure change which resulted in the new Agency and the need to identify the type of organisation it wanted to be. There was some concern that whilst staff knew that there was a corporate set of values few staff could identify what they were and how these impacted on their working lives and environment.

In designing and building the values it was essential that staff felt they could understand what these values stood for and how they could be put into everyday practice. Actions rather than just words on paper.

Following the agreement of the five values set out in the corporate plan we set out to get a view from all the teams across Scottish Forestry as to what behaviours they thought were consistent with each value and what behaviours detracted from them. Workshops were held on each of the individual values and staff at all levels contributed to the thinking. This information was collated and there were similar themes emerging across the whole of the organisation with both positive and negative behaviours identified.

We researched good practice in embedding values into staff thinking and actions and how we could bring values written on paper into everyday life. Having a mnemonic to remember the values came across as a strong tool. We felt that this would be the roots of our working environment and set the tone for the way we wanted Scottish Forestry to grow and develop. This led us to using the values tree as a symbol with the roots embedded in the actions we took. At the same time Learning and Development started to roll out the commissioned ‘Engaging the Bystander’ training across the whole of Scottish Forestry. A key message from this training was, “the standard you walk past is the standard you accept” – so if you want to change a negative culture you have to be brave and address this. BRAVE became a good symbol of the culture the staff wanted to develop.

Using BRAVE allowed us to change the values from passive to active and give staff a platform to work from in order to address poor behaviour and celebrate good behaviour.

- **Be Professional**
- **Respect Others**
- **Act with Integrity and Honesty**
- **Value Teamwork and Collaboration**
- **Encourage Innovation and Creativity**

We have developed a booklet for all staff which lists each value and the positive and negative descriptors taken from the original workshops. These are reminders of the way we want to be treated and the way we should treat others. We will be sharing our values with our customers so they are also clear about how they should expect to be treated and vice versa. In addition we have placed our BRAVE Values tree on a range of everyday products such as mouse mats mugs and notebooks as well as working on designing posters in the office when we return to office working. A box of values goods were sent to all Scottish Forestry staff alongside a KitKat to go with the mug as a small Easter care package. We also now have our BRAVE values on our email footers to demonstrate to all our commitment to building a BRAVE organisation that lives and breathes the values and behaviours identified by the staff. All acting as aide-memoire of the type of organisation we want to be.



BRAVE values are the roots that underpin Scottish Forestry.

- ◆ Be professional
- ◆ Respect others
- ◆ Act with honesty and integrity
- ◆ Value teamwork and collaboration
- ◆ Encourage innovation and creativity

Be **BRAVE** in your actions - remember "the standard you walk past is the standard you accept".

The Scottish Forestry Corporate Plan for 2020-2023 was originally prepared before the Scottish Government declared a national health emergency on the coronavirus pandemic.

The Corporate Plan is supported by an annual Business Plan, which provides more detail on steps we will be taking to make progress towards our strategic objectives for this year and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan which will help us monitor progress towards our new Equality Outcomes at a strategic level. In addition, for 2020-2021, this will also incorporate a Recovery Plan which will contain specific actions for the recovery of Scottish Forestry as an organisation following COVID 19. It states our commitment to support the restart and reset of the Forestry Sector in the aftermath of coronavirus.

Case Study – Embedding Equality Into The Corporate Plan



Addressing equalities and accessibility issues shaped the development of the Corporate Plan. Prior to any content being written, informal interviews took place with members of the public around the question “what would you like to be able to find out from our Corporate Plan?” – and this told us that people really wanted to know what Scottish Forestry does (as we are a new organisation); what is the environmental benefit of what we do; and who gets the funding available. Using this feedback to design the [Corporate Plan](#), we made sure that our Purpose was made clear and central to the document, accompanied by descriptions of our role as an organisation. We worked with designers to make the document visually appealing and readable. We will also be publishing a range of Key Performance Indicators which include environmental and funding information.

Once we had a draft Corporate Plan, we carried out consultation activities and sourced data to inform our Equalities Impact Assessment. Our online consultation was open to everyone. We conducted workshops and ran an online consultation for staff. We held a session with our staff members with expertise in social forestry. We ran a series of workshops with stakeholders, including organisations with an interest in forestry, as well as partners involved in wider land management and policy areas such as transport. We also sought guidance from a representative from Corporate Assurance for Social Security Scotland on how to ensure inclusivity in our organisation. These activities generated considerable feedback on equalities issues, such as the need to address our gender pay gap; encouraging young people to work in forestry; the importance of social forestry to make forestry relevant to a broad range of communities; and enabling a wider range of people/communities to access funding for woodland creation.

The results of this extensive engagement directly influenced the content of the Corporate Plan. Not only do we describe the activities we are going to undertake to embed equality, such as “monitoring information, undertaking workplace initiatives and learning from best practice to ensure our workforce is more reflective of our communities” and “support the development of the next generation of foresters and land managers”, we have also given space to our state our commitment towards addressing equalities issues. Within the Corporate Plan, we have a dedicated section on “contributing to inclusive growth and a fairer Scotland”, where we state: “our aim is to have an inclusive, diverse sector and workforce, representative of the communities of Scotland, and we want to be an exemplar for equality across the forestry sector. We will continue to improve diversity and inclusivity in our organisation and facilitate and promote the fair work agenda across the wider sector”.

In addition, the results of the engagement process have been input to the development of our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Plan. Initially, we are focusing on our internal processes and approach, taking action in areas such as reviewing our recruitment processes and employment practices, and establishing a mentoring scheme for women.



Case Study – Engaging The Bystander Training



In March 2020, we were due to deliver a pilot training workshop called 'Engaging the Bystander' to senior leaders and staff volunteers. This training, developed and delivered specifically for Scottish Forestry by Cultivating Minds UK, had previously been piloted in Scottish Government to help engage colleagues in discussions about inclusive culture, bullying, harassment and discrimination. The training also aims to provide practical tools and tips for tackling negative behaviours in the workplace and promoting a culture of "psychological safety" where everyone feels safe to speak up and raise concerns without fear of repercussion.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the face-to-face training had to be cancelled and our plans to deliver the sessions across Scottish Forestry put on hold. However, we continued to work with the trainer throughout early lockdown to adapt the training for the virtual world and in August 2020, we delivered a bespoke, blended version of the training to the Executive Team and about 30 colleagues, including FTUS representatives. This blended model included an interactive e-learning module and a two-hour group workshop via Microsoft Teams. Delivering the training in the virtual classroom was challenging but the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Here's what some of the initial participants had to say:

- The discussion is helpful to distinguish healthy from unhealthy banter.
- Thought-provoking, timely, absolutely essential to spread wider and gave me some more tools to use in future.
- Main takeaway for me is now having a group where you know there's like-minded thinking, even just to discuss a concern or scenario with in the first instance before deciding what to do.
- Executive team, please take advantage of the opportunity to understand and put your weight behind this agenda in a meaningful way; the training is excellent but not enough on its own to make a needed change – a lot of the workforce are relying on you.

After such a successful pilot, the Senior Executive Team agreed to deliver the training to all staff in Scottish Forestry as further progress towards eliminating bias, building an open and inclusive workplace and supporting everyone to feel safe to bring their whole selves to work every day.

The roll-out began in January 2021 and so far more than one hundred colleagues have participated.



6.0 New Equality Outcomes 2021-2023

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our day-to-day work across Scottish Forestry but also on the usual mechanisms we use to engage and consult with colleagues, visitors, stakeholders and members of the public.

Many of our usual methods or approaches have not been viable during COVID-19 due to remote working, reduced staffing capacity due to home-schooling/caring, visitor sites and centres remaining closed for much of the last 12 months and community engagement activity on our land being ceased due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Our stakeholders themselves, internally and externally, have also reported reduced capacity and the devastating impact of losing loved ones and community members to the virus as a reason not to take part in consultation on new equality outcomes over the last year.

Therefore, we have not been able to fully involve the people, groups and communities that will benefit from our new set of equality outcomes. We have however, been able to draw upon previous consultations and engagement activities, particularly with staff, to draft interim equality outcomes for the next two years. These are also aligned to Scottish Government's new outcomes, which we already contribute to as an Executive Agency.

The following interim outcomes will be reviewed and updated in line with our duties under the Public Sector Equality Duties over the next 24 months. We will then publish a new set of specific outcomes in 2023.

1. Our workforce increases in diversity to reflect the communities we serve and the general population of Scotland by 2023.
2. Foster and continue to embed an inclusive and accessible workforce culture, where people of all backgrounds are valued for their uniqueness and treated according to their needs; can access support and learning to develop their careers and have a sense of belonging and a voice in decision making.
3. Improve engagement with the communities we serve to enable a wider sector of society and under-represented groups to enjoy the benefits and opportunities that our woods and forests provide, particularly those close to where they live.



7.0 Next Steps

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Action Plan has been developed with input from colleagues and Forestry Trade Unison Scotland to identify and help us plan how to address the issues most critical to our people, organisation and the sector.

This report has highlighted the areas we must take further action on to ensure that we are progressing and truly mainstreaming equality into all areas of Scottish Forestry. We will utilise the data published in this report to review our EDI plan and make sure we are taking the positive actions that will create an environment which fosters inclusivity, creativity and respect, and an organisation where everyone feels valued.

We will renew our commitments to gender diversity at a senior level and support more women into leadership roles. We will increase the number of opportunities for youth employment across the organisation by expanding our work-based learning programme and further developing our Corporate Parenting Plan. And we will implement evidence-based actions to reduce our gender pay gap such as improving our flexible working practices, developing a new Workforce Plan and tackling inappropriate or negative behaviours.





Appendix – Workforce demographic data

The figures here represent the total workforce figures for Scottish Forestry as of 31 March 2021. To protect anonymity, figures <5 have been replaced by* to prevent disclosure of personal data.

Overall Employees

Gender		Disability			Ethnicity			Age	
Female	Male	No	Yes	Not Disclosed	BAME	White	Not Disclosed	39 and Under	40 and Over
96	96	170	9	13	*	184	6	55	137

Sexual Orientation			Gender Reassignment		Religion			
Heterosexual/ Straight	LGBT+	Not Disclosed	No	Not Disclosed	Religious	Agnostic	Atheist/ No Religion	Not Disclosed
57	*	133	78	114	26	*	31	131

Marital Status					
Divorced	Married	Partner	Separated	Single	Not Disclosed
12	106	8	*	60	*

Workforce by Payband

Payband	Gender		Payband	Age	
	Female	Male		39 and Under	40 and Over
SSG1 & Pay Band 1	0	*	SSG1 and Pay Band 1	0	*
Pay Band 2	*	14	Pay Band 2	0	15
Pay Band 3	9	20	Pay Band 3	*	25
Pay Band 4	22	17	Pay Band 4	10	29
Pay Band 5	25	17	Pay Band 5	20	22
Pay Band 5 (Ops)	*	10	Pay Band 5 (Ops)	*	12
Pay Band 6A	6	10	Pay Band 6A	11	*
Pay Band 6B	28	*	Pay Band 6B	7	25
Pay Band 7	*	0	Pay Band 7	*	0

New Starts

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Gender		Disability			Ethnicity			Age		
Female	Male	No	Not Known	Yes	BAME	Not Stated	White	39 and Under	40 and Over	Total
20	10	25	*	*	0	*	29	18	12	30

Leavers

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Gender		Disability			Ethnicity			Age		
Female	Male	No	Not Known	Yes	BAME	Not Stated	White	39 and Under	40 and Over	Total
10	13	17	*	*	*	*	19	12	11	23

Maternity

In the reporting period, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2021, 6 employees had some period of maternity leave.

Learning & Development – Training Course Attendance

Gender		Disability			Ethnicity			Age		
Male	Female	No	Yes	Not Known	White	BAME	Not Disclosed	34 or Under	35-54	55 or Over
1,511	1,768	2,975	177	127	3,116	46	117	755	1,685	839

Grievance & Disciplinary

There have been no formal Grievance and/or Disciplinary cases in Scottish Forestry for the reporting period.

Recruitment

A snapshot of success rates (proportion of people appointed out of all applications) is given below:

Gender			
Male	Female	Other/Not Stated	Total
3.6%	4.1%	6.5%	3.9%

Disability		
Yes	No	Undisclosed
0.0%	4.2%	2.3%

Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual/Straight	LGBT+	Prefer Not To Say
3.9%	4.3%	3.8%

Ethnic Group		
White	BAME	Prefer Not To Say
4.1%	2.3%	3.8%

Age Group		
Under 25	25-39	40+
1.6%	3.5%	5.4%

Full details of our recruitment data can be found [here](#).

Gender Pay Gap

Hourly pay rates

Mean GPG	2019	2020	2021
Female	£15.20	£15.24	£15.82
Male	£18.22	£19.80	£20.76

Median GPG	2019	2020	2021
Female	£13.30	£14.65	£15.18
Male	£17.42	£18.41	£19.44

Gender Pay Gap

Year	Mean Hourly Wage	Median Hourly Wage		Percentage of Headcount in Each Pay Quartile			
				Lower	Lower Middle	Upper Middle	Upper
2019	16.6%	23.7%	Female (2019)	67.4%	39.5%	54.8%	23.8%
			Male (2019)	32.6%	60.5%	45.2%	76.2%
2020	23.0%	20.4%	Female (2020)	67.9%	51.1%	45.5%	16.7%
			Male (2020)	32.1%	48.9%	54.5%	83.3%
2021	23.8%	21.9%	Female (2021)	74.5%	48.9%	52.2%	21.7%
			Male (2021)	25.5%	51.1%	47.8%	78.3%

Equal Pay

Mean FTE Salary Scottish Forestry

Grade	Salary
SSG2	–
SSG1	83,233
Pay Band 1	71,243
Pay Band 2	57,056
Pay Band 3	45,165
Pay Band 4	37,159
Pay Band 5	29,235
Pay Band 5 (Op)	35,239
Pay Band 6A	25,658
Pay Band 6A (Op)	–
Pay Band 6B	22,769
Pay Band 7	19,163
SAL	–
Total	35,288

Mean FTE Salary by Gender

Grade	Female	Male
SSG2	–	–
SSG1	–	83,233
Pay Band 1	–	71,243
Pay Band 2	56,803	57,074
Pay Band 3	45,491	45,019
Pay Band 4	36,859	37,547
Pay Band 5	29,383	29,017
Pay Band 5 (Op)	35,331	35,212
Pay Band 6A	25,600	25,693
Pay Band 6A (Op)	–	–
Pay Band 6B	22,747	22,921
Pay Band 7	19,163	–
SAL	–	–
Total	30,693	39,882

Mean FTE Salary by Disability

Grade	No	Not Known	Yes
SSG2	–	–	–
SSG1	83,233	–	–
Pay Band 1	71,243	–	–
Pay Band 2	57,320	56,803	55,856
Pay Band 3	45,160	–	45,209
Pay Band 4	37,173	–	36,607
Pay Band 5	29,220	30,159	28,797
Pay Band 5 (Op)	35,232	–	35,331
Pay Band 6A	25,600	26,525	25,138
Pay Band 6A (Op)	–	–	–
Pay Band 6B	22,795	22,516	–
Pay Band 7	19,163	–	19,163
SAL	–	–	–
Total	35,327	32,725	36,547

Mean FTE Salary by Ethnicity

Grade	BAME	Not Stated	White
SSG2	–	–	–
SSG1	–	–	83,233
Pay Band 1	–	–	71,243
Pay Band 2	–	–	57,056
Pay Band 3	–	–	45,165
Pay Band 4	37,530	–	37,149
Pay Band 5	30,159	30,159	29,189
Pay Band 5 (Op)	–	–	35,239
Pay Band 6A	–	26,178	25,485
Pay Band 6A (Op)	–	–	–
Pay Band 6B	–	22,921	22,764
Pay Band 7	–	–	19,163
SAL	–	–	–
Total	33,845	26,299	35,596



Scottish
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