

4.2.3 Strengthened the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Forum to include accessibility

Accessibility has been incorporated into the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum, acknowledging it as a key requirement for staff and customers as part of SLC's vision of being digital, customer-focused centre of excellence. The forum is now known as Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility Forum (EDI&A).

4.2.4 Sharing best practice

During the year SLC participated in relevant EDI related external conferences, e.g. the Text Help Inclusive Design Conference. SLC provided a demonstration of measures used to improve accessibility with a case study of how SLC carried out 'usability' tests of the student application process with a number of disabled participants. This included people with visual impairments, Parkinson's disease and dyslexia. The feedback from this user experience exercise has informed further improvements being made to the system.

4.2.5 Commenced an initiative to create an Inclusive Communication and Design Strategy

This will be a practical strategy that can be adopted by all business areas with regard to communication activities. The purpose of this draft strategy is to recognise individual's particular needs and preferences and thereby ensure the different communication needs of all staff and customers are met.

It is anticipated that this approach, will contribute positively to internal and external communication as well as the legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments as they apply to meeting the needs of disabled customers and staff.

In terms of next steps we will:

- Continue to seek compliance with Governments Digital by Default Strategy for all products and services while respecting the legitimate needs of the digitally excluded.
- Continue to improve web accessibility in line with industry standards.
- Progress with plans for an Inclusive Communication and Design Strategy.

4.3 Our People Objective

We will attract, retain and develop our diverse range of employees with a culture which embraces new ideas and celebrates the contribution which diversity and inclusion makes.

We have:

4.3.1 Undertaken a staff survey on Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) which will complement SLC's existing annual People Insight Survey.

The survey was carried out in October 2014 and:

- Provides a baseline of staff perceptions in respect of EDI.
- Highlights key themes important to staff.
- Focuses on activities and provides an indication of trends which can be compared with the results of the broader People Insight Survey results.

The survey the responses highlighted key themes we will now work on in terms of EDI awareness and values and behaviours. A number of actions have already been taken forward to address issues raised by the survey:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 'awareness and responsibilities' has been incorporated within SLC's Leadership Development Programme (see 4.3.2. below).
- The Recruitment Applicant System has been updated to meet the requirements of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled applicants, so that the Company maintains accreditation with the Positive about Disability 'double tick' standard.
- Improved monitoring and tracking of reasonable adjustments for disabled employees.

4.3.2 Improved equality, diversity and inclusion knowledge and experience of our senior and middle managers

This has been achieved by mainstreaming EDI into the 'Leading Self and Leading Others' elements of the Leadership Development Programme. The focus was to introduce the concepts of unconscious bias and organisational bias and to explore the impact this can have on decision making and workplace operation

In terms of next steps we will:

- Continue to identify improvements to address the issues from the EDI and People Insight Survey and in any subsequent surveys.
- Monitor the impact of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme as part of our recruitment process.

4.4 Equality Analysis Objective

We will ensure Equality analysis and impact assessments are delivered as part of our 'business as usual' activities.

4.4.1 Equality Impact Assessment guidance and toolkit has been produced

The guidance helps staff whose roles involve:

- Developing new or reviewing existing policies;
-
- Changing practices and processes;
-
- Making operational and strategic decisions and
-
- Making financial decisions.

The outputs of the use of the toolkit will allow SLC to demonstrate how the business has paid 'due regard' to the potential impact of decisions, processes and practices on groups and individuals with protected characteristics.

In terms of next steps we will:

- Continue to embed the requirement to complete equality impact assessments in all relevant business process including specifically project management/development and service management frameworks.
- Establish a mechanism to 'quality check' completed equality impact assessments to ensure that they are 'fit for publication' and competent to rebut any relevant challenges.

4.5 Our Management Information Objective

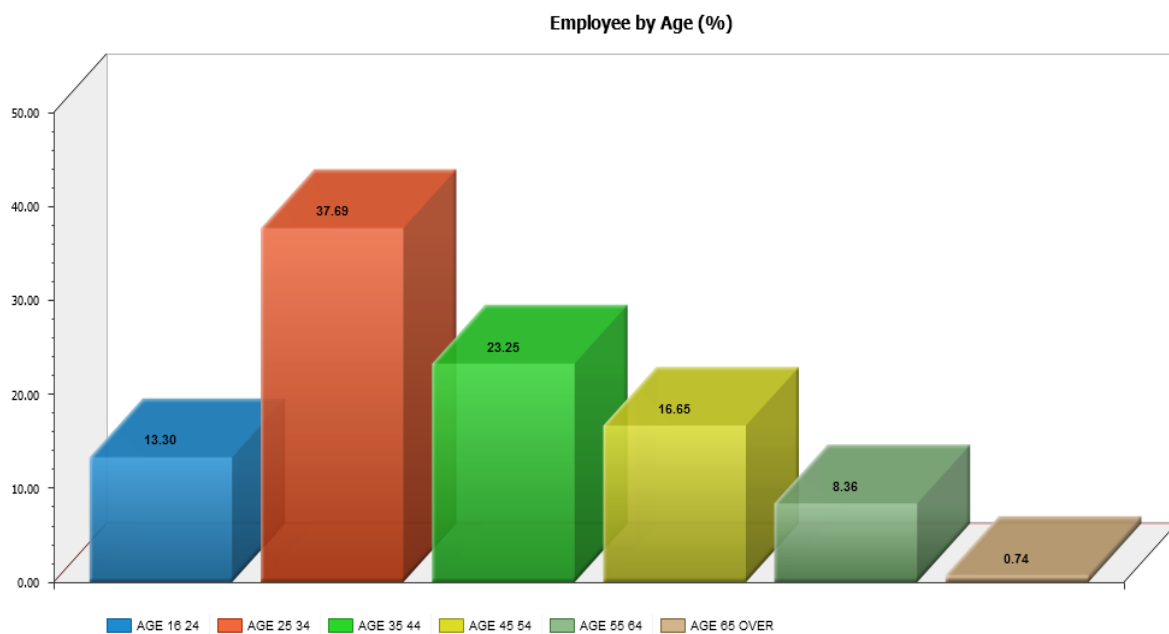
We will ensure that relevant high level diversity and inclusion indicators are mainstreamed to ensure they are considered by managers as and when they make business decisions.

4.5.1 Completed the production of the annual equality staff monitoring exercise

This information helps the Company understand the profile of the workforce by protected characteristic.

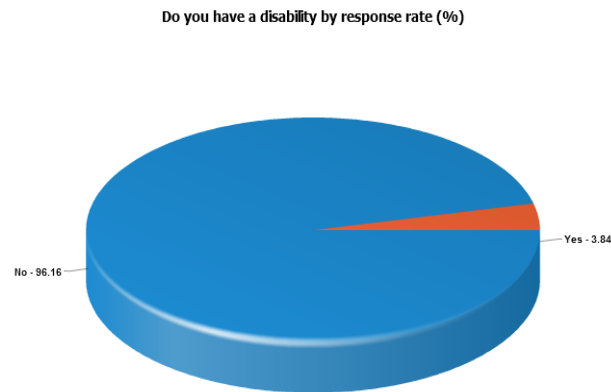
Some of the key findings from the SLC 2015 analysis are:

Age



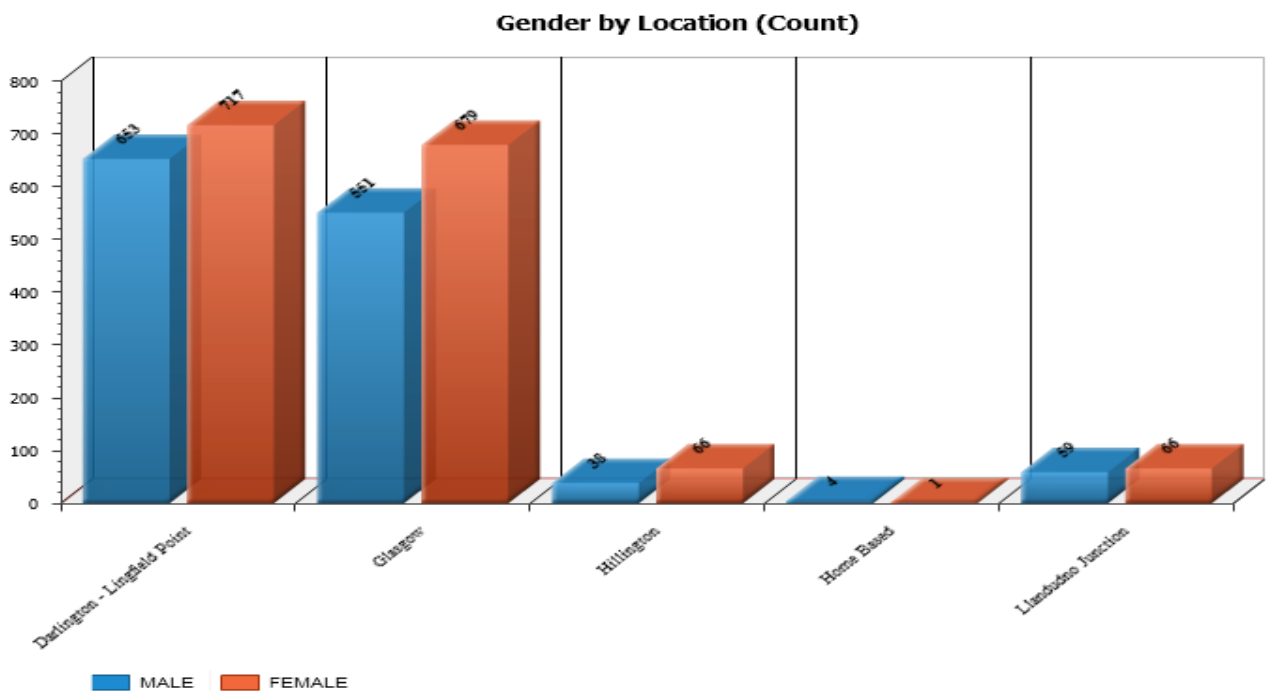
The data above indicates that SLC is a relatively young company with 51% of the employee group less than 34 years of age.

Disability



The level of disability disclosure within the Company is 3.84%. Disability data within workplaces tends to be under-reported in comparison with the data emerging from the UK Census 2011 which reported that 18% of the UK population identified some health related limitations.

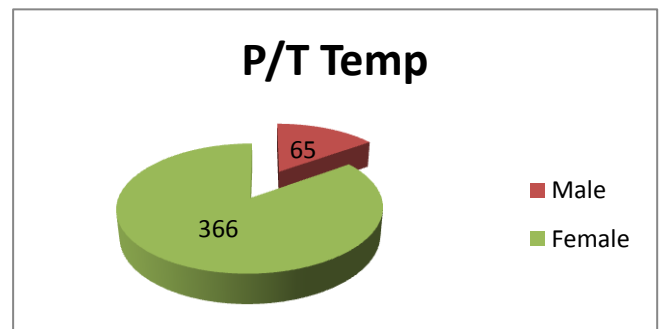
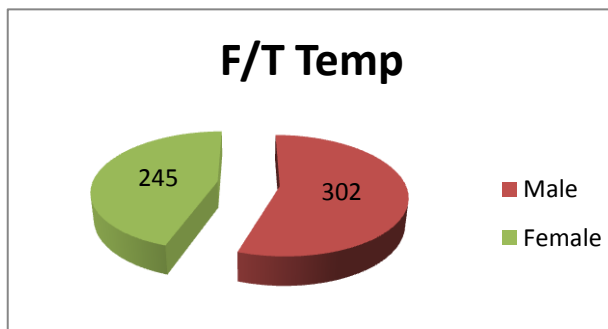
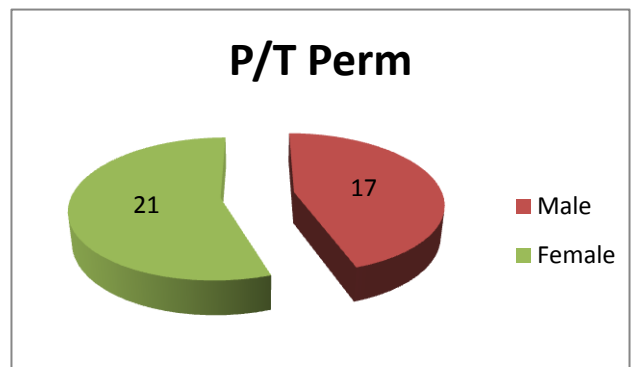
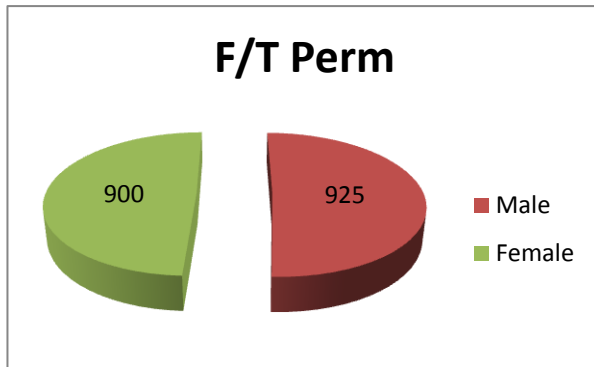
Gender



The gender profile of the workforce in total is 53.96% female and 46.04% male. This is a more balanced profile than the public sector generally.

In terms of gender it is worth examining the employment categories to identify if there are any gender-specific patterns.

The following data demonstrates that part time temporary working is predominantly female while the data picture of gender difference in full time contracts is small.



Ethnicity

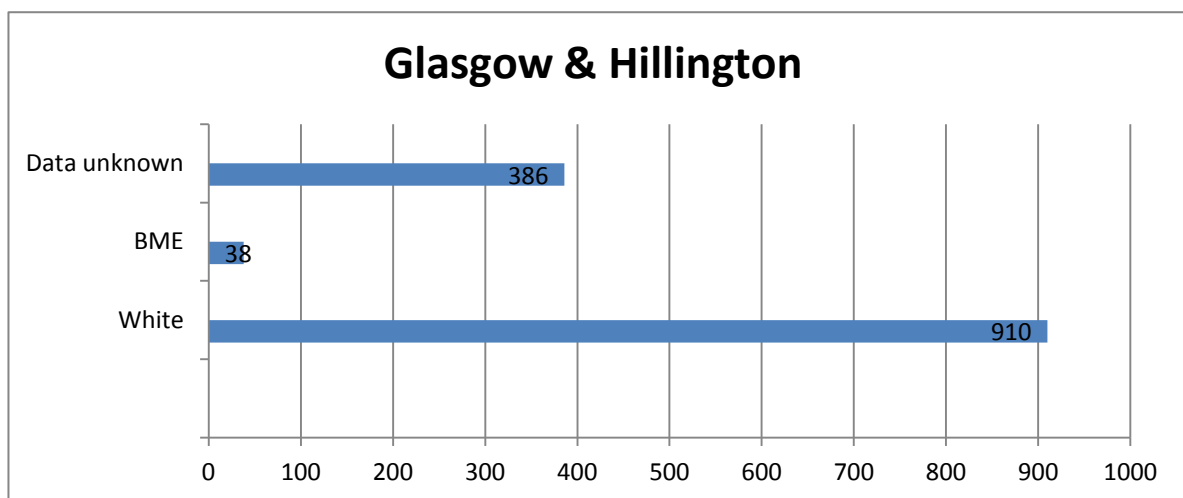
The largest employment bases are Glasgow (including Hillington) and Darlington. We have reported the ethnicity profile of the workforce in these areas only.

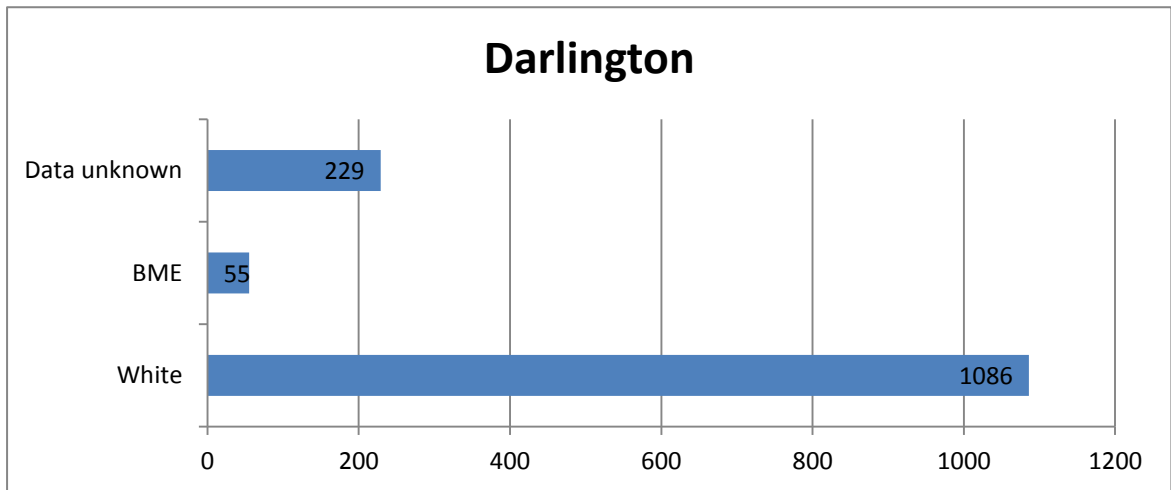
Data is available for employees who are classed as home based and for staff working in the Llandudno office however the numbers of staff employed from the Black and Minority Ethnic community are below the reporting threshold.

In the graph below the percentage of the workforce from the BME community in the Glasgow area is 2.84%.

The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population for Scotland from the 2011 Census is 4% while the BME population for Glasgow is 12%.

Our data indicates that we have almost 30% of the workforce where we hold no data suggesting a need to improve reporting/disclosure.



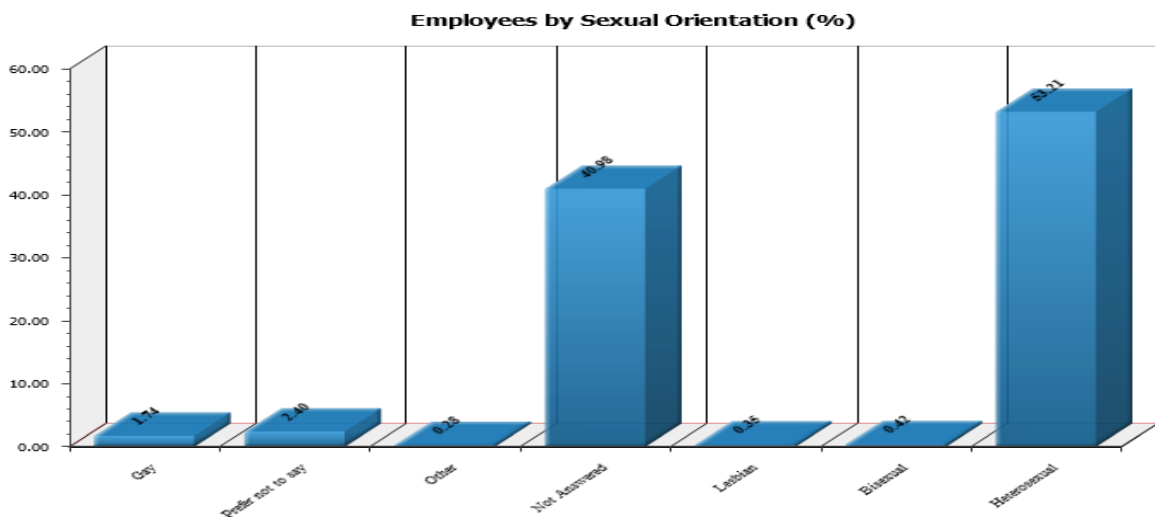


In the north of England the percentage of the workforce from the BME community in the Darlington area is 4.01%.

The BME population for England & Wales from the 2011 Census is 14%. The BME population for Darlington is approximately 4% which indicates that the SLC workforce in this area is representative albeit there is still a reporting/disclosure issue which requires improvement.

Sexual orientation

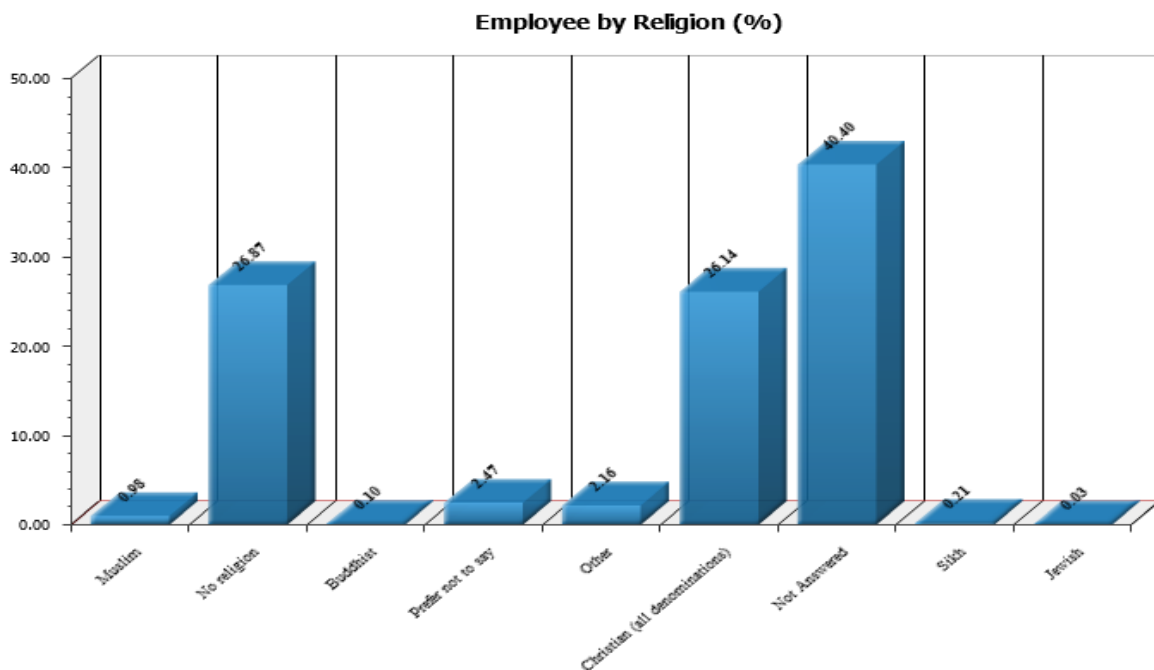
This is a new reporting area and we would anticipate reducing the level of unanswered data through action to improve reporting/disclosure.



Religion & Belief

This is another new reporting area and we would anticipate reducing the level of unanswered data through action to improve reporting/disclosure.

Looking at the no religion percentage this reflects the information from the 2011 census which showed that in England and Wales this is 25%. In Scotland this is even higher with 36% of the population indicating no religion.



It is worth noting that SLC has offices in Scotland, England and Wales and that the demographics and protected characteristics of each of these are quite different.

We plan to increase the level of sophistication of our equality monitoring so that we are in a better position to reflect and analyse the data by the particular demographics/characteristics of each region. This will offer the opportunity to better understand representativeness by region.

4.5.2 Completed mandatory e-compliance modules

This information helps the Company measure its organisational performance by setting mandatory targets for staff training. The completion rates for EDI courses were:

- Diversity and Inclusion (all employees) 81%
- Diversity and Inclusion (for managers) 66%

In terms of next steps we will:

- Identify where data has low response rates and take action to improve the percentage response rates.
- Create an access point on the equality intranet webpage for equality data which can be used as a resource for colleagues/managers completing equality impact assessments.
- Consider how best to compare our employment data trends with the (UK) population and whether SLC uses overall UK figures or whether this can be broken down across Scotland; England and Wales.
- Consider the best way to improve the capture and reporting of equality data from customer insight exercises.

Conclusions

This 2015 report is the penultimate progress report against the 2013 – 2016 objectives.

It is noted that preparations will be made by the Equality Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Forum to engage with staff, customers and stakeholders on developing the next suite of 4 year equality objectives.

The timescale for producing the next set of equality objectives is 6th April 2016 as identified within the Equality Act 2010.