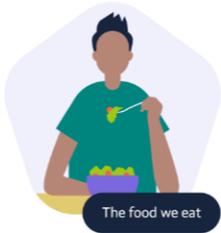




West
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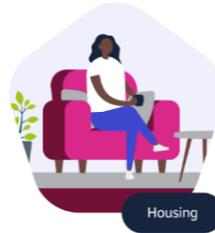
The food we eat



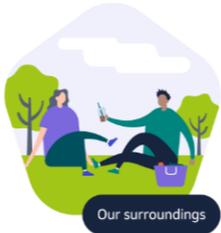
Family, friends
and communities



Transport



Housing



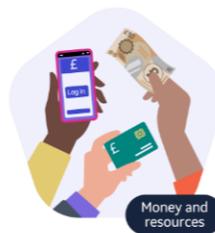
Our surroundings



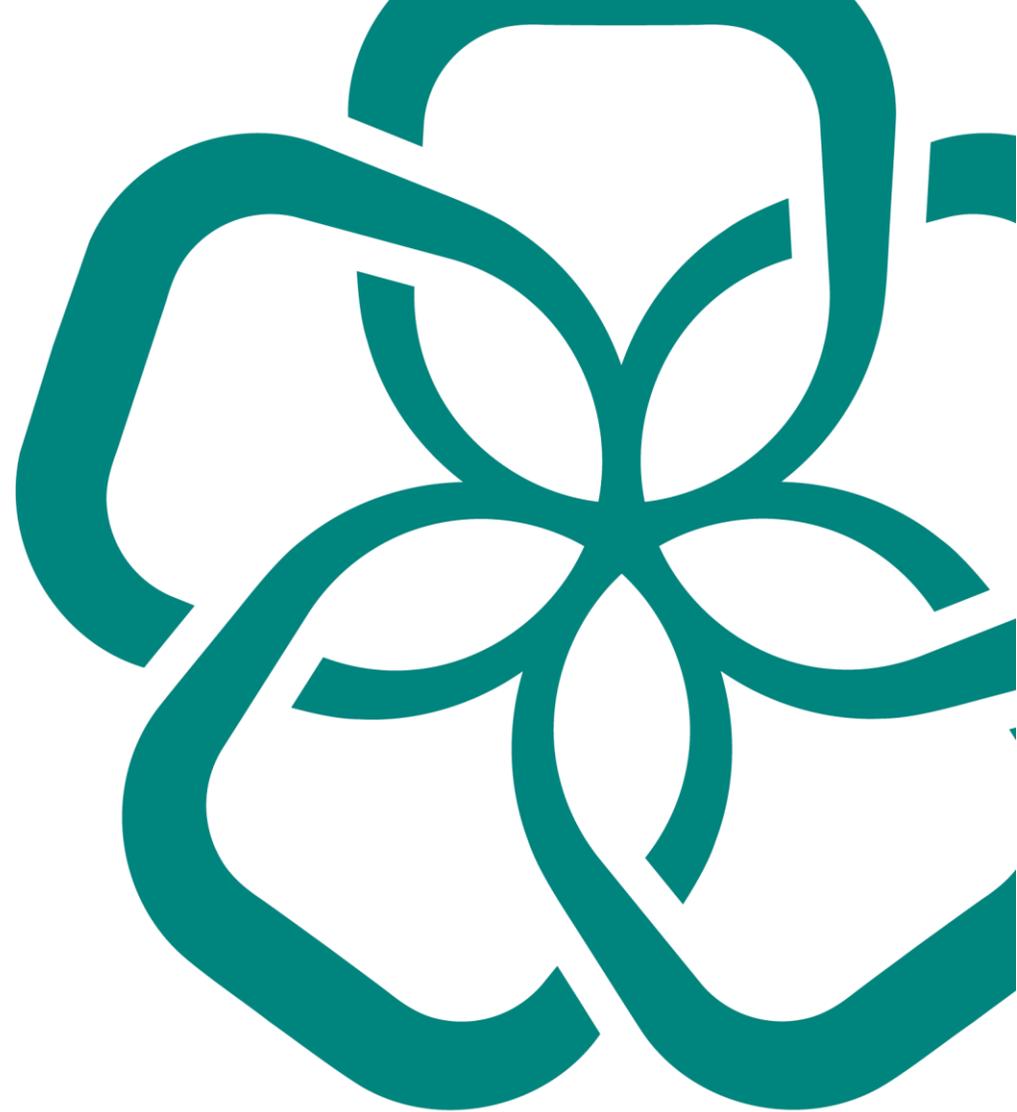
Education
and skills



Work



Money and
resources



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2024-25

Evidence in support of compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty

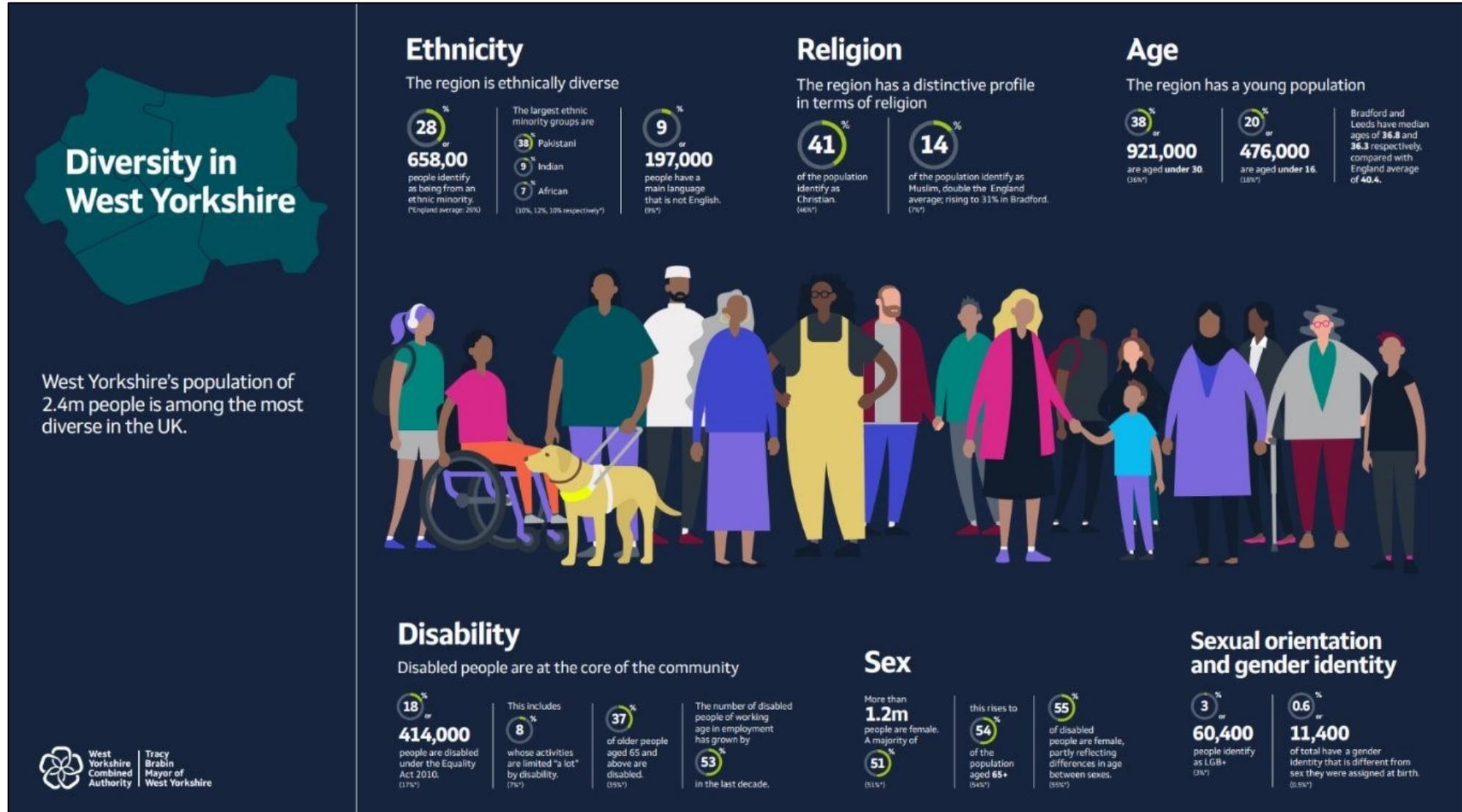
March 2025

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Foreword

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority serves a diverse population of 2.4 million people, it is essential that our investments, services, and programmes are targeted at narrowing gaps and addressing inequality, and that our workforce is diverse and representative of the communities that we serve.



Our unwavering commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is at the heart of our mission to create a region where every individual, regardless of their background, has equal access to opportunities and resources. This report details our progress in delivering EDI interventions, supported by data and real-life examples. While we have made significant strides, we recognise that achieving the ambitious targets set out in our EDI Plan 2022-25 requires sustained effort and collaboration.

Our EDI Statement underscores this commitment:

- Zero tolerance for discrimination: we do not tolerate behaviours, actions, or words that discriminate based on race, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, or disability.
- Mandatory training: All staff undergo mandatory EDI training to ensure awareness and understanding.
- Annual objectives: each staff member is assigned an annual objective to promote EDI in their work, with compliance monitored by line managers.
- Diverse workforce monitoring: we monitor and report the protected characteristics of our staff to ensure representation of the communities we serve, setting targets where analysis indicates the need for improvement.
- Service Accessibility Monitoring: We monitor and report the use of our services to ensure fair and equal access, aligning with census data and setting targets to address identified gaps

Our gender and ethnicity pay gaps continue to narrow, with the organisation achieving a 0% median gender pay gap this year, but this requires continued commitment and action to maintain, and acceleration if we are to hit our ethnicity pay gap targets of zero by 2028.

We increased the diversity of our workforce, and of the applicants who are looking to join us, but we need greater diversity at more senior levels within the organisation. So, we have grown our learning and development offer to support future diverse leaders but need to do more to accelerate the pace of change.

We have improved our data about the West Yorkshire economy through an EDI lens, but we have more to do to make the interventions that we are pursuing to improve the economy bite and have a real-world impact on narrowing equality of opportunity and tackling entrenched disadvantage.

While we are proud of our achievements, there is more to do. Our focus moving forward includes:

- Enhanced training: continuing to deliver comprehensive EDI training programs to further embed these principles across the organisation.
- Broader engagement: expanding our consultation efforts to reach all segments of our diverse communities through the development of the inclusive engagement strategy.

- Continuous monitoring: regularly reviewing our data and strategies to ensure we are meeting our EDI objectives and making necessary adjustments.

While we continue to make progress, we know that the change on the scale of our ambition will take time. We are redoubling our efforts. I am pleased to present this report which shows our progress over the last 12 months. Thanks to Jonathan Stephen, Hannah Pennick, Staff Networks, and members of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, for their contributions to this report.

Ben Still
Chief Executive Officer

Overview

Public Sector Equality Duty

This report provides information from the financial year 2024/2025 regarding our progress towards the Combined Authority's agreed [Equality Objectives](#) (hyperlink) that form three of the five priorities of [the Combined Authority's EDI Plan 2022-2025](#) (hyperlink). It also outlines the current methodology for understanding the employee profile. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public sector organisations like the Combined Authority to consider how their policies and/or decisions affect people and communities, who have and share protected characteristics named under the Equality Act 2010.

To comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public sector organisations must have due regard for:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people.
- Fostering good relations between people.

The Equality Act 2010

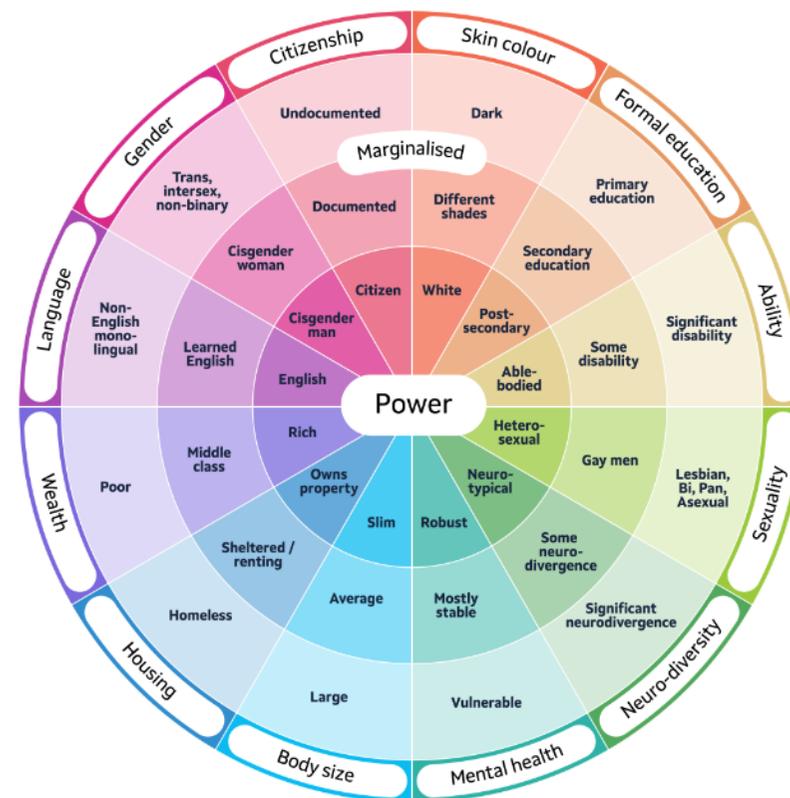
The Equality Act 2010 replaced all prior equality legislation to provide a single legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. The nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment (Gender Identity), Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, and Sexual Orientation. This report includes employee profile data for the following protected characteristics:

- **Age**
- **Disability status**
- **Race**
- **Religion or beliefs**
- **Sex**
- **Sexual orientation**

Our objectives under the Public Sector Equality Duty

The Combined Authority's Equality Objectives 2022-2025

1. Champion Equity, Diversity, And Inclusion Externally and Develop an Excellent Regional and National Reputation.
2. Consult And Engage with Our People, Communities, and Businesses to Understand Their Diverse Needs and Ensure Our Services Meet Their Needs.
3. Ensure Our Workforce Reflects the Diversity of West Yorkshire.



Progress against our equality objectives

Introduction

The renewed set of Equality Objectives 2022-25, form three of the five priorities set out in the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2022-25](#) (hyperlink) to strengthen accountability, monitoring and reporting on performance. The Plan has been developed and published and is the organisation's first Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan, building on the EDI policy and setting the direction for achieving the Combined Authority's EDI vision.

The Plan is embedded into the [Corporate Plan](#) (hyperlink) and contributes to the [West Yorkshire Plan](#) (hyperlink). The EDI plans reframe our interventions into one place, bringing together a range of activities for the duration of the plan. This will help shape a strategic approach to addressing inequalities in the future and will support the delivery of interventions. The EDI plan and associated targets have been developed and integrated into the organisation's business plans. The goal of the plan and mission, is to strive to:

- Integrate the breadth of EDI interdependencies across the organisation and shape a clear view of the current commitments.
- Strengthen recruitment and diversity and create a progressive and evolving culture.
- Build on best practice from partners including local authorities.
- Build skills, knowledge and understanding of services that will improve the evidence base for determining local priorities.
- Generate, preserve, and share the research and intelligence on EDI.
- Strengthen capabilities within the organisation and the region.
- Deliver new strategies for community engagement, access, and participation.
- Evidence impact and progress against the underpinning framework - Equality Framework for Local Government and the segments: Leadership and Organisational Commitment, Diverse and Engaged Workforce, Understanding and working with our communities, Responsive Services and Customer Care.

Embedding EDI had led to the continued success of the refreshed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group. The Steering Group is embedded into the Combined Authority's governance, chaired by the Director of Strategy, Communications and Intelligence, and Leadership Team's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Champion. The Champion is responsible for providing strategic leadership in driving forward the organisation's EDI ambitions, ensuring that EDI is embedded at all levels of leadership and maintain oversight as to improving the health of the organisation's EDI interventions.

Key highlights

We are really pleased to share the significant developments in embedding EDI across the organisation, including improved definitions to focus the tangible nature of interventions including the explicit focus on equity and intersectional analysis. Key achievements are as follows:

- Reviewed and launched the refreshed EDI policy.
- Ensured that the terminology and framework better accounts for measures monitoring social and inclusion outcomes through activity to consider the introduction of the Socio-Economic Duty.
- Positive action is explicitly detailed in the plan to support recruitment and wider employee lifecycle interventions in nurturing the organisation's diverse people and talent.
- Launched the Amplify programme, supporting ethnic minority colleagues' access to development opportunities.
- Launched the Women in Leadership programme, supporting women's access to development opportunities.
- Developed the Mayor's Inclusivity Champion workplan, and delivery of activity, including [Women of West Yorkshire Network](#) (hyperlink).
- Continued development of intersectional [pay gap report](#) (hyperlink).
- Continued maturity of Staff Networks which have helped improve the health of the organisation.
- Launched the Staff Networks Chairs programme in partnership with [SOLACE](#) (hyperlink), resulting in positive feedback demonstrating an increase for all attendees in their skills and knowledge as Chairs.
- Reaffirmed the commitment to the [Chartered Institute for Highways and Transport's refreshed equity, diversity, and inclusion Charter](#) (hyperlink).
- Committed to [Unison's Anti-racism Charter](#) (hyperlink) and implementation, embedding activities into business-as-usual practices to ensure that the progress on anti-racism is sustainable.
- Became members of the [Business Disability Forum](#) (hyperlink), who supported the review our EDI policy.

- Awarded the Gender Equality Champion Award in the [Vercida Employer Excellence Awards 2025](#) (hyperlink). Our organisation was chosen as a winner from thousands of candidates, based on public interactions with our brand through the Vercida website. We were also shortlisted for the Authentic Content and Wellbeing Champion award categories.
- Won the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion award for Halifax Bus Station In November 2024, at the [Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation, Yorkshire and the Humber Awards](#) (hyperlink).

Case studies and testimonials

To bring our EDI efforts to life, we compiled a series of case studies and testimonials from individuals and communities that benefited from our initiatives. These examples highlight the impact of our commitment to EDI.

Staff Networks

WeCAN

The WeCAN Staff Network and Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture Directorate, co-delivered an internal Spotlight session on Disability and Employment, in support of Disability History Month with 84 attendees. Feedback from attendees: "Well done team, great work for introducing the topic and facilitating learning and awareness - delivered very well!".

WeCAN attended the Yorkshire and Humber Good Work, Health, and Skills Summit

WeCAN and PoD contributed to the event. Feedback shows it was extremely well received, with comments such as 'brilliant and interesting presentations', 'a phenomenal event' and: 'It was truly impressive how you brought together so many diverse perspectives and stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue. The scale of participation and the quality of the discussions was amazing".

Embrace

Embrace, in collaboration with HR, procured and delivered an internal training course that focused on making internal applications, writing analysis and a coaching clinic. One of the participants, said: "Excellent course that explained how to write internal applications within the Combined Authority. Additionally, the learning from here can be applied in other aspects of my work where I have to write business reports etc.".

Transport

Orange Travel Wallet scheme

[Our Orange Travel Wallet scheme](#) (hyperlink) is designed to help people with communication difficulties or disabilities to use public transport, and we're working hard to make sure colleagues and partners across the bus network recognise the orange wallet and know how to support passengers. The bright orange wallet is a subtle way of letting transport staff know that a passenger may need additional support with their journey, or a bit more time.

"I rely on buses, it makes you more independent"

National Concessionary Travel Card Scheme

West Yorkshire residents who have a disability may be able to get a Blind or Disabled Person's Travel Pass.

We provide free travel passes for eligible [blind and disabled people](#) (hyperlink) and their companions, to use across our network. To apply for a Pass or to renew an existing Blind or Disabled Pass, you can register for an online account and complete the online application form at wymetro.com or contact the local council.

"Travel opens lots of doors"

Making cycling more inclusive

The [Cycle to Work scheme](#) (hyperlink) offers access to a wide range of specialised and adapted cycles which can be suitable for people with mobility needs and disabilities. We also work closely with [Experience Community](#) (hyperlink) – a not-for-profit organisation which helps people with disabilities to access green spaces through walking, cycling, art and conservation activities. Part of their work involves giving advice around accessible walking and cycling routes, as well as giving riders the chance to try out different types of bikes and cycling equipment.

Travel training

1:1 travel training is available through local authorities for people who might have difficulties in using the transport network such as unfamiliarity with routes, fear of travelling alone, or just needing a little extra help to navigate train and bus timetables. Leeds City Council's intensive travel training helped Kenny, one of their travel ambassadors, to feel comfortable travelling independently.

"It makes me happy to do what I want to do, myself"

Making travel simpler and more affordable

In 2021, we introduced the [Under 19 Fare Deal](#) (hyperlink) - a new deal on bus travel and all-new range of tickets launched by the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance - a partnership between the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, MCard and bus operators. This simplified tickets for West Yorkshire's young people and helped them get out and about and reduce the cost of travel when travelling to and from school.

Through MCard, 19–25-year-olds and students receive a 44% discount on weekly and monthly tickets. This helps young people commuting to work, college or university or exploring West Yorkshire, save more and stress less with MCard.



Mayor's Fares

In September 2022, we introduced Mayor's Fares – an initiative which aims to make travel more affordable for local people by ensuring that no one pays more than £2 for any single journey across West Yorkshire. In a recent survey with over a thousand respondents, over 40% said the introduction of Mayor's Fares had helped them manage the cost-of-living crisis, while 60% agreed that it was now easier for them to get around West Yorkshire.



The scheme has now been [extended into 2025](#) (hyperlink).

Prioritising safety

We know that some groups of people can feel unsafe on public transport due to fears around antisocial behaviour and may avoid making journeys at night or at certain busier times of the day.

That's why in November 2023, we introduced a team of full-time Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to [patrol bus stations and buses across the region](#) (hyperlink). Our Safer Travel team aims to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, increase the safety of women and girls and reassure and protect more vulnerable travel users.



West Yorkshire Bus Alliance

The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance aims is to put customers at the heart of improving services, keeping buses moving and developing a sustainable bus network.

West Yorkshire Bus Alliance have been working with Ahead Partnership over the last two years to deliver an education engagement programme that will inspire young people about the public transport sector and promote greener travel. This skills initiative from bus operators Arriva, First, Transdev and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority has seen over 3,000 young people across the region take part in hands-on activities and real-life challenge briefs to get a better understanding of the future of transport and the opportunities for them in it.

Employment and Skills

Building in-demand skills in key sectors

We offer a wide-range of fully-funded [courses](#) (hyperlink) for adult learners, helping people develop key skills that are in demand by local employers. These courses cover subjects such as digital, health and social care, construction and engineering, as well as targeting industry-specific needs such as bus drivers, warehouse operatives and the rail sector.

For example, this year we have funded an [all-female cohort of telecoms engineers](#) (hyperlink) providing learners with the skills to gain secure and well-paid employment in the telecoms industry, as well as an awareness of the opportunities available to them to progress in their careers. In late spring we ran a pilot Skills Bootcamp in Applied English Language for the Health and Care Sector, in partnership with Wakefield Council. This was specifically for refugees and migrants with healthcare backgrounds.



Making sure everyone has essential digital and maths skills



Across our region, 5% of adults in West Yorkshire lack essential digital skills for life and work, while many employers report a lack of basic maths and numeracy skills among their employees. To meet these needs, we're working with providers and education centres to offer focused programmes that will help people reach a higher level of digital literacy. Watch our [video below](#) (hyperlink).

Basic numeracy skills

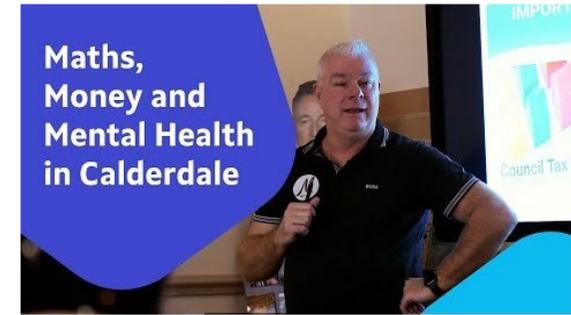
The fully funded Multiply maths programme for individuals and businesses supports basic numeracy skills – helping learners to succeed at work or just make daily tasks like shopping and handling bills a little easier. You can find out how Multiply has supported bus station staff in [our video](#) below.



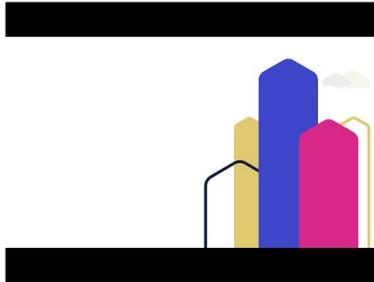
Building Confidence: Maths, Money and Mental Health in Calderdale

Find out how learning courses on maths, debt advice and money management, can break down barriers and fears and change peoples' lives for the better.

Hear from instructors Andrew, Kelly and Zoe, learner Chelsea and Calderdale Council representative Grant how maths support and adult learning can create lasting change for the people around us. Find out more about this programme [here](#) (hyperlink). Find out more about skills opportunities in West Yorkshire [here](#) (hyperlink).



Fair Work Charter



Last year, we became a founding member of the West Yorkshire Fair Work Charter – an expanding and development movement to improve the working conditions and practices across West Yorkshire.

The Charter helps good businesses turn into great businesses through promoting and recognising the positive impact of fair work, including through fair pay, providing opportunity, security, wellbeing, fulfilment and a voice for their employees. Over 200 organisations have signed up to the Charter – [find out more here](#) (hyperlink) or watch [our video](#) below.

Partnership working

"The relationship between West Yorkshire Sight Loss Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority has been hugely positive. By engaging with teams such as Mass Transit, Transport and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead we have been able to raise awareness of the challenges blind and partially sighted (BPS) people face and take meaningful steps toward making West Yorkshire a more accessible region.

We were asked to deliver a lunch and learn session to a number of Combined Authority colleagues with a focus on how public transport and the built environment can be inaccessible to BPS people. As a result, we have been able to work with the Mass Transit team to make future consultation more inclusive and share the voice of BPS people in West Yorkshire. By engaging in collaborative and open conversations West Yorkshire Sight Loss Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority have been able to develop a positive relationship and take meaningful steps to make West Yorkshire a more inclusive region for its BPS residents."



Champion Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Externally and Develop an Excellent Regional and National Reputation

1. The golden thread running through the Mayor's pledges is EDI. The Mayor is passionate that all parts of West Yorkshire benefit from Combined Authority activity and are represented in any profile building, trade delegations, inward investment queries and any services the Combined Authority provides.
2. The [West Yorkshire Plan](#) (hyperlink) sets out how the Combined Authority and its partners are working toward a brighter West Yorkshire that works for all, with associated vision and missions that centre EDI at the heart of everything we do. These values are embedded across all related work.
3. The five missions of the West Yorkshire plan are:
 - A **prosperous** West Yorkshire - an inclusive economy with well paid jobs.
 - A **happy** West Yorkshire – great places and healthy communities.
 - A **well-connected** West Yorkshire – a strong transport system.
 - A **sustainable** West Yorkshire – making lives greener.
 - A **safe** West Yorkshire – a region where everyone can flourish.
4. Following the re-election of the Mayor, the Inclusivity Champion has continued in role allowing for further collaborative work to advance the EDI ambitions jointly between the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board and the Combined Authority.
5. The Combined Authority & West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board have strengthened partnership working, with the Inclusivity Champion forming a key shared resource, as part of the [partnership agreement](#) (hyperlink). Shared organisational priorities overlap in social determinants of health, and joint work focuses on economic opportunity and equity, the climate emergency, and inclusion.
6. The Inclusivity Champion has an established workplan, with four workstreams:
 - **Convening networks to unlock West Yorkshire and amplify the lived experience of seldom heard voices**
 - **Spreading innovation and good practice**
 - **Influencing future strategy regionally and nationally**
 - **Building capability to help deliver more inclusive outcomes**

7. The Inclusivity Champion has continued to progress and host events for the [Women of West Yorkshire network](#) (hyperlink) aligned with previous work of the Mayor, in support of International Women's Day. The Women of West Yorkshire network's purpose is to empower and advocate for women, building professional networks and sharing opportunities for women to progress. There is now a formal Terms of Reference in place for the Women of West Yorkshire network to continue sustainably and within a clear remit.
8. To date, Women of West Yorkshire has a membership of 755 people, delivered three in-person and two virtual events in 2024-25, with over 400 people attending the events in total. These events have included networking opportunities, a focus on women in innovation and advocacy for the safety of women and girls. Going forward there is an effort to best understand the makeup of the Women of West Yorkshire network through sectors, roles and ambitions of membership so that events can be more appropriately tailored to member needs.
9. The Mayor's Inclusivity Champion also supported the development of the [new West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Equity and Fairness Strategy](#) (hyperlink), committed to ensuring that equity, diversity, inclusion and justice are at the core of NHS leadership and the delivery of healthcare services. The strategy builds on the positive work already happening with partners. The development included input from the Combined Authority, in support of the partnership agreement.
10. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is joint lead for [Race Disparity, Equality and Human Rights for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners](#) (hyperlink), working at a national level to champion EDI and, locally, to hold the Chief Constable to account for West Yorkshire Police's performance against the [Police Race Action Plan](#) (hyperlink) through bi-annual reports to the [Mayor's Public Community Outcomes Meeting](#) (hyperlink).
11. Following the [Safer Parks work](#) (hyperlink), the Combined Authority has been supporting a project to engage with the community, particularly women and girls, around Woodhouse Moor in Leeds, which has just completed. Social Enterprise Street Space was commissioned by the University of Leeds to generate ideas for creative interventions to be tested on the Moor during summer 2024, aiming to make the park feel safer and more welcoming for everyone.
12. The Environment and Place team are working collaboratively with the University of Leeds and Keep Britain Tidy to support the roll-out of bystander training for parks staff to help address the inequality of access to parks.
13. Delivered a [Reclaim the Night event](#) (hyperlink) run in Greenhead Park, Huddersfield on 27 October attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Policing and Crime, raising awareness of the safety of women and girls through articles [Huddersfield women 'Reclaim the Night' 47 years after first march - BBC News](#) (hyperlink) and demonstrating the organisation's ongoing commitment to tackling violence against women and girls. There was a presence from various Combined Authority departments including the Policing and Crime team and the Women of West Yorkshire network.

14. The Policing and Crime team commissioned a restorative justice service for West Yorkshire in collaboration with peer commissioners with lived experience of prison, probation and as victims. As part of this, the peer commissioners achieved Level 1 NCFE qualifications, designed and hosted a bidders presentation day and quality scored questions as members of the scoring panel.
15. Awarded over £1m to 68 community projects from the [Mayor's Safer Communities Fund](#) (hyperlink), which re-distributes monies seized from criminals. Projects supported include:
- **Staying Put** 'Hello – how are you?' – support to young people experiencing domestic violence.
 - **ZA Community Officials Ltd** – support to black and ethnic minority women living in West Bowling, Bradford, to improve economic wellbeing and reduce inequalities in health, crime, employment, education and housing.
 - **Step 2 Young People's Health** – support to children and young people in deprived areas of Bradford with a focus on supporting those with learning disabilities and neurodiversity to cultivate safer relationships.
 - **Hive Huddersfield CIC** – support for young people aged 13 – 17 identifying as LGBTQ+.
 - **Grassroots Batley**, Empowering Girls and Women – working with women from a predominantly South Asian descent to reduce inequalities.
 - **People Matters** – supporting people with learning disabilities and autism.
 - **RETAS Leeds** – supporting asylum seekers and refugees.
 - **Give a Gift** – tackling domestic violence in refugee communities.
 - **Black Lives Matter** - SpeakupLeeds – supporting people experiencing racism in Leeds.
16. The Urban Design team has compiled a list of criteria to support housing associations to make their homes more dementia ready. West Yorkshire Housing Partnership members have agreed to incorporate the criteria into their newbuild standards and explore how they can be used for existing homes. More information [here](#) (hyperlink).
17. The [Combined Authority's dementia-ready housing criteria](#) (hyperlink) has been discussed with West Yorkshire planning authorities who have committed to embed them in developing policy. Further, this criteria guidance has been sent to the housing minister. Joanne Gardner presented the dementia-ready housing criteria at a [national webinar](#) (hyperlink) hosted by the housing learning and improvement network on 9th July.
18. The Combined Authority Strategic Place Partnership not only focuses on local impact but also seeks to influence regional and national policies. By sharing successes and learnings, the environment and place team are building a strong reputation for excellence in EDI, positioning West Yorkshire as a model for inclusive development.
19. The Housing Accelerator Fund has been extended to Registered Providers to support unlocking 100% affordable housing for those on the lowest incomes in areas of high-level deprivation. Our strategic place partnership with Homes England focuses on creating a framework

that supports continuous improvement in EDI, through addressing regional inequalities, ensuring that all policies and practices are inclusive and equitable from the ground up.

20. The Policing, Environment and Place directorate organised seven volunteering away-days in July and August that included a focus on EDI, supporting and attending places such as a dementia garden, a mental health charity and a food bank. Whilst also improving connections with a diverse range of organisations and upholding our commitment to EDI.
21. Collaborative work continues with members of the West Yorkshire Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Partnership Network, consisting of EDI practitioners across the five local authorities, West Yorkshire Police and the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board. This Network is focused on contributing to the West Yorkshire Plan and does so by facilitating shared learning, collaborative benchmarking, and shaping a regional EDI ecosystem to identify opportunities to advance EDI.
22. The EDI team has led on the creation of the Northern Mayoral Combined Authorities Partnership Forum, aligned with the [Northern Manifesto](#) (hyperlink). The Partnership Forum unites EDI leads/responsible officers to share best practice and understand approaches of how different EDI initiatives have been embedded across the different regions. Current areas of discussion have included workforce inclusion programmes, inclusive engagement approaches, and progress on implementation of the Socio-Economic Duty.
23. There has been ongoing training for all senior colleagues on Equality Impact Assessments through recorded sessions, which have been integrated into induction training. This means that all new starters to the organisation can be trained from early stages on how to effectively complete these impact assessments. There has been a monitoring form produced to assess indicate impact of these training sessions.
24. Furthermore, following the previous delivery of EDI training beyond e-learning provision, the recommendations have formed a brand-new EDI training programme, that has been co-designed working with colleagues, including Staff Networks. These training sessions have been piloted, with 100% of evaluations stating that these new sessions met the objectives and that the training increased their understanding of EDI and what it meant in the context of the Combined Authority. The new training also includes additional modules for line managers to speak on inclusive recruitment, and senior leadership to cover embedding EDI in workplans and strategies.
25. The Learning and Development team continue to work with SOLACE to influence a northern [AMPlify programme](#) (hyperlink), in parallel to the current offer coordinated in London.
26. Aligning to the Mayoral Pledge, the Fair Work Charter was launched on 24 November 2023, supporting, and celebrating employers to deliver greater diversity, wellbeing, and social mobility within the workplace. This Charter has continued to be promoted across the region, with an additional 156 signatories since the beginning of April 2024. This brings the total now to 231.

27. Adoptees of the Fair Work Charter continue to reflect all five of the West Yorkshire districts, reflecting the Combined Authority's commitment to ensuring that the entire region can benefit from access to fair and equitable employment. More can be read about the Charter here: [Fair Work Charter](#) (hyperlink).
28. The new businesses represent a breadth of industries across the region, including culture, sport and entertainment, public transport, manufacturing, food processing, digital, technology and media, financial, legal and professional services, and consultancy. 84% of these new adoptees are from the private sector, with the remaining 16% being from the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector.
29. The business support team have commissioned a marketing campaign to celebrate and elevate ethnic minority businesses and to create a bank of case studies aimed at celebrating women and disability led businesses.
30. There has been substantial progress working towards West Yorkshire Mass Transit being best in class for accessibility and inclusion. The Mass Transit team is working closely with colleagues developing the Local Transport Plan to further develop this work into a broader approach for ensuring West Yorkshire's broader integrated transport system (including the likes of bus, rail and cycling & walking) will display consistent high standards of accessibility and inclusion.
31. The Mass Transit summer consultation outcome report has now been published. It highlights a number of key initiatives undertaken to ensure the consultation was accessible and inclusive. A full breakdown of initiatives taken to ensure the consultation was accessible for all can be found on page 29 of the [Consultation Outcome report](#) (hyperlink).
32. EDI principles have been embedded in policy and strategy including Local Transport Plan objectives, Active Travel Strategy and Electric Vehicle infrastructure strategy. A transport EDI document is being developed which will be a supplementary document to the Local Transport Plan, and going forward will align with the developing EDI strategy. In addition, EDI principles are considered and embedded in all study and design work include Bradford connectivity study. 10+ project designs were reviewed and considered by the Combined Authority's Quality Panel which reviews design quality through walking, cycling and wheeling.
33. Inclusion and Inclusive Growth has been identified as a key objective under the case for change which the Local Transport Plan seeks to address. The evidence base for this strategy development has indicated that improving public transport connectivity, particularly for people living in deprived areas, is necessary to reduce existing transport-related barriers to employment, education and training and stimulate productivity growth in West Yorkshire. Better connecting people to learning opportunities is particularly important to address West Yorkshire's skills deficit, which has been identified as one of the key factors for West Yorkshire's productivity gap.
34. To address the findings that enabling more people to walk, cycle and use public transport is also key to reduce car dependency and create a more equitable region, the Local Transport Plan will emphasise active travel methods and seek to remove or minimise barriers to access.

35. Transport infrastructure projects are often targeted at high deprivation neighbourhoods to give opportunity for all and enhance inclusive growth. Various active travel projects to encourage walking have started on site such as Bradford Access to Schools and Lydgate School Safety. Thornton Road (Corridor Improvement Programme) has gained final business case approval. Halifax Bus Station has completed on site and is open to the public.
36. In November 2024, Halifax Bus Station won the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion award at [the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation, Yorkshire and the Humber Awards](#) (hyperlink). This award recognises employers or individuals that have implemented an EDI initiative of merit.
37. Active Travel England have informed us that they consider our Quality Panel as one of the leading Design Review Panels in the country and have asked if we are happy to assist other Local Authorities in working up their panels in 2025.
38. The AccessBus service has been operational for over 30 years. AccessBus is an accessible dial-a-ride bus service providing door-to-door local transport, seven days a week between 9am and 5pm under five contracts, one for each district in West Yorkshire. Although there are no eligibility criteria and the service is open to anyone, it is almost entirely utilised by passengers who are elderly and/or disabled and unable to use standard bus services. AccessBus provides a critical role for individuals who cannot use traditional bus services – not only is it a form of transport provision but it is crucial for passengers social and mental well-being.
39. The Combined Authority also deliver a home to school taxi/minibus service for young people with special educational needs and disabilities on behalf of Wakefield Council.
40. The recently [launched Local Growth Plan](#) (hyperlink) embeds EDI as a principle in tackling the key barriers that are holding back growth in the region, including investment, skills and connectivity. Every action and priority in the Local Growth Plan is driven by the principles of inclusion, health and wellbeing and sustainability. This means:
- Ensuring all residents, especially those who are disadvantaged or from underrepresented groups, benefit from the prosperity this growth delivers.
 - Delivering for the future prosperity and direction of West Yorkshire with a child-first agenda embedded across all activity.
 - Improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of residents across all policies.
 - Meeting the commitment to net zero by ensuring economic growth is regenerative and fosters thriving communities.

Further development

- Review the equality impact assessment approach and process to improve application and monitoring of equality impact assessments and support our delivery partners.
- Strengthen EDI in commissioning and procurement.

- We will work with the Inclusivity Champion to respond to the intelligence and priority actions identified including the developing interventions with communities related to the adopted definitions of Islamophobia and Antisemitism.
- Continue to share best practice around inclusive employment to local businesses and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector through the Inclusivity Champion.
- Utilising social value to advance EDI ambitions in achieving better outcomes for people, place and region.

Monitoring impact

- Strengthened the governance and rigor of embedding EDI both internally and through our external services through our performance monitoring and progress towards achieving our equality objectives. In particular, the introduction of a EDI performance dashboard.
- To complement the interventions to embed EDI in all that we do, we have set the ambition that 100% of strategies, policies and plans have equity, diversity, and inclusion embedded. This includes:
 - All business plans and budgets include targeted recruitment and diversity actions specific to the department to enable corporate aims to be met.
 - All policies, strategies and plans developed by the Combined Authority will have a completed an equality impact assessment which pro-actively examines and evaluates all the protected characteristics.
 - By 2028, 100% of scheme equality impact assessments are quality checked where they come through the Combined Authority Assurance Framework.
 - The Inclusivity Champion workplan has specific objectives that are aligned with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan with measurable outputs to substantiate the progress that the Inclusivity Champion has had on creating a more equitable and inclusive region.

Consult and Engage with Our People, Communities, and Businesses to Understand their Diverse Needs and Ensure Our Services Meet their Needs

1. We continue to engage local people, community groups and businesses in decision-making. In the last year, the [Your Voice](#) (hyperlink) engagement platform has grown by 600+ new accounts. This means that more people from our region are regularly informed and engaged about the Combined Authority's work.
2. In 2024 the Your Voice website received over 222,000 visits from our local communities interested in engaging with our projects and sharing their views. We saw an increase in new accounts for women at the end of 2024, following a campaign to encourage more diverse sign ups. Further promotion of Your Voice is planned in 2025/26 with an aim to encourage more young or ethnically diverse people to register.
3. We use the ['About You' questions](#) (hyperlink) in our consultations, to understand and work with communities. The approach means there is a better understanding of whose voices are often missing, and we continue to seek innovative ways to reach those groups. The Communities, Consultation and Engagement team monitor responses to our consultations and engagement work to more effectively target promotion to reach those in the communities we need to strengthen engagement with.
4. We are developing an Inclusive engagement framework which will set the standards of inclusive engagement and encourage a culture of engagement. As part of the framework development, we engaged with diverse various voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to understand how they prefer to be engaged and what engagement barriers they experience. This exercise offered us insights about our communities, helped us build new links with local organisations and raise awareness of the work of the Combined Authority.
5. The Community Engagement team has built numerous, trusted relationships over the last year and continues to build new relationships. These contacts will result in better consultation feedback as awareness of the work of the Combined Authority grows. Good relationships have been developed with a variety of groups, including faith.
6. We are coordinating an event for the West Yorkshire districts on child-friendly engagement and urban design in March 2025.
7. The Environment team have commissioned engagement specialists to co-design a project to engage with groups that we've struggled to engage with to date as part of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (young people, minority/ethnic groups, people in areas of deprivation/poor access to nature, people with health conditions or disabilities.)

8. We are currently exploring opportunities to encourage young women to consider entrepreneurship as a career pathway through enterprise and startup support. There is a focus on underrepresented groups such as female migrants and ethnic minority female founders through previously commissioned development funds. We have recently set up a Black Business Group to create a platform for sharing experiences, challenges, and best practices. It also enables us to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers and needs specific to black businesses.
9. The recently launched West Yorkshire Housing Strategy includes equity, diversity, inclusion and inclusive growth as a guiding principle throughout all the strategy's objectives. The housing strategy has been carefully informed by comprehensive reported evidence and is deeply reflective of the diverse demographics across the region. By analysing this data, we have gained a thorough understanding of the varied needs of our communities. This insight has guided us in shaping services that are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of these communities, ensuring that our housing initiatives are inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the distinct characteristics of the population we serve.
10. Engagement sessions have taken place with the Mayor and Inclusivity Champion to build relationships and assess the offer the Combined Authority can make to faith communities. This work could potentially lead to the creation of a future advisory group/board that could advise the Combined Authority on future work plans and priorities for West Yorkshire.
11. The relationship between the Combined Authority and the West Yorkshire Sight Loss Council is a key case study on the importance of effective consultation and engagement: *"The relationship between West Yorkshire Sight Loss Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority has been hugely positive. By engaging with teams such as Mass Transit, Transport and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead we have been able to raise awareness of the challenges blind and partially sighted people face and take meaningful steps toward making West Yorkshire a more accessible region [...]"*.
12. Internally, Staff Networks continue to champion EDI across workforce policies. The Staff Networks organised an 'open day' to promote their work to all colleagues and raise awareness. Networks are regularly involved in communications activities for EDI related events and are planning to hold future open days open to all colleagues to attend.
13. To date, the Combined Authority's Staff Networks include:
 - **Embrace**
 - **Gender Equality**
 - **Proud**
 - **WeCAN**
 - **Young Employee Network**

14. Each Staff Network now has access to a budget to support achieving respective network activity.
15. In addition to the formal Staff Networks, there is a subgroup of WeCAN called the Parents of Neurodivergent Children (PoD), specifically focused on peer support for parents of neurodivergent children. This group has organised several organisation-wide events which have been very well attended and focused on informing fellow colleagues about the lived experiences of neurodiverse children and adults and adjustments which can be made in the workplace to improve accessibility and wellbeing for neurodiverse colleagues.
16. The Corporate Communications team are working with Staff Networks to evolve their engagement platforms and methods, including support with the intranet and the visual identity of all the Staff Networks.
17. Internally, there is a substantial intranet site with access to EDI learning materials and microsites for each Staff Network, with viewing rates of 9328 over the total lifetime of the page.
18. Staff Networks' activities are monitored through the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, as well as receiving support from the Combined Authority's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Manager. Representatives from each of the networks are invited to the Steering Group quarterly in line with high priority items to ensure they are involved in discussions and cited in organisational decisions.
19. In consultation with colleagues including Staff Networks, we refreshed the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group terms of reference, now the pan organisational forum to discuss both internal and external delivery of EDI. This group is chaired by the Director of Strategy, Communications and Intelligence and Senior Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Champion.
20. In addition, the refreshed terms of reference to strengthen the EDI ecosystem, is a key indicator for assessing the progress of embedding EDI in the context of broader organisational priorities, ambitions, and objectives, as well as the work of the Mayor's Inclusivity Champion.
21. The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group also provides a strategic approach to accreditations which reflects evidence led measures aligned to the maturity of the Combined Authority and demonstrates most value for the communities intended.
22. The WeCAN Staff Network created a [Visitors Guide to Wellington House](#) (hyperlink) to support first time visitors, particularly those who are neurodiverse or who have any specific accessibility requirements are able to plan in advance for their visit and have an awareness of the facilities which the office space can offer. This additional support is an indication of the organisation's advocacy and support for one-off or first-time visitors to the office space who may have different access needs.
23. There has been a *Technology and Accessibility Group* founded to ensure all digital materials are accessible for both internal and external viewers to organisational documents, webpages and consultation platforms, thus increasing the inclusive nature of our communications and consultation activity and ensuring that all people can have access and awareness of the Combined Authority's work.

24. The Health and Safety Team has inputted into and influenced the design of new and refurbished bus stations, with facilities such as welfare facilities, access and signage being considered, thus accommodating for the diverse needs of the people of West Yorkshire and ensuring that this diversity is taken into account at an early stage.

25. As set out in the [EDI Statement](#) as well as linked to the targets embedded in business plans, all Combined Authority employees will undertake Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training offered through iHasco e-learning.

26. As of December 2024, all colleagues continue to complete the e-learning modules, reflecting:

- **EDI ihasco completion rates: 92%**
- **Unconscious bias completion rates (employees): 89%**
- **Unconscious bias completion rates (managers): 86%**

Further development

- As part of the Equality Impact Assessment review, create a central repository of assessments and consider publication process internally and externally.
- Development and implementation of the Inclusive Engagement Strategy.
- Refresh About You questions to ensure that our Communities, Consultation and Engagement can accurately capture the feedback of our communities and ensure that our services meet the needs of diverse groups.
- Working with and learning from Staff Networks, through a case study series to magnify experiences of Staff Networks' members, to promote the importance and value of the networks as well as inform interventions to address gaps in the workforce Colleague Survey, and monitoring information.
- A review of EDI material across internal and external systems to establish a central platform.

Monitoring impact

- Establish and report metrics through the Inclusive Engagement Strategy.
- Review of the About You questions and embedding across internal and external services, to ensure consistency in monitoring.

Ensure Our Workforce Reflects the Diversity of West Yorkshire

1. The recruitment and diversity workplan led by Human Resource Team is an enabler to the Combined Authority becoming more reflective of the West Yorkshire profile.
2. As of December 2024, the data indicates that the positive trends identified relating to the proportion of ethnic minority colleagues have continued to be seen through 2024, for all colleagues including senior colleagues. Progress needs to accelerate to meet the targets for 2030, although progress is broadly positive.
3. Employees joining in the past 12 months are more likely to provide information about their sexual orientation, this information suggests we are improving the representation of employees who self-report as LGBT+. We have consistently met and exceeded our target that 5% of our colleagues will be people of minority sexual orientation in 2024.
4. The proportion of colleagues declaring a disability has been consistently increasing since 2023 and is currently at 10%. Progress has stalled in the past quarter and is lower than the rate required to meet the 2030 target of 20% representation.
5. The previous 12 months has seen some progress towards a more representative colleague profile for gender, continuing the trend from 23/24. Colleagues indicating their preferred gender is a new inclusion, recording this information has just been made available via self-service in CiAnywhere so this is likely an underestimation of the true figure. Monitoring of progress towards the 2030 target of 2% of colleagues being people of minority gender expression is a future development.
6. Inclusive Recruitment briefings for managers, focusing on inclusive recruitment interventions and to launch EDI questions in the recruitment process, have continued across the organisation to promote and encourage inclusive recruitment. During 2023 there were 14 sessions with a total of 98 managers attending. Sessions continued in 2024 with five sessions with 41 managers attending and are planned again from March 2025 following a review of the session content.
7. The implementation of the new CiAnywhere has allowed for greater specificity when employees are updating their personal information, allowing for more authentic self-reporting from colleagues when recording their personal data.
8. We have incorporated tracking progress against the 2030 workforce composition and representation targets into our quarterly Management Information reports, starting with Q2 2024-25.
9. Per the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan, interview questions and values have had EDI questions embedded, with every interview, regardless of role or grade, requiring an EDI question from a bank to be asked and adequately answered. This has been added to the Interview Scoring Marksheet for managers to score this question separately. This also helps remind managers of the importance of asking

an EDI related question. A spot check was conducted by the Internal Audit team to ensure that this practice was consistent across interviews.

10. Role Profiles being used for recruitment have been amended to include as a core competence *‘Demonstrates a Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at all times.’*
11. There has been a greater drive for positive action, specifically within internal progression opportunities through targeted learning and development initiatives. Currently there are several employees including managers enrolled on the AMPlify Solace training programme, specifically put in place to champion and empower diverse talent.
12. There are a further number of employees who are due to start the next cohort of this training programme. This approach to positive action in learning and development opportunities in the organisation is part of a broader organisational culture movement towards proactively seeking to champion diverse talent.
13. Embedded EDI into the Learning and Development Policy, resulting in actions such as EDI embedded in the induction process, and monitoring effects on employee performance through related training and performance reviews.
14. To better understand the experience of the Combined Authority’s diverse workforce and perception toward the Combined Authority’s improvements, two EDI questions were added to the annual Colleague Survey in 2021, as follows:
 - **The Combined Authority respects individual differences.**
 - **The Combined Authority acts fairly with regard to career progression / promotion, regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age.**
15. Further questions were added to the Colleague Survey in 2024 following a consultation (which included the Staff Networks) in the summer. Five of these new ‘Likert’ scale (agree-neutral-disagree) questions were themed around EDI and can be considered as further barometer questions for the EDI plan. These questions were:
 - **I feel safe expressing my opinions and ideas at work**
 - **My opinions are heard and ideas considered by team members**
 - **Team interactions are inclusive and collaborative**
 - **I understand how I can contribute to the ED&I vision**
 - **I think the staff networks play an important role**
16. Following the consultation, age was also introduced as an additional demographic question to the colleague survey in 2024. All questions, including the demographic questions are entirely optional on the survey. These demographic questions allow analysis of the results

through different lenses providing deeper insight into colleague sentiment. Results of the 2024 Colleague Survey were published internally in March. Headlines from the survey relating to EDI were:

- 54% of colleagues selected ‘*yes definitely*’ when asked if they thought the Combined Authority respects individual differences (e.g. cultures, working styles backgrounds, ideas etc.), down slightly from 60% in 2023. A further 40% selected ‘*yes, to some extent*’ (up from 33% last year), whilst the share of colleagues who responded ‘no’ to this question is the same as last year (5%). This result is on a par with 2022 results and is higher than in 2021. Colleagues with a disability were less likely to say ‘*yes definitely*’ (43%) compared to those without a disability (60%). The share of colleagues who selected ‘*yes definitely*’ declines by length of service; from 66% for those who have worked at the Combined Authority for less than a year, to 52% for those who have worked at the Combined Authority for more than a decade. Notably, variation in strong positive (‘*yes definitely*’) responses between women and men narrowed in 2024 (57% vs 68% in 2023 vs 54% vs 60% in 2024, for women and men respectively).
- 43% of colleagues selected ‘*yes definitely*’ when asked if they thought the Combined Authority acts fairly regard to career progression / promotion, regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age, down slightly from 46% in 2023, whilst a further 32% selected ‘*yes, to some extent*’. Colleagues with a disability were less likely to say ‘*yes definitely*’ (39%) compared to those without a disability (47%)
- Overall, colleagues with a disability were consistency less likely to report a positive response to the survey questions; more than half questions have a $\geq 10\%$ point gap levels of agreement to question statements between staff with and without a disability. For example, 59% of staff with a disability agreed they would recommend the Cobined Authority as a good place to work vs 80% of without a disability.
- When asked if they felt safe expressing opinions and ideas at work, 64% agreed and 17% disagreed. Levels of agreement to this statement decline with age; 81% of 18- to 30-year-olds felt safe expressing their opinions and ideas at work but this falls to on 56% for those aged 51 years and older.
- When colleagues were as asked if their opinions were heard and ideas considered by team members, 79% agreed and 8% disagreed. Notably, colleagues with a disability were less likely to agree (70%) than those without a disability (83% agreed).
- Colleagues were also asked if team interactions were inclusive and collaborative. Overall 70% agreed and 1 in 10 disagreed, with some variation by length of service; 76% of staff who had worked for the CA less than a year agreed compared to 55% of those who had worked for the Combined Authority for 10 years or more.
- Colleagues were asked if they understood how they contributed to the ED&I vision and 74% agreed, whilst 8% disagreed. Similar to the other EDI questions, positive responses decline with length of service; 83% of staff who had worked for the CA less than a year agreed vs 61% of those who had worked for the CA for 10 years or more. In the open responses, colleagues said that they

highly valued the organisation's commitment to EDI and felt that progress has been made over the past 12 months to promote EDI across the Combined Authority. In particular, there was positive feedback on teams that feel welcoming and inclusive, felt to contribute to job satisfaction. While this was felt to be the right direction of travel, colleagues said they felt that more could be done to develop the organisation's focus on EDI with suggestions including a greater focus of EDI during recruitment, improved support for colleagues with disabilities and more consultation activity with under-represented groups.

- Finally, colleagues were asked if they thought the staff networks played an important role. 57% agreed and 11% disagreed. In the open responses, there was positive feedback about the staff networks, where colleagues felt that they helped staff build connections, feel represented, and drive improvements across the organisation.

17. The results indicate a generally positive response to equity, diversity and inclusion at the Combined Authority. However, the survey highlights areas of opportunity to improve e.g. the differences in experience identified among Combined Authority disabled employees. Improvements to internal policy continue, including:

- **Updating the parental leave policies in line with legislative and other changes.**
- **Implemented an organisational chest-feeding (breast feeding) guide to inform and support employees who are new parents.**
- **Updated the Employee Handbook to reflect new legislation around flexible working requests and carers leave.**

18. There has been an agreed £5000 budget allocated to each Staff Network Group to offer additional development support or opportunities to employees who are in a Staff Network.

19. Rolled out additional leadership programme for Staff Network chairs through the AMPlify Solace programme, which is a bespoke offering specifically tailored to address the development requests of the networks. This delivery was a collaborative piece of work between the HR Learning and Development partner and the Strategy EDI Team.

20. Colleagues delivered of Spotlight session on Disability and Employment, in support of Disability History Month with 84 attendees. Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture led the session design and delivery in partnership with WeCAN, resulting in increased awareness of Disability History Month.

21. WeCAN Staff Network have been instrumental in raising awareness of reasonable adjustments and signposting members to the likes of supporting policy and guidance, as well as magnifying issues to ensure we are making meaningful progress in terms of our journey towards Disability Confident accreditation.

22. WeCAN have contributed lived experience examples from members to highlight and educate colleagues on a wide range of conditions. Talking openly and raising awareness about neurodivergence has seen many colleagues take the step to gaining assessment and accessing Right to Choose providers.
23. The Gender Equality Group has set up Period Poverty Donation Point to support the organisation Getaway Girls. In February 2025 they organised a 'Lets Lift the Curfew' 5k run to raise awareness about the safety of women and girls at night. They have also inputted into internal policies, e.g. Domestic Violence, Sexual Harassment.
24. There has been a further rollout of the Suzie Lamplugh Bystander Training, to support colleagues on the best ways to be an ally in public.
25. Embrace supported Islamophobia awareness month, sharing personal stories, providing practical support for colleagues and promoting faith led community work. Also Embrace supported the organisation around the civil unrest rooted in Islamophobia that occurred over the summer months of 2024.
26. Proud hosted an oversubscribed event with a parent of a trans child, raising awareness of what families experience, marched in Leeds Pride with the Mayor, hosted monthly network meetings and increased membership by 25, supported changes and input into our policies and hosted Pride month events throughout June including an internal Pride.
27. Our Gender and Ethnicity pay gaps reports have been confirmed and published in December 2024, reflecting positive progress towards pay parity targeted for 2028 including a median gender pay gap of 0%.

Further development

- Review and strengthen the understanding of the diverse employee lifecycle, through employee data analysis of workforce profile and Colleague Survey.
- Continue to strengthen briefings and guidance including platforms for information through the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Hub providing up to date resources.
- Explore the opportunity for the organisation to provide work experience.
- Monitoring and reporting colleagues' EDI objectives aligned with colleagues' performance reviews.
- Advancing the EDI dashboard, to monitor and report impact across the interventions.

Monitoring impact

Our overall ambition is that our workforce, including our leadership, will be at least representative of the West Yorkshire population for the protected characteristics of disability, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. By 2030:

- At least 20% of colleagues will be people with disabilities (in line with working age population).
- At least 23% of colleagues will be people belonging to minority ethnic communities (in line with whole population).
- At least 23% of senior colleagues (grades 10 to 16) will be people belonging to minority ethnic communities (in line with whole population).
- At least 2% of colleagues will be people of minority gender identity/expression and sex characteristics.
- At least 5% of colleagues will be people of minority sexual orientation.
- By 2023, 100% of employees complete their employee profile monitoring information on new Integrated Corporate System (including prefer not to say) – excluding people on maternity (parental) leave and long-term sickness. This will improve the accuracy of the employee profile baseline.
- By 2025, 100% of employees who respond to the Staff Survey will have an inclusive employment experience, monitored by:
 - **By 2025, 100% of respondents to the Staff Survey will agree the Combined Authority respects individual differences.**
 - **By 2025, 100% of respondents to the Staff Survey will agree that the Combined Authority acts fairly with regard to progression.**
- By 2023, 100% of recruitment processes will be inclusive, monitored by:
 - **100% of interviews include an EDI question in the set of interview questions.**
 - **100% of applications are anonymised before sifting.**
 - **100% of role profiles include EDI requirements**
- By 2023, all new role profiles include EDI requirement
- By 2025, all role profiles include EDI requirements
- By 2023, IHasco unconscious bias training complete by 100% of managers
- By 2023, 100% of employees complete IHasco mandatory EDI, and unconscious bias training.
- By 2023, over 75% of employees complete the optional EDI IHasco units
- By 2024, 100% of Senior Management Team complete equality impact assessment training (training to be procured in 2023)
- By 2025, at least 75% of the entire workforce complete the equality impact assessment training
- By 2025, 100% of managers attend Combined Authority focused diverse recruitment workshops

Employee Profile Data

Methodology

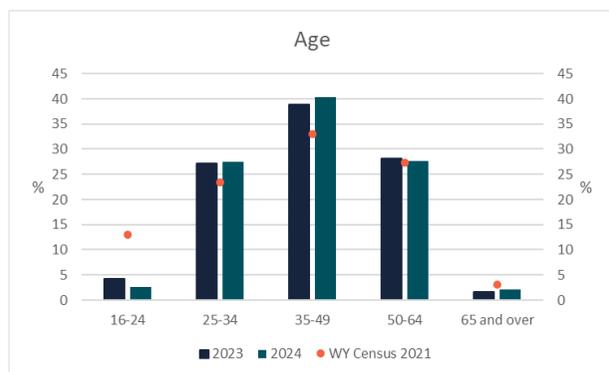
The 2024 dataset includes all employees currently employed by the Combined Authority as of 31 December 2024, The 2024 data provided through CiAnywhere has benchmarked against the West Yorkshire population, baselined from the Census 2021. The key statistics for the different protected characteristics are explored in more detail in this report.

Our employee profile

The employee profile of the Combined Authority has been benchmarked against West Yorkshire data from the 2021 Census. Where possible a working age population has been used. Data for other Combined Authorities is not consistently available for comparison and many of these areas have significantly different populations making comparison not sensible.

Age

Age	Combined Authority 2022	Combined Authority 2023	Combined Authority 2024	Combined Authority 23/24 Change	Economically Active West Yorkshire Population Census 2021
Under 25	4.0%	4.2%	2.6%	-1.7%	13.0%
25-34	25.6%	27.2%	27.5%	0.3%	23.5%
35-49	38.8%	38.8%	40.3%	1.5%	33.0%
50-64	29.9%	28.2%	27.6%	-0.6%	27.4%
65+	1.6%	1.6%	2.1%	0.5%	3.1%

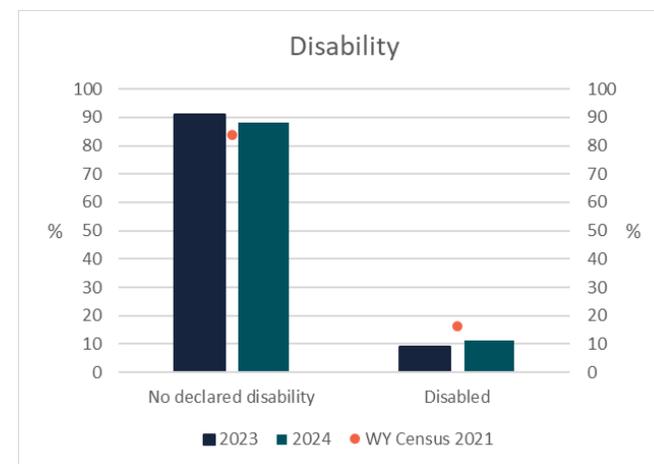


Source: CiAnywhere

The economically active population of West Yorkshire broken down by age group is now available from the 2021 census and is included here. The age groups used have been realigned to mirror this analysis.

Disability

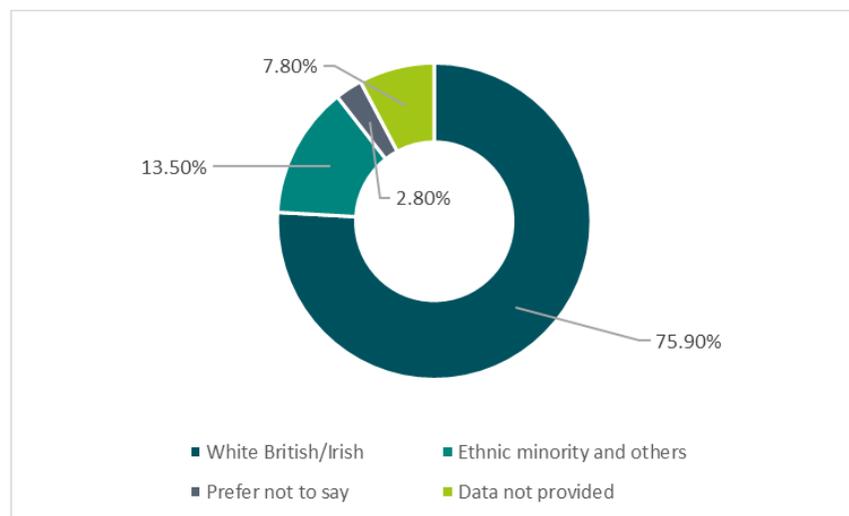
Disability declaration	Combined Authority 2022	Combined Authority 2023	Combined Authority 2024	Combined Authority 23/24 change	West Yorkshire Working Age (15-64) Population Census 2021
No declared disability	91.9%	91.1%	88.1%	-3%	83.8%
Disabled	8.1%	8.9%	11.2%	2.3%	16.2%



Whilst details of disability are recorded in CiAnywhere, the specifics are excluded from this analysis in line with the 2021 Census comparator. Data from the Census for disability by age is only currently available in 5-year age bands so the best working age comparison available is the 15-64 age group.

Race / ethnicity

Race / ethnicity	Combined Authority 2022	Combined Authority 2023	Combined Authority 2024	Combined Authority 23/24 Change	West Yorkshire Working Age (16-64) Population Census 2021
White British/Irish	84.9%	78.8%	75.9%	-2.9%	71.6%
Ethnic minority and others	10.6%	15.9%	13.5%	-2.4%	28.4%
Prefer not to say	0.6%	0.6%	2.8%	2.2%	
Data not provided	4.0%	4.7%	7.8%	3.1%	



This is a compulsory question in the Census unlike religion, sexual orientation and gender identity which are all currently, voluntary questions and hence the prefer not to say category for those questions but not for ethnicity. The category *ethnic minority and others* includes everyone who has not identified as either White British/English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish or White Irish. The category recording is aligned with the [GOV.UK guidance](#) (hyperlink).

One of the recommendations in the [final report on COVID-19 disparities](#), published in December 2021, is to refer to ethnic minority groups individually, rather than as a single group. As indicated on page 58, *Employee Data and Methodology improvements*, we are working to the strengthen the new corporate system going forward to align with GOV.UK and the Race and Ethnic Disparities Report.

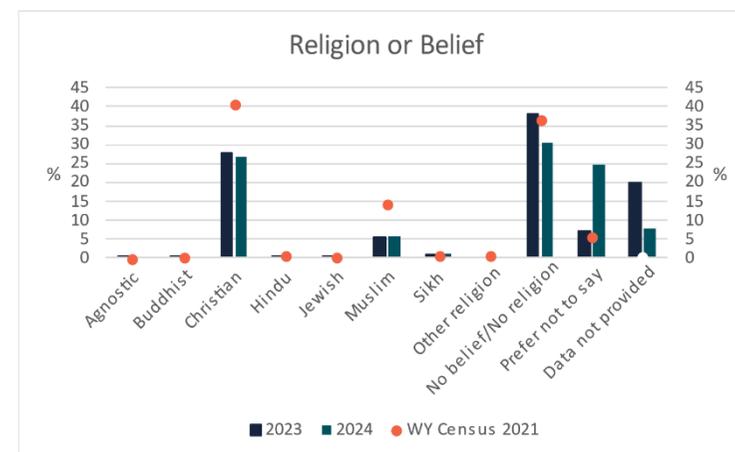
Belief / religion

Belief / religion	Combined Authority 2022	Combined Authority 2023	Combined Authority 2024	Combined Authority 23/24 Change	West Yorkshire Population Census 2021
Agnostic	0.1%	0.1%	0%	-0.1%	0.04%
Buddhist	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.27%
Christian	28.3%	27.7%	26.6%	-1.1%	40.62%
Hindu	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.77%
Jewish	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0%	0.30%
Muslim	4.9%	5.7%	5.7%	0%	14.50%
Sikh	0.6%	1.0%	1.1%	0.1%	0.82%
Other religion			0.5%	0.5%	0.83%
No Belief/No religion	33.1%	38.1%	30.5%	-7.6%	36.69%
Prefer not to say	6.5%	7.1%	24.8%	17.7%	5.58%
Data not provided	25.8%	20.1%	7.9%	-12.2%	

Data for 2024 reflects the inclusion of 'Other' as a potential option with a notable increase in colleagues indicating they did not wish to state their religious belief. One in four employees have not input data for this meaning the actual proportions within the Combined Authority could vary from those reported, although this group is smaller than in 2022.

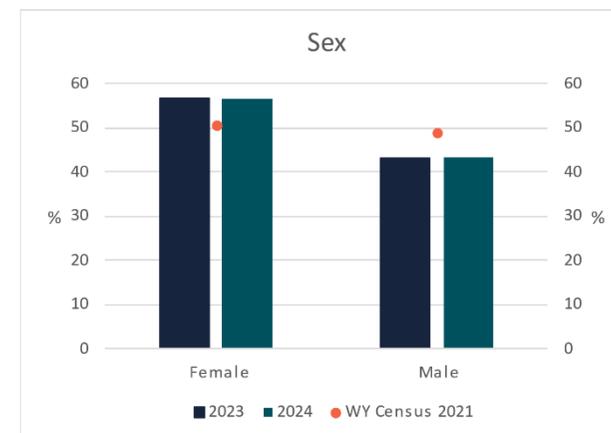
The Carval system does not have the option for employees to choose *Other* religion which may also be affecting the accuracy of the data collected.

Source: CiAnywhere



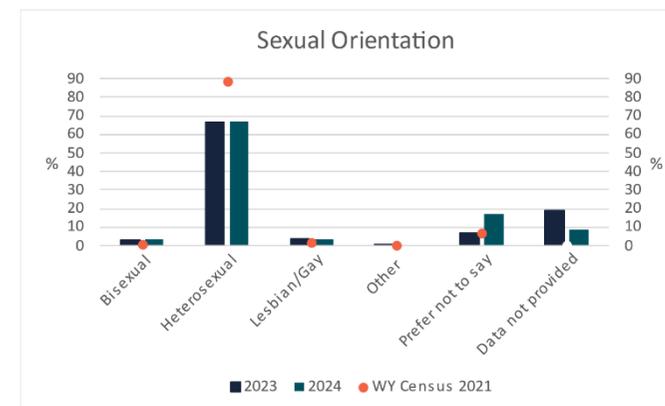
Sex

Sex	Combined Authority 2022	Combined Authority 2023	Combined Authority 2024	Combined Authority 23/24 Change	West Yorkshire Working Age (16-64) Population Census 2021
Female	57.1%	56.8%	56.7%	-0.1%	50.9%
Male	42.9%	43.2%	43.3%	0.1%	49.1%



Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Combined Authority 2022	Combined Authority 2023	Combined Authority 2024	Combined Authority 22/23 Change	West Yorkshire Population (16+) Census 2021
Bisexual	1.5%	3.3%	3.2%	-0.1%	1.4%
Heterosexual	66.0%	66.8%	67.4%	0.6%	89.3%
Lesbian/ Gay	3.1%	4%	3.5%	-0.5%	1.5%
Other			0.4%	0.4	0.3%
Prefer not to say	5.6%	6.7%	17.1%	10.4%	7.5%
Data not provided	23.9%	19.0%	8.4%	-10.6%	



2024 has seen a sizeable increase in people indicating they would prefer not to indicate their sexual orientation, which correlates with an associated reduction in those not providing an answer.

The total headcount has increased by 12.8% from 864 in 2023 to 975 in 2024.

Employee data and methodology improvements

Going forward, the methodology will be reviewed to enable positive changes in the methodology in future reports, following implementation of a new Integrated Corporate System. This will improve the quality of employee monitoring and address the gaps evidenced in the employee profile section of the report. HR Management Information is now reported on a quarterly basis to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Committee.

Appendix A: Completed actions delivering the West Yorkshire Combined Authority’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan 2022-2025.

The image reflects the delivery of the EDI Plan to date, with over 66% of tasks completed, and the remaining in/or to progress. The delivery over 2025/2026 will take the Combined Authority into the final year of the EDI Plan, with a focus on shaping the EDI strategy to launch in April 2026.

Focus areas for 2025/2026:

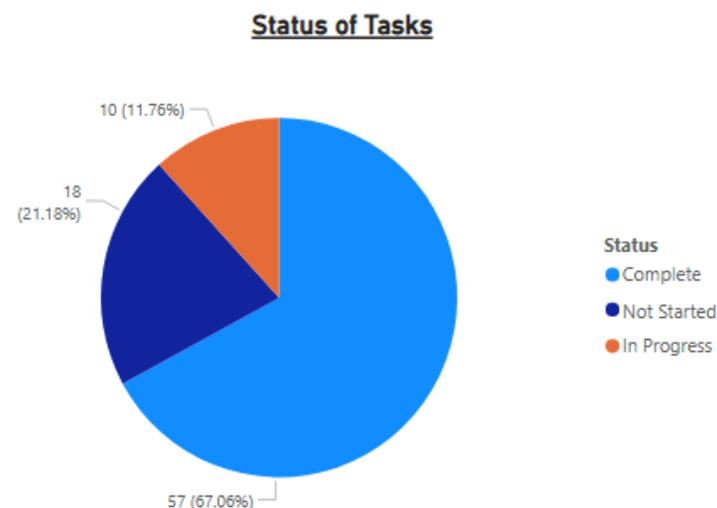
Delivery of the EDI Plan, including:

Priority 1: Embed equity, diversity, and inclusion

- Review of the Equality Impact Assessment Framework, toolkit and options to digitise the process
- Define the equality impact assessment process map
- Create a central repository of equality impact assessments
- Promote the refreshed equality impact assessment framework
- Create and publish an EDI handbook linked to the contents of the refreshed EDI policy
- Create mechanism for equality Impact assessments sample check annually
- Integrate EDI into the Policy Toolkit and Forum
- Develop EDI Strategy 2026, including advancing the Equality Framework for Local Government, anti-racism programme of initiatives and actions, as well as considering the Socio-Economic Duty, and Armed Forces Covenant

Priority 2: Equity, diversity, and inclusion foundations

EDI Delivery Plan Tasks



- Development of Public Sector Equality Objectives aligned with the EDI Strategy 2026 development.
- Establish interim targets that support monitoring of pay gap targets (2028) linked to strategy development.

Priority 3: Ensure workforce represents the diversity of West Yorkshire

- Establish interim targets that support monitoring of workforce composition targets (2030) linked to strategy development
- Workforce EDI training targets, including equality impact assessment training.
- Colleague survey targets
- Workforce diversity monitoring, reporting and equal opportunities target
- Staff Networks development
- Learning and development EDI interventions that yield better outcomes for the diverse workforce
- Disability Confident level 3 planning

Priority 4: Consult and engage with our people, communities, and businesses to understand their diverse needs and ensure our services meet their needs

- Development of the Inclusive Engagement Strategy.

Priority 5: Champion equity, diversity, and inclusion externally and develop an excellent region and national reputation

- Extend on the adoption of Antisemitism and Islamophobia definition, to collaborate on developing action plans
- Continue delivery of the Inclusivity Champion workplan



Find out more
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