



## Gathering workforce diversity data: **Why it matters**

The heat network industry is set to grow from around 3% of all heat generated in the UK to 18%<sup>1</sup>. The Heat Networks Industry Council (HeatNIC) estimates that up to 35,000 jobs will need to be created in the sector. A diverse and inclusive industry is key to the sectors success.

A focus on diversity and inclusion (D&I) will strengthen the industry, help us be more innovative and have more creative solutions to grow our talent pool and develop the talent we already have.

The Diverse Heat Network has been established to ensure that the emerging UK heat network sector leaves no stone unturned when it comes to attracting and developing talented people to drive the industry forward.

As an industry we need to hold ourselves to account and cannot do this without monitoring our progress and capturing good data. Last year HeatNIC, in partnership with Association of Decentralised Energy, commissioned a workforce and skills survey, the first of its kind across the heat networks sector, to help us start to understand and baseline the industry.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Committee on Climate Change, however, low carbon heat networks will need to supply around 18% of heat by 2050 to meet net zero cost effectively.

# Why collect data?

Collecting and analysing workforce data, enables organisations individually, and the industry collectively, to drive progress on:

- diversity and inclusion (D&I)
- identifying and developing responses to skill gaps such as initiatives to attract people into the industry
- identifying apprentice and training needs, developing industry wide initiatives

## Organisations' reasons for engaging in D&I

71% want to invest in D&I to improve employee experience and attract talent

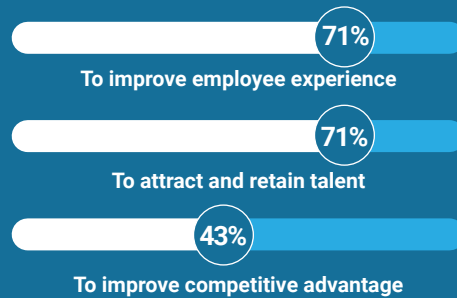


Figure 1: Organisations' reasons for engaging in D&I

## Survey results

The workforce survey collected information on the make-up of the heat networks industry workforce, skills and training gaps as well as D&I statistics, strategies and commitments. The survey received a total of 17 responses providing details on 1,285 employees.

Due to its relatively small sample size and the partial completeness of certain sections, there are limitations to the insights this first survey can provide. Response data on the wider set of D&I characteristics was very low giving no clear insight into the industry mix for characteristics such as: LGBTQIA+, nationality, ethnicity, disability, salary range, work location, employment status, business function and job family.

**Better quality data will help identify employment and skills gaps.**

# Key insights

## Workforce by work type

Two-thirds of the workforce are involved in capital projects.

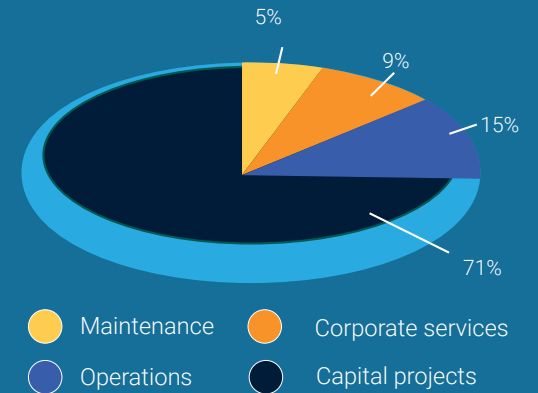


Figure 2: Proportion of workforce by work type

## Age profile by age band

Data provided shows that 19% of employees reported as female.

This difference is further emphasised with the mean age being 37.1 for females and 42.5 for males.

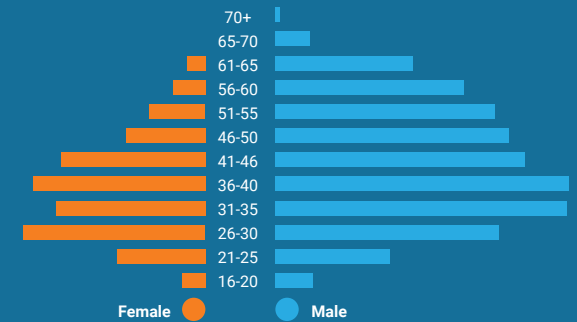
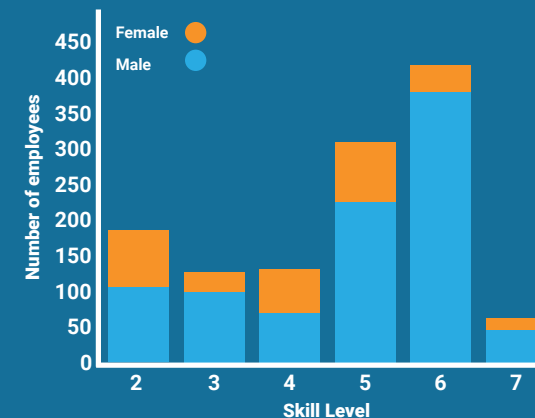


Figure 3: Age profile by age band (total sample size: 1,073 employees)

## Skill level and gender distribution



59% of roles classified at a higher skill level (level 5+).

In comparison, rail has 20% of its overall workforce classified at skill levels 5 & 6, with offshore wind having just under 40% of its workforce classified at these skill levels.

Figure 4: Proportion of job roles shown by equivalent skill level and gender distribution

# Start collecting data now

If we are to work collectively to grow and change our industry, we will need to start by understanding our workforce.



**We are asking for organisations – large and small...from local authority and consultant to billing agent and manufacturer - to start to collect data as part of the Diversity & Inclusion charter and in future participate in the next workforce survey.**



The aim of the Diverse Heat Network is to enable change within the sector through a range of initiatives and activities. We want to encourage collaboration, share best practice, and learn from each other to collectively develop impactful resources which we can all benefit from.

A crucial part of that is identifying those parts of our sector which are not diverse and collectively identify blockers to establish what action we need to take to increase diversity within the sector and create cultures of belonging within our workplaces. Everyone needs to be capturing data to help us do this.

We are asking for the industry to join the Diverse Heat Network and sign up to the Diversity and Inclusion charter committing to:

- Create an inclusive environment in our workplaces
- Achieve best practice in recruitment, retention, and career progression practices
- Actively promote diverse representation at events
- Collect data and monitor their organisation's progress
- Lead by example and support the development of good diversity practice by collecting and sharing examples of practical activities that contribute to progress with other signatories
- Develop and adopt future protocols that support practical implementation of the aims of the charter
- Commit to senior leadership responsibility for Diversity & Inclusion commitments and initiatives and sign up to the charter so we can make progress.

**Scan the QR code below to read about and sign up to the industry's new D&I charter.**

