



**WILTSHIRE**  
Fire & Rescue  
Service

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Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority

# *Equality & Diversity Data*



**2011/12**



**DEVELOPING** FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE  
**EQUALITY FRAMEWORK**

Your Safety: Our Priority

For a copy of our Customer Charter please go to our website [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

If you or someone you know would like to see this document in another language or a different format such as large print, Braille or audio CD, please contact us on 01380 723601.

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## Foreword

Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service (Wiltshire FRS) has a high reputation for providing emergency services that meet the needs of all the communities we serve. We will not discriminate in the delivery of services that make Wiltshire and Swindon a safe place to live, work and visit. Our commitment to equality of opportunity is longstanding.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The public sector Equality duty (section 149 of the Act) applies to public bodies and supports good decision making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, and helping them to deliver services that are accessible to all and which meet different people's needs.

The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties, which require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Duty, in particular regarding the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

We are committed to reviewing this information in April 2012 and at least annually thereafter in line with our planning process.

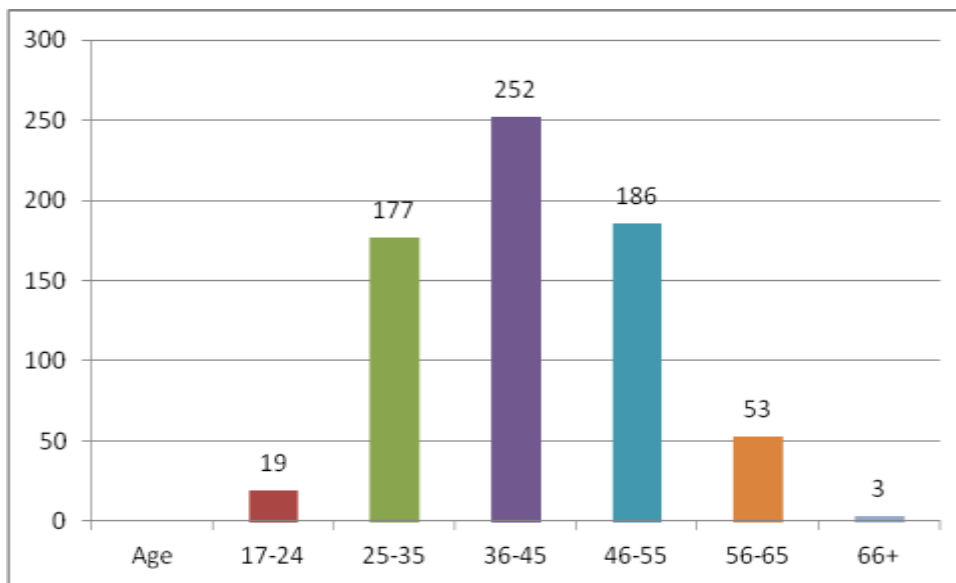


## Employee Information

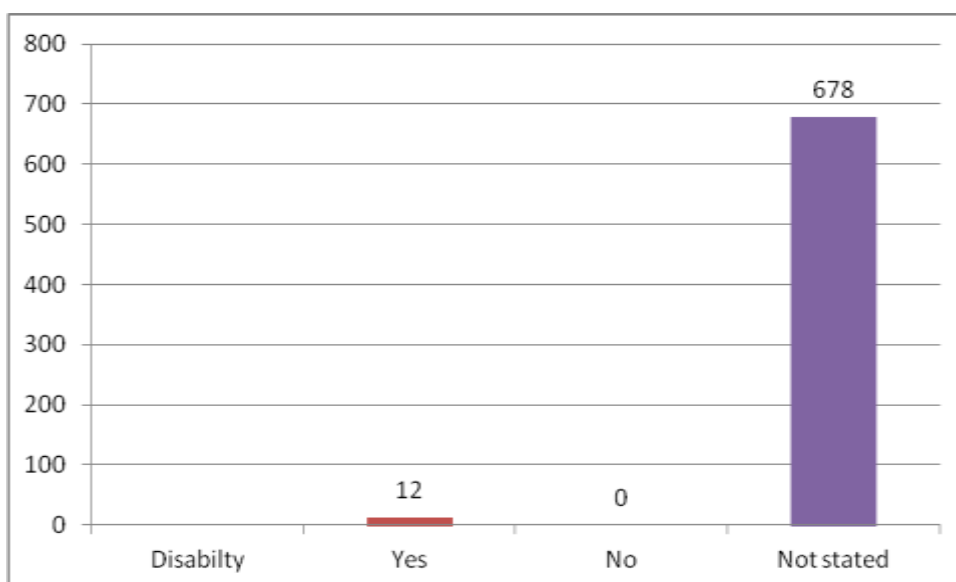
The Service reports on the make-up of its workforce as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March every year, and the information provided below will therefore be updated to show the details for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 when this information is available.

### Total staff as at 31.3.11

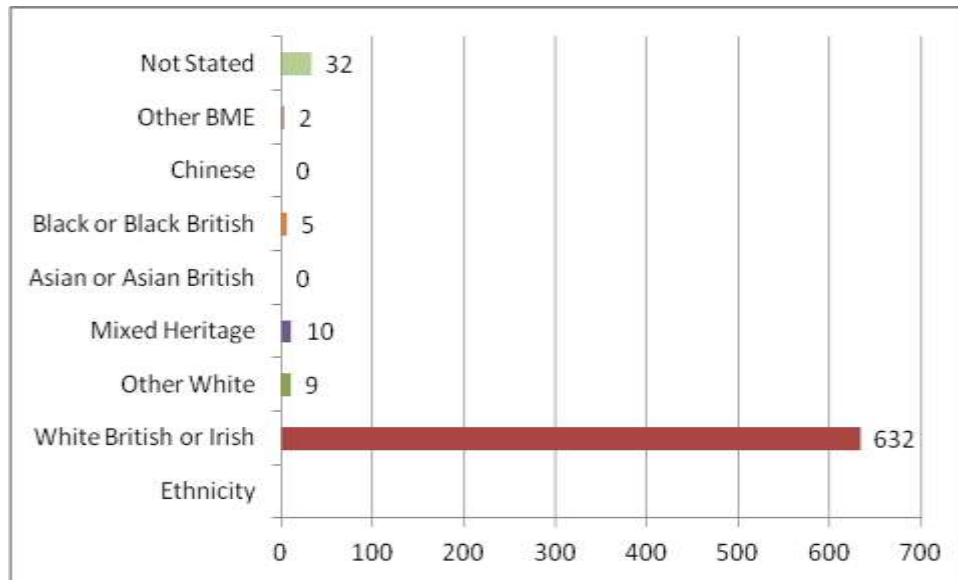
#### 1. Age



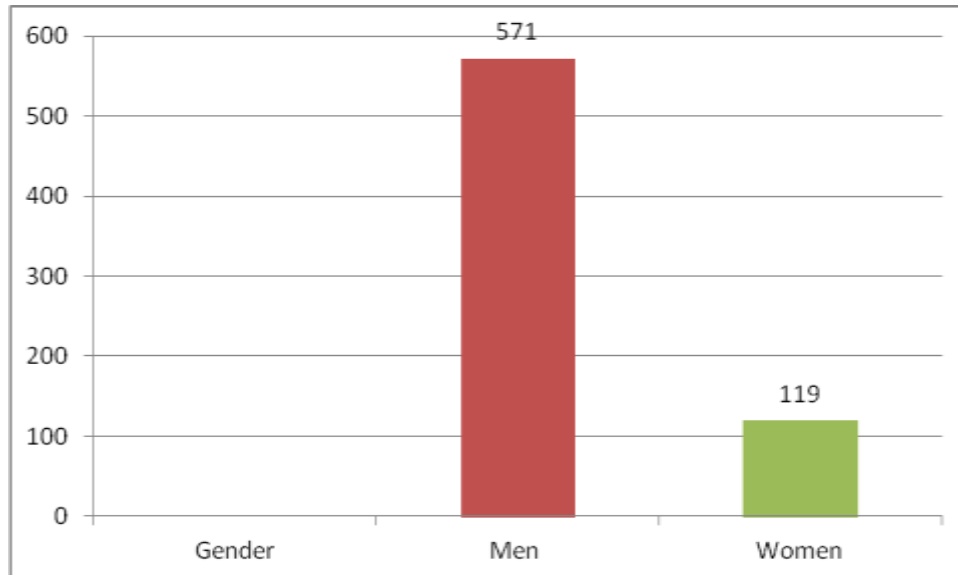
#### 2. Disability



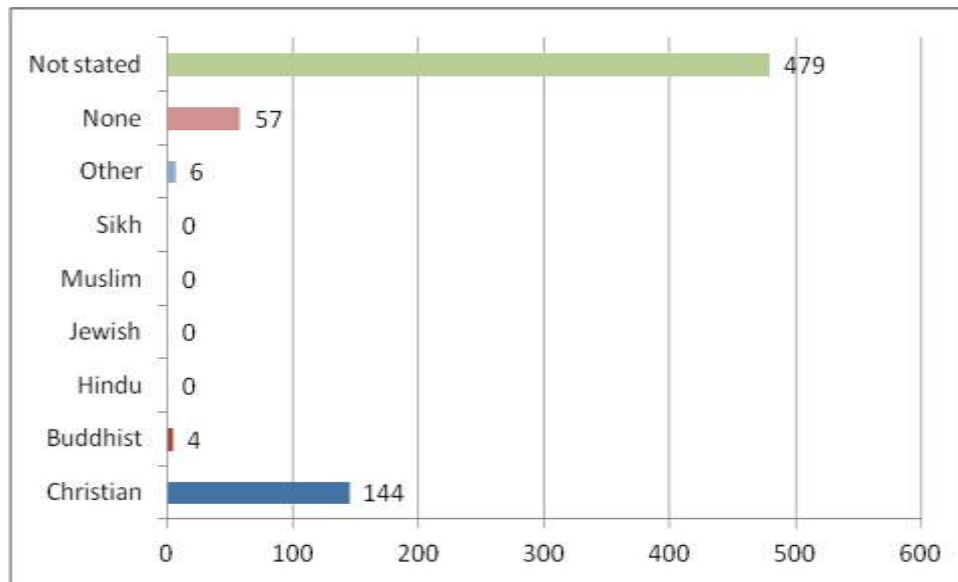
### 3. Ethnicity



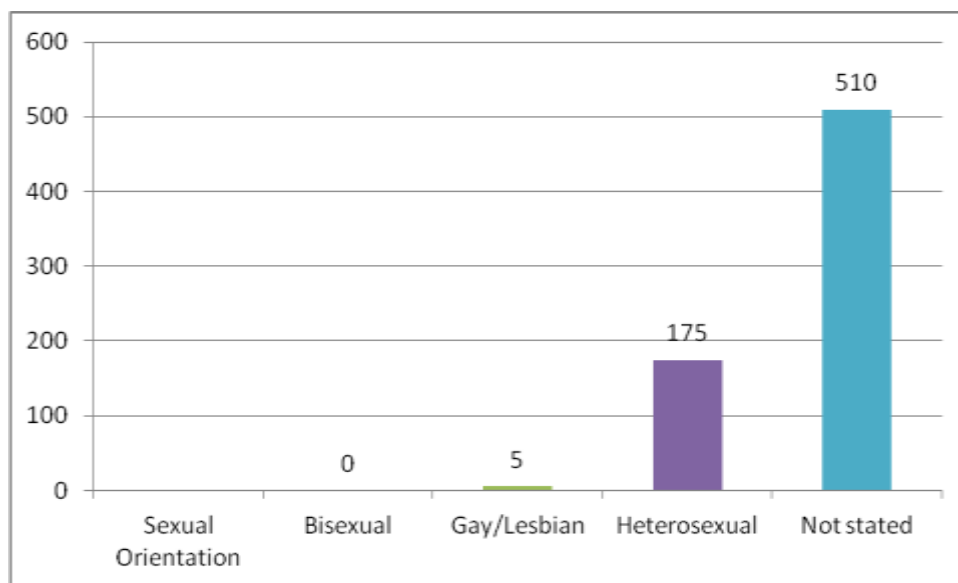
### 4. Gender



## 5. Religion



## 6. Sexual orientation



## 7. Marital status

Currently there is no requirement to collect data on marital status therefore there are no figures recorded for 2010/11.



Historically Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service has not been legally required to collect data on all protected characteristics; hence we currently do not have information which is complete. The provision of equality data is optional for staff and you will note that in some areas there are a lot of “Not stated” classifications.

The service acknowledges that more needs to be done to decide what information it is necessary to collect. Also staff need to be better informed regarding the use of the data and to be reassured of its confidentiality. This is currently under review.

## Grievances

During 2010 – 11 there were 14 grievances raised by staff. One of these grievances was raised by an employee with a protected characteristic, although the grievance was not related to this protected characteristic, and one grievance from a different member of staff related to a protected characteristic. As a result of these grievances policies and work processes have been amended.

## Flexible Working

The applications for flexible working have not previously been monitored, but, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 this will commence.

# Service Users

## Home Fire Safety Checks



A home fire safety visit is an opportunity for a home fire risk assessment to be carried out in homes of people who are potentially vulnerable to fire. The visit aims to make householders aware of potential fire risks within the home and educate them on what to do in order to prevent or reduce them. The visit also focuses on helping the occupier put together a night time routine of shutting internal doors and making sure electrical appliances are switched off. The home fire safety visit also helps the occupier develop an escape plan in case a fire does break out.

The visit includes ensuring appropriate numbers of working smoke alarms are present in the property. Smoke alarms, that have a ten year guarantee, can be fitted in the occupier's home free of charge at the time of the visit. The principle reason for carrying out these checks is therefore to decrease the number of deaths and injuries caused by fire within the home through educating homeowners on fire safety.

During 2010 – 11 the service carried out 3,729 home fire safety checks for our most vulnerable residents, during which we installed 4,568 smoke alarms.

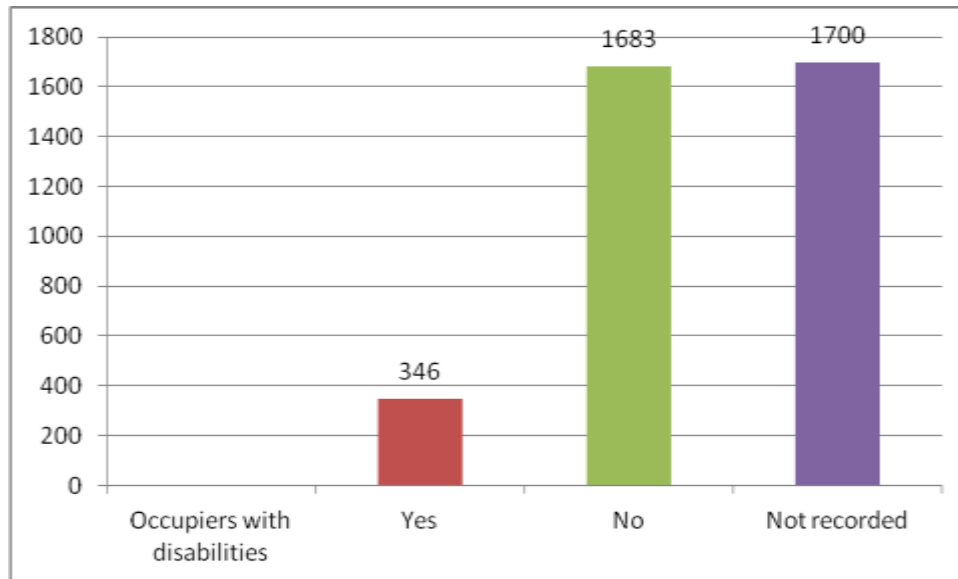
### Who qualifies for a free Home Fire Safety Check?

This service is *completely free of charge* for people who fall into **one** of the following categories:

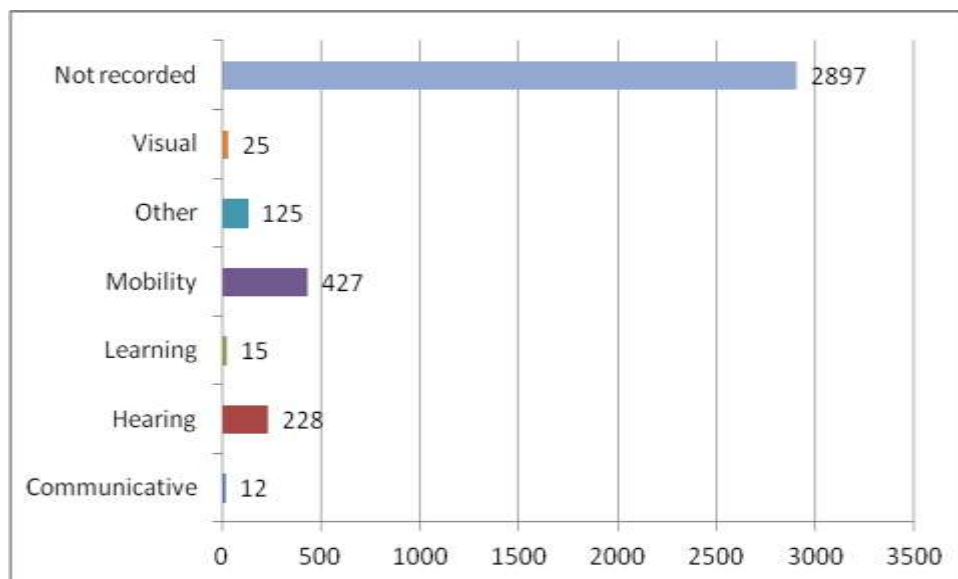
- Live on their own
- If anyone living in the property is aged 65 or over
- If anyone living in the property is aged 5 or under
- If anyone living in the property has a limiting condition (*sight, hearing, mobility problems, takes medication or has any conditions that might prevent them from hearing a smoke alarm and being able to leave unaided*)
- If the property is a thatched house, mobile home or house boat

## Statistics (April 2010 to March 2011)

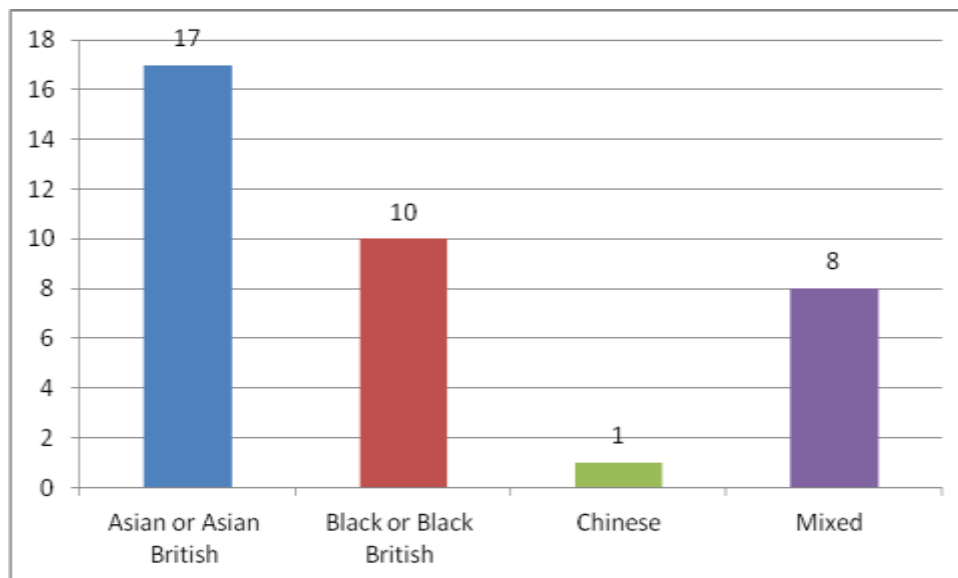
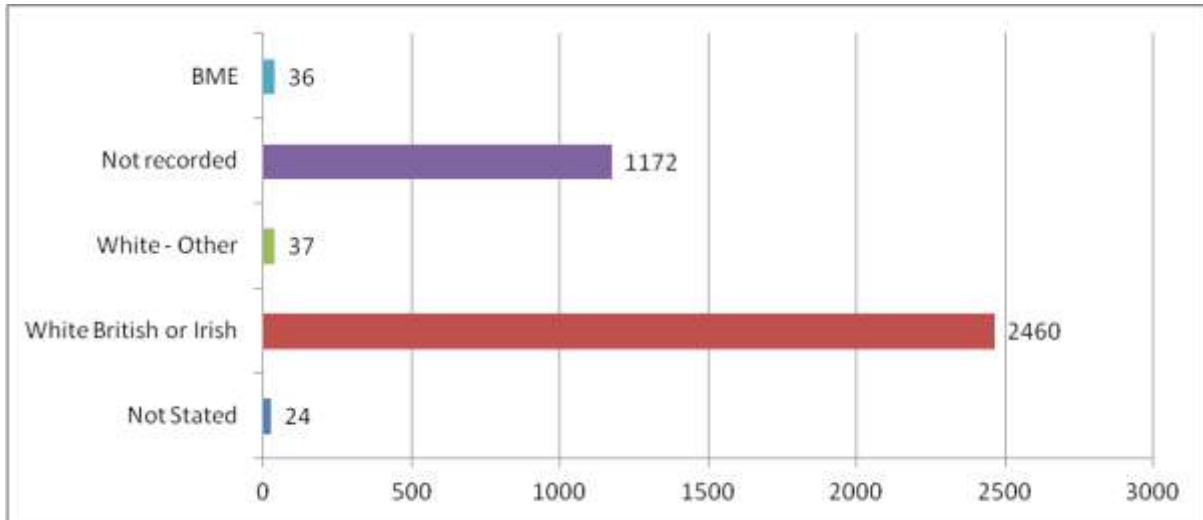
The following two graphs will show the number of Home Fire Safety Visits which recorded occupiers who had identifiable disabilities.



## Special Needs



The next graphs show the number of visits recorded as people from different racial backgrounds. The second giving a breakdown of those identified as being from the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) community.



## Accidental Fires

In 2010-11 the Service attended 360 accidental fires in homes compared to an average of 369 over the preceding three years. The Service has comparably fewer accidental fires in the home than the most recent national statistics or that those for the South West region. This is particularly encouraging when viewed in the context of the greater numbers of people, known to be vulnerable to the risk of fire, remaining independent and living in their own homes.

There was one death resulting from a fire in the home in 2010-11, compared to two deaths in the previous year. The lessons learned from individual case studies have improved our ability to more effectively target those most at risk. There were 19 injuries compared with 29 the previous year. Although the number of house fires has remained relatively static, the significant reduction in injuries indicates that the risks the fires posed was lower. The Service believes that this is down to the success of our home safety check and smoke alarm programme as fires are discovered earlier and occupiers are making safer decisions.

Fires are categorised in two ways – a primary fire is one which involves property such as buildings, vehicles or outdoor structures, and a secondary fire is any other fire. In 2010-11 the Service attended 235 primary fires and 477 secondary fires, compared to an average of 358 primary and 547 secondary fires over the preceding three years.



## Deliberate Fires

The overall reduction of deliberate fires is 21%. This is believed to be due to a number of factors such as local partnership working, vehicle clearance and policing activities. The activities of our youth engagement team feature an anti-arson message, which we believe has contributed to the reduction of fires in this area.

## Youth Engagement

### Schools

The Service has three members of staff who deliver fire safety awareness to children at Key Stages 1 and 2, and some at foundation stage. In 2010-11, over 17,000 children were seen by the team.

### Young Fire Setters

We also operate a Young Fire Setters intervention programme, which involves working with young people to change their behaviour because they have been fire setting or have an attraction to fire to an extent which gives cause for concern.

### Salamander

The Salamander programme encourages participants to work as a team, while building up confidence and self-esteem – it involves fire fighting skills with hose, pumping appliances and hydrants; abseiling; ladder climbing; search and rescue; casualty care; road traffic collision rescue skills; and water rescue.

At the end of a week's course the group put on a display of their new found skills for family, friends and senior Fire & Rescue Service officers.

This programme has been run for young people who are disadvantaged, young carers and young people with Down's syndrome who live in Wiltshire and Swindon. A number of courses have been run over past years.

### Safe Drive, Stay Alive

The Safe Drive Stay Alive Roadshow is based on powerful personal testimonies designed to make the audience aware of the nature and extent of the personal tragedy and suffering that a road traffic collision can and does cause.

This roadshow has been presented to young people in schools throughout Wiltshire and Swindon for the past few years. It has also been expanded to involve young soldiers.

Safe Drive, Stay Alive is a local road safety partnership between Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, Wiltshire Police, and South Wilts Intervention for Trauma and the Wiltshire & Swindon Road Safety Units.



## Complaints

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 there were 17 complaints received. One of these complaints was regarding the provision of a service to an individual with a protected characteristic. As a result of the complaint, processes were reviewed with a partner in order to learn from the complaint and to improve future service levels

## Customer satisfaction levels

During the year January to December 2011 the number of compliments received from service users was 82. These covered a range of services from emergency operational response, community visits and talks, to home fire safety checks. Some of these compliments came from groups who have members with protected characteristics.



# Policies and programmes during 2011

## Single Equality Scheme

In 2011 Wiltshire FRS reviewed all of its equality schemes in line with legislation. Although the new Equality Act does not legally require a scheme Wiltshire FRS consider it good practice to have a scheme in place and therefore have published a Single Equality Scheme for 2011 to 2013.

The scheme acts as a single point of reference for staff and service users for all equality matters which affect the service.



## Pay Structure

During 2011 a new pay structure was introduced for corporate staff which had been developed and negotiated with Unison and was as a result of moving to the Greater London Provincial Council job evaluation scheme to work towards equal pay. Internal relativities have been developed using the job evaluation process. An incremental system was continued with as this enables the Service to take account of the developing nature of jobs for this particular group and the pay arrangements are considered to reflect how the group operates. Continuing to use incremental grades enabled a more cost effective transition and minimised the financial effects for the more equality based arrangements.

## Bullying and Harassment Policy

During 2011 a review of the Service's Bullying and Harassment policy commenced, which has involved a number of staff interviews and focus groups. It is expected that the new policy will be issued in 2012.

## **RESPECT Behavioural Framework**

The Service has also reviewed the behaviours expected from its staff and has launched a RESPECT behavioural framework as part of our major programme of organisational change.

The RESPECT framework covers:

- **R**esponsibility
- **E**quality
- **S**upportiveness
- **P**rofessionalism
- **E**xcellence
- **C**ommunication
- **T**ransformation

It will be introduced into a number of internal processes to help all of us ensure that the work we do, and the way that we do it, is fully in line with organisational aims and objectives.

## **Equality Impact Assessment Process**

In line with Wiltshire FRS equality schemes the service has carried out Equality Impact Assessments on each of its policies as they are developed. These assessments have historically been attached to policies once they have been published.

The Equality Act 2010 has removed the necessity to have a formal Equality Impact Assessment process. However, Wiltshire FRS identifies the benefits in assessing its processes, decisions, practices and functions as to their affect on those with protected characteristics. The service has been working on developing a more integrated process of assessment.

The new process is currently under development and will be rolled out during 2012.

## Internal Communication

### QM – Monthly Staff Magazine

Wiltshire FRS publishes a monthly staff magazine to keep staff updated with current themes and information. Since 2008 page 7 of the magazine has been dedicated to providing staff with updates and progress on equality and diversity issues. This page is entitled “Equality Matters....”

This is a good media for introducing new themes and celebrating equality and diversity work which has taken place. Examples of this are reports after attending Pride and Mela events.

Copies of QM can be viewed on the Wiltshire FRS website.



### Equality and Diversity SharePoint site

The Wiltshire FRS intranet includes a SharePoint site dedicated to Equality and Diversity. This acts as a reference library for staff and allows everyone to keep up to date with current legislation and trends.

The site is regularly updated and maintained by the Equality and Diversity Advisor.

## External Communication

### ECBL – Equal Chances Better Lives



Wiltshire FRS were members of the ECBL Task group which developed the Single Equality Service for Wiltshire County area. The service continues to work closely with ECBL to ensure that contact is made with groups and individuals from different backgrounds across Wiltshire County.

Wiltshire FRS have assisted in developing the Equality Networks being set up by ECBL, including offer venues in the form of meeting rooms at Fire Stations.

ECBL is now an integral part of GROW, the voluntary sector support organisation for Wiltshire County area.

### Wiltshire & Swindon Equality & Diversity Lead Officer Group

Wiltshire FRS are active members of the Wiltshire & Swindon Equality & Diversity Lead Officer group. The group is made up of officers from statutory organisations who have a responsibility for Equality & Diversity within their organisations. There is also a representative of ECBL on the group to ensure that contact is made with the Voluntary Sector and community groups.

At the present time the group is chaired by the Equality & Diversity Advisor from Wiltshire FRS.

The purpose of the group is to put equality & diversity at the forefront of service delivery through a structured, co-ordinated and collaborative approach by public service providers across Wiltshire and Swindon

**Objectives / Delivery Role of the Lead Officer group:**

- To develop joint working to meet agreed equality objectives, plans and schemes
- To create and maintain links with strategic thematic partnerships to support them in integrating equality as a core part of their work
- To support and promote in partnership effective equality achievements, across communities and wider partnerships
- To share, monitor and assess developments and progress towards improving performance on equality, diversity and inclusion
- To make a demonstrable and measurable difference to the lives of people in Wiltshire and Swindon

This group meets on a bi-monthly basis.

## Appendix A

# The Equality Act 2010

### General Duty:

The general equality duty is set out in the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) see copy at Appendix A. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (see page 10) and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

These are sometimes referred to as the three aims or arms of the general equality duty.

The Act helpfully explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status. This means that the first arm of the duty applies to this characteristic but that the others arms (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.



## Specific Duties:

The specific duties apply to all the public authorities that are listed in Schedule 1 to the regulations. A Fire Authority is included in that Schedule. A copy of the regulations introducing the Specific Duties is attached at Appendix B.

### **Publish information**

Publish sufficient information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty across its functions. This must be done by 31 January 2012 (and by 6 April 2012 for schools), and at least annually after that, from the first date of publication.

This information must include, in particular:

- Information on the effect that its policies and practices have had on people who share a relevant protected characteristic, to demonstrate the extent to which it furthered the aims of the general equality duty for its employees and for others with an interest in the way it performs its functions.

Public authorities with fewer than 150 employees are exempt from the requirement to publish information.

### **Manner of Publishing information**

Information must be published in such a manner that it is accessible to the public.

The information required to be published under the Act can be published within another published document e.g. within the annual business plan.

### **Prepare and publish equality objectives**

By 6 April 2012, prepare and publish:

- One or more objectives that it reasonably thinks it should achieve to meet one or more aims of the general equality duty.
- Subsequently objectives should be set at intervals of not greater than four years.

It must also:

- Ensure the objectives are specific and measurable.