

The Highland Council

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Report 2025

Introduction

The Highland Council is committed, through policy and action, to eliminate discrimination and promote equality. The Council is particularly aware of the duties under the Equality Act 2010 in terms of employment monitoring and is obligated to meeting these.

This report includes the findings of analysis relating to the protected characteristics including age, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, maternity and pregnancy, transgender and caring responsibilities.

The snapshot date for this report 31 March 2025.

Our new updated Equality Monitoring Form was launched in 2024, through our self-serve system for employees. Staff communications were issued throughout 2024/25 to explain the importance of staff completing this information, whilst also reassuring employees that their information is protected and will remain anonymous. The data being requested matches the Census 2022 categories.

As a result of the new form, we have seen an increase in the number of employees submitting their equalities data. This is a positive step forward and we can already see a reduction in data gaps.

To support further progress, we will promote the form throughout the year via regular communications to employees. Managers will also prompt their employees to complete the form if they have not already done so.

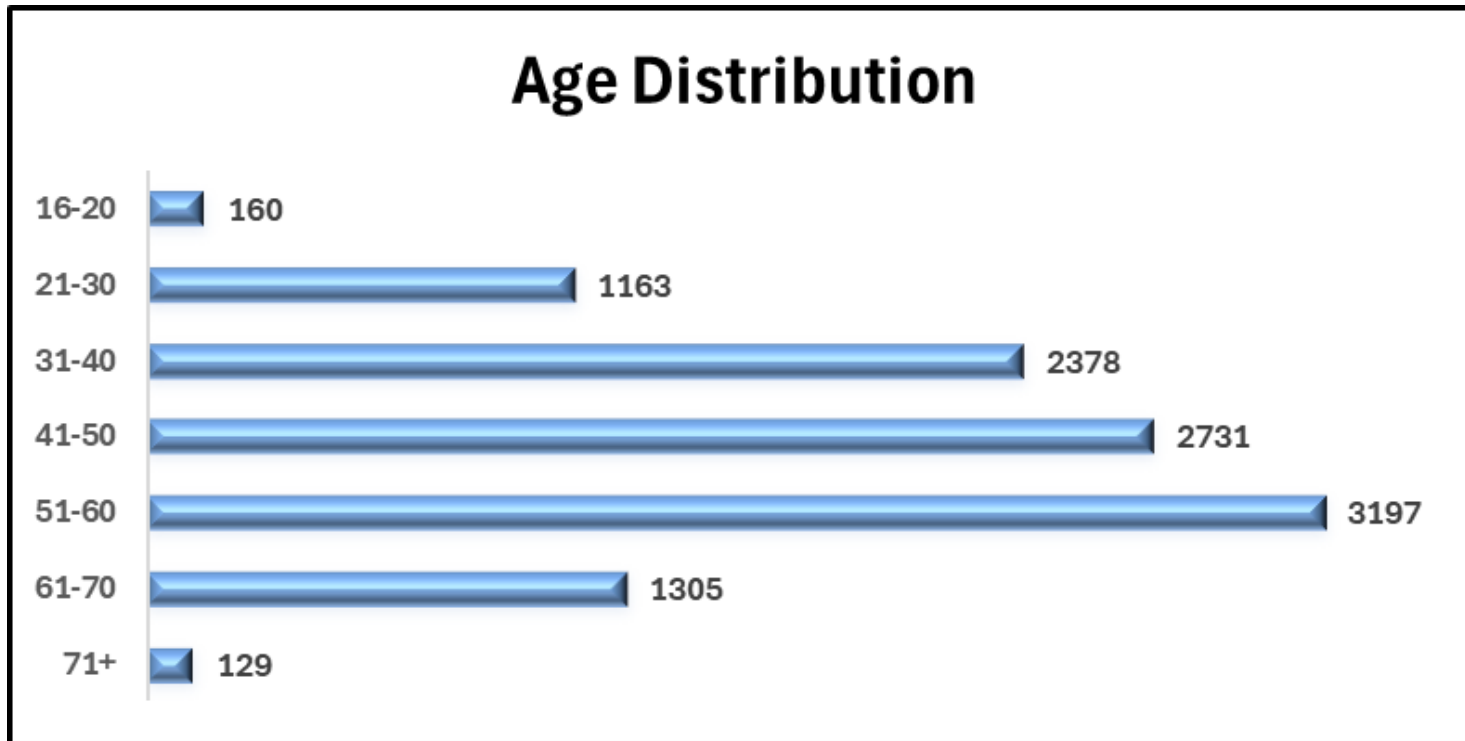
The Council currently holds data on 100% of the workforce in relation to age and sex (gender), 47% of the workforce in relation to disability and 43% in relation to race (ethnic group). The information recorded for the other protected characteristics has now vastly improved, however it is still limited in comparison.

The data in this report shows that we currently hold 35% of the workforce data in relation to religion or belief and sexual orientation. 34% in relation to Transgender and Caring Responsibilities and 32% in relation to Marriage or Civil Partnership.

The outcomes and action plans supported by this report are published in the Equalities Mainstreaming Progress Report which will be considered by the Communities and Place Committee in May 2025.

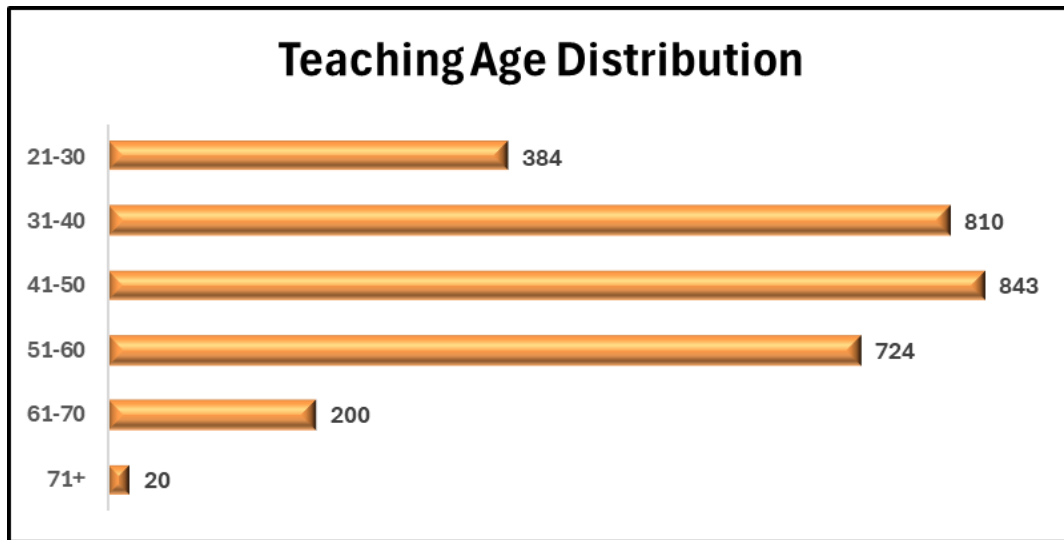
Age

Analysis of data relating to age distribution shows a high proportion of staff aged between 41 and 60 years of age and a low proportion of staff aged 30 and under.

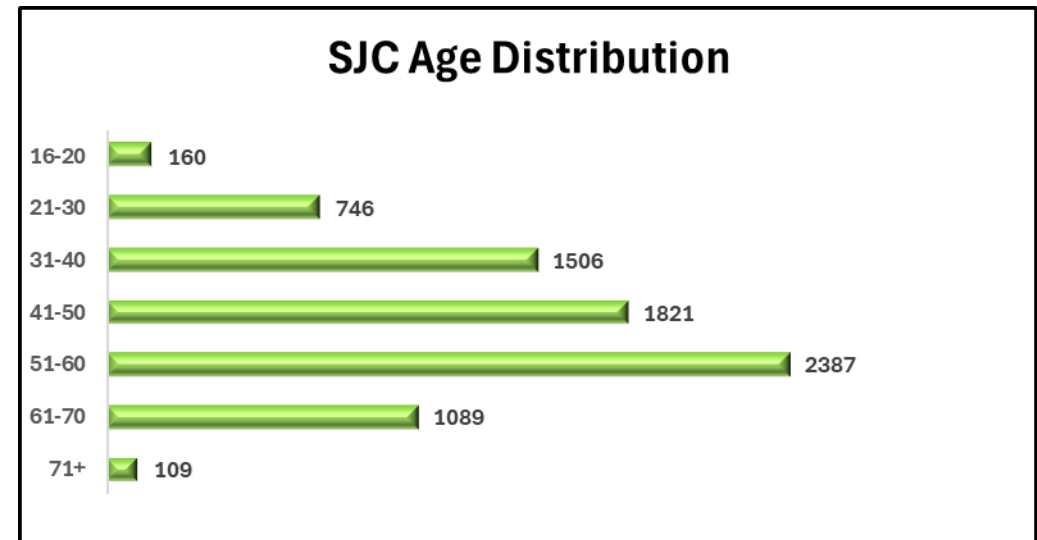


The Distribution of All Employees by Age (Figure 1)

Comparison of the two major groups, teaching staff and Scottish Joint Council (SJC) staff continues to show an even more marked slant in the SJC workforce with over 3 times as many employees aged 51-60 versus those aged 21-30.



The Distribution of All Employees by Age (Figure 2)



The Distribution of All Employees by Age (Figure 3)

Age and Job Family

SJC staff under 30 are found predominantly in the Technical & Practical, Personal Care and Business Support job families and in the lower grades 1 to 5. The majority of staff who continue to work beyond 70 years of age do so in Technical & Practical jobs and in lower graded work.

Age Range	Business Support	Community	Management	Personal Care	Professional & Specialist	Technical & Practical	Total	%
16-20	15	1		72		72	160	2.0%
21-30	134	18	1	317	78	198	746	9.5%
31-40	181	47	13	631	201	433	1506	19.3%
41-50	245	55	51	695	258	517	1821	23.3%
51-60	312	109	92	693	316	865	2387	30.5%
61-70	121	47	26	264	98	533	1089	13.9%
71+	9	6		19	6	69	109	1.4%
Total	1017	283	183	2691	957	2687	7818	

The Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Age and Job Family ((Figure 4)

Grade	Age Range							Total
	16-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71+	
HC01	23	17	32	58	89	116	42	377
HC02	13	42	141	143	201	133	16	689
HC03	39	139	208	233	278	131	15	1043
HC04	49	179	371	519	665	296	22	2101
HC05	12	189	319	324	401	157	4	1406
HC05APP	22	8	3	1	1	0	0	35
HC06	2	64	144	131	158	76	3	578
HC07	0	59	113	132	222	72	2	600
HC08	0	14	42	53	71	25	1	206
HC09	0	28	72	99	119	40	1	359
HC10	0	7	46	69	89	19	2	232
HC11	0	0	9	37	49	7	1	103
HC12	0	0	6	11	22	9	0	48
HC13	0	0	0	6	10	5	0	21
HC14	0	0	0	5	9	1	0	15
HC15	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	5
Total	160	746	1506	1821	2387	1089	109	7818

The Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Age and Grade (Figure 5)

Disability

10% of the total Council workforce identify as having a long-term health problem or being disabled. This equates to 20.2% of almost half of the Council workforce who completed an Equality Monitoring Form.

In comparison, in the 2022 census, 23.8% of the Highland community identified themselves as having a long-term health problem or disability. Based on the data disclosed, this suggests that our workforce largely reflects the wider Highland community.

Disability	Total Workforce	Day-to-day activities limited a lot		Day-to-day activities limited a little		Day-to-day activities not limited		Prefer not to say		No Data	
	11064	65	0.6%	1051	9.5%	4156	37.6%	246	2.2%	5546	50.1%

The Distribution of All Employees by Disability (Figure 6)

Disability	Starters	Leavers
Yes	138	10
No	339	159
Unknown	1187	1034

The Distribution of All Employees Joining and Leaving the Council by Disability (Figure 7)

Training Stats by Disability	Applied		Received	
	No.	%	No.	%
Not Limited	3029	45%	3029	45%
Yes, limited a little	711	11%	711	11%
Yes, limited a lot	39	1%	39	1%
Unknown	2949	44%	2949	44%

The Distribution of training for All Employees by Disability (Figure 8)

Occupational Segregation by Disability

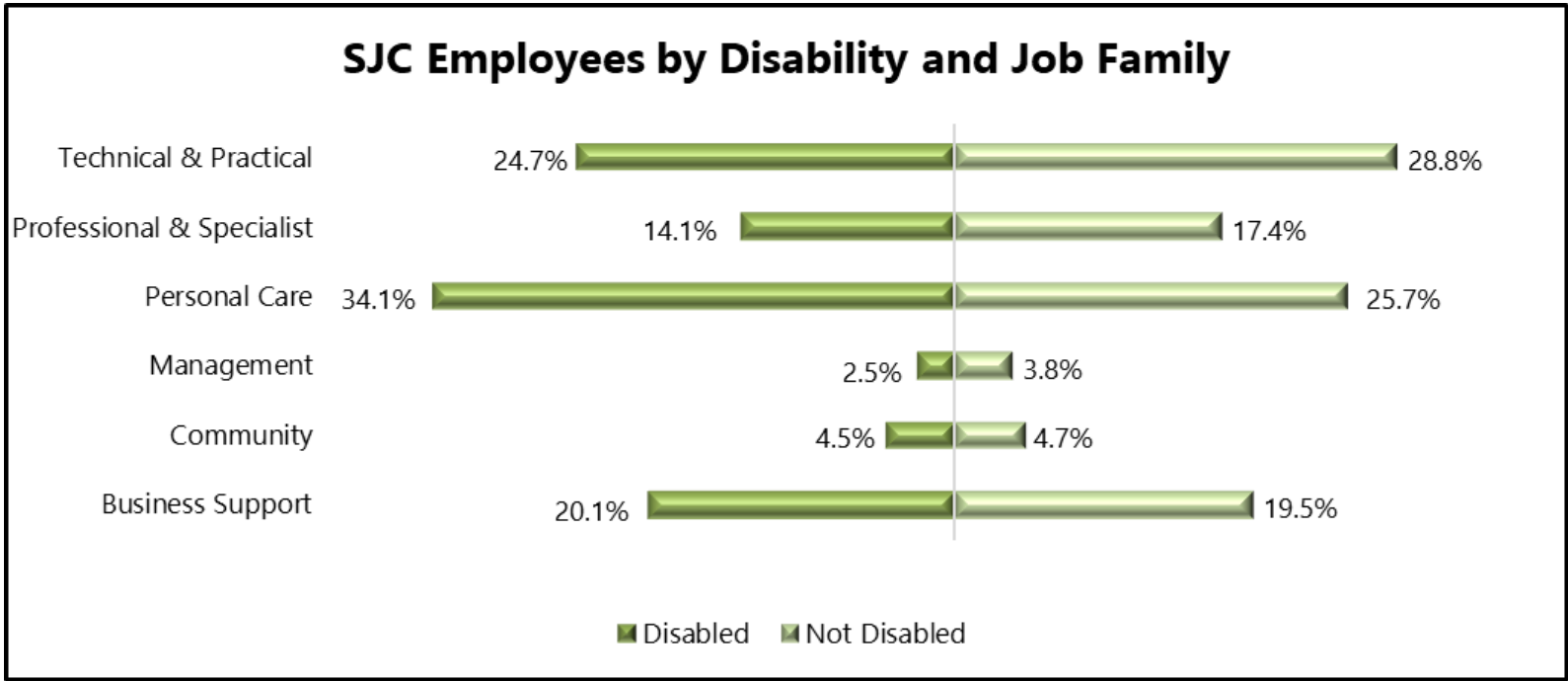
In relation to occupational segregation, there is no discernible difference between those employees who identify as being disabled versus those who do not who work in similar roles.

Disabled and non-disabled employees are found in similar ratios across Business Support, Technical & Practical, Community and Professional & Specialist roles. Disabled employees are slightly overrepresented in Personal Care roles and underrepresented in management roles.

Disabled employees are underrepresented in the most senior grades, HC12-15.

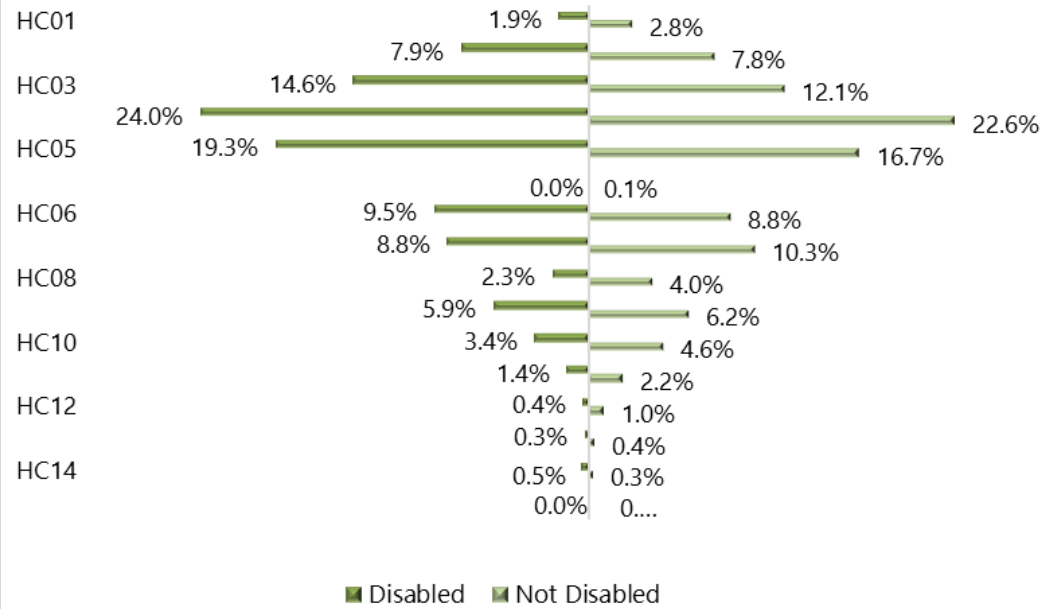
There are still notably more opportunities for part time employment and working in the lower SJC grades (HC01 – 06).

The Highland Council is committed to equality of opportunity and are proud to be recognised as a Disability Confident Leader employer, demonstrating its strong commitment to disability inclusion. This enables new and existing staff members with a disability or long-term health condition, across all grades, a tailored approach to managing their workplace environment to ensure it is safe and accessible.



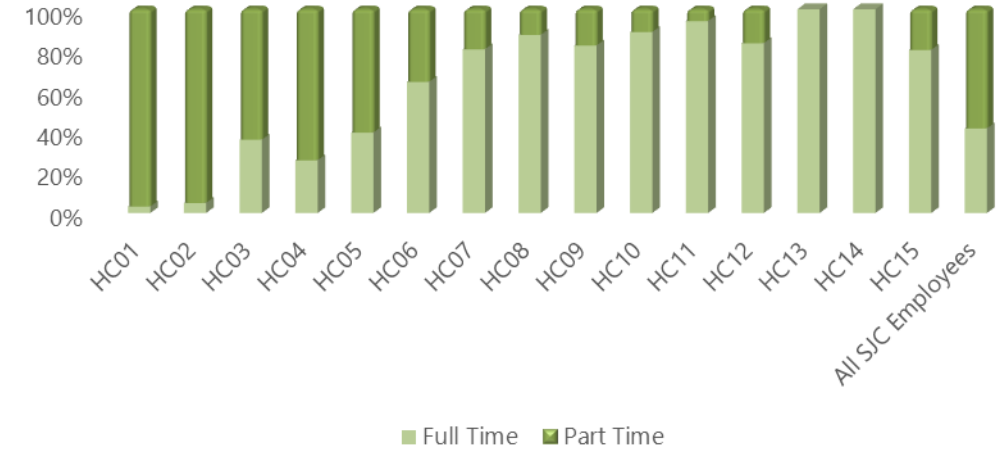
Occupational Segregation by Disability (Figure 9)

SJC Employees by Disability and Grade



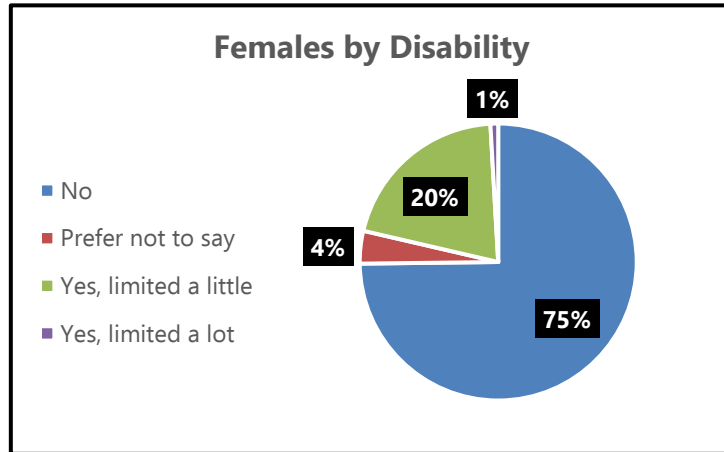
Occupational Segregation by Disability (Figure 10)

Availability of Part-Time Employment

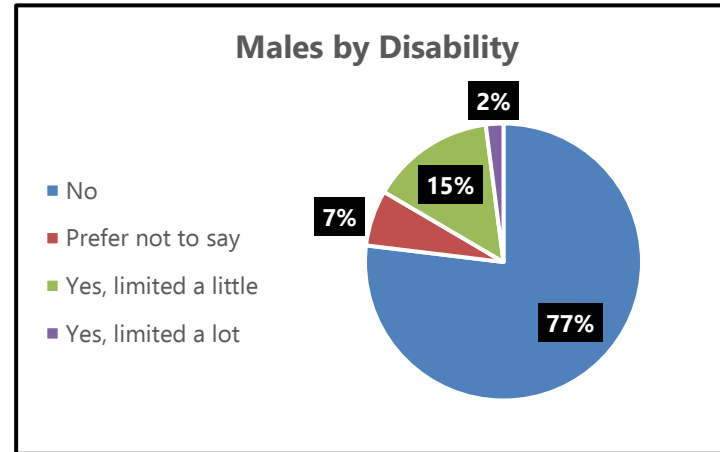


Availability of Part-Time employment – Disability (Figure 11)

Intersectionality and disability

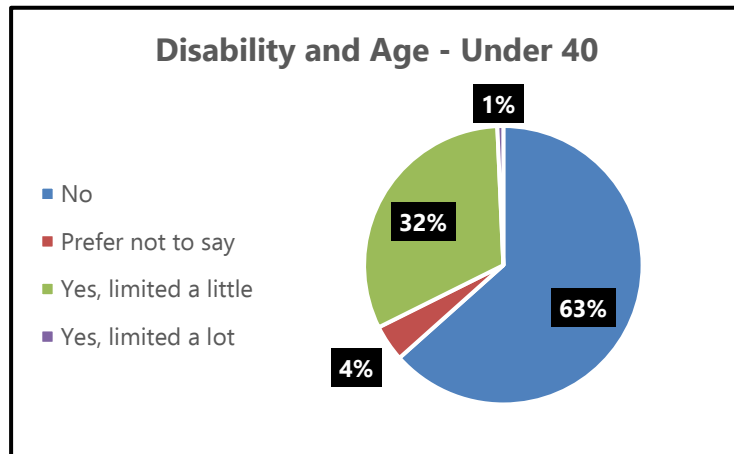


Females by Disability (Figure 12)

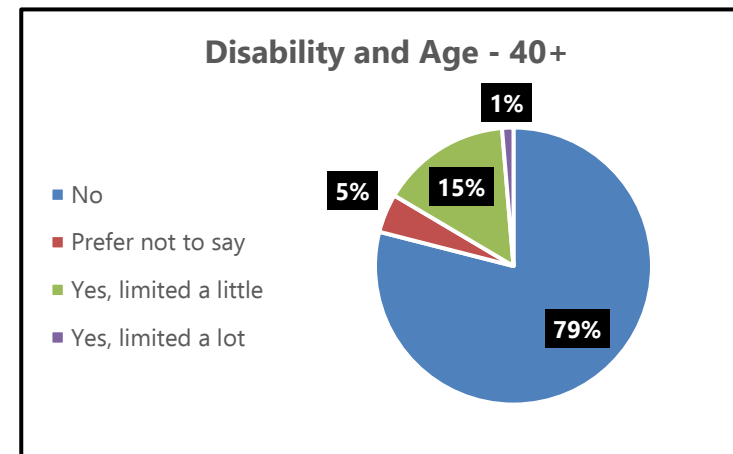


Males by Disability (Figure 13)

On examining the intersection of gender and disability we discovered that 5% more women than men report being limited a little in their daily activities.



Age under 40 by Disability (Figure 14)



Age 40+ by Disability (Figure 15)

On observing the intersection of age and disability we learnt that over twice as many employees under 40 than employees 40+ report being limited a little in their daily activities.

Race (Ethnic Origin)

The representation of race (ethnic groups) employed by the Council largely reflects the wider Highland population as publicised in the 2022 census results.

Ethnicity	Employees %	Highland Census 2022 %
White: White Scottish	77.1%	75.9%
White: Other White British	16.7%	16.2%
White: White Irish	0.7%	0.7%
White: Gypsy/ Traveller	0.0%	0.1%
White: White Polish	1.0%	1.9%
Other White	3.2%	2.6%
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	0.1%	0.8%
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	0.6%	1.2%
African: African, African Scottish or African British	0.2%	0.2%
Caribbean or Black	0.1%	0.1%
Other ethnic group	0.2%	0.3%

The Distribution of All Employees by Ethnic Group in Comparison with the Highland Population (Figure 16)

Figure 16 represents just under half of the whole workforce. Our level of data has continued to improve with employees completing the equalities monitoring form via our systems self serve. Below are the ethnicity statistics for starters and leavers.

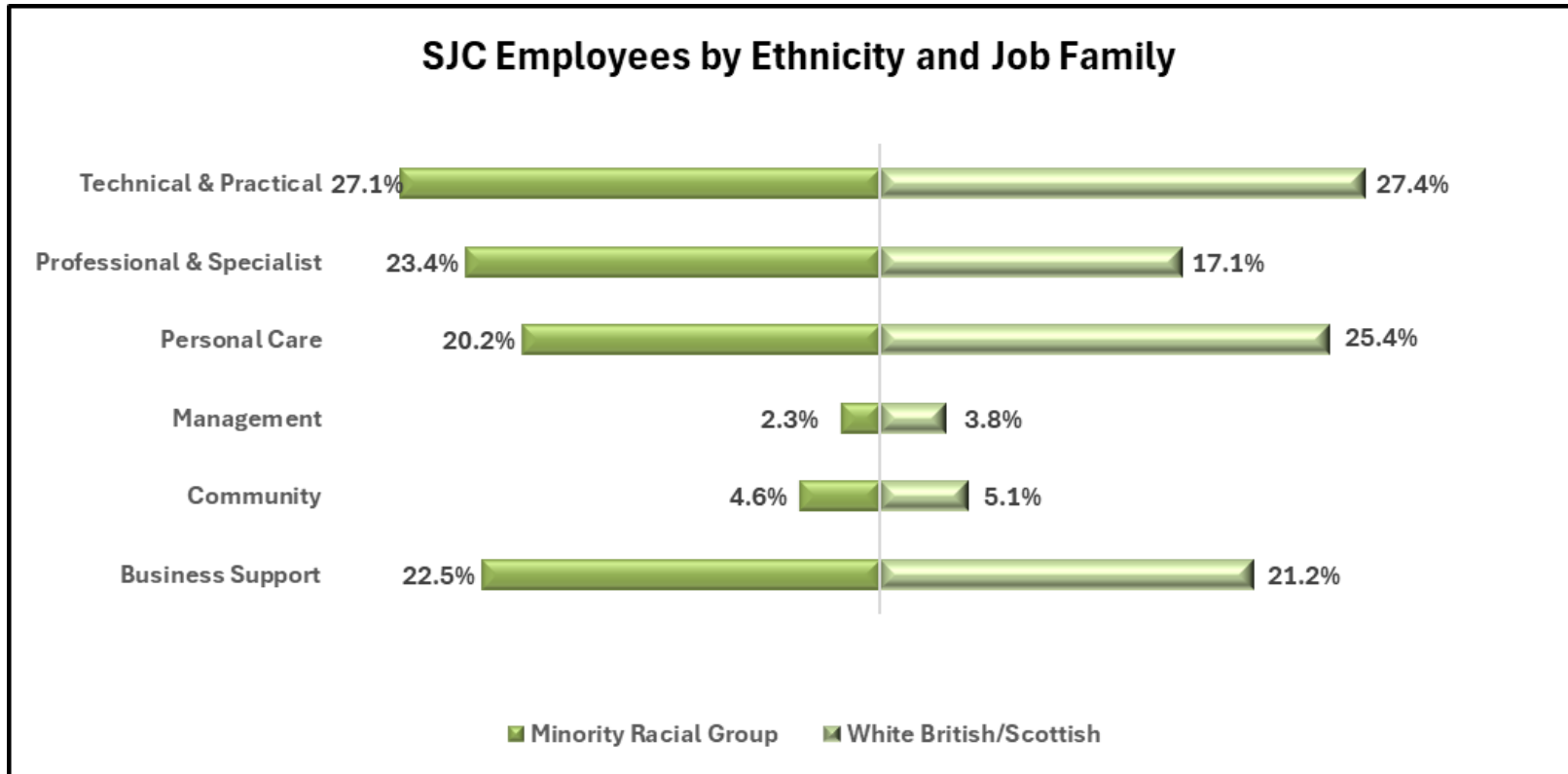
Ethnic Origin	Starters	Leavers
Black & Minority Ethnic Groups	18	4
White Groups	404	159
Unknown	1242	1040

The distribution of Employees Joining and Leaving the Council by Ethnicity (Figure 17)

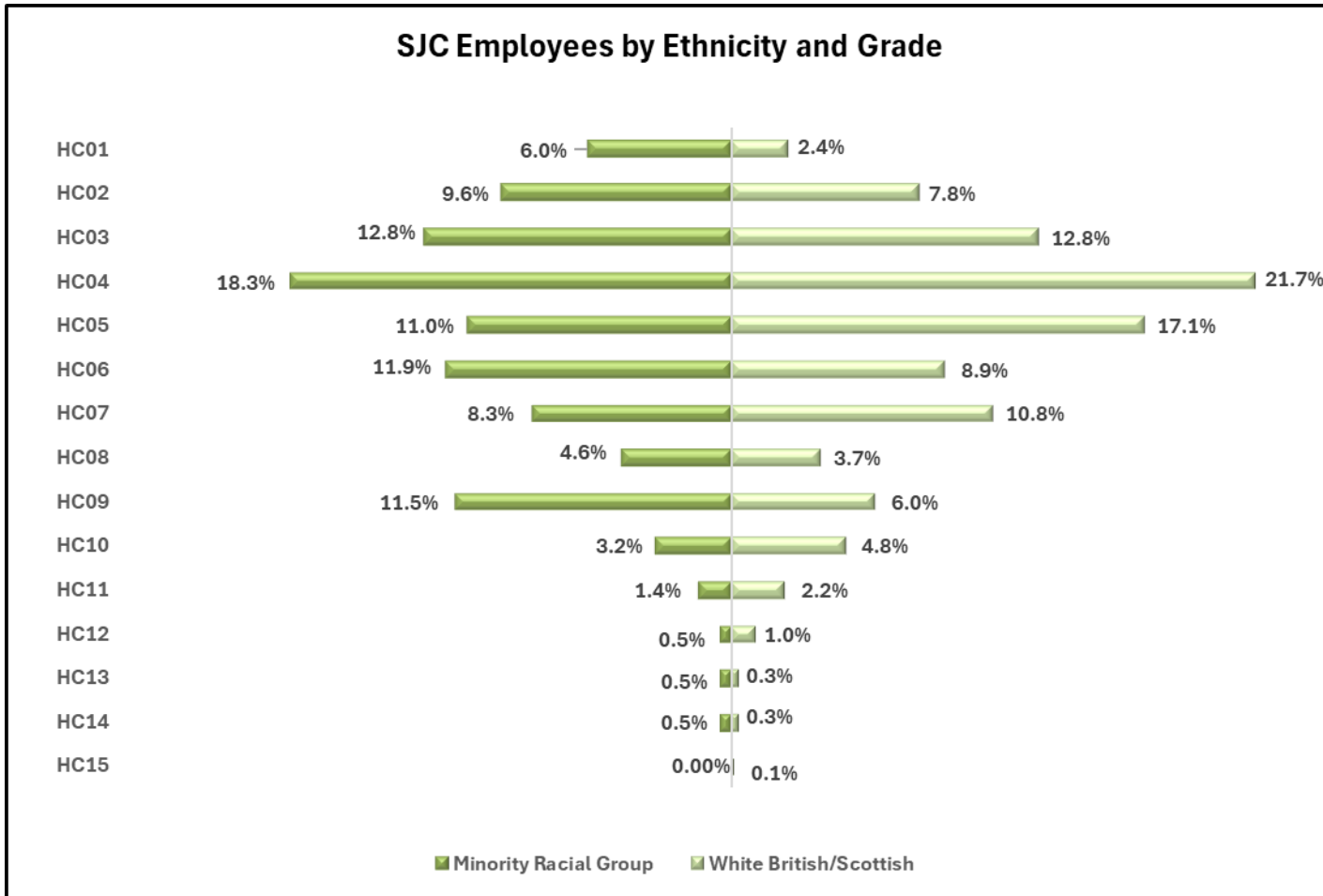
Training by Ethnic Origin	Applied		Received	
	No.	%	No.	%
Black & Minority Ethnic Groups	44	1%	44	1%
White Groups	3399	51%	3399	51%
Unknown	3285	49%	3285	49%

The distribution of training for All Employees by Ethnicity (Figure 18)

Occupational Segregation by Ethnicity

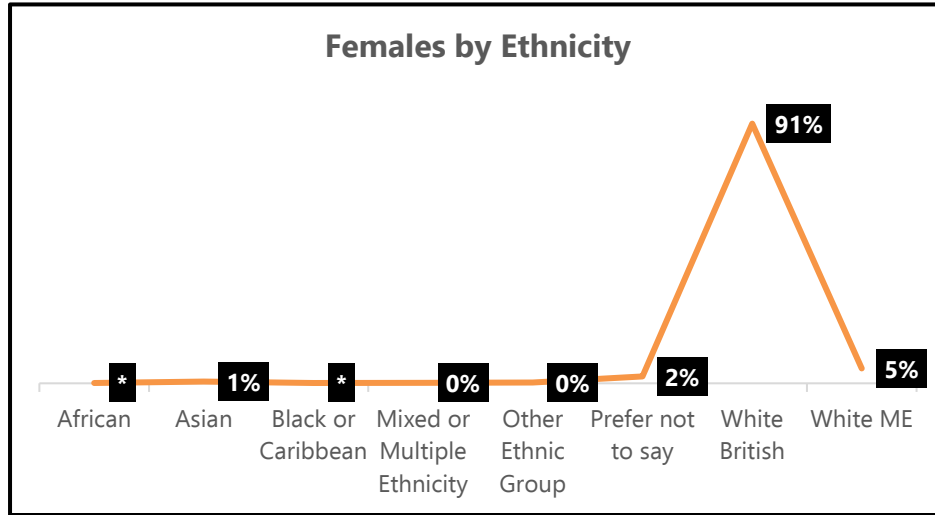


Occupational Segregation – Ethnicity and Job Family (Figure 19)

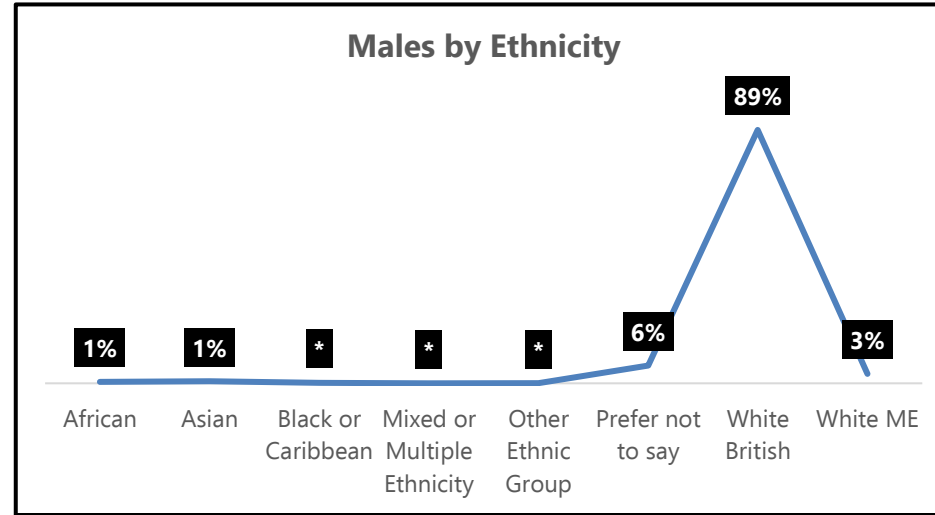


Occupational Segregation – Ethnicity and Grade (Figure 20)

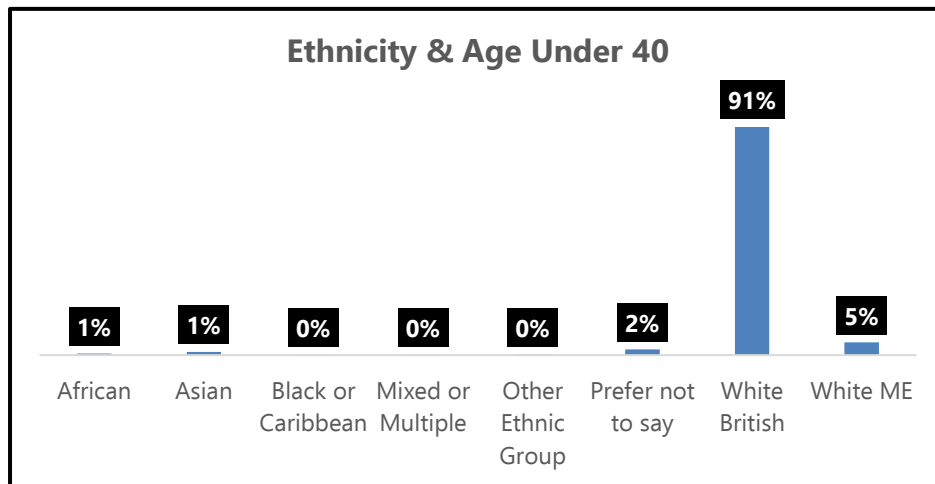
Intersectionality and Ethnicity



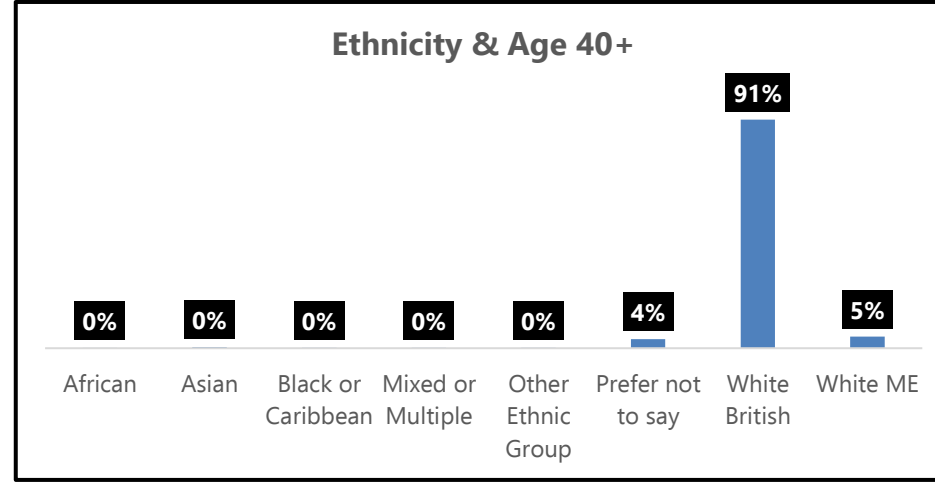
Females by Ethnicity (Figure 21)



Males by Ethnicity (Figure 22)



Age Under 40 by Ethnicity (Figure 23)



Age 40+ by Ethnicity (Figure 24)

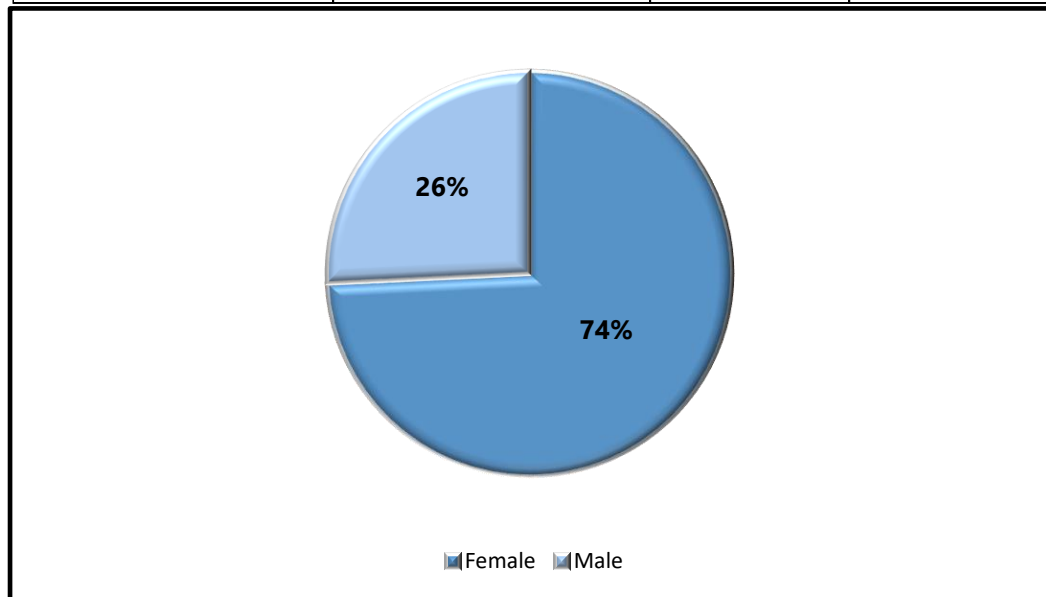
On examining the intersections of gender and age with ethnicity we discovered very little distinction

Sex (Gender)

Analysis of the data relating to sex (gender) shows a predominantly female workforce across the whole of the Council (74.1%). This is the case for both the SJC and teaching workforce.

All Employees

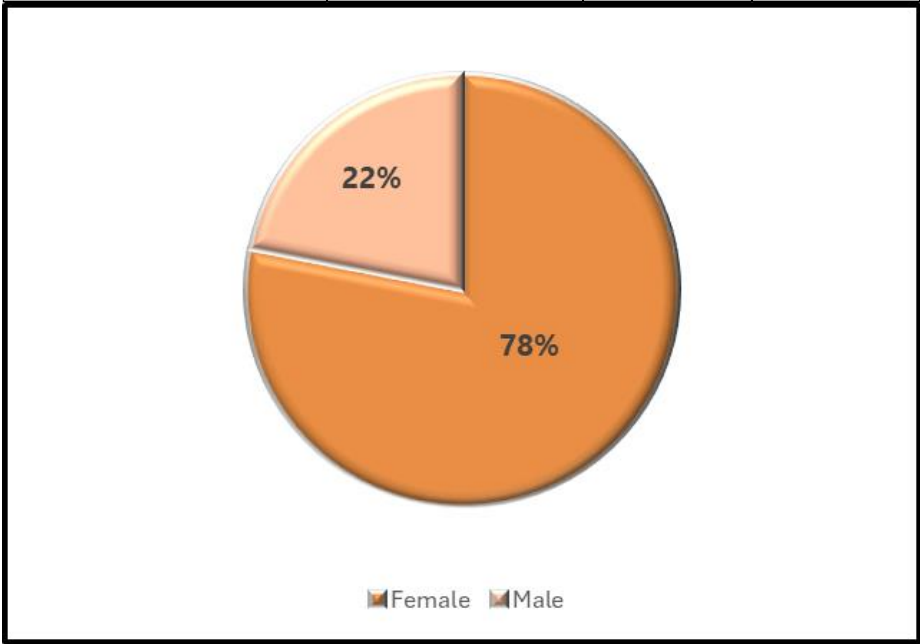
Sex	Female	Male	Total
No. of employees	8214	2850	11064



Distribution of All Employees by sex (Figure 25)

Teaching Employees

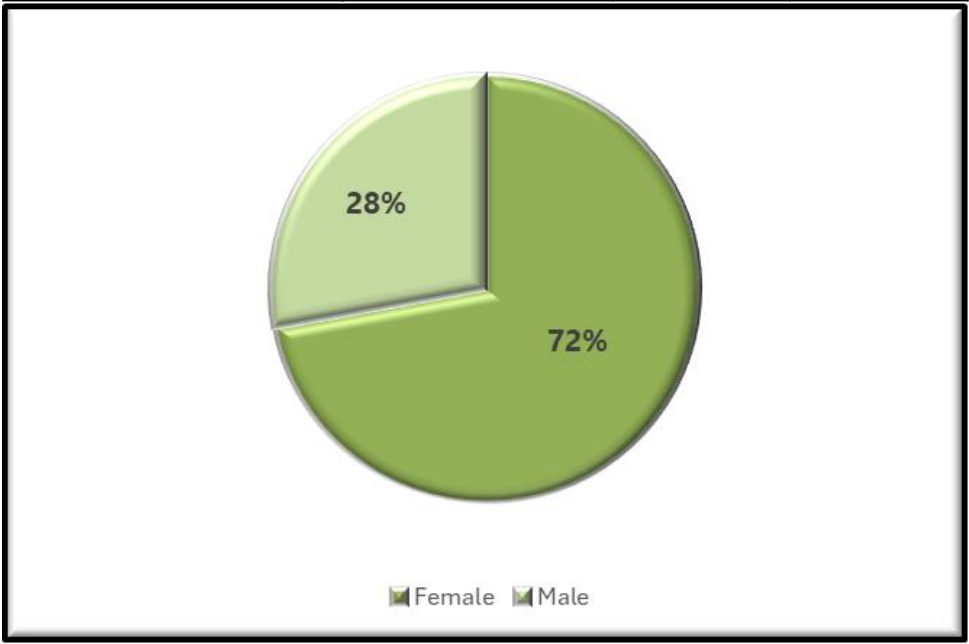
Sex	Female	Male	Total
No. of employees	2327	654	2981



Distribution of Teachers by Sex (Figure 26)

SJC Employees

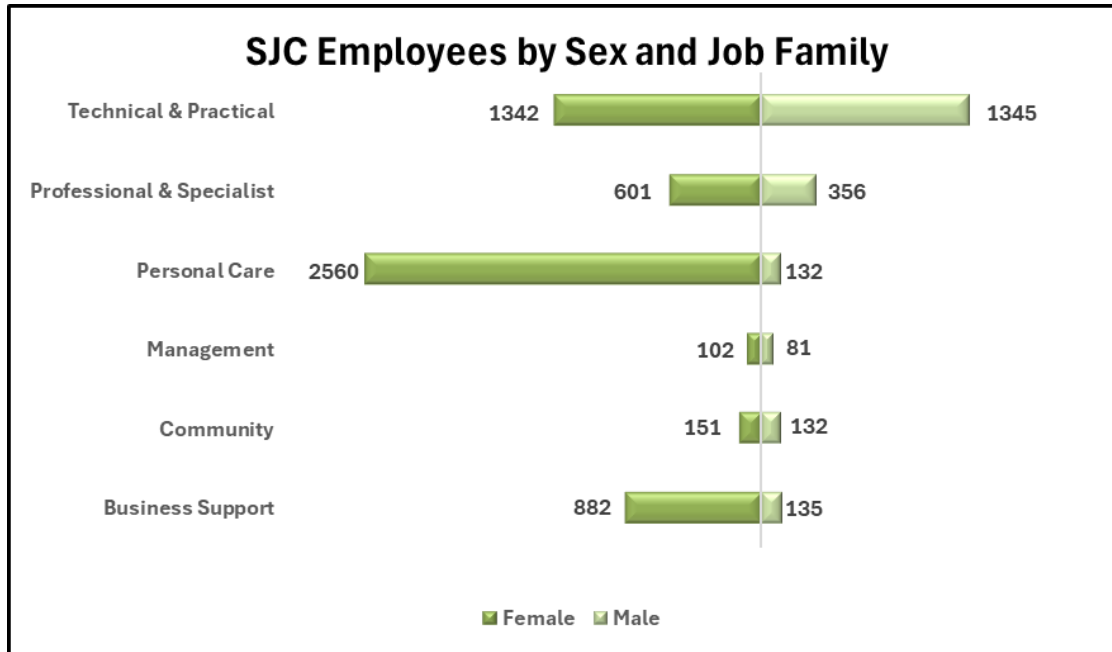
Sex	Female	Male	Total
No. of employees	5638	2181	7819



Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Sex (Figure 27)

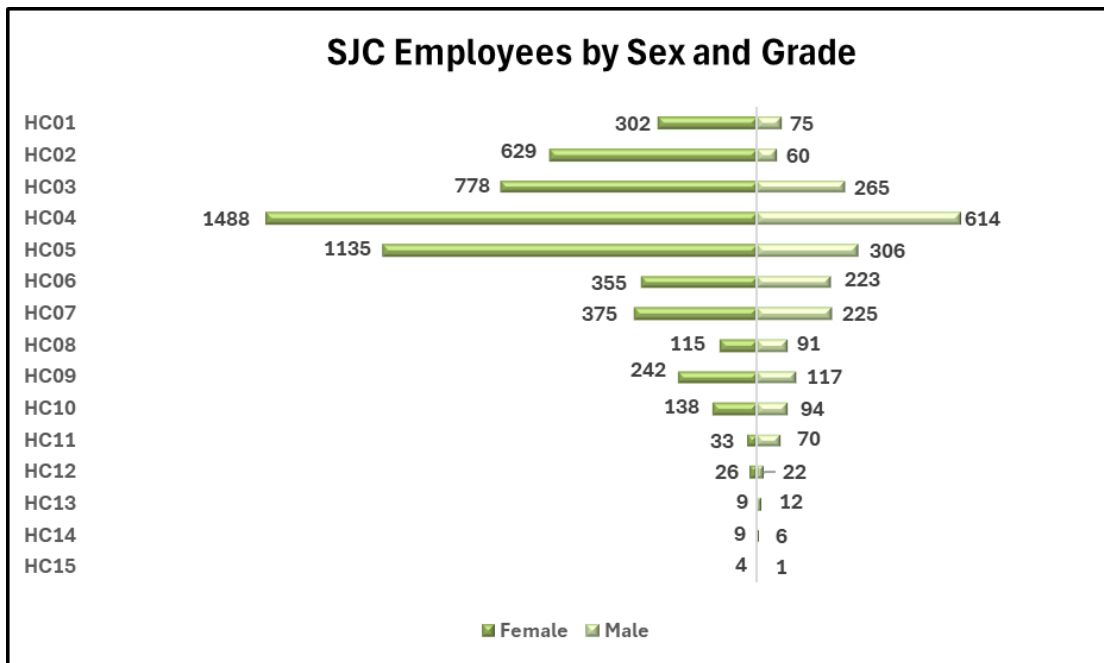
Occupational Segregation by Sex

In relation to occupational segregation, the pattern of male and female employment is varied. Male and female employees are found in similar ratios across the job roles within Community, Technical & Practical and Management. Female employees are significantly overrepresented in Personal Care, Business Support and Professional & Specialist roles.



Care must be taken in drawing conclusions from the Technical & Practical group as horizontal segregation continues to persist with males working predominantly in community works roles and females working predominantly in catering, caring, and cleaning roles.

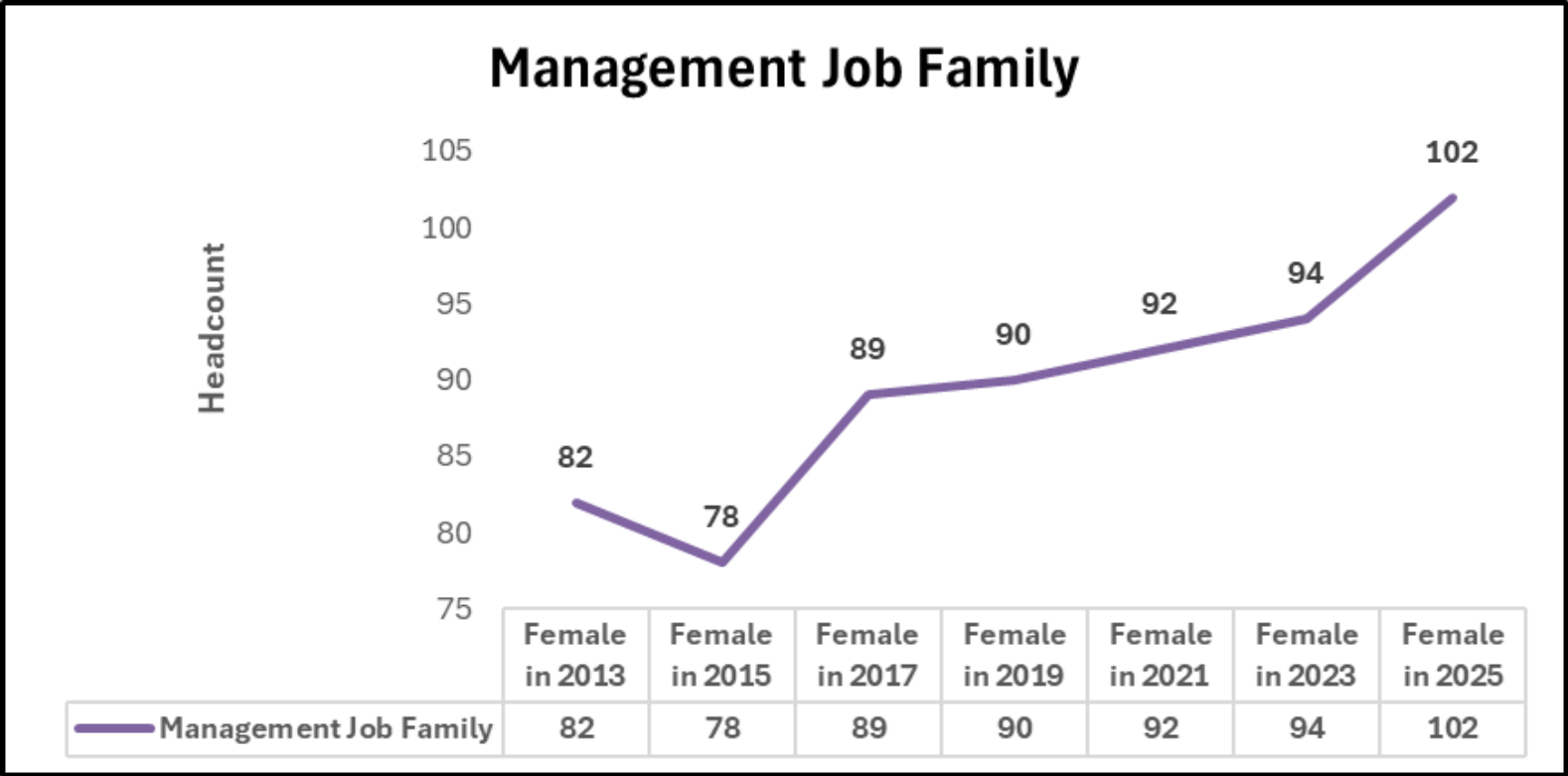
Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Sex and Job Family (Figure 28)



Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Sex and Grade (Figure 29)

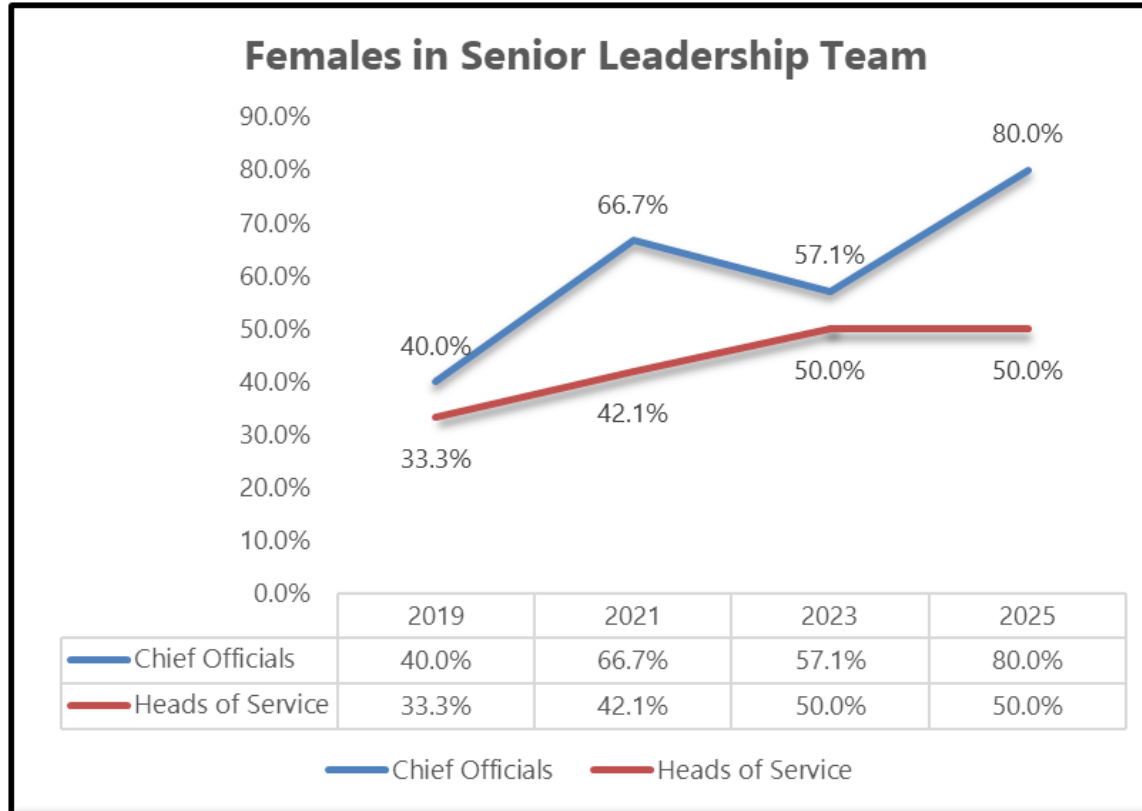
Females in Management

In 2025, 55.7% of the managers employed in SJC Management posts are women. The increase in the number of women in management over the years can be seen in the chart below.



Females in Management (Figure 30)

Females in Senior Leadership



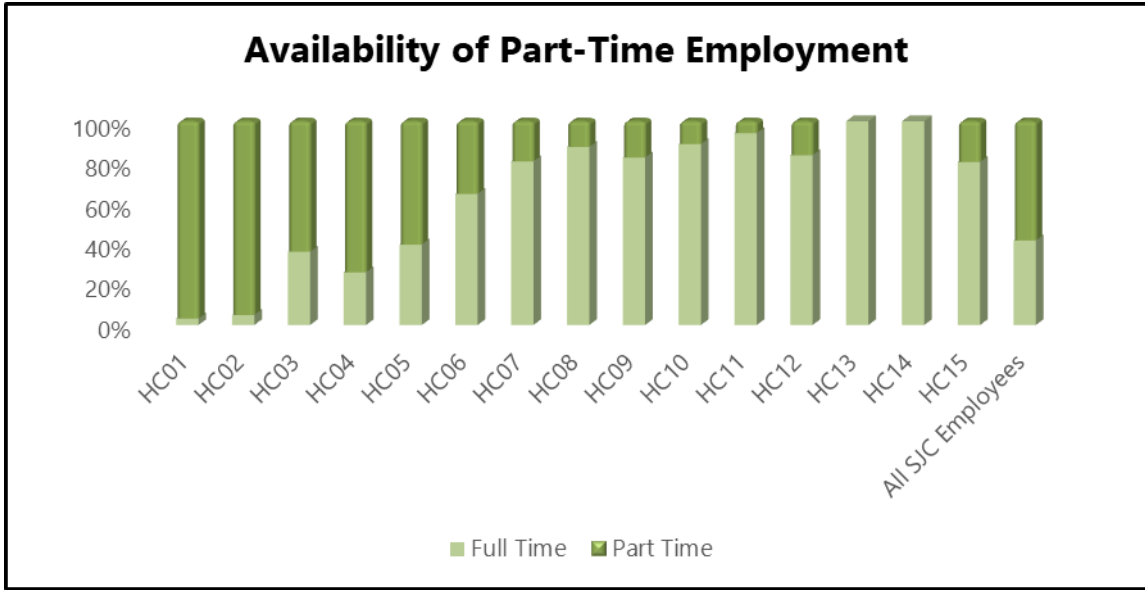
Numbers in Senior Leadership Team									
Chief Officials	2019	2021	2023	2025	Heads of Service	2019	2021	2023	2025
Female	2	6	4	7	Female	6	7	7	4
Male	3	3	3	7	Male	12	9	7	1
Total	5	9	7	14	Total	18	16	14	5

In 2025, 57.9% of the senior leadership team are women which is a 5.5% increase since 2023.

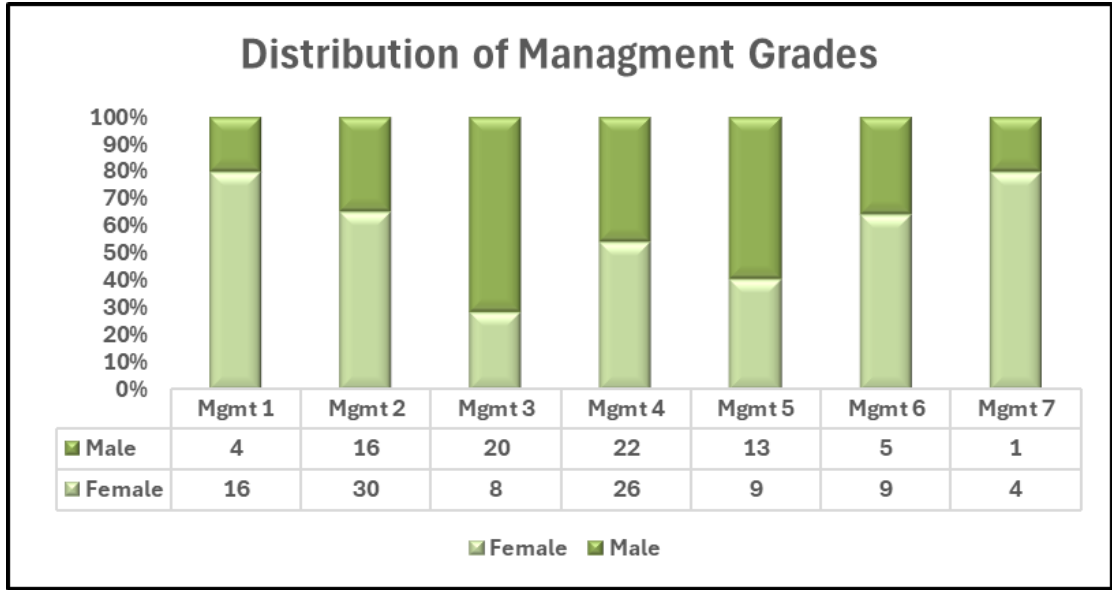
There are still significantly more opportunities for part-time working in the lower SJC grades (HC01-06)

Information and analysis of gender pay gaps in published separately.

Females in Senior Leadership Team (Figure 31)



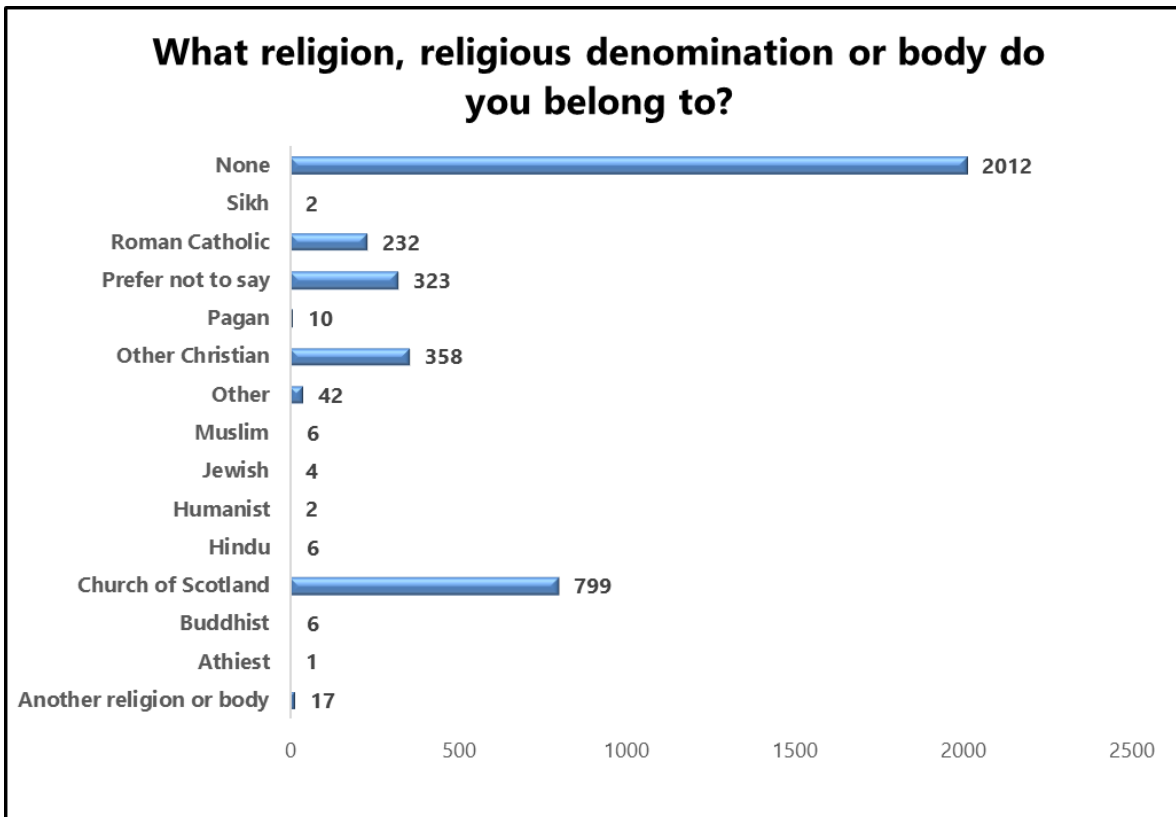
Availability of Part-Time Employment – Sex (Figure 32)



Distribution of Management Grades – Sex (Figure 33)

Religion or Belief

In 2023, we held data on religion or belief for less than 10% of the workforce. Now, with self serve functionality and promotion of the new equalities form that figure has increased to 35%. While this isn't representative of the whole Council, it serves as a valuable indicator. It also marks a significant improvement that will support the identification of future trends.

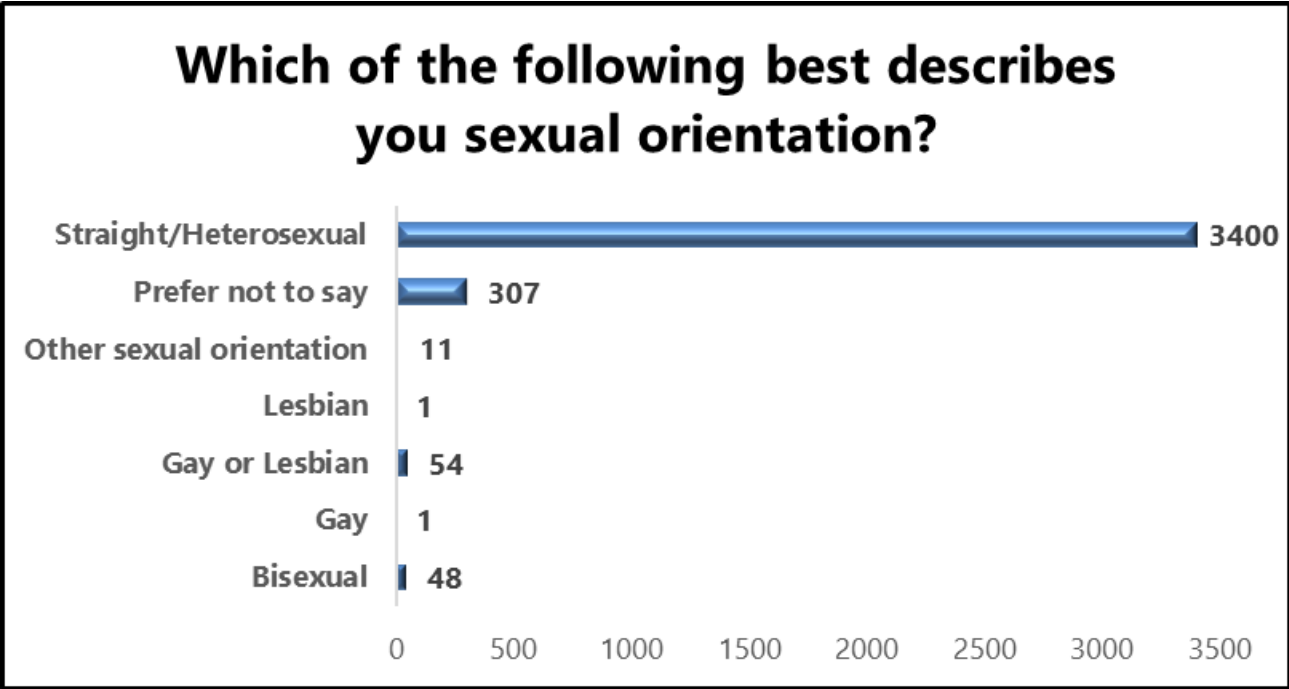


Distribution of Employees by Religion or Belief (Figure 34)

This data represents
35% of our workforce

Sexual Orientation

In 2023, we held data on sexual orientation for less than 10% of the workforce. Now, with self serve functionality and promotion of the new equalities form that figure has increased to 35%. While this isn't representative of the whole Council, it serves as a valuable indicator. It also marks a significant improvement that will support the identification of future trends.



This data represents
35% of our workforce

Distribution of Employees by Sexual Orientation (Figure 35)

Marriage or Civil Partnership

In 2023, we held data on marriage or civil partnership for less than 10% of the workforce. Now, with self serve functionality and promotion of the new equalities form that figure has increased to 32%. While this isn't representative of the whole Council, it serves as a valuable indicator. It also marks a significant improvement that will support the identification of future trends.



This data represents
32% of our workforce

Distribution of Employees by Marriage or Civil Partnership (Figure 36)

Maternity and Pregnancy

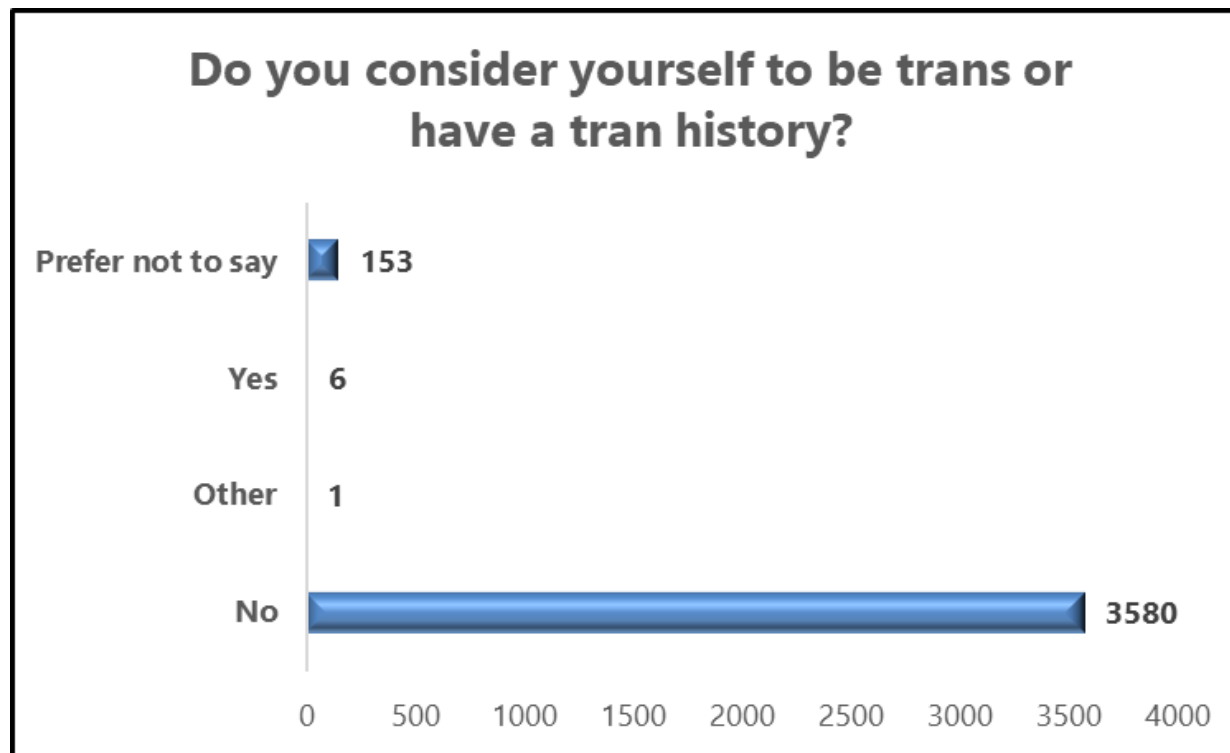
In 2023, we were unable to report on Maternity leave, however our reporting functionality has now been upgraded which enables us to provide this information for employees for 2024-25. We are still unable to report on pregnancy specifically as this is not recorded within our reporting system, however our current systems capabilities continue to be reviewed to meet our reporting requirements.



Number of Employees on Maternity Leave in 2024-25 (Figure 37)

Transgender

In 2023, we held data on trans/trans history for less than 10% of the workforce. Now, with self serve functionality and promotion of the new equalities form that figure has increased to 34%. While this isn't representative of the whole Council, it serves as a valuable indicator. It also marks a significant improvement that will support the identification of future trends.

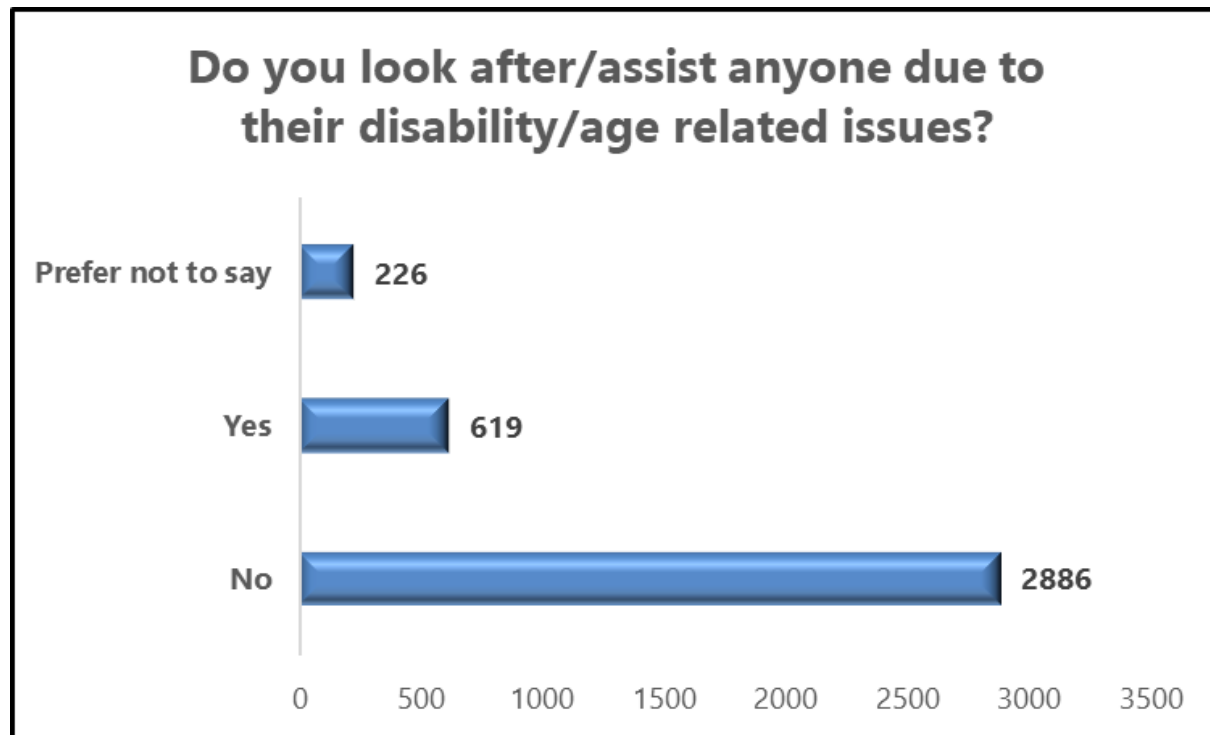


This data represents
34% of our workforce

Distribution of Employees by Trans/Trans History (Figure 38)

Caring Responsibilities

In 2023, we held data on caring responsibilities for less than 10% of the workforce. Now, with self serve functionality and promotion of the new equalities form that figure has increased to 34%. While this isn't representative of the whole Council, it serves as a valuable indicator. It also marks a significant improvement that will support the identification of future trends.

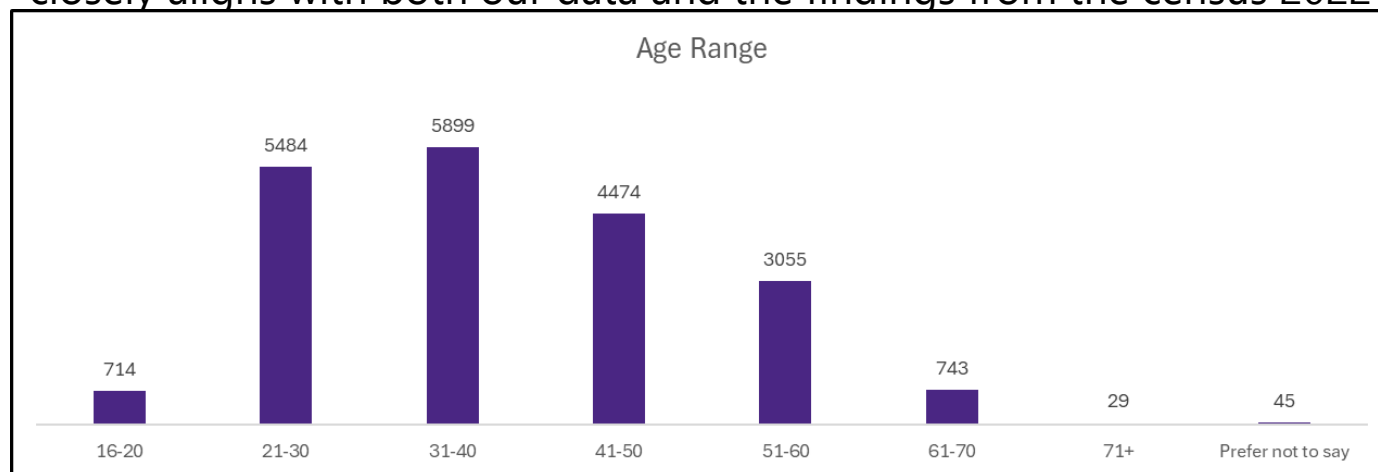


This data represents
34% of our workforce

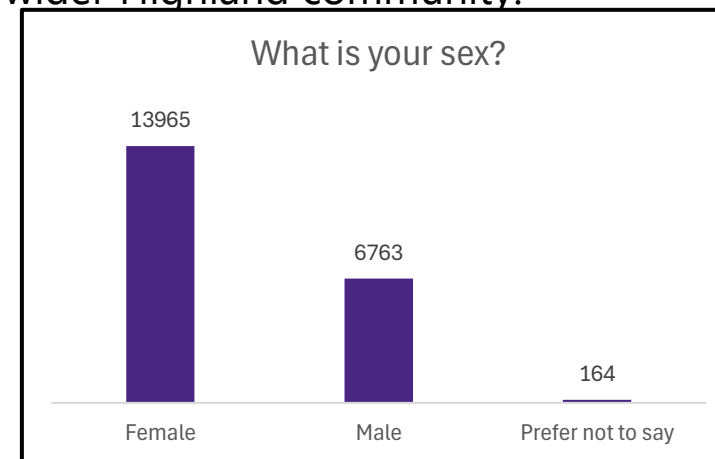
Distribution of Employees by Caring Responsibilities (Figure 39)

Recruitment

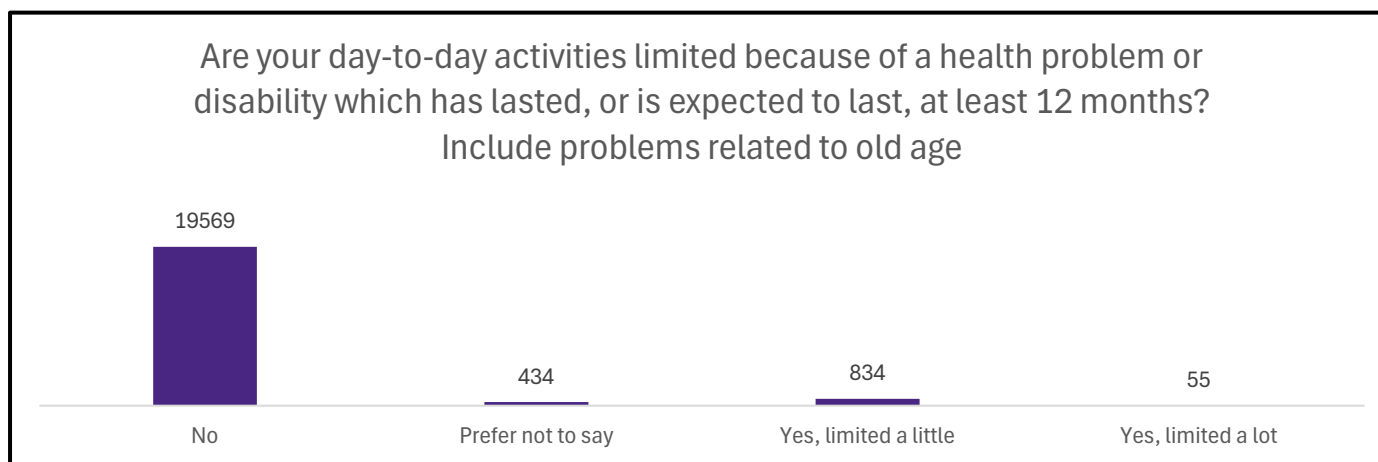
Below are the equalities statistics from all shortlisted applicants within our recruitment system in 2024-25. This data closely aligns with both our data and the findings from the census 2022 on the wider Highland community.



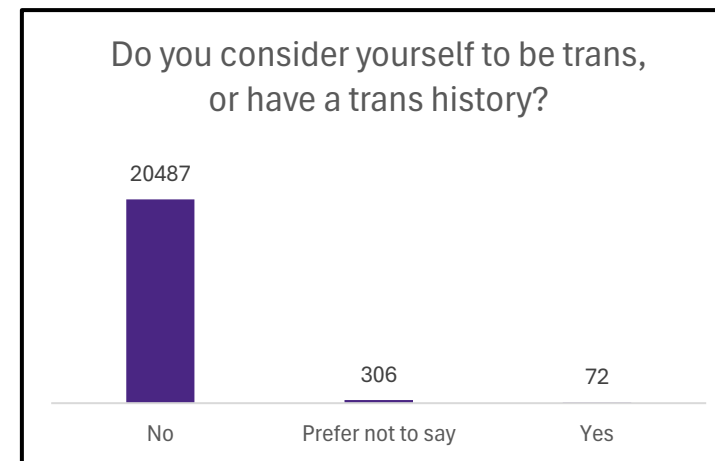
Shortlisted applicants by Age (Figure 40)



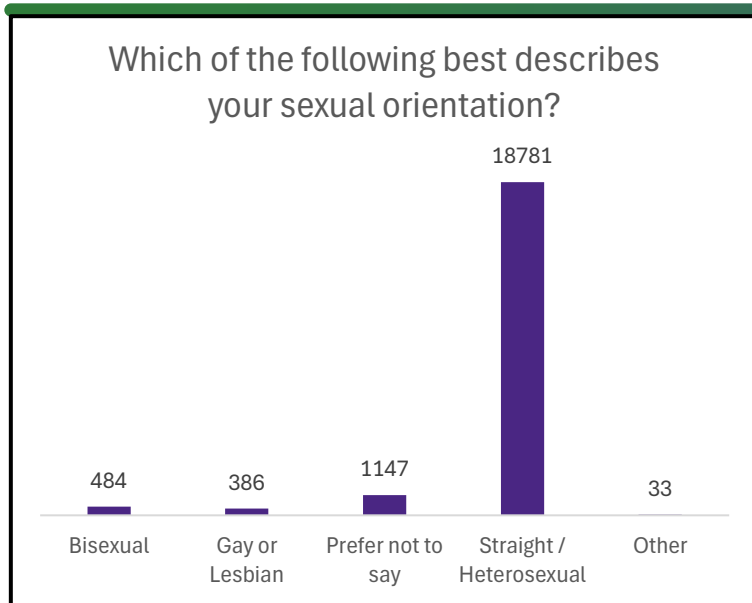
Shortlisted applicants by sex (Figure 41)



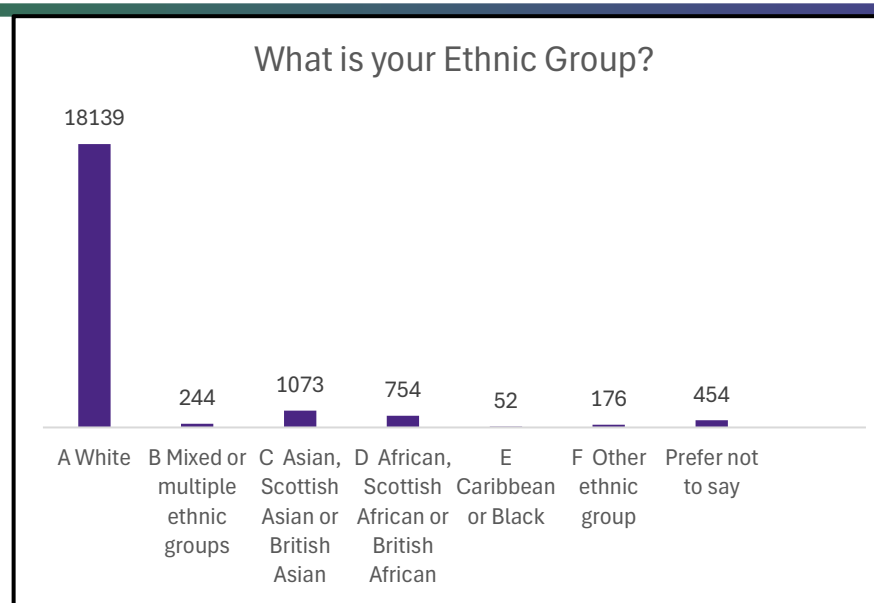
Shortlisted applicants by disability (Figure 42)



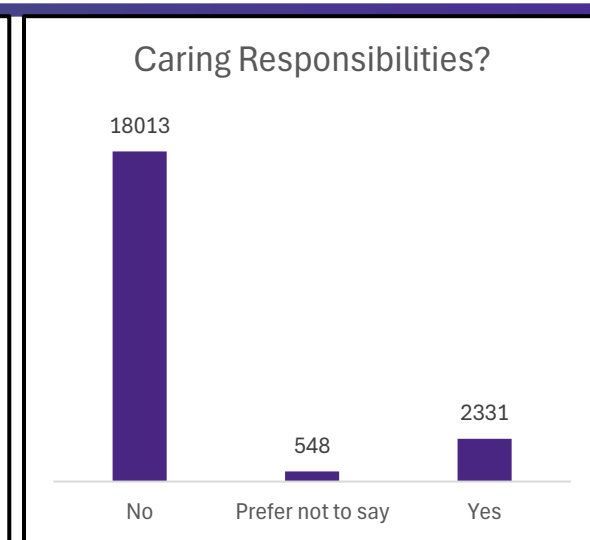
Shortlisted applicants by trans (Figure 43)



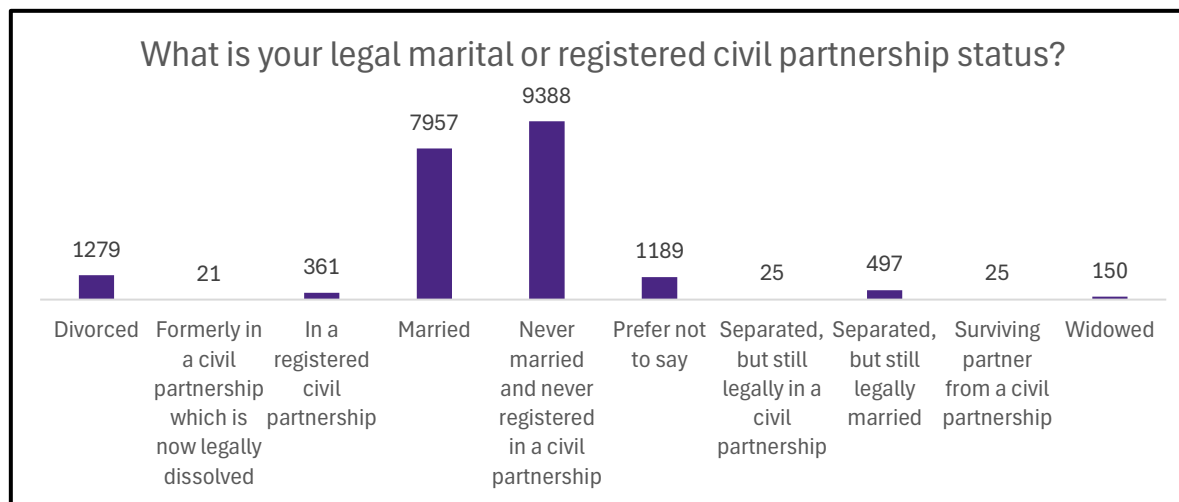
Shortlisted applicants by sexual orientation (Figure 44)



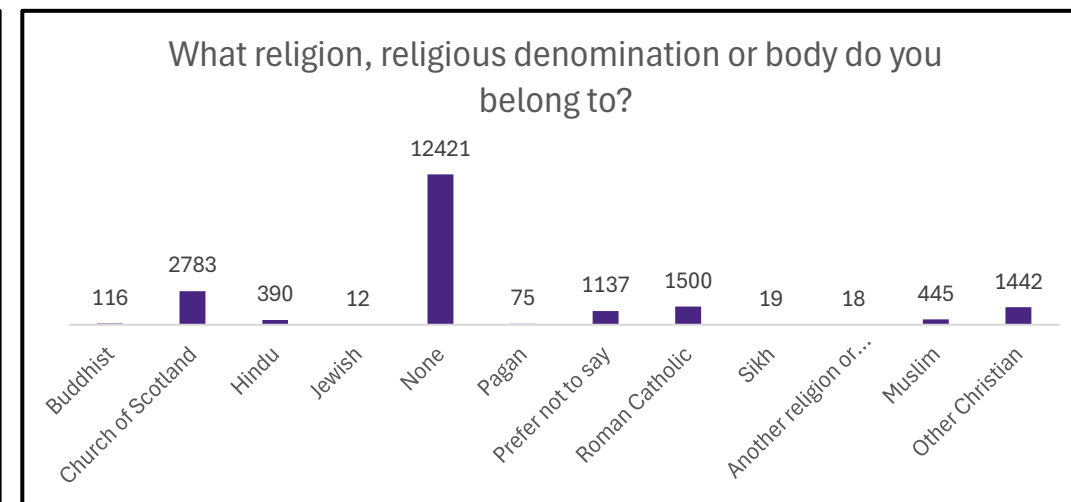
Shortlisted applicants by ethnic group (Figure 45)



Shortlisted applicants by caring responsibilities (Figure 46)



Shortlisted applicants by marriage or civil partnership (Figure 47)



Shortlisted applicants by Religion (Figure 48)