



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Annual Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Performance Assessment Report 2025/2026

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Chief Fire Officer Foreword

I am pleased to present North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Performance Assessment Report for 2025/26. This year reflects continued progress in embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into how we lead, how we work, and how we serve our communities.

We have seen meaningful improvements in workforce inclusion, targeted engagement with communities whose voices are less often heard, and increased confidence among staff to deliver inclusive, person centred services. This progress has been achieved through the commitment of our people, the leadership of our managers and the support of our staff networks and partners.

While there is further work ahead, I am confident that the actions set out in this report demonstrate our ongoing commitment to learning, improvement and accountability.

Dawn Docx
Chief Fire Officer
North Wales Fire and Rescue Service



Introduction

In 2024, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) published its five year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy for 2024–2029. The strategy supports delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan, reflects the Service’s Core Values, and helps ensure compliance with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

This report sets out the progress made during 2025/26 against the EDI Strategy. It should be read alongside the Annual Equality Monitoring Report and the Gender Pay Gap Report for the same period. Rather than repeating detailed statistics, this report focuses on what has been delivered, what has improved, and what we have learned during the year. In parts, this reports demonstrates how it has progressed its work towards different government directives and objectives from their Anti-Racism Wales Action Plan and LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales and consideration given for the new Disabled People’s Rights Plan 2025-2030.

How we measure progress

Progress is monitored through workforce equality data, regular equality monitoring reports, staff engagement and feedback, and formal oversight through the Service’s EDI Committee.

What has changed this year

During 2025/26, the Service has made a number of important improvements, including:

- expanded positive action activity to support recruitment, particularly into firefighter roles;
- increased staff engagement through the Staff EDI Network Groups;
- more targeted consultation with under represented communities; and
- stronger partnerships that support inclusive service delivery.

Theme 1 – Embedding inclusivity into our organisational culture

Connected to: leading inclusively; openness and transparency; accessibility

Throughout 2025/26, the Service continued to strengthen an inclusive and respectful organisational culture, supported by visible leadership, workforce development and consistent equality analysis.

The Chief Fire Officer continued to chair the EDI Committee, reinforcing senior accountability. Inclusive behaviours were also recognised through initiatives such as the annual Contribution to Diversity Award.

Further progress was made in building staff capability. An additional 19 colleagues completed Equality Impact Assessment training, representing a 23% increase, and completion of mandatory EDI training rose to 87%, an improvement of 6% compared with the previous year. Face to face sessions covering unconscious bias, autism awareness and inclusive behaviours helped staff apply learning more confidently in their everyday roles.

EDI considerations were also reflected in estate planning, including the modernisation of various fire stations and design of the new training centre, helping to improve accessibility and create more inclusive learning environments.

One of our Group Manager's receiving his Contribution to Diversity Award from our Chief Fire Officer.





Theme 2 – Attracting, recruiting and retaining talented people

Connected to: attraction; empowerment; education

During the year, NWFRS continued to focus on building a diverse and inclusive workforce through data led recruitment and retention activity.

Workforce monitoring showed steady improvement, including increased ethnic minority representation (+0.4%), a rise in disability declaration (+0.6%), and improved female representation across operational, control and corporate roles (+1.2% overall). It was positive to see several males join the service in new specialist roles and other roles that would have historically been filled by females. These measures help develop a diverse workforce that bring different talents, experiences and skills.

Reducing the gender pay gap

As at 31 March 2026, the Service's gender pay gap was 7.3% (mean) and 11.7% (median), both lower than the UK average (approximately 13% mean and 12.8% median, based on Office for National Statistics data for all employees).

This reflects progress in workforce representation and distribution. A gap remains, largely due to the higher proportion of men in operational roles, and work will continue to address this.

Targeted recruitment and positive action

The Service took lawful positive action to encourage applications from under represented groups, particularly women applying for firefighter roles.

This included promoting opportunities at local park run events, engaging with sports clubs and community groups, delivering taster sessions, and attending Disability Confident recruitment and Pride events across North Wales. This activity helped challenge perceptions of the firefighter role, clarify entry requirements and reduce perceived barriers to applying. As a result, the Service has seen a slight increase (+0.3%) in the number of wholetime firefighter filled by women.

Positive action explained

Positive action refers to lawful steps under the Equality Act 2010 to encourage applications from under represented groups into the workforce. All recruitment and promotion decisions continue to be made on merit.

Staff delivering Positive Action events in a Disability Confident Recruitment Event in Llangefni, Ynys Mon, and Flint High School Pride Event.



Building understanding and awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion

In addition to recruitment activity, the Service invested in building awareness and understanding of EDI issues across the workforce. This work was led by the EDI Officer in partnership with the four Staff EDI Network Groups.

During the year, the networks coordinated campaigns, guidance and events recognising key equality, religious and cultural observances, including International Women's Day, LGBT+ History Month, Neurodiversity Celebration Week, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month, Black History Month, Ramadan, and faith based observances such as Lunar New Year, Ramadan, Diwali, Hanukkah, Easter, Vaisakhi and Passover.



Guest Speaker Captain Sheridan Lucas MBE inspiring our Women in the Fire Service network members of her journey in the British Army on International Women's Day

Learning activity also included staff led reflections on religion and belief, external speakers on issues such as honour based violence, and participation in national learning through organisations such as the Asian Fire Service Association, Women in the Fire Service Cymru and the National LGBT+ Fire and Rescue Service Conference. Learning from this activity was shared across the Service and used to inform guidance and everyday practice.



NWFRS staff attending the AFSA Summer Conference, National LGBTQI+ Fire and Rescue Service Conference, and Inspirational Women in the Fire Service Cymru weekend

Theme 3 – Delivering inclusive services to our community

Connected to: engagement; trust and confidence; keeping people safe

Delivering skilled and trauma informed services

Our Prevention teams continued to develop and maintain their professional skills through Deaf Awareness, Autism Awareness and Misogyny Awareness training. This learning supported their trauma informed practice in the delivery of extensive school fire safety, and road safety programmes with young people across North Wales. Maintaining person centred and trauma informed approaches also enabled the team to continue delivering our Safe and Well Check programme, proactively reducing risks to those affected by age, disability, health needs or social isolation.

Staff attending Deaf Awareness training



The Prevention team also worked collaboratively with Station teams to deliver Phoenix activities, ensuring that a consistent, person-centred approach underpinned this preventative work with young people. This joined-up approach has supported the ongoing success of the Phoenix Project, helping young people who may be experiencing social, behavioural or educational challenges to build confidence, develop skills and work towards qualifications. In parallel, Fire Cadet schemes in Bala, Y Trallwng, Amlwch and Cerrigydrudion have encouraged inclusive participation and positive engagement with the Service.



Students from Ysgol Bryn Eliau take part in Phoenix course at Llanfairfechan Fire Station

Consulting with under represented communities

The Service took a proactive approach to consultation, informing service planning including the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026/27. Targeted engagement through community groups, places of worship, colleges and universities ensured an increase in participation from disabled people, younger residents, and people whose preferred or primary language is not English or Welsh, helping to reduce barriers and broaden representation in the feedback received by the service.



Building visibility and trust

NWFRS engaged directly with a wide range of communities through events such as International Older Persons Day, Wrecsam Carers Week, the Gwynedd Dementia Super Group annual event, Vale of Clwyd Mind sessions, and Unique Transgender events. This engagement supported a targeted approach and helped to build trust and confidence with communities who may be at increased risk and are traditionally less likely to engage with emergency services.

Staff supporting the 2025 Prestatyn and Bala Pride Day.



Partnership working with agencies at the Wrecsam Carers Week event, and in Dinbych Fire Station during International Day of Older Persons



Theme 4 – Developing effective partnerships

Connected to: connection; collaboration; maximising impact

During 2025/26, partnership activity focused on learning, delivery and shared improvement. This included involvement in the North Wales Diverse Together Conference, presentations at Learning Disability Wales's Annual Conference, and participation in the Holocaust Memorial Day service at Bangor University.

The Service strengthened workforce capability through accredited Autism Awareness training and progressed to Disability Confident Level 2 ('Employer') status. Work also continued with partners including the Department for Work and Pensions, Careers Wales and Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn to establish the North Wales Disability Confident Forum, alongside ongoing participation in All Wales and national EDI networks.

The Service is also represented at national and regional networks and forums, including National Fire Chiefs Council working groups, The Asian Fire Service Association, The North Wales Interfaith Forum, North Wales Equality Leads Network and The Welsh Local Government Association Equality Officers Network. These networks and forums enable our Service to stay informed about developments and common trends with EDI in the workplace, but to understand common challenges with funding, recruitment and service delivery.



Our EDI Officer in the North Wales Interfaith Forum, and our Home Safety Support Worker presenting at the Learning Disability Wales Annual Conference

Looking ahead

In 2026/27 the Service will:

- complete a review of Equality Impact Assessment practices;
- introduce leadership training on neurodiversity and reasonable adjustments;
- continue to promote Autism Awareness training for frontline staff;
- publish and monitor the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan;
- report and monitor quarterly workforce equality data to the EDI Committee;
- quality check staff disability and ethnicity data to prepare for additional pay gap reporting requirements;
- continue positive action recruitment activity; and
- support the Staff EDI Network Groups and establish a Carers and Parents Network.

Further information

If you require this report in large print, Welsh language or an alternative format, please contact:

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