



**Scottish  
Water**  
Trusted to serve Scotland

# Public Sector Equality Duty

## Report 2021-2025



# Contents



Introduction from our CEO	1
Our Responsibilities as a Public Body	2
Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality in Scottish Water	3
Section 2: Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 Final Report	18
Equality Outcome 1	18
Equality Outcome 2	22
Equality Outcome 3	25
Equality Outcome 4	26
Section 3: New Equality Outcomes 2025-2029	29-30
Appendix: Equality Monitoring Report	31
Appendix: Equal Pay Statement and Occupational Segregation	38
Appendix: Gender Pay Gap Data	44

# Introduction from our CEO

I have huge pride in the work carried out by our people as we deliver our services to 5.4 million customers every day across Scotland. I also want us all to consider equality in everything we do; it is not just the right thing to do, it is also critical to achieving our business goals. This full Public Sector Equality Duty Report captures what we have achieved in our work since our last interim Report was published in 2023.

In this report, we update on progress achieved on the equality outcomes Scottish Water set in 2021. The report highlights the improvements we have made in relation to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion and attracting diverse new talent. It also explains the gradual progress being made on tackling under-representation of different equality groups as we work towards having a workforce that represents the communities we serve. The more we can achieve in this area, the stronger we become as a company. Everyone working at Scottish Water is here on merit. We are focused on removing barriers so that we can advance equality of opportunity and improve our data across diversity characteristics.

Whilst we have made progress, we know there is still much work to do. The publication of our new equality outcomes in section 3 outlines the work planned to achieve our goal of better outcomes for those experiencing inequality. This sets out priority areas for action, particularly on how we can ensure the delivery of service excellence for all of our customers, whatever their circumstances, as well as focusing on gender, disability, race, and ethnicity.

The last two sections of the report include our most up-to-date information on occupational segregation by sex, ethnicity, and disability; our statement on equal pay and equality monitoring data of our



Alex Plant, CEO Scottish Water

workforce. The final section on gender pay gap reports that Scottish Water's median hourly pay for women was the same as men in 2024, and I'm delighted with this progress.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with our partners in government, our regulators, supply chain partners, and our customers and communities to deliver our equality outcomes for the reporting period 2025-2029.

I also look forward to Scottish Water making a significant contribution to ensuring social justice across the country, as we focus on our purpose of supporting a flourishing Scotland by being trusted to care for the water on which Scotland depends.

**Alex Plant**  
**CEO Scottish Water**

# Our Responsibilities as a Public Body

This report is our fourth full Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Report. It provides an update on progress made against the equality outcomes we set for 2021-2025. It demonstrates how, through a wide range of policies, initiatives, and continuous improvement activities, Scottish Water is working to embed equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our organisation and meet our responsibilities as a public sector body.

As set out in the Equality Act 2010, public sector organisations, including Scottish Water, have a duty to show due regard when carrying out their public functions as a service provider, policy maker, and an employer, with a need to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

In addition to this, as a listed authority in The Specific Duties (Scotland) Regulations 2012, Scottish Water has a duty to:

- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty
- Publish equality outcomes and report progress
- Equality Impact Assess (EqIA) and review policies and practices
- Gather and use employee information
- Publish gender pay gap information
- Publish statements on equal pay
- Publish occupational segregation information in relation to gender, race, and disability
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- Publish in an accessible format

## THE REPORT IS IN FOUR PARTS:

1. Mainstreaming Equality Review which provides information demonstrating our equality journey since 2021
2. Final report on the equality outcomes we set in 2021 covering April 2021-March 2025
3. Activity in setting new equality outcomes for the next four years April 2025-March 2029
4. Appendix that includes:
  - Equality Monitoring data
  - Equal pay statement and occupational segregation data
  - Gender pay gap data

# Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality in Scottish Water

This section provides detail of our continuing approach to mainstreaming within Scottish Water. Our ambition is to go beyond the requirements set out in equality legislation.

As we know, and outlined in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's publication 'Equality and Human Rights Monitor: Is Scotland Fairer? 2023' there are groups not covered by the Equality Act 2010, who may also experience poorer outcomes. For example, those who are carers, ex-service personnel veterans or those who are care experienced.

We want to give everyone in our communities the chance to access and progress in the careers we have on offer, regardless of their background or differences.

You can read the Equality and Human Rights Monitor: [Is Scotland Fairer? 2023 Report](#)

## Responsible Business

We have 5.4 million individual customers. The quality of drinking water we provide to each and every person across Scotland has been consistently high, thanks to our investments that support jobs and economic growth while protecting and enhancing the environment. Our service to 2.61 million households and over 150,000 business premises is essential to daily life in Scotland. Every day, we collect, treat, and return over 1 billion litres of wastewater safely back to the environment and supply 1.49 billion litres of water daily. Scottish Water has three strategic ambitions: Service Excellence, Great Value and Financial Sustainability, and Beyond Net Zero emissions.

Scottish Water's approach to being a responsible business goes beyond delivering core services efficiently and looking after our people. It includes engaging with communities, supporting young people, and inclusive recruitment practices, especially in areas of social deprivation. It includes our [Generation H<sub>2</sub>O](#) initiative working with young people, and our Net Zero efforts. Scottish Water is also committed to delivering social and environmental benefits through our capital investment programme including biodiversity and blue-green initiatives that improve the environment and quality of life for people and wildlife. You can read more about these initiatives in our [Long-Term Strategy published in 2025](#).

In 2024, Scottish Water held Connect and Flourish events across Scotland, where CEO Alex Plant and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) shared strategic ambitions and the purpose of Supporting a Flourishing Scotland with all employees. Scottish Water offers meaningful employment, inclusive approaches, and in-work progression for everyone, regardless of background. Employees come to work each day to make a difference, and, outside of that, we are all different and unique, just like our customers.

Our Scottish Water Characteristics guide our daily behaviours and values. Two characteristics reflect our current strengths (Responsible and Caring), while two others (Bold and Inspiring) highlight areas for future growth. This report updates our progress on equality outcomes from 2021 and introduces new outcomes for 2025-2029, all underpinned by these four Characteristics.



Bold



Responsible



Inspiring



Caring

## Customer Communications and Community Engagement

Our strategic ambition of Service Excellence is all about helping us to focus on the service that we provide. Everything we do considers customer and community benefit. We unveiled our new customer campaign 'Piped by Us, Owned by You' in early 2024, raising our profile as leaders in sustainability and showcasing our employees in the campaign, employees with different backgrounds and characteristics to reflect the communities and customers we serve. The campaign reminds customers that, as a publicly owned company, we are owned by them and they have a part to play in safeguarding the vital water and waste water services we deliver 24/7.

Scottish Water has a great track record of excellent customer experience and inclusive communications, and our Customer Engagement Centre is continually improving and doing more to engage with stakeholders, customers, and communities.

When it comes to capital investment projects such as delivering new waste water treatment works, and given every project is unique, we introduced new processes in 2023 to further improve our community engagement plans. These detail a project's potential impact on everyone, from residents to businesses, to ensure engagement is done correctly and well.

We are holding more community events than ever, from Shetland to Stranraer which includes attending local events, hosting community briefings and working with campaign groups. We want to hear from as many customers as possible. This ensures that we engage with local stakeholders on key projects in their area and any concerns regarding accessibility or equality of opportunity can be highlighted and addressed at an early stage in consultation with those who may be impacted. One example of this is Scotland's new lowest carbon waste water treatment works at Winchburgh in West Lothian. Completed in 2023, Winchburgh will support the future of one of the country's fastest growing communities.



A summer customer engagement event

In addition, our Independent Customer Group (ICG), which was set up in 2021, also provides feedback to us as we plan and deliver key programmes of work.

Read [an update](#) from Agnes Robson, Chair of ICG, on page 23 of our 2023/24 annual report

On a day to-day basis, our Customer Engagement Centre is proactive in keeping people informed, helping them to understand any operational service interruptions, such as a temporary loss of water supply, that might affect them and their families. They ensure our customers know how we're dealing with those issues and how long any issue might take to resolve. Since our last interim report in 2023, we have increased our web and social media activity on operational service interruptions as well as relaunching our SMS service. By the end of 2024, more than 60,000 had signed up for our text alert service.

You can find out about registering for new service updates by [emailing](#) or calling 0800 0778778

Our Customer Engagement Centre also launched our customer powered Insights Dashboard in 2023, which visualises customer and water event data in various ways, bringing to life the experience of customers across the water network and generating insights. It also has map functionality, providing detailed geographic insights that help us to better serve our customers and communities right across Scotland.

Because everything we do considers customer and community benefit, we are committing to a new equality outcome which will help us improve accessibility, further meeting our diverse customers' and communities' requirements.

## Top Up Taps

Our Top Up Taps are available for everyone with a refillable bottle to use, and provide people with access to free, great tasting Scottish water while out and about. This contributes to the three key aims of our 'Your Water Your Life' campaign: drinking our country's tap water is good for the planet, good for you and good for your pocket. The first tap was installed outside the Scottish Parliament in November 2018 and since then we have installed taps in a range of locations from Shetland to the Scottish Borders, and we now have more than 132 flowing - keeping people hydrated on the go.

**We have installed over 132 Top Up Taps in five years.**

Saving over 8 million plastic bottles.



Find your nearest [Top Up Tap](#)

## Priority Services Register

Our Priority Services Register (PSR) allows eligible customers to let us know of any additional support requirements they may have. This could include customers who have a disability, are over 60, live with children under five, or need documents translated into another format or language. Through the reporting period of 2021-2025, the number of customers on our PSR has grown year on year and is now more than 20,000.

We continue our partnership with Age Scotland who promote our PSR support through contacts with their service users and campaigns. Scottish Water employees can also support Age Scotland's Friendship Caller service through our volunteering programme.

We continue to work with other utility providers, sharing best practice in terms of PSR management and service, and we are part of the Scotland-wide PSR Scotland website.

In 2024 we piloted a new way to assist our PSR customers in being more personally resilient in winter, issuing vouchers for them to use to buy bottled water, so that they are prepared if they encounter a supply issue as the temperatures drop. As well as offering service enhancement, this approach is more cost efficient and contributes to our Net Zero ambition. We will continue to equality impact assess this change so that we continue to meet the needs of all our diverse customers.

Learn more about [Age Scotland Friendship Caller Service](#)

Visit the [PSR Scotland Website](#)

## Recite Me

We also have the Recite Me accessibility tool on our website. Recite Me improves digital inclusion by allowing visitors to customise content so they can consume it in ways that works best for them. We know not everyone in Scotland speaks English, so the tool quickly and easily translates all the web content into 131 languages, with half available audibly.

Recite Me offers a variety of features to support visually impaired customers including reading aloud the website text. To make reading easier for everyone, including neurodivergent people, the visual layout of the website can be changed in terms of colour scheme, text and font size so every visitor to our website can experience it in a way that suits them.

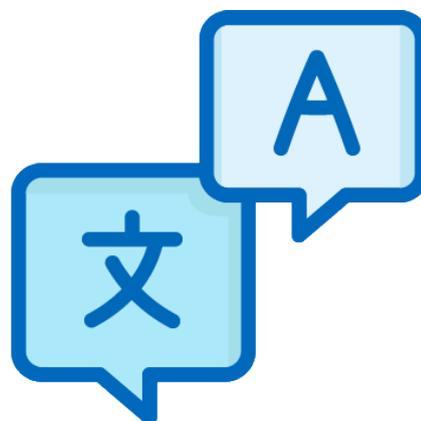
We are supporting the growing customer preference for online and social media channels, whilst also ensuring that our other traditional communication channels are equally accessible. We want our customer service strategy to reflect our customers' diverse range of needs and expectations and ensure a consistent level of service is received no matter which communication channel is chosen.

Our Customer Engagement Centre also provides customers with access to translation services for anyone who does not speak English as their first language. We also work with Contact Scotland BSL, an online interpreting service which enables customers who use British Sign Language (BSL) to communicate easily with us.

**Recite Me Translates into 131 Languages.**

Answering the question 'what does Scottish Water do well?' in our last employee experience survey, a colleague said:

*"Scottish Water strives to understand the needs of our customers, its employees and the environment so it can give the best service it can. Scottish Water constantly looks for ways to improve every aspect of the business but also looks at the wider picture."*



## Engagement and Involvement

Our leadership team is committed to listening to, and engaging with all our people and teams across Scottish Water, as well as our customers and communities. At our last Annual Consultative Meeting (ACM) our Chair Deirdre Michie and CEO Alex Plant were joined by members of our Executive Leadership Team and took part in a Q&A with attendees at the Aberdeen Science Centre and those who joined online. Topics included how we plan to work closer with communities to deliver net zero and what we are doing to clean up our water bodies. Ahead of the event we delivered a Generation H<sub>2</sub>O educational session, teaching youngsters to be a generation of responsible water users, with pupils from Hanover Street Primary in Aberdeen as part of our wider educational programme. You can read more about this on page 20.



Pictured above: pupils from Hanover Primary School with Alex Plant, CEO, Deirdre Michie, Chair, and Scottish Water colleagues at Aberdeen Science Centre.

## Procurement

Since the publication in 2021 of our Strategic Plan – A Sustainable Future Together – that sets out our future strategy, we have set out our ambitions to go beyond net zero emissions, deliver service excellence and provide great value and financial stability. We are facing some huge challenges and making some big commitments.

Getting this done requires a transformation of Scottish Water but we cannot do this alone, we need our supply chain partners to come on this transformation journey with us.

We will continue to embed carbon understanding and reductions, circular economy opportunities, ethical supply chain approaches, and innovation from the supply chain to support A Sustainable Future Together.

Unlocking these potential benefits from procurement can help us foster jobs and growth, encourage innovation, and boost training and apprenticeship opportunities. Good procurement practice can and should play a key role in helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), third-sector organisations and supported businesses compete effectively for contracts.

Our procurement procedures were described as world-class by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) and we have maintained platinum accreditation status since 2015. Scottish Water continually demonstrates how an effectively managed CIPS Platinum accredited professional procurement service can achieve value for money across all spend categories, whilst providing substantial savings.

Scottish Water is committed to the principles of Fair Work First, as set out by the Scottish Government, and these are built into supplier selection and contract management processes. Scottish Water requires its supply chain to comply with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act, the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act and equivalent legislation. Our ethical requirements are included within the Scottish Water Supplier Code of Conduct which is linked to our standard Terms and Conditions. We are also a member of Scotland Against Modern Slavery, Utilities Against Slavery, and are a founding partner for Action Sustainability's Responsible Sourcing of Solar Panels Due Diligence Guidance.

## Living Wage Employer

Scottish Water is an accredited real Living Wage employer and makes the real Living Wage a condition for our supply chain partners, demonstrating our commitment to fair work practices.



## Beyond Zero Harm

Our CEO and members of the Scottish Water Board came together with our supply chain partners in November 2024 to hold our first Beyond Zero Harm industry collective launch. This gathered about 300 people to talk about how, as an industry, we can ensure everyone who works with us stays safe and beyond zero harm, ensuring health and wellbeing is uppermost in people's minds. By doing so, we know that people can enjoy their work, can go home safe, and feel fulfilled with what they are doing. Going forward, this means more than just a focus on the process, but to make sure that the emotional connections and our Scottish Water character drive behaviours which are central to how we do our work.



Beyond Zero Harm conference, November 2024

## Flourishing Scotland Awards

In November 2024 we held the first employee recognition event since 2017 to celebrate the people and projects who help us support a Flourishing Scotland. At the Flourishing Scotland awards there was an incredible 266 nominations, covering 13 categories including Diversity and Inclusion and Health and Wellbeing categories. All our judges remarked on the quality of submissions and how difficult it was to choose a winner in each category. Winners for both the Health and Wellbeing and Diversity and Inclusion awards went to the Carers' Network, which is one of our ten Belong employee network groups.

Our Carers' Network started an online 'Carers' Wall' where colleagues can add their support and pledges to carers from across Scottish Water. The pledges include those from our CEO, directors and senior leaders, including our leadership sponsor for our Carers' Network as well as from colleagues across Scotland.



Carers' Network receiving their award at an internal award ceremony

The powerful visual of the wall helps make caring visible, recognised, and valued, and we have been proud to share our knowledge, learnings, and best practice with other external organisations through our involvement with [Carer Positive Scotland](#).

## Belong Employee Network

Since our last interim report was published in 2023, our Belong Network, which comprises all our employee-led groups, has continued to grow. The newest is our Neurodiversity network, launching in 2024. Each group is supported by dedicated network leads, core network members, and sponsored by at least one senior leader. Each group has a unique set of aims and objectives which are shaped by the communities they represent. The underpinning principles of the Belong Network are inclusion and bringing people together. In addition to providing social networks, the groups also provide valuable practical support to many members. The groups are psychologically safe environments where people can talk to someone they trust with similar lived experience.

When employee experience survey results are being reviewed and business changes are being proposed and considered, the groups are involved on a regular basis to enable consultation and engagement, ensuring effective employee voice. You can read more about results from our survey on page 26.

Since our last full mainstreaming report was published, we have strengthened how we support the Belong Network. We have done this by regularly bringing all our Senior Leadership sponsors together and giving each of the Networks additional resources to help them become even more bold and inspiring in support of the diversity, equality and inclusion agenda across Scottish Water.



Our ten current groups are listed below, showing the numbers of colleagues involved as well as the percentage point increase to show their impact and how they've grown in size over the past 4 years:

Belong Network	2021	2024	% point change since 2021
Armed Forces Network	70	83	+18%
Carers Network	144	218	+51%
disABILITY	59	79	+33%
Generation Plus	69	202	+47%
LGBT+	101	136	+35%
Multicultural Network	111	119	+7%
Neurodiversity*	-	172	-
NxtGen	279	426	+53%
Parents Supporting Parents	176	281	+60%
Women in Scottish Water	457	709	+33%

\*Our Neurodiversity network was launched in 2024.

In response to the question 'what does Scottish Water do well?' in our latest Employee Experience survey many colleagues mentioned the impact of the Belong network:

"The focus on the Belong network is great in allowing people to be themselves at work and to feel supported".

"We support, in a very caring way, employees when they go through hard times in their own life. We have groups that celebrate the diversity that make Scottish Water such a great place to work".

"There is a sense of community in Scottish Water that has grown over the years, and the emergence of the Belong groups is a fantastic testament to this".

The summary below highlights the impact each of our networks have in supporting our mainstreaming equality work across Scottish Water and beyond:

## Armed Forces Network

The Armed Forces Network was created to support serving and ex-service personnel in Scottish Water, their friends and family, across Scottish Water. Scottish Water was proud to sign the Armed Forces Covenant in 2016 and subsequently achieved bronze status in the Defence Employer Recognition scheme. In 2019 we achieved Silver status, and in 2020 Scottish Water attained the Gold Award.

Our Network also represents Scottish Water externally by engaging in community events, working with external organisations and continues to participate in Poppy Scotland fundraising activities.

## Carers' Network

Our Carers' Network has driven several substantial initiatives over this period. Highlights include: various workshops with Age Scotland; the celebration of Carers' Rights Day in November; and our involvement in the 10 year anniversary of Carer Positive Award in 2024, for which we hold exemplary status.

The group hosts monthly drop-in Carers' Cafés for those in Scottish Water who balance work with caring responsibilities. The success of the Carers' Network is reflected by its growing membership and visibility of the importance of caring with 8% of colleagues identifying as Carers' in our most recent Employee Experience survey.

In a recent testimonial a member of the network reflected on the network's impact:

"I personally have benefitted from the Carer's group. Balancing work and care was very tough; I often had no idea how to cope with dementia symptoms and was stressed about taking annual leave to take my mum to all her medical appointments. The Carer's group was a lifesaver. Many in the group had experience of dealing with someone with dementia and shared useful stories and experiences that helped me cope better".

## disABILITY Forum

Our disABILITY Forum's purpose is to support the creation of a culture of inclusivity within Scottish Water by engaging, enabling, and energising our colleagues. They do this through raising awareness of disabilities, providing guidance, support, and information, including that gained through lived experience. They support colleagues to better understand how they can more effectively engage with each other, family members, friends and customers that may have disabilities or impairments. The disABILITY Forum has influenced and contributed to positive changes that have been made to our physical workplace environments. The Forum has also been key to the establishment, nurturing and creation of our Neurodiversity network who are contributing to Scottish Water's aspirations to support neurodivergent people and their families more effectively.

## Generation Plus

Our Generation Plus group exists to help employees in mid-life to thrive and feel valued. They do this by focusing on being a source of support and community for employees in mid-life and encouraging personal career growth and development. They provide leaders across the business with insight to improve the experience of mid-life people working in Scottish Water. This helps ensure we have an age-inclusive workplace.

## LGBT+ & Allies

Our Belong Network also represents Scottish Water externally by engaging in community events and working with external organisations. For example, our LGBT+ & Allies Network has represented us at five Pride events across Scotland in 2024.

## Multicultural Network

We are continually becoming a more multicultural workforce, reflecting the people and communities we serve across Scotland. Our network is passionate about celebrating diversity, both acknowledging and understanding differences across cultures, but also in recognising commonality and the values and customs we all share.

The group gives employees an opportunity to share cultures and experience new things. The group also explores areas such as race, equality, and representation and supports an increase in cultural awareness, knowledge and understanding. The group will continue to help shape and inform the race equality focused activities underway as we deliver our commitment to The Race at Work Charter.

## Neurodiversity

Our newest Belong group provides and acts as a knowledge hub, raising awareness and enabling colleagues to recognise and explore their neurodivergence providing safe spaces for conversations and encouraging peer support. The network is helping Scottish Water maximise the contributions from neurodivergent people working collaboratively with other Belong groups. Under senior leadership sponsorship the group has grown at pace and was instrumental in Scottish Water achieving a Neuro Champion award in the category of Inclusive Employer from the Celebrating Neurodiversity Awards 2024.

## NxtGen

NxtGen is our second largest network aimed at those early in their career or who have recently joined Scottish Water. The network supports colleagues to network, learn and explore ideas, and work collaboratively with our other Belong networks helping to support an age inclusive workplace, whilst at the same time challenging how we do things. NxtGen does this through key activities like facilitating 'day in the life of' (DILO) experiences across the organisation. This offers opportunities for people to get involved in activities outside of their own job role, expanding their knowledge and developing their skills. NxtGen organises networking events with leaders to learn about their careers and creates opportunities for new employees to engage socially. NxtGen also supports our ongoing interaction with key partners focusing on young people, such as Career Ready, and contributes evidence for Scottish Water Investors in Young People platinum accreditation. You can read more about these in section 2.

## Women in Scottish Water

To celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) 2024, our Women in Scottish Water (WiSW) network organised and ran a week-long demonstration of commitment to #InspireInclusion. Our WiSW network, graduates, apprentices and Early Years professionals within our People team, came together in March 2024 to coincide with both IWD and Scottish Apprenticeship Week. We invited local school pupils to explore the many career paths available at Scottish Water and do a virtual tour of a waste water treatment works.



Members of ELT celebrating International Women's Day

WiSW also contributed to Scottish Water's new [Careers Map](#), which you can read more about on page 19, championing and inspiring girls and women to pursue a career in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) related disciplines. The network was also shortlisted for the Diversity and Inclusion award as part of our Flourishing Scotland awards in 2024 in recognition of the quarterly newsletters they produce, helping WiSW realise their goals of creating allyship and supporting women to progress at Scottish Water.

## Parents Supporting Parents

Another network that has been growing steadily in membership is Parents Supporting Parents (PSP), which seeks to help all families across Scottish Water support their children's emotional and mental health, and wellbeing. The network focuses on several areas including the first 1000 days, parenting pre-schoolers, parenting primary and early secondary aged children, parenting teens and young adults, single parents, co-parenting families, parenting neurodiverse children, and children with Additional Support Needs (ASN). ASN is a vitally important issue for schools, parents, and guardians across Scotland with recent statistics showing the number of children with ASN has reached a record high of 36.7%. [View a summary of the statistics here.](#)

The network also supports expectant and postpartum parents, bringing pregnant employees together in group chats. It has highlighted campaigns for World Breastfeeding Week and Maternal Mental Health Day.

## Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy and policy

Steered by the publication of the data collection and publication guidance on protected characteristic groups by the Scottish Government in 2022, we have continually worked to improve our data collection and address equality evidence gaps over the reporting period. We will continue our work on the data in/data out development, encouraging all colleagues to update their personal details and equality information on the HR self-service system. All equality monitoring data is shown in the Appendix of this report.

We have also used Scottish census data released through the summer of 2024 to inform our equality data analysis. We launched our Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Dashboard for senior leaders in late 2024 which enables comparison of Scottish census data with our anonymised workforce demographics. By tracking the data, we know where we have under-representation or gaps, highlighting where to focus our efforts so that together, we can become Bolder and more Inspiring.

We have a suite of complementary people policies which reference diversity, equality, and inclusion. These policies are reviewed regularly, and equality impact assessed to keep them up to date with changes in best practice. For example, our Family, Carer and Special Leave policy was updated in 2024 to reflect the new legislation which introduced a flexible entitlement of one-week unpaid leave per year for colleagues who have a dependent with a long-term care need. We will continue to enhance our HR systems so we can better track the usage of caring leave alongside different types of leave used to support all our people.

Policies include:

- Armed Forces and Reservists
- Attendance Management
- Dignity at Work
- Diversity, Equality and Inclusion
- Family, Carer and Special Leave
- Flexible and Early Retirement
- Health and Wellbeing
- Maternity, Adoption and Paternity
- Recruitment
- Secondment
- Shared Parental Leave

## Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

In 2023, a dedicated EqIA resources site was launched on our intranet. This provides guidance on impact assessment responsibilities to enhance the quality of assessments and ensure that Scottish Water can demonstrate a systematic and proportionate approach to this piece of equalities legislation. The resources include an equality impact assessment process map, guidance, template form, evidence framework, examples of completed impact assessments, and FAQs. Although Scottish Water is not listed as a public authority subject to the Fairer Scotland Duty, we do consider socio-economic impact within our EqIAs.

We have also made available the video series 'Mountains for All' Parts 1 and 2, created by the Scottish Government, which helps decision makers understand the value of impact assessments and how to do them well. We run regular drop-in sessions to support those completing assessments to develop confidence and competence in assessing equality impact. We have also utilised various communication channels including our wellbeing bulletin 'Scottish Water Cares' to promote impact assessments and answer frequently asked questions.



### Modernising Reward Foundations

We worked in partnership with our trade unions to conclude the reform of our pay and grading structure for collectively bargained employees by end of March 2024. By March 2025 we completed a similar exercise for our management population. Both exercises increased transparency of jobs, grades and pay to improve perceptions of fairness and equality in how we reward our people. The new mechanisms also contributed positively to changes in our gender pay gap.



### Move to a 35 hour week

We also moved to 35 hours (or the equivalent for those working a different work pattern) from November 2024 to help improve the wellbeing and work/life balance of everyone in Scottish Water. The move has been made without compromising on health and safety or the excellent 24/7 service we provide for our customers. The move to a 35 hour week was agreed as part of our successful Modernising Reward Foundations (MRF) negotiations.

### Hybrid and Flexible Working

We recognise the importance of people connecting and collaborating at work, and while ensuring the needs of the business are balanced, we support flexible working to enhance work/life balance and manage personal commitments. In addition, our Family, Carer and Special Leave policy supports the application of flexible working arrangements to suit the circumstances of families and carers.

Many responses to the question 'what does Scottish Water do well?' in our latest Employee Experience survey raised the topic of flexible working and work life balance including the move to a 35 hour week.

"Caring culture and commitment to staff wellbeing/work life balance/flexibility is un-paralleled against anywhere I've worked".

"I like its progressive approach to how people work and how it moves with the times and allows flexibility which supports equality, allowing people to be on a more level playing field who would have previously been at a disadvantage".

## Workplace Adjustment Service

We have a Workplace Adjustments (WPA) service which aims to provide a quick and effective route for accessing support for any employees who consider themselves to be disabled, or to have a long-term condition or neurodivergence. We do not require employees to have a formal diagnosis to access support through the WPA, as that can be a barrier. We actively promote the service to raise awareness and encourage people to seek support so they can thrive and do their best work. A colleague who was supported by the service fed back:

“Amazing to be offered this service to help make my job that bit easier. I have a lifetime disability, but this makes it a wee bit easier for me to fit in and do my best for Scottish Water”.

## Accessibility Tools

Our Data Improvement Team has been working hard to promote the use of new technological accessibility tools. They also provide guidance on how best to use them to break down any barriers that may exist relating to vision, hearing, mobility, neurodiversity, mental health, or language. They set up a Microsoft 365 Accessibility project team which included an Accessibility Adoption Group made up of colleagues from across the organisation, including representatives from our disABILITY Forum and Neurodiversity network. The group tested new accessibility tools and guidance, and this work is ongoing as we introduce Windows 11 in 2025.

## New Initiatives

To further our mainstreaming equality work in the past year, we have partnered with The Human Library Organisation. This is a platform where you can “borrow” a human book, who is an individual with a story to tell, and have a conversation with them about their topic or experience. By listening to the Human Library contributors, colleagues can share knowledge and challenge their stereotypes, prejudices, and assumptions, and learn from different perspectives. This encourages conversations and deepening understanding between people from different backgrounds, bringing people together in a safe and respectful environment. It allows us to display understanding behaviours and insights to those we work with and the customers and communities we serve, thus adding value under our Service Excellence ambition.



## Volunteering

All Scottish Water employees are allocated two volunteering days per year. Volunteering can help develop new skills, support communities and charities, and have a positive impact on wellbeing. Scottish Water supports volunteering in the following five areas:

- Local Community
- Environmental/Conservation
- Education
- WaterAid
- Skills Based Volunteering



Since April 2021 to the end of December 2024 our colleagues have delivered a bumper 1193 days in volunteering, all contributing to our purpose of supporting a Flourishing Scotland.

## Learning and Development

Our diversity, equality and inclusion learning courses, reviewed and updated in 2022, form part of Scottish Water's training and development courses. This ensures that all our employees at every level understand Scottish Water's diversity, equality and inclusion aims, relevant equality law in the UK, and expected behaviours which are guided by our Scottish Water 'Character'. Completion of these courses help to grow knowledge over time and act as an important reminder of the responsibilities of each employee, so that everyone can talk about diversity, equality and inclusion in a helpful and constructive way.

Our learning and development platform also provides great content and courses on many topics related to diversity, equality and inclusion. For example, neurodiversity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and race. Refreshed Inclusive Teams training is also being delivered from 2025.

Our performance management and development approach (known as 'My Story'), launched in 2023, is centred

around the individual, helping each person to recognise their individual contributions and how these in turn contribute to the overall Scottish Water story. My Story is managed and recorded through our learning and development platform allowing individual learning objectives to link directly with the existing training records and promote relevant learning content, including topics covering diversity, equality and inclusion.

In our last employee survey we asked employees 'what does Scottish Water do well?' and many respondents referenced learning and development opportunities:

"The development of people within Scottish Water is really great to see... growing up with peers and seeing us all being successful within different areas of Scottish Water is really rewarding".

"Inclusion and diversity are embraced, taking care of employees with different needs or changing circumstances. Employees are encouraged to learn, develop and progress career goals".

## Inclusive leadership

Inclusive leadership was carefully considered as part of the design of 'My Story' and this year we have taken the opportunity to strengthen our leadership objectives. All line leaders are responsible for pursuing a beyond zero-harm approach to safety, health and wellbeing. They are responsible for fostering inclusive teams that engender trust and psychological safety, enabling people to be themselves at work, supporting their development and performance.

We continue our work in expanding the involvement of our leadership teams within our Belong networks. We know these sponsorship roles can be hugely rewarding and insightful in terms of an individual's senior leadership development, whilst challenging, inspiring and supporting the networks with whom they work. It also provides an important bridge to leadership in Scottish Water.

Work towards our equality outcomes is supported by memberships and partnerships with, for example, the Non-Departmental Public Body Equality Forum in Scotland, Energy and Utility Skills, Business in the Community and Business Disability Forum. They provide a range of valuable resources, learning opportunities and measurement frameworks which support our activities and actions in driving forward progress against our equality outcomes. Benchmarking exercises and framework measurement tools, like the Energy and Utility Skills Inclusion Framework, provide us with insight into how we perform compared to other organisations across our industry.

## Awards and Memberships

We are delighted that Scottish Water has been recognised with several awards and accolades in this reporting period, including:

- Great British Wellbeing Awards – Best Wellbeing in the Workplace Strategy: Public Sector 2025 (winner)
- Awarded Neuro Champion in the category of Inclusive Employer from the Celebrating Neurodiversity Awards 2024
- Investors in Young People - Platinum level (achieved)
- Carers Positive - Exemplary Status (achieved)
- The Herald and GenAnalytics Diversity Awards 2022 - Diversity in the Public Sector (finalist)
- HR Network Awards 2022 - Wellbeing Award of the Year (winner)
- HR Network Awards 2022 - Diversity & Inclusion Award of the Year (finalist)
- The Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme - Gold Standard (achieved)

# Section 2: Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 Final Report

This section outlines the progress and key contribution that we have made towards the equality outcomes that we set in 2021 since we last updated in our interim PSED Report in 2023.

Our equality outcomes set in 2021:

- Be renowned for creating opportunities for young people, particularly from areas of social deprivation
- Increase representation in our workforce of women, BAME\*, young people and those with a disability
- Increase diversity of our leadership bench across all under-represented groups
- Achieve high levels of engagement and retention among those employees with under-represented protected characteristics

\*From 2023 to the present and in line with guidance from the Scottish Government we are amending the wording of this outcome to 'Increase representation in our workforce of women, minority ethnic groups, young people and those with a disability'.

## Outcome 1

### Be renowned for creating opportunities for young people, particularly from areas of social deprivation.

Background: We recognise the important role we play in supporting a flourishing Scotland. We have already gained a strong reputation for the broad range of youth employment and development programmes we offer internally, but also our wider support for outward facing initiatives that create opportunity for young people from areas of social deprivation. We support the Young Person's Guarantee, which is about connecting young people with opportunities whether they are in employment, training or education.

We have been partnering with other organisations such as Action for Children, Career Ready, MCR Pathways, Scottish Swimming and Scottish Sport Futures, as well as launching our own nationwide education programme to encourage young people to protect the future of Scotland's water, Generation H<sub>2</sub>O.



## Engaging young people in the community

This equality outcome is not just about creating job opportunities, rather it's about all opportunities to learn and develop skills which empower young people and support the future of a flourishing Scotland. This reflects our support of the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG).

An interactive [Careers Map](#) was launched in 2023. The resource, which has been designed for young people from Primary 7 through to their final senior school years, gives insights into the diverse range of careers and skills that keep Scotland's water flowing, along with video and blog content. The resource is also promoted through our Generation H<sub>2</sub>O Programme which you can read more about on page 20.

Scottish Water is regularly represented at external events for young people, and we support schools across Scotland by way of classroom and career fair volunteering, as well as offering outreach webinars to community groups and not for profit organisations who represent people from minority groups across Scotland.



Generation H<sub>2</sub>O lesson at St Mary's Primary School, Leith

## Career Ready

Scottish Water has supported mentoring with Career Ready for several years now. Career Ready is a national social mobility charity at the heart of a network of employers and educators, who all believe that every young person, regardless of background, deserves the opportunity to build a rewarding future. Career Ready is a successful programme for developing young people's skills for the workplace, and our employee's leadership skills. The two-year programme empowers young people in S5-6 to build workplace skills through a series of authentic workplace experiences and a network of support – the only schools programme in Scotland. The programme runs every year from November culminating in a 4-week paid work placement in the summer months. We aim to support around 12 placements annually.

## MCR Pathways

We continue our partnership with MCR Pathways. As part of this work, we are encouraging and enabling our people to be trained as volunteer mentors who can be matched with a young person in their senior school stages. The aspiration is to increase positive destinations for looked-after children and young people, as well as those who have experienced disadvantage, to realise their full potential and see more options available to them. Over this reporting period the number of employee mentors Scottish Water supports has risen to 20, and we were proud to share the stage with MCR Pathways as part of a panel discussion at The Gathering, the largest free voluntary sector event in the UK, in 2025. We shared our learnings and reflections on how mentoring can drive personal and professional growth, not only for individuals, but for organisations and the wider community too. [MCR Pathways 2024 Scottish Impact Report is available here.](#)

## Generation H<sub>2</sub>O programme

Since our last interim report, we have been continuing work on our Youth Engagement and Education Programmes which are related to this equality outcome. In summer 2024 a group of schoolchildren from Glasgow helped launch Generation H<sub>2</sub>O, our nationwide education programme, encouraging young people across Scotland to become a generation of responsible water citizens and protect the future of Scotland's water.

Pupils, from Clyde Primary School in Glasgow, joined us on a visit to scenic Loch Katrine, the water supply source for more than one million people across Greater Glasgow, to formally mark the start of the H<sub>2</sub>O programme.

Clyde Primary School is one of almost 270 primaries out of 1988 which have already participated in the lessons and the visit enabled pupils to learn about the water supply from source to their own taps at home and to Top Up Taps at either end of Loch Katrine. The programme features a community outreach element to ensure harder to reach groups can participate. Partner organisations such as Forestry Land Scotland and the Steamship Sir Walter Scott Trust also spoke to the pupils about biodiversity, water safety and the history of the water supply in the area.

Their teacher said, "Some of our pupils didn't know that wasting water was even an issue so using the Generation H<sub>2</sub>O resources has been really beneficial and has prompted lots of debate and many ideas about how to protect our water and reduce waste. The pupils are taking the messages back to their families and friends and helping spread the word about how to protect water and the environment, and that is fantastic".

Scottish Water colleagues have been using some of their volunteering time to support the Generation H<sub>2</sub>O programme and visit schools. At the time of writing in December 2024, 526 primary and 135 secondary schools have registered with a total of 42,670 young people reached to date. With our employees' expertise we are prioritising volunteering resource to schools across Scotland so we can work with students who may be in more disadvantaged communities.

We have shared our Generation H<sub>2</sub>O resources with key partners including Education Scotland and DYW (Developing the Young Workforce) who are embedding a culture of employer leadership and collaboration that is essential for preparing young people for the workforce. There are 700,000 young people in Scotland, all of whom are current consumers of our water and the next generation of our customers. Generation H<sub>2</sub>O is designed to inspire young people to become part of a movement to celebrate and protect the nation's water, a valuable and precious resource, creating responsible 'water citizens' for a flourishing Scotland.



Learn to Swim

## Investing in young people

We have been exploring how we can deliver innovative approaches to foster and nurture our existing youth talent, as well as ensuring we reach and attract the most diverse youth talent pipelines. Once we've given young people that first foot on the career ladder, we want to help them keep progressing to reach their potential.

One of these new approaches is our partnership with Edinburgh based Action for Children (AfC). In partnership with AfC, we are helping young people prepare for work through employability training and placements in our Sewer Response teams. Additionally, we have worked with Skills Development Scotland and colleges to reach out to young people undertaking pre-apprenticeship courses when we have had apprenticeship opportunities in our Water Response teams.

Many of our roles require our people to be mobile, therefore we have supported our apprentices in gaining their driving licences. Since our last interim report, we have explored different ways of supporting the apprentices in this, by taking a more personalised approach to understand and break down barriers that some people may face, whether that be help with the initial financial cost, or thinking differently about the timing of driving lessons.

One apprentice we supported with intensive training on passing their test in 2024 was "absolutely over the moon and chuffed to bits".

We know it can be difficult for some people to get a first foot on the career ladder and these approaches align with our Scottish Water Character. They also contribute to our equality outcomes in terms of creating opportunities for young people, particularly from areas facing wider inequality issues, and in achieving our purpose of supporting a flourishing Scotland. You can read the '[State of the Nation 2024](#)' report from the Social Mobility Commission which examines these issues.

## Learn to Swim and Scottish Sports Futures

Over the reporting period we are delighted to have supported a new generation of children to become safer, happier, and healthier through the Learn to Swim National Framework. To date the programme has provided swimming lessons to over 105,000 children over the first four years and aims to reach another 100,000 children by 2025.

The Scottish Sports Future programme provides alternative education through sport to help disengaged young people gain qualifications and get on the right path for college or apprenticeships. Scottish Water was proud to sponsor the Positive Destination Award at the 2025 Scottish Sports Future Awards in March 2025.

## Recognised by Investors in Young People

We are extremely proud that Scottish Water was accredited with the Investors in Young People (IiYP) Platinum Award at the end of 2022.

The assessor who undertook the IiYP evaluation praised Scottish Water's achievement: "Scottish Water are a leading ambassador for employing young people and are an exemplary employer for all sectors to be benchmarked against."

At the time of writing, we are busy preparing for our next full IiYP accreditation review due in October 2025.

# Outcome 2

## Increase representation in our workforce of women, BAME, young people and those with a disability.

Background: Scottish Water has historically had recruitment campaigns where a mixed representative candidate pool has not been achieved. Over the past four years we have increased diversity within our candidate pools to enable more people from diverse backgrounds to be hired, so that our workforce becomes more representative of the Scottish population. We know from our work with Energy and Utility Skills that the wider sector is also under-representative of different equality groups.



### Shifting Demographics

We are pleased that we have achieved progress in this outcome and the percentage of women, people from ethnic minorities, young people and disabled people employed at Scottish Water have all increased since our last full PSED report in 2021. Information on equality monitoring data can be found in the Appendix.

However, we have not made as much progress as we would have liked. We need to continue to gather data to better inform processes, policies and practices in this area. We will continue to encourage and improve understanding of why we ask our people to share this. We will also improve communication of what we do with the data, sharing the success stories in terms of how this helps us better perform the general equality duty. For this reason, we have chosen to set a new equality outcome linked to our workforce reflecting the diversity of Scotland.

More details of occupational segregation data, meaning the concentration of men and women, persons who are disabled and persons who are not, and those who fall into minority racial groups and those who do not, can also be found in the Appendix. You can read more about our new set of equality outcomes in section 3.

### More women working at Scottish Water

Whilst we still have a predominantly male workforce, the percentage of women working at Scottish Water has increased over the past 4 years from 28.5% in 2021 to 31.2% by the end of 2024.

Energy and Utility Skills estimated the Water and Waste Water sectors percentage of workforce being female across the UK in 2024 at 31.7%, so Scottish Water is slightly below the UK sector average. Achieving gender balance will take time but we have been working hard to attract more female candidates, building capability in-house to personalise our attraction to improve female/male balance and monitoring conversion rates from sift to interview and offer of job stages closely. Boosting the number of women in our workforce continues to be an area of focus for us.

## Our Youth Talent programmes intake by year

Apprentice Intake	Female (%)	Male (%)
2024	25	75
2023	23	77
2022	8	92
2021	20	80

Although the numbers of women represented within our apprentice intake in 2022 dropped, we have seen some improvement over the last two years. However, men continue to dominate apprenticeship positions.

Intern Intake	Female (%)	Male (%)
2024	65	35
2023	56	44
2022	71	29
2021	50	50

There has been variability over the years of the reporting period, with women dominating Internship positions over the last three years. Women have also dominated graduate positions in the last two years.

Graduate Intake	Female (%)	Male (%)
2024	58	42
2023	61	39
2022	42	58
2021	47	53

After considering the drop in ratio of apprentices of female to male in 2022, we reviewed candidate engagement, attraction, recruitment, and selection processes, and will continue taking appropriate steps including general positive action measures under the Equality Act 2010, where appropriate. We continue to take bold, targeted interventions to address female representation and improve our recruitment and talent development processes.

## More representation of people from a minority ethnic background

As outlined in the Appendix, whilst we now hold data on 91.7% of our workforce, the percentage of people from a minority ethnic group at Scottish Water is 4.6%, which is an 0.8% increase since 2021. We have made some progress on addressing the representation for this particular equality group, but we have more to do. There has been a slight increase in our unknown data gap for this protected characteristic and a slight decrease in those preferring not to say.

According to Scotland's census in 2022, 12.9% of people in Scotland had a minority ethnic background. This is an increase from 8.2% in 2011. There is more to be done to increase representation of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in the workforce.

Considering the outputs from the census, we are taking targeted action to address under representation. Our Multicultural Network has championed signing [Business in the Community's 7-point Race at Work Charter](#), which includes capturing ethnicity data and publicising progress. Please also see our update on equal pay and occupational segregation in the Appendix.

## More representation of people with a disability

The percentage of people who report they have a disability, long-term health condition or neurodivergence is 4.1%, an increase from our 2023 reporting figure of 1.5% and an increase from our 2021 reporting figure of 2%. Please see Chart 3 in the Appendix.

Whilst 4.1% of our people have shared this information through our HR system, we know from our latest Employee Experience survey in September 2024, that 16% of respondents said they had a disability, long-term condition or neurodivergence. We are making progress on this protected characteristic. However, our data is telling us that our workforce is still under-represented when compared to the 2022 Scottish census data, which shows 21% of Scotland's working age population have a disability.

We will continue to build employee insights using our employee surveys. The data is informing decision making and helping prioritise targeted support and action.

We continue to regularly promote our Workplace Adjustment Service through multiple communication channels and evaluate the effectiveness of adjustments measuring short and long-term outcomes.

As shown in Chart 3 in Appendix, we still have an unknown data gap for disability of 18.4%. We continue to communicate the importance of providing this information, as it contributes to greater awareness of available workplace support where this is required.

### Investing in Scotland’s young people

Over the reporting period, we have delivered significant activity to provide pathways and opportunities for young people to work in Scottish Water, and this work continues.

Each year our recruitment campaigns for both Graduates and Apprentices attract vital young talent. In 2024 we received a record number of applications to both crucially important talent pipelines.

We have seen a gradual increase in younger employees in the workforce over the last 4 years. Chart 1 in the Appendix contains details about the age breakdown of our workforce. At the end of December 2024, most employees were aged between 30 and 59, broken down as follows: 30-39 (21.6%), 40-49 (21.9 %), 50-59 (26.7%), with 12.1% aged sixty or over and 15.7% aged 29 and under. Representation of this last age group has increased over the last four years.

We are making small but steady progress in building a more age-balanced workforce. As ‘Generation Z’ increase in numbers, remaining ‘Baby Boomers’ continue to retire (see chart for description).

## Definition of Generations in the Workforce

Generation	Year Born	Age in 2024
Generation Z	1996-2012	12 to 28
Generation Y (Millennials)	1981-1995	29 to 43
Generation X	1965-1980	44 to 59
Baby Boomer	1945-1964	60 and over

Multi-generational work has been delivered through the development skill-based reverse mentoring as part of our coaching and mentoring offer and collaboration of events driven by our Belong groups. Generation Plus and NxtGen are supporting different generations to share their knowledge and learn from, and with, each other.



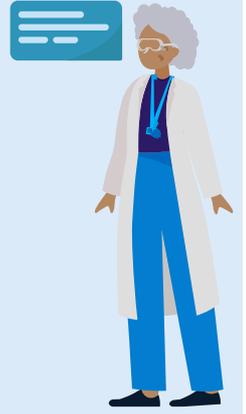
2024 Apprentice intake

### Attracting diverse new talent

We have reviewed our attraction and selection practises with an aim to increase diversity of all applicants and new hires to Scottish Water. Engaging social media presence has driven our most recent recruitment advertising campaigns featuring story telling videos of past and current graduates and apprentices. Work continues as we improve how we closely track our recruitment demographics, monitoring conversion rates from application, sift, selection and interview to the final offer stages.

# Outcome 3

## Increase diversity of our leadership bench across all under-represented groups.



Background: We know visible role models and active commitment from our leadership community is important in mainstreaming equality and building an inclusive culture which stretches across the entire workforce. Our leadership bench includes current leaders within the business and our succession plan. Inclusive leaders are also in a strong position to influence behaviours within their teams, and through their actions can help to embed inclusive attitudes and demonstrate allyship and advocacy for minority groups.

Since our last interim report in 2023 - as well as welcoming Deirdre Michie as our new Chair – Scottish Water has welcomed six new members to our Executive Leadership Team (ELT), comprising three women and three men. Our leadership ‘bench’ comprises not just those that are current leaders in our business but the future leaders and developing talent of Scottish Water. We currently have a good gender balance on our succession plans for senior leadership roles.

While 31.2% of the Scottish Water workforce are women, 41% of our business managers are women, progression which resulted from their participation in the ‘Future Leaders’ programmes that ran in previous years.

We introduced two new leadership development programmes in this reporting period; ‘Take the Lead’ and ‘Leading with Character’. Both programmes have increased representation within our internal talent pipelines to ensure wider consideration of diverse candidates for promotion opportunities and increase representation at leadership levels.

‘Take the Lead’ is aimed at equipping aspiring leaders with the skills, knowledge and experience they will need to prepare them for future leadership roles. From the outset of this initiative, we had a clear remit to make the ‘Take the Lead’ programme inclusive and accessible. To achieve this, we built key elements into the engagement and application phases.

The equality data for our ‘Take the Lead’ employees reflect a profile more representative than the Scottish Water average. ‘Take the Lead’ participants are made up of 42% women and 58% men. We continue to track the impact of this programme in advancing diversity, equality and inclusion at Scottish Water, and at the time of writing, more than 50 of the first ‘Take the Lead’ cohort have been successful in securing a team leadership role within Scottish Water.

You can read more about occupational segregation across a variety of different demographic groups in the Appendix.

However, we have not made as much progress as we would have liked for this outcome. It is a multi-year piece of work and, as outlined above, we will continue to focus work on improving processes and key data points. These include hiring, evaluation, promotion, and involvement in development programmes. For this reason, we have chosen to set a new equality outcome linked to our workforce reflecting the diversity of Scotland at all levels of our organisation. You can read more about our new set of equality outcomes in section 3.

# Outcome 4

## Achieve high levels of engagement and retention among those employees with under-represented protected characteristics.

Background: we are focusing on engagement and retention in addition to recruitment. By creating a workplace where all employees feel a sense of belonging, where they can be themselves and fulfil their potential at work regardless of their backgrounds or characteristics.

Scottish Water's Belong Network groups were formed to give a collective employee voice to those who hold a particular protected characteristic or life experience, and are a valuable tool in providing peer support, education, and networking opportunities.



### Employee Experience Survey

We have been able to collect additional data via our Employee Experience surveys and build employee insights over the full reporting period 2021-25.

In 2024, we surveyed 4745 Scottish Water employees to understand their experience with us. 3575 responded, representing 75% of our workforce. Of these, 2415 (67%) went on to respond to equality monitoring questions informed by the Scottish Government's guides for collecting equality information.

This is in comparison to the Employee Experience Survey in 2022 when the total response rate was 3083 with 2382 (77%) people responding to the equality monitoring information questions (excluding 'prefer not to say').

We use key performance indicators covering the following areas:



Engagement



Experience vs Expectations



Intent to Stay



Inclusion



Wellbeing

## Survey Methodology

Whilst the methodologies between the two surveys have varied, the Inclusion KPI Indicator questions have remained broadly the same. We have seen a 12% increase in the number of colleagues taking part in the survey since 2023, and a 7% increase in our Engagement score.

In 2024, having taken action based on feedback from our 2022 survey results, we have now seen an increase in people sharing data. For example, we have seen an increase in the number of colleagues identifying with disability/long term health categories including Deafness and partial hearing, as well as Neurodivergent conditions such as Dyslexia and Autism. We can attribute this in part to our promotion of wellbeing messages shared in our award-winning Scottish Water Cares internal bulletin, as well as sharing knowledge and understanding of various long-term conditions across different communication channels. We believe there is a positive correlation between the work of our disABILITY Forum, launch of the Neurodiversity network, the Human Library initiative, and the promotion of the Workplace Adjustment Service and Employee Assistance programme. They all contribute to more colleagues sharing their experiences with us.

The survey results have enabled us to discover useful information and make insightful conclusions informing our overall employee engagement and diversity and inclusion strategies, for example actively promoting the Scottish Government's 'Autism Different Minds. One Scotland.' campaign in our workplace, helping to increase understanding of Autism. This aims to make Scotland a more accessible, inclusive and understanding place for autistic people to learn, work and live.

[Visit the 'Autism Different Minds' site](#)

Other results from our 2024 survey across a variety of demographic groups show that people of 50 years of age and above were scoring less favourably for the inclusion indicator questions than the average. Results also showed younger people scoring less favourably, whilst women are more likely to feel included than men.

In terms of carers, whilst 2.4% of our people have shared with us they are a carer on our HR system, the number of colleagues who responded in our survey indicates we have 8% of our workforce identifying as carers. This is representative of the Scottish Census 2022 results which indicate that 7.1% of the population aged between 16-64 are carers, when they asked people if they look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours, or others.

Our survey results told us those who do identify as carers were also scoring lower than average on the inclusion indicator scores. Those who have a disability or long-term health condition; and some groups of people belonging to certain ethnic minority groups and minority religions; as well as those from some minority sexual orientation groups were all scoring less favourably for the inclusion indicator questions than the average.



In 2024 we also asked about Trans and Gender Identity, and we found that those who identify as Trans or who have a Trans history also scored less favourably than the average score for the inclusion indicators.

We have fed back results from our surveys to our groups within our Belong networks and key stakeholders to inform priorities and action planning. The survey is a valuable source of feedback, but the best feedback is in the conversations we have. We need to consider what further measures are appropriate to provide support and guidance to employees who share protected characteristics, and we continue to work with all our Belong networks who act as a representative forum.

### Retention/Intent to Stay

From our last Employee Experience survey in 2024 under the new Intent to Stay metric we can see groups of people belonging to minority ethnic, religious and sexual orientation groups and those who are Trans, or who have a trans history, all scored less favourably.

However, those who have a disability or long-term health condition and/or who identified as Carers scored more favourably, again possibly indicative of the focused work on these protected characteristics that we have delivered over the last reporting period. More detail about Retention can be found in the Equality Monitoring Report section of the Appendix.

### Looking forward

Capturing good-quality data through our surveys enables baselines to be established and progress measured. In the most recent Employee Experience survey to the statement 'I feel as if I belong at Scottish Water', 71% was the average score. This was an increase from 64% in 2023. We compare and benchmark our survey results to other UK companies that use the same statements in their surveys and as 71% is slightly lower compared to the UK average score we want to improve this.

We aim to drive the improvements that will make a real difference to groups who share protected characteristics. Consequently, our equality outcomes for 2025-2029 include an outcome relating to employee inclusion. This covers all protected characteristics, continuing the work we commenced in the last reporting cycle to achieve high levels of engagement and retention among employees with under-represented protected characteristics. You can read more about this in Section 3.

# Section 3: New Equality Outcomes 2025-2029

We have identified areas of focus using evidence and involvement of relevant groups including our Belong Network. Our equality outcomes reflect the insights and the action we can realistically take to continually improve and achieve change and meet our responsibilities as a public body. They also underpin the Scottish Water Characteristics of being Bold, Responsible, Inspiring and Caring and they are achievable, measurable, ambitious and link to our core purpose and strategic ambitions. Because everything

we do considers customer and community benefit, we have chosen to commit to a new equality outcome relating to the delivery of service excellence to all our customers across Scotland. Our new set of inward-facing equality outcomes which apply to all levels of the organisation, and our new outward facing equality outcome, are shared below.

## Equality Outcome 1

We recognise, support, and meet our diverse customers and communities' requirements in an inclusive and accessible way.

<b>Inequality</b>	Regardless of their backgrounds, protected characteristics or the place where they live and/or work we need to ensure we deliver excellent customer service to meet all our diverse groups of customers' evolving expectations.
-------------------	---

<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Supports Scottish Water's purpose in supporting a flourishing Scotland and making a critical contribution to Scotland's health, wellbeing and prosperity, the sustainability of our natural environment and our country's long term economic success. Contributes to achieving actions in the Service Excellence, Customer Communications/Community Engagement plans.
------------------------------------	---

## Equality Outcome 2

Our employees will reflect the diversity of Scotland in relation to women, minority ethnic people and disabled people.

<b>Inequality</b>	Women, people from minority ethnic groups and disabled people continue to be under-represented at Scottish Water.
-------------------	---

<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Supports Scottish Water's purpose in supporting a flourishing Scotland and making a critical contribution to Scotland's health, wellbeing and prosperity. Contributes to achieving actions in the national gender, race and disability equality actions plans set by the Scottish Government.
------------------------------------	---

### Equality Outcome 3

The employee experience will be inclusive for diverse groups.

Inequality	Lower Employee Experience survey sentiment on Inclusion key performance indicator scores from those protected characteristic groups known to face inequalities.
Link to strategic objective	Supports Scottish Water's purpose in supporting a flourishing Scotland and making a critical contribution to Scotland's health, wellbeing and prosperity. Contributes to achieving actions in the national gender, race and disability equality actions plans set by the Scottish Government.

### Equality Outcome 4

To support a flourishing Scotland, increase opportunities for individuals whose career and development opportunities may be limited due to their background or the place where they live and provide enabling environments in the early stages of their careers with us.

Inequality	Labour market opportunities are unfavourable in many areas across Scotland. People who share protected characteristics and/or who come from more disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or living in lower SIMD areas may face more barriers to entry and progression to employment.
Link to strategic objective	Contributes to the purpose of supporting a flourishing Scotland and making a critical contribution to Scotland's health, wellbeing and prosperity. Contributes to the purpose of creating a more successful country and share opportunities more equally for all of Scotland.

## Future monitoring and reporting

The work and ambitions highlighted through our equality outcomes and the wider contents of this PSED Report are ongoing, and progress against these will continue to be monitored and reported internally. We will take a collaborative, bold, and innovative approach across Scottish Water to ensure progress is being made against each of our equality outcomes.

A full update on progress against equality outcomes will be reported in our next PSED Report, due in 2027.

# Appendix: Equality Monitoring Report

## Scope of Report

This report provides an overview of our equality and diversity employment monitoring data for financial years 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-2024 and for the whole of 2024.

It covers the protected characteristics of age, sex, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. For the most recent protected characteristic data this report includes our people on payroll at a monitoring date of 31 December 2024. For the previous three years the monitoring date used was 31 March. Our work in this area over the reporting period 2021-25 has been informed by the Scottish Government's Equality Data Improvement programme which commenced in April 2021.

[View our last full report providing comparison of years 2017- 2021](#)

In terms of data quality, we encourage our people to use the self-service portal within our HR system to share and update their confidential equality data with us. Supplying this information is voluntary, and individuals can choose what they wish to share. We do include a 'prefer not to say' option against all equality monitoring questions.

Since 2023, we have run annual campaigns encouraging all our employees to update their equality information as well as targeted communications to new joiners. We review the effectiveness of these communications to inform future actions and to use data collection methods that work.

We have also included available data covering the reporting period from April 2023 to December 2024 for:

- Return to work of women on maternity leave

- The numbers of employees taking parental leave and shared parental leave
- The numbers of full-time and part-time employees by sex
- Retention and data on leavers analysed by protected characteristics of age, sex, and by numbers of full-time and part-time employees

## Interpreting the data

Information is published in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and does not identify individuals.

Information is captured for the purpose of understanding how our workforce profile compares with known data about the different population groups within Scotland. It is also used to identify lawful measures to improve our workforce diversity as well as improve inclusion which is key to retention and employee wellbeing.

Information about groups of people fewer than 10 is suppressed to protect anonymity. This is shown as a dash in the charts. We include a 'prefer not to say' option against all monitoring questions. This is counted as a response and not included in the unknown data category.

Workforce headcount in 2021 was 4201, in 2022 was 4218, in 2023 was 4473 and in 2024 was 4794.

Information in the Equality Monitoring section is published in percentages only, with the charts showing what the percentage point difference is between 2021 and 2024. Data relating to the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity is given as a count.

## Using the data

The data is reported every two years as part of the public sector equality duty which is a statutory report under the terms of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

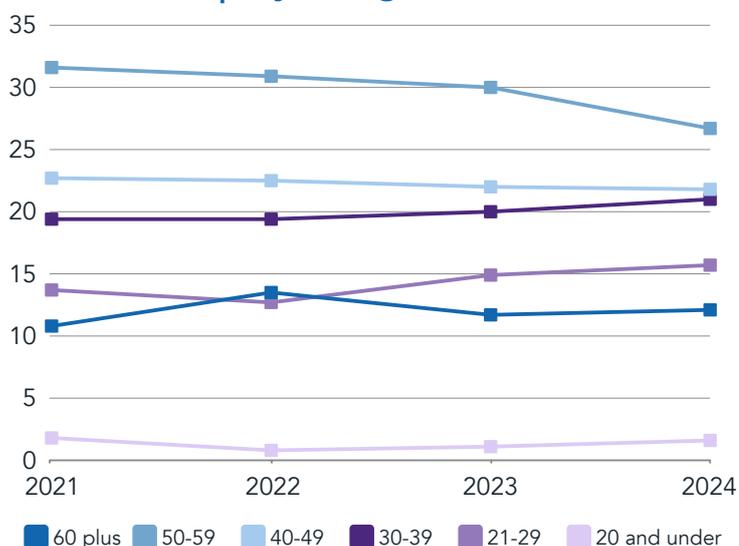
It enables us to identify and monitor data gaps and take action to reduce these.

The data provides evidence to justify the use of positive action in recruitment and training e.g., targeting training and development opportunities to communities under-represented within our workforce.

## Introduction to the data

The following data charts are presented by equality protected characteristic. They cover age, sex, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and pregnancy and maternity. Gender reassignment data is absent from this report to protect anonymity; however, we provide a narrative.

### Chart 1: Employee Age Profiles



## Age

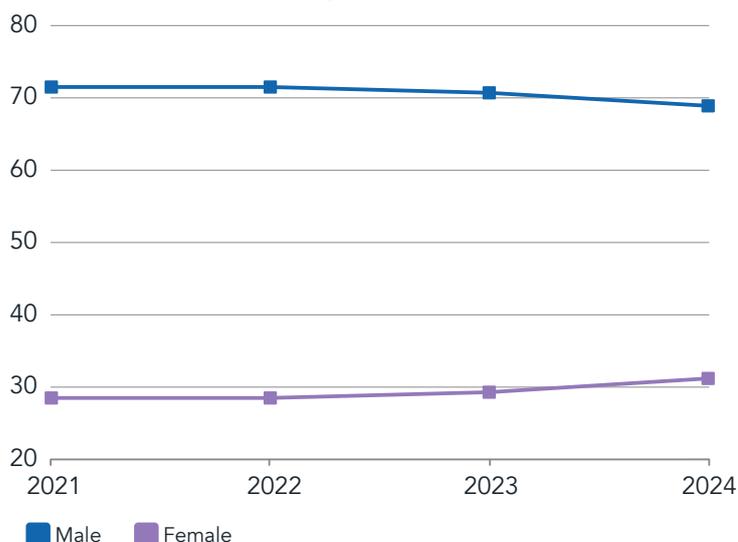
Age ranges 50-59 has the highest proportion of employees - accounting for 26.7% of the total Scottish Water population in 2024. Whilst there is still a peak in the upper age bands, the overall age profile is looking slightly more balanced than in previous years. The average age of employees has been on a slight downward trend since 2021 from 44.7 years to 43.9 years. This can be attributed to a high rate of retirement from older/longer serving employees which is expected to continue, coupled with a continued focus on our youth pipeline.

Age	2021	2022	2023	2024
60 plus	10.8	13.5	11.7	12.2
50-59	31.6	30.9	30.0	26.9
40-49	22.7	22.5	22.0	22.0
30-39	19.4	19.4	20.0	21.6
21-29	13.7	12.7	11.7	15.7
20 and under	1.8	0.8	1.1	1.6

Percentage of employee population by year.

**Sex**  
 Scottish Water remains largely predominantly male. Females make up 31.2% of the workforce, an increase of 2.7% since our last full PSED Report was published in 2021.

**Chart 2: Percentage of male and female employees**



Sex	2021	2022	2023	2024
Male	71.5	71.5	70.7	68.9
Female	28.5	28.5	29.3	31.2

Percentage of employee population by year.

**Employee Disability profile**

**Chart 3: Percentage sharing Disability, Long-term Condition or Neurodivergence**

Disability status	2021	2022	2023	2024	-/+
Yes	2.0	2.3	2.6	4.1	+2.1
No	95.0	89.0	83.0	77.0	-18.0
Prefer not to say	3.0	0.2	0.3	0.4	+2.6
Unknown	-	8.3	13.8	18.4	+10.1

**Minority Ethnic Background**

**Chart 4: Percentage of employees by ethnic group**

Ethnic Group	2021	2022	2023	2024	-/+
Minority Ethnic Group	3.8	3.9	4.4	4.6	+0.8
White	87.6	86.9	83.4	81.7	-5.9
Prefer not to say	8.6	7.4	6.8	5.2	-3.4
Unknown	-	2.5	5.8	8.3	+5.8

For the purposes of the analysis presented here, 'Minority ethnic group' includes 'White Other,' 'Mixed or multiple ethnic groups,' 'Asian or British Asian,' 'African, or British African,' 'Caribbean or Black,' or any other ethnic groups.

## Employee Sexual Orientation profile

Chart 5: Percentage of employees by sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	2021	2022	2023	2024	-/+
Straight/ Heterosexual	12.5	22.8	27.0	34.9	+22.4
Gay or Lesbian	0.6	0.8	0.9	1.1	+0.5
Bisexual	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.9	+0.7
Other	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	+0.2
Prefer not to say	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.4	+0.9
Not known	86.2	74.0	70.0	61.3	-24.9

## Religion and Belief profiles

Chart 6: Percentage of employees by religion and belief

Religion or belief	2021	2022	2023	2024	-/+
Christian	14.5	15.5	15.0	13.8	-2.3
Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	-
None	5.0	9.0	10.2	12.0	+7.0
Other	4.9	2.3	3.8	3.2	-1.7
Prefer not to say	26.6	22.8	20.0	16.6	-10.0
Not known	51.3	51.9	50.5	53.9	+2.6

## Gender reassignment

We understand that monitoring numbers of Transgender people is a sensitive area and data is handled sensitively and confidentially through the monitoring process. Considering the publication of the new Data collection and publication guidance on Sex, Gender Identity, and Trans Status by the Scottish Government in late 2021 we improved the data collection element of our HR system in 2022.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Scottish Water’s Maternity, Paternity, Adoption & Shared Parental Leave Policy offers enhanced maternity provision. This consists of 26 weeks full pay, 13 weeks of statutory maternity pay, and 13 weeks unpaid leave.

### Chart 7: Return to work of women on maternity leave

Maternity leave	2021	2022	2023	2024
Employees on maternity leave	46	61	69	63
Employees who returned on reduced hours	2	8	7	13
Employees who returned with no change to hours	13	30	25	22
Employees still on maternity leave	28	23	37	28
Employees who did not return	3	0	0	0

For those who returned from maternity leave between the period 1 January - 31 December 2024, 22 returned to their substantive post and hours, and the remaining 13 women, returned on formal flexible working arrangements. This is a higher number of women returning on formal flexible working arrangements when compared with the previous three years.

## Paternity and Shared Parental leave (SPL)

### Chart 8: Employees taking paternity leave and shared parental leave

Family friendly leave	2021	2022	2023	2024
Employees taking paternity leave	61	62	54	71
Employees taking shared parental leave	-	11	-	13

Our data period moved from an April-March to a January-December period from 2024 onwards. During 2024, 71 people took paternity leave, compared to a paternity leave uptake of 54 people in 2023, 62 people in 2022, and 61 people in 2021.

During 2024, 13 people took advantage of the ability to take SPL, which is paid equivalently to maternity leave, even though this is not a legal requirement. This compares with the period 2023 and 2021 when less than 10 people took SPL, and with 2022 when 11 people took SPL.

Our Belong networks, including Women in Scottish Water and Parents Supporting Parents have been helping us celebrate employees’ stories of sharing parental leave and how we can all do more to encourage expectant fathers and partners to take-up the option of shared parental leave.

## Numbers of part-time and full-time employees

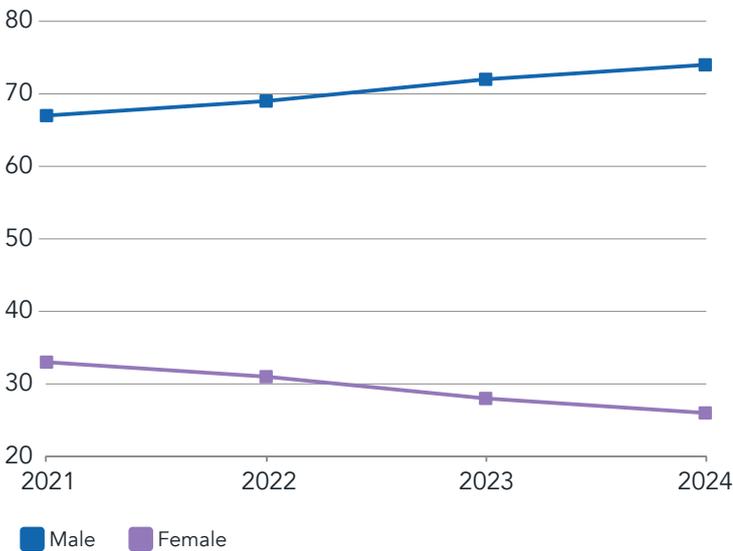
Part-time employees now account for 9.2% of the workforce which is a slight decrease from the 9.8% reported in 2023. Part-time contracts continue to become slowly more common for male employees.

The proportion of part-time employees who are female has increased since we last reported and is 60% compared to 58.7% in March 2023, 61% in March 2022 and 61.5% in March 2021. The proportion of part-time employees who are male was 40% (rounded) by the end of 2024. Flexible retirement is partly contributing to this gradual shift.

## Retention

Data in this section considers the rate at which individuals are leaving Scottish Water across different demographic groups.

Chart 9: Male/Female leavers



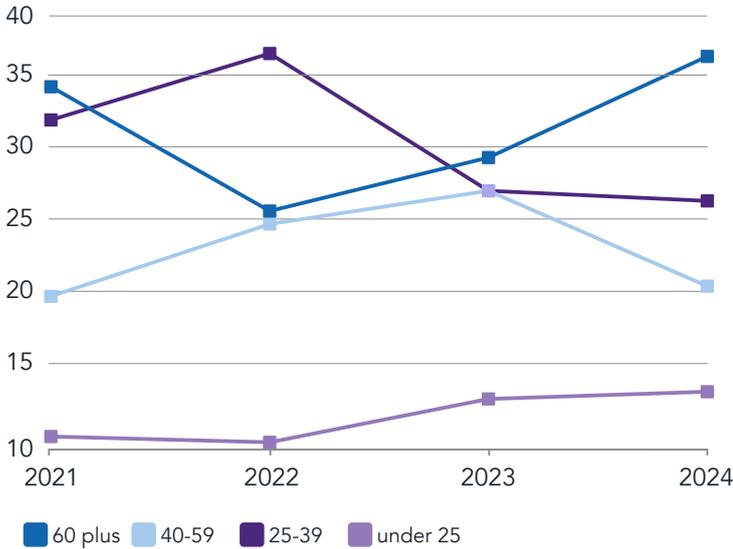
Sex	2021	2022	2023	2024
Male	67.0	69.0	71.0	74.0
Female	33.0	31.0	28.0	26.0

## Age Leavers

There has been some fluctuation across age groups in terms of leavers data. Employees aged over 60 have continued to represent most of the leavers, accounting for between 26.5% and 37.2% since 2021.

The proportion of leavers in the 25–39-year-old age group has fallen by 10.2% since 2022 - 2023. The rates at which under 25s are leaving are continuing to increase from 10.9% in 2021 to 14% in 2024.

Chart 10: Percentage distribution of leavers by age group

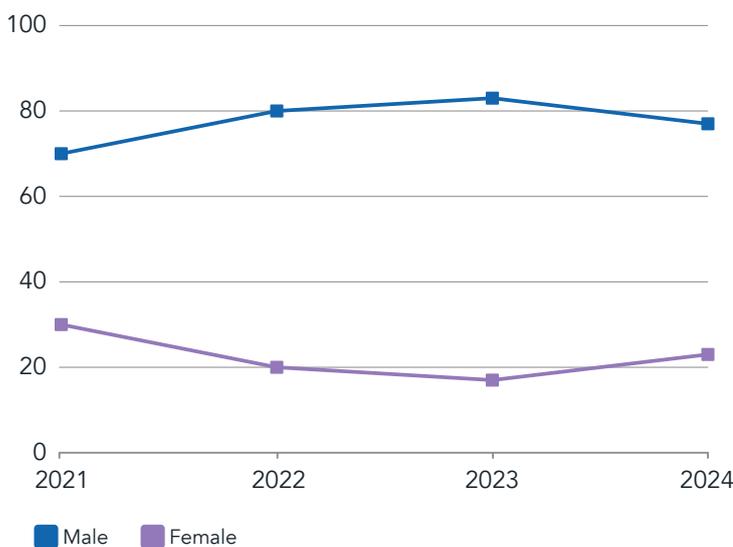


Age	2021	2022	2023	2024
60 plus	35.1	26.5	30.2	37.2
40-59	20.6	25.6	27.9	21.3
25-39	32.8	37.4	27.9	27.2
under 25	10.9	10.5	13.6	14.0

## Full-time / Part-time Leavers

Higher rates of part-time workers left Scottish Water in 2024 (23%) compared to the overall split of 90% full-time / 10% part-time employees. The overall percentage of part-time workers leaving has fluctuated over time with a peak of 30% in 2021-2022, reducing to 17% in 2023-24.

Chart 11: Full-time/part-time male/female leavers



Sex	2021	2022	2023	2024
Male	70.0	80.0	83.0	77.0
Female	30.0	20.0	17.0	23.0

# Appendix: Equal Pay Statement and Occupational Segregation

## This Appendix includes:

- Scottish Water Equal Pay Statement
- Chart 12 - Occupational Segregation by Sex
- Chart 13 - Occupational Segregation by Ethnicity
- Chart 14 - Occupational Segregation by Disability
- Chart 15 - Percentage of employees part-time by grade

## Interpreting the data

Information in this Appendix is published in numbers and percentages. Information about groups of people fewer than 10 is suppressed to protect anonymity. This is shown as a dash in the charts. The descriptor TUPE refers to employees who have been transferred to the employment of Scottish Water under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.

The data is reported every four years as part of the public sector equality duty which is a statutory report under the terms of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

In Scottish Water, work of different kinds happens across all job grades. However, on average more of our lower graded jobs are in front line operations, and by proportion are more reliant on manual or outdoors work. This can lead to Occupational Segregation, where historical social norms can mean that people self-select different types of career, which in our sector can influence the grade of job they are employed to do.

## Scottish Water Equal Pay Statement

“We recognise that all employees should receive equal pay for like work, work of equal value, and work rated as equivalent under our job evaluation scheme in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Scottish Water is committed to delivering a pay and reward system which is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias. We will work towards reducing any identified pay gap. We are also committed to continuing our work with our recognised Joint Trade Unions to take action to promote and implement equal pay between women and men, persons who are disabled and persons who are not, and persons who belong to a minority racial group”.

## Modernising our Reward Foundations

In 2021 Scottish Water started on our transformation journey to change the pay and grading system for employees. This new pay and grading system, named Modernising Reward Foundations (MRF), was created to make sure our reward structures are fit for purpose, for now and for the future.

During the transformation period there was significant involvement with our employees, listening to both their feedback and that of our recognised Trade Unions. We also undertook quantitative and qualitative research with employees.

Through employee surveys and MRF, we have changed how we describe jobs, created new job profiles, developed a consistent role catalogue, introduced new job grade and salary ranges, and introduced a new mechanism for pay progression.

The new pay and grading framework was introduced in April 2024 and an equality impact assessment for the change was completed.



Chart 12: Occupational Segregation by Sex

Grade	Number of		Total	Percentage of grade (rounded)		Percentage of sex	
	Male	Female		Male	Female	Male	Female
Structured Trainee Programme - Apprentice	141	35	176	80.0%	20.0%	2.9%	0.7%
Structured Trainee Programme - Graduate	50	49	99	51.0%	49.0%	1.0%	1.0%
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	124	26	170	73.0%	27.0%	2.6%	0.9%
3	142	142	284	50.0%	50.0%	2.9%	2.9%
4	683	82	765	89.0%	11.0%	14.2%	1.7%
5	400	188	588	68.0%	32.0%	8.3%	3.9%
6	641	352	993	65.0%	35.0%	13.3%	7.3%
7	660	335	995	66.0%	34.0%	13.7%	6.9%
8	312	183	495	63.0%	37.0%	6.5%	3.8%
TUPE	18	-	20	90.0%	-	0.3%	-
Business Manager	100	69	169	59.0%	41.0%	2.0%	1.4%
General Manager	20	-	29	69.0%	31.0%	0.4%	-
Chief Executive & Directors	-	-	11	-	-	0.1%	-
Total	3299	1495	4794			68.8%	31.2%

Chart 13: Occupational Segregation by Ethnicity

Grade	Minority Ethnic	White Other	White Scottish/ British/ Irish	Percentage of Ethnicity		
				Minority Ethnic	White Other	White Scottish/ British/ Irish
Structured Trainee Programme - Apprentice	-	-	109	-	-	2.7%
Structured Trainee Programme - Graduate	-	-	60	-	-	1.5%
1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	-	-	133	-	-	3.4%
3	-	-	211	-	-	5.3%
4	-	10	638	-	7.0%	16.2%
5	10	16	483	12.3%	11.3%	12.3%
6	18	28	843	22.2%	19.8%	21.5%
7	23	51	818	28.3%	36.0%	20.8%
8	-	16	429	-	11.3%	10.9%
TUPE	-	-	-	-	-	-
Business Manager	-	-	152	-	-	3.8%
General Manager	-	-	26	-	-	0.6%
Chief Executive & Directors	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total number of employees	81	141	3917			
Total percentage of employees	1.7%	2.9%	81.7%			

Chart 13 shows the highest concentration of employees from minority ethnic backgrounds are in grades 7, 6 and 5. This reflects the distribution of employees in the organisation. The chart does not include the 655 colleagues (13.5% of employees) who did not respond/preferred not to say.

## Chart 14: Occupational Segregation by Disability

Grade	Number of disabled people	Number of non-disabled people	Percentage of Disability	
			Disabled	Non-disabled
Structured Trainee Programme - Apprentice	10	67	5.4%	1.8%
Structured Trainee Programme - Graduate	-	38	-	1.0%
1	-	-	-	-
2	-	113	-	0.4%
3	16	192	8.6%	5.2%
4	19	587	10.2%	15.9%
5	18	459	9.7%	12.4%
6	49	776	26.4%	21%
7	32	820	17.2%	22.2%
8	23	435	12.4%	11.7%
TUPE	-	18	0.5%	0.5%
Business Manager	-	152	-	4.1%
General Manager	-	27	-	0.7%
Chief Executive & Directors	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>3691</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Chart 14 shows the highest concentration of disabled employees are in grades 6,7,8 and 4. This partly reflects the distribution of employees in Scottish Water. The chart does not include the 918 employees (19%) who did not respond/preferred not to say.

Chart 15: Percentage of employees part-time by grade

Grade	Percentage of organisation part-time	Percentage of grade part-time
Structured Trainee Programme - Apprentice	-	-
Structured Trainee Programme - Graduate	-	-
1	-	-
2	0.6%	18.2%
3	1.4%	25.0%
4	2.5%	9.5%
5	1.2%	9.6%
6	1.5%	7.6%
7	1.4%	7.0%
8	1.0%	9.6%
TUPE	-	-
Business Manager	0.2%	6.5%
General Manager	-	10.3%
Chief Executive & Directors	-	9.0%
Total	9.2%	

Chart 15 provides details of the number of employees in each of the Scottish Water pay grades working part-time. Those working part-time account for 9.2% of our overall workforce (3.7% of men and 5.5% of women).

# Appendix: Gender Pay Gap Data

Whilst Scottish Water is not listed in the relevant schedule of the Regulations for public authority employers who are under mandatory GPG Reporting obligations, Scottish Water does have a duty to report its gender pay gap data under the general equality duty. In the interests of transparency, we continue with our adopted approach of sharing our gender pay gap data using the two-year frequency of PSED reporting.

The gender pay gap is calculated as the difference between the median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for men and women as a proportion of the median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for men. A negative mean or median gender pay gap shows that women are paid slightly more than men.

When calculating hourly rates of pay we have included: base salary, paid leave, allowances, shift pay, on call and standby payments. We have not included: overtime, expenses, benefits in kind, redundancy pay, salary sacrifice values, pay in lieu of leave, and pension contributions. For the purposes of counting 'relevant employees', in the most recent calculation we have excluded those on Apprenticeship training contracts as they are not in substantive roles.

For the most recent gender pay gap data this report includes our people on payroll as at a monitoring date of 31 December 2024 and 31 December 2023. For the previous years the monitoring date used was 31 March.

## Gender Pay Gap Information for Scotland

In 2024, the median gender pay gap for full-time employees in Scotland widened from 1.4 per cent in 2023 to 2.2 per cent in 2024. This is due to men's hourly earnings (excluding overtime) increasing at a faster rate than women's hourly earnings (excluding overtime). This means for every £1 men earn women earn £0.98.

### Gender Pay Gap - Scotland

## Gender Pay Gap Information for Scottish Water

In 2024, women earn £1 for every £1 that men earn when comparing **median** hourly pay. Their median hourly pay is the same as men's.

In 2024, women earn £1.02 (rounded) for every £1 that men earn when comparing mean (average) hourly pay. When comparing mean hourly pay, women's **mean** hourly pay is 2.48% higher than men's.



Chart 16: Gender pay gap measurements - comparing mean and median at Scottish Water 2021-2024

2021-2022		2022-2023		2023		2024	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
1.6%	-1.9%	2.9%	-1.4%	0.6%	-2.1%	-2.4%	0.0%

Chart 17: The percentage of women in each pay quarter 2024

Pay Quarter	Male	Female
Upper hourly pay quarter	69.0%	30.9%
Upper middle hourly pay quarter	67.9%	32.0%
Lower middle hourly pay quarter	70.2%	29.7%
Lower hourly pay quarter	68.1%	31.8%

At Scottish Water, women occupy 31% of the highest paid jobs and 32% of the lowest paid jobs.

Chart 18: Comparing the percentage of women in each pay quarter at Scottish Water 2021-2024

Quartile	2021-2022		2022-2023		2023		2024	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Upper hourly pay quarter	71.0%	29.0%	72.0%	28.0%	69.5%	30.5%	69.0%	30.9%
Upper middle hourly pay quarter	69.0%	31.0%	68.0%	32.0%	68.5%	31.5%	67.9%	32.0%
Lower middle hourly pay quarter	74.9%	25.1%	73.0%	27.0%	75.4%	24.6%	70.2%	29.7%
Lower hourly pay quarter	68.0%	32.0%	70.0%	30.0%	67.4%	32.6%	68.1%	31.8%

Chart 19: Mean Gender pay gap by age band 2021-2024

Age band	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023	2024
25 and under	-0.7%	-2.0%	-3.9%	2.9%
26-40	3.5%	-0.6%	-1.2%	-4.1%
41-55	-1.2%	2.0%	-1.4%	-6.1%
56 and over	-1.5%	6.8%	4.0%	4.2%

Chart 20: Median Gender pay gap by age band 2021-2024

Age band	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023	2024
25 and under	-3.4%	-7.0%	0.0%	-0.1%
26-40	-1.7%	-2.6%	-4.3%	-2.2%
41-55	-1.2%	-0.8%	-4.4%	-3.2%
56 and over	-1.8%	2.4%	-0.3%	4.1%

The latest data shows that men aged 55 and over and men under 25 have a slightly higher mean hourly pay than women in those age bands. However, in all other age groups, a negative mean and median gender pay gap shows that women are paid slightly more than men.

## Summary

We have a predominantly male workforce. We have carried out detailed analysis and identified distribution of job types and grades as being the main cause of gender pay differences in our workforce. Please see chart 12 in Appendix (Occupational segregation by sex chart). By carrying out further workforce and gender pay gap analysis by age as well as gender, length of service was recognised as having an impact on rates of pay. We are pleased that our mean gender pay gap has reduced since 2021-2022 and that we are reporting no median gender pay gap for 2024. Women earn, on average, the same as their male counterparts per hour.

Actions that have helped lower our gender pay gap have included:

- Creating education hubs to promote an interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) related careers from an early age
- Closely monitoring the number of female employees joining each year
- Focusing on inclusivity in our development programmes to increase the representation of women in our succession planning (women made up 40% of applicants and 42% participants in our 'Take the Lead' programme)
- Introducing mentoring to provide extra support for female apprentices working in traditionally male roles
- Using recruitment campaigns in a gender sensitive way, for example featuring female modern apprentices in job adverts

- Strengthening support for our 'Women in Scottish Water' employee led network group
- Supporting flexible working practices wherever possible.
- The introduction of our new pay and grading system (MRF)

Our focus on recruiting and developing women has led to a narrowing of the pay gap and we will continue this work to ensure equality.