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1. Introduction

The Equality Monitoring Report 2016/17 has been developed to provide detailed information on the composition of the Forestry Commission workforce. It also helps demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 by providing information on the work taking place across the organisation that helps eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups.

This is the first Equality Monitoring Report which will report on our employees in England only.

2. About the Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission is the Government Department responsible for the protection and expansion of England's forests and woodlands, including increasing their value to society and the environment.

The Forestry Commission is committed to ensuring that the forests and woodlands we manage are accessible to and enjoyed by all communities. We continue to identify and remove barriers to the enjoyment of our forests, woodlands and services that groups may encounter due to their protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

The Forestry Commission:

- Welcomes millions of visitors every year to our forests and woodlands, many of whom utilise and enjoy our visitor centres and thousands of way-marked walks and trails, cycle routes and bridle paths, including accessible trails;
- Employs 1130 people (as at 31 March 2016);
- Plants many millions of trees every year;
- Sustainably harvests almost four million tonnes of timber every year, which equates to almost a third of the UK's total domestic timber production;

- Is custodian of sustainably managed woods and forests and other land, two thirds of which lie within National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Takes degraded land no one else wants and turns it into green space for the benefit of all, helping to regenerate blighted industrial landscapes such as former coalfield communities and bring new woodlands closer to urban areas;
- Provides grants, licences and advice to community and private woodland owners to encourage new tree planting and sustainable forest management;
- Provides research services relevant to UK and international forestry interests, providing an evidence base for UK forest practices and UK Government policies.

2.1 Our Structure

The Forestry Commission has a statutorily appointed Board of Commissioners consisting of a Chair and up to ten other Forestry Commissioners, who are appointed by Her Majesty the Queen on the recommendation of Ministers. Delivery of policy, as well as progress against strategy objectives, is overseen in each country by the Commission's National Committees. The Forestry Commission is led by a Director in England, who is also a member of the Board of Commissioners.

The Forestry Commission takes the lead, on behalf of the Westminster, in the development and promotion of sustainable forest management and delivers the distinct forestry policies of England through specific objectives drawn from the country forestry strategies.

Further information on the Forestry Commission, including its aims and structure, can be found on our [website](#).

2.2 Restructuring our business 2016-17

During the course of 2016-17, Forestry Commission England progressed with establishing corporate services in England, overseen by the Corporate Services Establishment Programme (CSEP) Board. Forestry Commission England's governance change programme worked to prepare for the Forestry and Land Management Bill (Scotland) which was introduced to Scottish Parliament in May 2017. The Bill outlined provision for the transfer the Commissioners' powers in Scotland to Scottish Ministers.

In 2016-17 Health and Safety and Learning and Development were established as services in England within Forest Enterprise England (FEE). Business cases for England HR, Finance and IT services were put to the FCTU for consultation in February 2017, following which the recruitment of staff into these services commenced. These teams will be established within FEE to provide services for FEE and Forest Services in the shorter term. In 2016-2017 Forest Research ran a similar programme to establish HR, IT and finance corporate services for Forest Research, an agency of Forestry Commission England.

2.3 Our Values

The Forestry Commission is an organisation that values:

- **Teamwork** - We work collaboratively with each other and our stakeholders, ensuring trees, woods and forests meet the needs of society;
- **Professionalism** - We enjoy and take pride in our work, acting with integrity and political impartiality to achieve high standards of health and safety, quality, efficiency and sustainability;
- **Respect** - We value each other and our stakeholders, recognising diverse perspectives and treating everyone with consideration;
- **Communication** - We are open, honest and objective with each other and our stakeholders. We are prepared to challenge and to be challenged;
- **Learning** - We are always learning, developing the skills, knowledge and behaviours to support organisational success; and,
- **Creativity** - We seek new ways of doing things, sharing ideas and embracing change.

2.4 Our People Strategy and Equality and Diversity Strategy

The corporate plans determine the key strategic drivers for how the organisation manages its people and services. The latest People Strategy (2016-2019), 'Fit for our Future', has the same vision and themes, one of which is Equality and Diversity, where we set out our commitments to:

- Legal compliance;
- Improving the diversity of our workforce; and,
- Supporting our staff in engagement with communities to meet the General and Specific Duties placed on public bodies through the Equality Act 2010.

Our [Equality and Diversity Strategy](#) was published in April 2012. This is our framework to help embed the diversity elements of our People Strategy throughout the Forestry Commission until 2017. The vision of the Equality and Diversity Strategy is to have a diverse workforce that reflects the society that we serve and to continue to offer exemplar customer services to diverse communities.

The five goals of this Strategy are to ensure that we;

- Build on our successes and continue to work towards making our services and facilities available to all;
- Continue to ensure our departmental policies, organisational objectives and operational practices enable everyone to access our services and facilities;
- Continue to engage with communities to ensure our services and facilities are fit for purpose and tailored to meet their requirements;
- Continue to respect, support and value all our staff, treating them in accordance with our values; and,
- Recruit and employ people in order to make our workforce more representative of the populations in England.



2.5 Our Diversity Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the People Strategy and the Diversity Strategy, we also produced a series of Diversity Objectives for the four years from 2012 to 2016. A revised set of objectives for the Forestry Commission was published in April 2016.

The Objectives have been selected to ensure that the Forestry Commission meets the three aims of the General Duty as outlined in the Equality Act. The three aims of the General Duty are:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- To advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and,
- To foster good relations between people from different groups.

We have classified the Objectives by each of the nine protected characteristics, and then split them between staff and customer focussed actions.

The Forestry Commission recognises that the diversity of its staff group is intrinsically linked to the provision of valued services to diverse communities and vice versa. Diverse staff can provide insight into ways of working with diverse communities and suggesting an inclusive approach to customer service. They act as role models and can encourage a wider pool of potential applicants to apply to work for the Forestry Commission if they can see that the organisation takes a positive and proactive approach to equality and diversity.

The Forestry Commission Equality and Diversity Objectives can be found on our [website](#).



3. Our Approach to Equality and Diversity

In developing this Annual Equality Monitoring Report, we recognise that the Forestry Commission has made progress in embedding equality and diversity into everyday business. However, we are not complacent and recognise that there is still much to achieve.

We have examined our relevant policies, functions, service planning and service delivery processes to ensure that no-one is in any way discriminated against or subject to unfair opportunity/adverse treatment. Further, as an employer we ensure that appropriate training is available to all staff to raise awareness of the equality and diversity agenda and ensure that employees are aware of their responsibilities. We have been reviewing this approach since devolution of equality and diversity and will be developing new programmes of activity relevant to each part of the organisation. This will be reported on our website in due course.

As a service provider, the Forestry Commission takes an inclusive approach to working with individuals and organisations. We also procure goods and services from organisations and individuals that have or subscribe to equality and diversity values and objectives, as set down in legislation.

3.1 Our Approach to Engagement

As a Government Department we comply with the current guidance on consultation and engagement. Therefore, consultations are conducted with key stakeholders when regulations change.

The provision of recreation is one of our principal objectives and we understand that recreation initiatives provide us with a major opportunity to meet the General Duties of the Equality Act, particularly around advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. In our internal recreation guidance, we stress the importance and value of understanding the local community and being proactive in identifying and seeking views from those people who currently do not access our services, as well as those we are more used to working with and who are established visitors to our forests. The guidance includes checklists to assist field practitioners to include their whole community. Through engagement we hope to improve our understanding of any barriers to visiting our forests and to work with different groups to identify and put in place solutions, events and facilities that will encourage more frequent visits from a more diverse range of the local and wider population.

3.2 Our Approach to Equality Analysis

We have continued to mainstream the use of Equality Analysis (EqA), to ensure that our new policies or services, and any changes to existing policies or services, fully take into account any impact on our diverse customers and staff.

Our HR policies, including Learning and Development strategies and initiatives, are subject to EqA, as well as our customer-facing projects.

The approach to Equality Analysis was reviewed in late 2016 and new guidance on equality impact assessments is now in place (January 2017). However, Equality Analysis was the model used during the period covered by this report.

3.3 Our Approach to our Customers

The Forestry Commission England recognises that forests and woods contribute positively by providing opportunities for people to participate in and enjoy woodlands. We deliver an extensive range of practical programmes to ensure that communities and individuals can get the most from them.

There are a number of ways in which we can reach and engage with people. For example, we offer:

1. Education and learning initiatives;
2. Healthy living initiatives and activities;
3. Play, recreation and sporting opportunities;
4. Volunteering
5. Community forestry and woodland creation in and around towns and cities, to be closer to where people live.

As the needs of communities change and develop, we will continue to adapt to ensure that we offer equality of opportunity for all. We proactively promote our services and facilities to anyone who wishes to use them. However, we also recognise that there may be perceived barriers and reasons why people may not be able to fully benefit from our facilities. Therefore, we are actively seeking to address this by adapting infrastructure, providing a wide range of activities and events, engaging with communities and in some

cases providing specialist equipment and/or tailored activities. To achieve our objectives, the Forestry Commission is working closely with a range of partner organisations at a local, regional and/or national level.

We undertake a range of surveys to compare and test customer satisfaction and explore needs. These range from public opinion surveys and site questionnaires to feedback forms for our events and activities. Our site managers use local demographic data to more strategically assess the potential demand for services and facilities and compare this with actual site usage. Our external website is built to level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standard, to meet the demands of a wide range of users, including those with visual impairments, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these. Applying this standard ensures that we are inclusive in how we provide information to all potential customers, suppliers and the public to meet our public duties around accessibility; and that our website is also more accessible to users in general. We are currently developing a new website for Forestry Commission England and working with an independent organisation, The Shaw Trust, to ensure the new website continues to maintain level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standard. More information on the accessibility of our current website can be found [here](#).

3.4 Our Forests in Your Home

In order to give people who are unable to visit, or are unsure of visiting our forests a taste of what we can offer, we have created pages on our web site called [Our Forests in Your Home](#). The site shows many of the activities that can be experienced by visitors, gives information and videos on wildlife, recreation options and climate change. The site also offers a link to the pages that let people search for details of the nearest forest to their home and discover what events and facilities are available there. In order to make these pages as useful and interesting as possible for our intended audience, we will add to them and refine them over time as new content becomes available.

3.5 Monitoring Our Visitor Numbers

During 2016 a report was produced by “Beaufort Research” undertaking 1801 visitor interviews conducted at all 8 English District locations across 2016.

The Survey records positive responses from respondents in different categories. The following information was provided in relation to their protected characteristics:

Disabled	Not disabled	Female	Male	BAME	White	Age 44 or less	Age 45 or over
7%	93%	55%	45%	5%	95%	52%	48%

4. Our Employees

4.1 Building and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

FEE continues to be forward thinking in how it can attract, develop and retain its workforce. There is extensive work ongoing at all levels within the organisation to ensure that workforce plans are in place to ensure that we have the right people in the right place with the right skills. There is ongoing work in development of leadership, broadening out the scope of apprenticeship programmes and offering a range of vocational courses to staff. Coupled with the positive work ongoing on wellbeing, FEE will continue to improve the working environment.

4.2 Equality and Diversity Training

The Forestry Commission has developed and delivers in-house equality and diversity training. We have different levels of training events, tailored to suit the needs of staff and depending upon their level of exposure to customers and/or their involvement in policy making. The training includes all aspects of equality and relates to the Forestry Commission's business. We have developed on-line training modules for staff and managers and face-to-face training on the Equality Analysis process. The sessions included in our New Entrant (induction) courses have also been re-designed. In addition, FC employees now have access to the full suite of Equality and Diversity training available through Civil Service Learning.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Staff Forum

From the 1st of April 2016 responsibility for Equality and Diversity was transferred from a Group Level to a national level and now forms part of the regular England Staff Council meetings, involving management and Trade Union partners.

4.4 Staff Survey 2017

We conduct a staff survey every two years to gauge satisfaction levels across the organisation and to identify areas for further investigation and improvement. The 2015 staff survey was undertaken in September 2015, results were analysed in the 2015/16 report and the next staff survey was undertaken in 2017. The results of the 2017 staff survey will be reported within the 2017/18 report.

4.5 Mental Wellbeing and Staff Development

Proposed approach for an integrated wellbeing programme:

During 2016/17 the development stages have been undertaken and the new Well Being initiatives have been rolled out to the organisation. There are 3 key aspects which should be adhered to, to the aim is to ensure this is embedded into the organisation.

- 1) There is real and demonstrable top level commitment from the Executive Team and all district leaders
- 2) There are local champions who are the points of contact to drive it locally. It would be expected that they undertake self-assessments on their current position against the proposed wellbeing programme, deliver activities and regularly update against progress on their local plans
- 3) Governance structure is established to include a national expert, local champions and Trade Union representative to ensure momentum, drive and collaborative working. This is being sponsored by a senior Executive champion.

Refreshed Training aligned to business

Mental Health Lite Training

Business in the Community East of England team, (part of The Prince's Responsible Business Network) have been commissioned to run a half day awareness raising session with all senior leaders on Monday 1st August (25 attendees). Following this a two-day course for those identified by the organisation to become Mental Health First Aiders will be established.

The initial training is a half-day session and is delivered by an accredited Mental Health First Aid trainer. The purpose is a light touch introduction where participants will be able to:

- Identify the discrimination surrounding mental health problems
- Define mental health and some mental health problems
- Relate to other people's experience
- Help support people with mental health issues
- Look after their own mental health

The second area of training is more in depth. This two day programme enables participants to:-

- Have a deeper understanding of Mental First Aid and how to identify and manage employees suffering from a variety of mental health conditions
- Understand how to identify and manage staff with depression
- Understand how to identify and manage staff with Anxiety disorders
- Understand how to identify and manage staff with psychosis

Other training

It has been identified that there has been some adhoc training (Stress Awareness Training, Supporting People through Change as examples) when parts of the business are going through change but feedback has been received that this is “one off, not embedded”. A complete review of training is recommended with the local champions to ensure that training is timely, based on business need and is the most effective option. For example, face to face training is not always the most effective method as an individual may need to wait 6 months to get onto the course by which time their mental health may have significantly deteriorated.

As part of this review of training, the Civil Service Learning options will be included. Research has been undertaken to understand the current uptake of the wellbeing modules. Across the whole organisation only 5 individuals have completed “Wellbeing, Resilience and Stress E-learning”. The review will consider the most effective ways to embed this.

Develop Quality Conversations

A toolkit will be developed for leaders to have more rounded inclusive conversations with members of their team. For example, tools to help them understand more about their teams, ensuring a stress risk assessment is annually undertaken (or when prompted), understanding what support they need, their career aspirations & development needs to ensure we get the most out of them and also ensure they can achieve their full potential. This is closely linked to effective performance management and inclusive leadership (i.e. understanding and valuing your teams).

Wellbeing Awareness Month

Wellbeing activities will be organised across a particular month or several months across the calendar year (local events) around specific themes. Examples may be extravagant like fundraising for a local charity and undertaking the Three Peaks Challenge, through to inviting local organisations in, on particular days to share tools to help people with their mental wellbeing (e.g. Mind).

Explore use of life coaches

Life Coaching is a profession that is profoundly different from consulting, mentoring, advice, therapy, or counselling. The coaching process addresses specific personal projects, business successes, general conditions and transitions in the client's personal life, relationships or profession by examining what is going on right now, discovering what your obstacles or challenges might be, and choosing a course of action to make your life be what you want it to be.

It was discussed as extremely beneficial at the CIPD Wellbeing Conference so this will be explored as an offering as part of the FC England Wellbeing Programme. Further, coaching is being explored as part of embedding the new FE Leadership model.

FC England Physical Wellbeing Activities

When we look at the brand of the Forestry Commission from an external perspective, you do think Wellbeing. We offer a lot of active sports and activities for our visitors but how much do we utilise them as staff to help our own physical wellbeing? Do we arrange similar team building activities based around what we offer the public? This will need to be explored further to ensure it happens across the organisation as we offer some fantastic activities. For example, at Sherwood Pines alone they have a 10K Wild run trail, a variety of cycling trails, Nordic walking, archery and disability trails.

Employee Assistance Programme Zone

We currently have a confidential free phone advice line that can be contacted 24/7 365 days a year (0800 0285 147). The advisors answering the phone are trained to help assess what is needed and provide the support that best suits people's needs.

However, there is an Employee Wellbeing zone available on the Forestry Commission intranet to help employees assess their wellbeing and then manage and track their wellbeing goals. Through a variety of conversations, it has been established that this wellbeing zone isn't very well known so should be made visible as part of this programme outlining the benefits to all.

5. Equality Monitoring Data

We have completed a detailed monitoring process for employment data collected between April 2016 and March 2017. In the outcomes detailed in the following tables, we have represented the total figures from Forest Commission England. The information was based on a snapshot as of 31st March 2017.

Please note that staffing data used to complete these tables covers those considered to be in paid employment by the Forestry Commission, including Public Appointments, office holders, and some apprentices. As such, figures may differ from other published reports, which only include Forestry Commission employees.

5.1 Overview of Our Analysis

The following tables show the detail of our workforce and specific comments have been made against each table. In summary, the tables below demonstrate that our workforce is predominantly Male (62%), White (99%), not disabled (97%) and aged 40 or over (64%).

As a result of Government Spending Reviews, we have limited our advertising programme which promoted our job opportunities in media outlets specifically targeted to women, people with disabilities and people from minority ethnic backgrounds. We took this action, as although a more limited recruitment programme remained. However, our External Recruitment data shows that there was an increase in the number of applications from people from Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, and those aged 40 and over this year. The numbers however remain low in comparison to the overall number of applications. As the expansion of the National office increased towards the end of the reporting period and into 2017/18 a greater number of applications from BAME groups will be expected due to the nature of the roles advertised and the local recruitment market.

We provide a wide range of internal training, to suit the requirements of the business and provide a Management Development Programme to provide our managers with the necessary skills to progress, or to improve their performance. This programme is targeted more towards managers' individual skill sets than our previous management training events. The Forestry Commission has its own in-house Learning and Development team, who design and deliver training in response to business needs. External training is also widely used to cover areas of particular expertise e.g. IT software. Our in-house Learning and Development team receives regular updates on equality and diversity issues and offers flexible training options to those who request them. This enables more people to access training by removing barriers created by the training materials or by the need to travel to a training venue or commit whole days to training.

Our analysis allows us to identify and investigate any apparent discrepancies in the year, but the low numbers of disabled and BAME employees means that the data can be significantly changed by just one or two people being promoted, accessing training, receiving top performance marks etc. We compare data gathered over the years to see whether any trends are developing and whether discrepancies are repeated year on year. There are some historical and cultural reasons behind the composition of our workforce. Careers in forestry operational roles can be perceived as masculine and requiring great physical strength and mobility; this has resulted in long-standing occupational segregation. There is work underway to change this perception and our employment brand.

5.2 Employees in Post

The following table provides information on the protected characteristics of our 1130 employees in post on 31st March 2017.

Employee Data	Disabled	Not disabled	Not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Not Disclosed	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Percentage	3%	96%	1%	38%	62%	<1%	99%	<1%	38%	62%

The table shows that our workforce of 1130 people in March 2017, remains predominantly not disabled, male, white and aged 40 or over. Further analysis shows that only 4.5% (51) of our staff are aged 24 or under.

5.3 Full/part time split at 31 March 2017

All Staff		Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Full time	*83%	3%	97%	<1%	29%	71%	1%	99%	<1%	38%	62%
Part time	*17%	4%	95%	<1%	81%	19%	1%	98%	<1%	25%	75%

(* percentage of all staff)

Of the staff employed by the Forestry Commission on 31st March 2017, 934 (84%) worked on a full time basis. 195 (17% of the total workforce) worked on a part time basis. Almost 80% of employees working part time were women, whilst almost 70% of employees working full time were men. Of the 195 employees working part time, 74.91% were aged 40 or over, whilst 57.8% of those working full time was in the 40+ age group. This is no surprise given that almost 70% of all employees are in this same age group.

The Forestry Commission has a range of family friendly policies in place to ensure that staff are supported and can work in different roles.

5.4 Type of contract at 31 March 2017

	Disabled	Not disabled	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity Not disclosed	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Perm	81%	90%	89%	92%	78%	91%	83%	87%	93%
Fixed Term Temp	6%	6%	8%	4%	11%	6%	17%	9%	4%
Short Term Temp	9%	3%	2%	3%	11%	2%	0%	3%	2%
Other*	4%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%

* Other – Casual, Office Holders, Part year appointments, Re-employed pensioners, seconded officers, fixed term recurring appointment, committee members, other contractors

The table highlights that the majority of the Forestry Commission's staff are on permanent contracts. For example 81% of disabled employees have permanent contracts.

5.5 Pay Band at 31 March 2016

	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
Senior Pay Bands*	0%	<1%	0%	0%	<1%	-	-	-	<1%	<1%
Middle Pay Bands**	3%	10%	20%	9%	10%	22%	8%	33%	4%	13%
Other Pay Bands***	97%	90%	80%	91%	89%	78%	92%	67%	95%	86%

* Indicates staff who are Commissioners, or in pay-bands SSG1A, SSG1, and SSG2; ** Indicates staff who are in pay bands PB1, PB2 and PB3; and *** Indicates staff who are in pay-bands PB4, PB5, PB5 (Op), PB6A, PB6A (Op), PB6B and PB7.

The table shows that distribution of protected characteristics across the pay bands is quite even and has not changed significantly from the figures reported in previous years, with non-disabled, male and aged over 40 staff likely to be in a higher pay band.

The differential for age at Middle Management level can be explained by longer service, with most senior staff being older. Despite continued staff turnover and because of limited permanent recruitment, there has been little change in the distribution of staff across the Pay Bands compared to previous years. The most significant difference is for disabled staff in the lower grades, where this year there was an increase of disabled people in the lower grades from 92% to 97%. This could be as a result of greater disclosure on disability.

5.6 Internal Recruitment during 2016/2017

Internal Recruitment	Total	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not known	Female	Male	Gender not disclosed	BAME including other/mixed	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	39 or less	40 or over	Age not disclosed
Applications	279	0.4%	95.3%	4.3%	31.5%	65.9%	2.6%	1%	94%	5%	64%	34%	2%
Interviewed Applicants	171	1%	97%	2%	31.6%	67.8%	0.6%	1%	96%	3%	64%	36%	-
Successfully appointed applicants	98	-	98%	2%	34%	66%	-	2%	96%	2%	64%	36%	-
As % of total applicants within each Protected Characteristic Group interviewed and successfully appointed.	Interviewed	100%	62%	33%	61%	63%	14%	67%	62%	38%	61%	65%	-
	Successful	-	36%	17%	38%	35%	-	67%	94%	15%	35%	37%	-

With the exception of Forest Research, which holds specific science promotion boards for its scientific staff, the Forestry Commission holds internal competitive recruitment campaigns for many of its vacancies. This is in line with current recruitment guidance which sets out that posts should be recruited internally first where they require experience and professional/ technical expertise, competencies and behaviours likely to be available within the organisation and/or the post is likely to present an opportunity for natural progression for existing Forestry Commission employees. This ensures that employees with development aspirations have the opportunity to apply and be successful if they have the required level of competence for the role. It is worth noting here that the

'pool' of internal candidates are largely male, not disabled, white and aged 40 or over. As such the data for internal applications reflects the current diversity of our workforce.

- Applicants for internal vacancies are predominantly male, not disabled, of white ethnicity and aged 39 or under;
- Female applicants were slightly more likely than men to be successful in comparison to the overall number of applications from this group;

The issues highlighted here are based on very small numbers, and so it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions. Given that no disabled applicants were successful in internal recruitment, further investigation will be undertaken to identify any barriers, perceived or actual, to internal recruitment.

5.7 External Recruitment during 2016/2017

External Recruitment	Total	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not known	Female	Male	Gender not disclosed	BAME including other/mixed	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	39 or less	40 or over	Age not disclosed
Applications	3393	4.5%	93.6%	1.9%	39.6%	59.6%	0.8%	5%	93%	2%	62%	37%	1%
Interviewed Applicants	456	6%	92%	2%	53.7%	46.1%	0.2%	4%	94%	2%	60%	39%	1%
Successfully appointed applicants	121	3.3%	94.2%	2.5%	65%	34%	1%	3%	96%	1%	58%	40%	2%
As % of total applicants within each Protected Characteristic Group interviewed and successfully appointed.	Interviewed	18%	13%	14%	18%	10%	4%	10%	14%	14%	13%	14%	8%
	Successful	4%	4%	5%	6%	2%	4%	2%	4%	1%	3%	4%	4%

Spending for external advertising of roles continued to be restricted under the Governments cost restrictions during 2016/17. However significantly more applications were received compared to the group figures in 2015/16

Analysis of the data shows that:

- Of the successful appointments, 65% were women, while 34% were men, which if these results continue will start to address the gender imbalance of the organisation. Only 5% of applications came from BAME groups, with 2 % of successful applicants commencing a new role, the previous year recorded a 0% success rate.
- Applicants from a BAME background and applications from people with a disability groups have the lowest numbers of applicants.

5.8 Performance marking for the year ending 31 March 2017

Performance rating	Age 44 or less	Age 45 Or over	Disabled	Not Disabled	Not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Not disclosed
Top	12%	11%	0%	12%	0%	11%	12%	0%	12%	0
Good	87.7%	88.4%	100%	88%	100%	88%	88%	100%	88%	100%
Not Fully Effective	Less than <1% -figures not reported as may identify individuals.									

The data shows that female and male employees are treated equally in the award of a Top Performance rating, which is an improvement in previous year's figures. The data also shows BAME employees are less likely to receive a Top Performance rating than any other racial group, as has previously been the case.

Disabled employees received no top awards within this reporting period, with the number of disabled people achieving a Top Performance rating continually decreasing from 15% in 2013/14, to 8% in 2014/15, to 5% in 2015/16, down to no awards in 2016/17.

Given the drop in the number of Disabled employees receiving top ratings the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion managers will investigate this issue and take steps to address this if it is shown that there is any perceived or otherwise discrimination taking place.

It should also be noted that traditionally only a few Forestry Commission employees receive a not fully effective rating, meaning that numbers available for analysis at this level are typically very low and therefore there is no traditional normal model of distribution for analysis of performance ratings.

5.9 Internal training, average events attended per person during 2016/17

Internal Training	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	34 or less	35 – 54	55 and over	Age not disclosed
Management Training	1%	99%	0%	47%	53%	3%	97%	-	37%	55%	8%	-
IT	12%	88%	0%	63%	37%	2%	98%	-	30%	49%	21%	-
Forestry Operational	3%	97%	0%	29%	71%	1%	98%	1%	45%	43%	12%	-
People Skills	4%	94%	2%	45%	55%	15%	97%	1.5%	34%	49%	16%	1%
Seminar	0%	92%	8%	62%	38%	4%	92%	4%	23%	42%	31%	4%
Specialist Technical Training	3%	97%	0%	16%	84%	0.5%	99%	0.5%	46%	38%	16%	-
All Training	3%	96%	1%	32%	68%	1%	98%	1%	41%	44%	14%	1%

Overall, the data shows that men are more likely than women to participate in internal training (68% compared to 32%). However, seminars and specialist technical training are statistically shown to be attended more by women. The forestry operational training statistic highlighted in the table of men receiving more internal training (71%) is in line with the workforce statistic reported earlier.

This data will continue to be closely monitored but work must continue to expand the diversity of our workforce in order to see a shift in the diversity of our data for our training.

5.10 External training, events attended per person during 2016/17

External Training	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	34 or less	35 – 54	55 and over	Age not disclosed
Management Training	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT	0%	100%	0%	31%	69%	0%	100%	0%	31%	56%	13%	0%
Forestry Operational	3%	97%	0%	28%	72%	0%	100%	0%	53%	33%	14%	0%
People Skills	0%	100%	0%	66%	34%	0%	100%	0%	8%	59%	39%	0%
Seminar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Specialist Technical Training	7%	93%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	41%	35%	24%	0%
All Training	3%	97%	0%	24%	76%	0%	100%	0%	40%	40%	20%	0%

The external training data shows a similar statistical gender split compared to internal training. This is perceived to be as a result of external training being more specialist rather than forestry operational as the majority of this operational training is in house.

5.11 Leavers during 2016/2017

	Total	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over	Turnover rate
Leavers during 2016/2017*	141	1.5%	97%	1.5%	52%	48%	2%	96%	2%	50%	50%	16%
The breakdown of leavers from each Protected Characteristic	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over	Total no of leavers	
End of contract **	46	50%	32%	66%	36%	29%	33.3%	32%	100%	34%	31%	33%
Retirement ***	14		10%		8%	12%		10%			20%	9%
Resignation	71	50%	50%	34%	50%	50%	33.3%	51%		63%	38%	52%
Compulsory Early Leaver	0											
Transfer / Secondment	9		7%		6%	7%	33.3%	6%		3%	10%	6
Voluntary Early Exit	1		<1%			2%		<1%			1%	<1%
Dismissal	0											
Death in Service	0											

* Total Leavers in 2016/2017 = 141; ** end of contract – end of casual Short term temporary appointments (STTA), Fixed Term Appointments (FTA), Part-Year Appointments (PYA) contracts; *** Retirement – Actuarial, Age, Medical, Re-employed Pensioner Retired.

As the Forestry Commission continues to prepare for full devolution, there has been a continued increase in the use of Short Term Temporary Appointment contracts (STTAs) that last up to 12 months to fill seasonal/short term jobs and to cover for staff absences i.e. maternity leave, long-term sick absence, etc. As a result 46% of all leavers during the year were as a result of STTA contracts ending, down from 48% in 2014/15. Historically, it is younger people who are appointed to STTA contracts, and this accounts for the higher level of leavers aged 39 or less. Other than end of contract, resignation is the main reason for younger staff leaving.

50% of leavers who had disclosed a disability left due to end of contract. The figure is the same for BAME leavers. However, the low disability and ethnicity workforce data means that one or two additional leavers will have had a significant impact on the proportions shown in the table. Of the leavers who are disabled, BAME or female, approximately 38% resigned. An Exit Interview is offered to all employees who leave the organisation, and there has been no indication from these employees that any issues related to their protected characteristics were the reasons for their resignation. Other resignation levels are comparable and indicate no underlying issues that might prompt an increased turnover in some groups in comparison. However, the fact that younger, female, disabled and BAME employees were more likely to resign will be monitored and investigated more fully.

5.12 Disciplinary Action during 2016/17

Disciplinary Action	Disabled	Not Disabled	Female	Male	BAME	White Other	White British
4	-	100%	50%	50%	-		100%

In 2016/7, there have been 4 disciplinary cases across the Forestry Commission. Given the very low number of cases little analysis can be undertaken. There is no evidence of any discrimination. The outcomes of these disciplinary cases include verbal and 1st written warnings.

All disciplinary cases are individually overseen by a HR Case Manager, to ensure that the Discipline Policy and Procedure is applied correctly and consistently across the Forestry Commission.

5.13 Grievances raised during 2016/7

Grievances	Disabled	Not Disabled	Female	Male	BAME	White Other	White British	Age 39 or under	Age 40 or over
	-	100%	50%	50%			100%		

The number of grievances substantially decreased in 2016/7 from eight to two, compared to nine in 2014/5. The reasons for raising the grievances are varied, with none citing any discrimination.

5.14 Work patterns at 31 March 2017

Work Patterns	Disabled	Not disabled	Disability not disclosed	Female	Male	BAME	White	Ethnicity not disclosed	Age 39 or less	Age 40 or over
*Five weekdays	76%	75%	80%	59%	86%	78%	75%	66%	73%	77%
**1 – 4 weekdays	3%	7%		17%	1%		7%		5%	8%
***Other	21%	17%	20%	24%	3%	22%	16%	34%	21%	24%
****Null		1%		<1%			2%		1%	<1%

*Five weekday = any five day worked in a 7 day week ** 1-4 weekdays = any 1-4 days worked in a 7 day week *** Other= other working patterns including compressed hours

Female employees are more likely than male to work a one to four day week or other working patterns. Male employees are less likely to work one to four weekdays, although the number of male staff who working a five day week has reduced slightly to 88% in comparison to 89% in 2014/15, 91% in 2013/14 and 93% in 2012/13. The number of disabled people working five weekdays has increased slightly from 71% in 2014/15 to 77% this year.

There has been an increase in the number of people from BAME groups working 'other' work patterns – from 14% in 2014/15 to 21% this year. Other work patterns include Annualised Hours, which allow for attendance to vary through the year, and Rostered Contracts, which generally include duty turns over weekends. BAME employees are more likely to be on these contracts than those who have identified as White. This flexibility is important to the Forestry Commission, as it allows us to manage both recreation and forest management needs and accommodate seasonal peaks and troughs.

5.15 Return to Work after Maternity Leave

The Forestry Commission exceeds statutory legislation in relation to paid maternity leave, and also offers a range of family friendly policies to support parents in the workplace.

During 2016/17 we had 23 employees on maternity leave:

- 15 employees returned from maternity leave during 2016/17,
- 13 employees had a period of non-paid leave, extending their maternity leave.
- 8 employees remained on maternity leave at the end of 2016/17

6. Equal Pay

6.1 Equal Pay Audit

The Forestry Commission wants employees to be fairly and equitably rewarded for the work they do, therefore Equal Pay Monitoring is part of the annual pay review process. A full Equal Pay Audit was published in 2017.

The scope of the audit is to identify pay gaps on grounds of gender, working pattern, ethnicity, disability and age. Sufficient diversity information is not available on the other protected characteristics so a broader review is not possible. The audit considers pay, overtime and pensionable allowances.

The audit focusses on employees in Pay Bands 1 to 7, including operational pay bands. The Senior Staff Group was excluded from the audit, as responsibility for Senior Civil Service pay is held by the Cabinet Office. As there is a single staff group for pay negotiation purposes the data is analysed at Forestry Commission level.

Below the Senior Staff Group there are 10 pay bands, reflecting eight levels of job responsibility. At Pay Bands 5 and 6A there are operational pay bands which have a higher basic salary to recognise the requirement to undertake operational working which involves greater flexibility in working hours, longer working hours and on-call duties. These roles do not normally qualify for overtime or on-call allowance. Operational Pay is currently under review, therefore detailed analysis of these pay bands were not included in the audit.

Further information on the Equal Pay Audit is available on [request](#).

6.2 Average earnings at 1 October 2017

Average earnings for staff in post include full time equivalent Salary and Overtime. Protected characteristic earnings are compared to all-staff earnings by Pay Band. Details shown in red in the table below highlight where average earnings are below the all staff average earnings for the protected characteristic groups, and details show in **bold** highlight where the number is greater than 5% or less than -5% to help identify differences considered significant.

	All staff average earnings	Disabled // All staff	Not disabled // All staff	Female // All staff	Male // All staff	*BAME // All staff	White Other // All staff	White British	Age 39 or under // All staff	Age 40 or over // All staff
SSG2	£111,613		0.0%		0.0%	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
SSG1A	£78,915		0.0%		0.0%			0.0%		0.0%
SSG1	£72,146		0.0%		0.0%			0.0%	-2.5%	2.5%
PB1	£62,548		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		-3.5%	0.2%	-3.5%	0.2%
PB2	£51,425		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.1%		0.0%	-2.8%	0.3%
PB3	£41,851	3.1%	-0.1%	-3.5%	1.4%		-1.8%	0.1%	-4.4%	1.1%
PB4	£34,568	4.7%	-0.2%	-1.8%	0.9%	-5.1%	-1.7%	0.0%	-2.8%	1.8%
PB5	£26,922	3.0%	-0.2%	-0.4%	0.9%	-6.0%	-7.0%	0.3%	-1.7%	1.6%
PB5OP	£31,085	4.5%	-0.1%	-2.7%	0.6%		-0.9%	0.0%	-3.1%	1.6%
PB6A	£25,109	-4.6%	0.1%	-4.7%	2.5%	-2.9%	-1.8%	0.1%	-4.4%	3.0%
PB6AO	£27,653	0.5%	0.0%	-1.9%	0.5%		0.0%	0.0%	-2.1%	1.3%
PB6B	£20,930	-2.3%	0.1%	-0.9%	0.8%	4.5%	-2.6%	0.0%	-2.3%	1.1%
PB7	£17,506	-2.7%	0.1%	0.4%	-0.3%		-1.8%	0.2%	0.2%	-0.3%
All Staff	£28,340	-5.4%	0.2%	-6.3%	3.8%	9.6%	-0.4%	-0.1%	-7.7%	4.3%

The data indicates some statistically significant differences (highlighted in **bold**) in average earnings per Pay Band between the different protected characteristics for which we capture data. The pattern of significant differences remains in the same grades and

demographic differences to last year. This division, while based on the split of genders in operational roles, could appear that men are more likely to get overtime because of the roles they are in. This could contribute to overall pay inequality.

Many of our roles, and associated Pay Bands, are operational and specifically forest-based roles such as forest crafts, machine operators, etc which are historically and predominantly roles held by older, White British and mostly non-disabled male employees.

As our longer-serving employees are male, white and over 40 years of age proportionately we have more of these groups of staff at the maximum of the pay scales than women, those who are BAME or white other and those aged 39 or less which gives rise to 'natural' pay gaps. Many of these roles also have a greater business need to work additional hours, resulting in payment of overtime and this continues, although to a lesser extent than in previous years. There are difficulties in analysing this information however, particularly around disability due to the small percentage of employees in such categories. This means for example that just one or two colleagues leaving the organisation could significantly change the average length of service.

For over ten years, we have been actively re-structuring our pay system, shortening the length of pay scales and the time it takes to progress from entry point to pay band maximum. This approach is steadily reducing the gender pay gaps in our system, as the shortening of the pay scales means staff can theoretically reach the maximum of the Pay Band within four years. However, the previous two-year pay freeze, limited pay rise announced in 2015 and continuing Civil Service wide cap on pay has halted progression from minimum to maximum of our Pay Scales.

7. Our approach to monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a key priority for the Forestry Commission and will form the basis, along with Equality Analysis, of future action. Comprehensive and meaningful data, information and research will be collected and used to build an evidence base to help us assess our progress in meeting our equality objectives. The Forestry Commission will continue to monitor the required areas under the Equality Act and will report and benchmark progress on an annual basis. This information will be used to identify gaps in representation. Where gaps are identified, action will be taken to investigate reasons and to address discrepancies appropriately.

We will ensure that monitoring information in relation to employment and service provision offers:

- Comprehensive benchmarks against which we can monitor progress against achieving our [Equality Objectives](#) (see [Section 2.3](#) and [Appendix 1](#))
- A quantitative basis for Equality Analysis with which we can highlight areas of required action.

8. Conclusion and Further Information

We continue to be encouraged that some progress is being made to diversify our workforce. However, we are also very aware that we still have a challenge ahead of us and know that there is more to do. This will not be an easy challenge, many of the issues will take time, but work is underway and we are committed to making a real difference to our customers and our staff.

As mentioned earlier in the report, there are now country Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Managers for FC England, FC Scotland, Forest Research and Shared Services. These country managers will produce separate equality monitoring reports. The next report is due in April 2018 to coincide with the new gender pay gap reporting legislation.

Further information on our work on equality and diversity can be found on our [website](#). Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Managers can also be contacted by emailing us at diversity@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or by calling 0300 067 5000. We welcome any feedback you may have on this report.

If you would like a paper copy of this document or require it in an alternative accessible format, please contact us on the details above.