

Research Report



Staff Survey 2023

Prepared for: The Health Research Authority

Prepared by: BMG

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Prepared by: BMG Research

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BMG

success decoded

Produced by BMG

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In February 2023, the Health Research Authority (HRA) re-commissioned BMG to undertake an organisation-wide survey of employees. This survey was carried out with the objective of providing a measure of employee views and attitudes, and to enable the tracking of trends since 2019 through to 2023.

The following report provides a summary of the key findings derived from the survey undertaken during March 2023, including, where possible, benchmarking with other public sector organisations (local authorities, housing associations, regulatory bodies etc.) and an exploration of variations across different employee groups.

1.2 Methodology

The questionnaire closely mirrored those used in recent years to enable tracking of trends to be conducted. However, a few amendments were made to reflect the current context of the organisation.

All 268 employees within the organisation were given the opportunity to complete a survey. The survey was emailed to staff members, and was accessible via a hyperlink held within the email. The survey was hosted remotely by BMG.

A total of **205** responses were received, giving a solid response rate of **77%**. This is 5%-points above the 2022 response rate and is in line with the response rate received in 2021 showing a consistency in the extent staff are willing to answer the survey.

77% response rate **(+5% since 2022)**

There has been quite a bit of change in the directorates since 2022 making direct comparisons limited on a directorate level. The number of responses received by Directorate is as follows:

- Approvals Service – Operations; Confidentiality Advice Team, 89
- Approvals Service –Support and Improvement, Coordination and Standardisation, Guidance and Advice, 20
- Policy & Partnerships, 19
- Digital, 16
- Resources, 22
- Prefer not to say, 39

The sample is subject to a maximum standard error of +/-3.74% at the 95% confidence level on an observed statistic of 50%. Therefore, we can be 95%

confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by all employees, had each completed a questionnaire, to within +/-3.74% of the percentages reported. For example, if a satisfaction score of 50% is given for a particular question, we can be 95% confident that if we had actually gained a response from every staff member at the Authority, the score would lie between 46.26% and 53.74%.

1.3 The report

The data used in this report is rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage point. It is for this reason that, on occasions, tables or charts may add up to 99% or 101%. Where tables and graphics do not match exactly to the text in the report this occurs due to the way in which figures are rounded up (or down) when responses are combined. Results that differ in this way will not have a variance that is any larger than 1%.

All data used within this report is based on valid responses. This means that if an employee answered don't know to a particular question, this is excluded from the figures.

Significance testing has been used to look for statistical differences in the responses between groups of employees. In this case, the T-Test has been used. Where there is said to be a statistically significant difference between two or more variables, this is based on a 95% confidence level.

The following symbols will be found throughout this report:

Symbol	Meaning
*%	Denotes where the figure is less than 0.5%
Question*	Denotes when a questions wording has changed from 2022
X%*	Denotes where the question in the survey is worded slightly differently to the question in the BMG benchmarking database or in the previous year.
cf.	Denotes the term 'confer', which is to compare. This is used where two or more figures are compared against each other

2 Key findings

An effective method of summarising the results of employee research is to explore the highest and lowest scoring measures. This analysis approach looks at the 5-point scale questions only and takes the score to be the summary of the top 2 positive scores (i.e., sum of strongly agree and agree).

2.1 What is the HRA doing well?

The indicators scoring most positively in the latest HRA employee survey are the measure about being happy to be flexible at work (91%) – the highest scoring measure for the third consecutive year- and my line manager trusts me to do my job well (90%). Additionally, 89% of staff find their line manager approachable, listens and responds to them. Staff also feeling strongly about supporting the need for change (89%) and being committed to helping the HRA be successful (88%). While all of these 5 measures have decreased since last year this is more due to how exceptionally well the HRA has performed in these areas in the past as the agree scores here are still exceptionally high.

These are measures that the HRA has consistently performed very strongly in over recent years with 5/6 questions also being in the top highest scoring questions in 2022 too.

Figure 1: highest %agree questions in the survey



2.2 What could the HRA be doing better?

It can also be very useful to explore which areas are scoring the least positive (least number of employees agreeing).

The measures with the lowest levels of agreement are “There are opportunities to develop my career at the HRA” (30%) and “Overall, change is well managed*” (31%). Both these measures also see very high levels of disagreement at 36% and 40%, some of the highest levels of disagreement in the survey.

Several statements pertaining to change management observe relatively low levels of agreement, such as the previous “Overall, change is well managed”, “Feedback is listened to acted upon” (34%) as well as “When changes are needed the reasons are well communicated to me in advance” (38%). Change Management was an area highlighted for improvement in 2022 and has fallen even further since 2022.

Other statements with low levels of agreement include “Morale is high amongst staff in the team”, with an agreement score of 31%.

Many of these questions have also decreased considerably since 2022 highlighting them as key areas for the HRA to look at improving looking ahead.

Figure 2: lowest %agree questions in the survey



3 Trends over time

This chart below provides a summary of the direction of travel for the organisation since the last staff survey in 2022. It has been possible to compare 73 of the questions asked with those asked in 2022, and overall, results have declined or remained level with 2022. This pattern is part of a common trend BMG has identified across surveys carried out in 2022 and 2023 as organisations frequently saw a rise in engagement during 2020 and 2021 due to positive views of their handling of the Covid pandemic. Organisations have since settled back down to more regular levels. In addition, the new challenges that arise from home/ flexible working could have an effect on this.

For the HRA, 4 measures have improved by 5%-points or more, while 30 measures have remained in line and 39 measures have seen a 5%-point or greater decline.

Figure 3: extent of change compared to 2022 scores



The table below details the most notable improvements versus the 2022 staff survey. It shows that perceptions around Staff Voices is where we see the most significant improvement, particularly in how many employees are aware of this aspect of the organisation. Improvement around employee’s perception of the hybrid working model has also improved.

Table 1: Indicators that have improved most since 2022

	2021	2022	2023	% Change since 2022
Staff Voices communicates its news well*	52%	38%	63%	+25%
I know who the members of Staff Voices are*	N/A	47%	70%	+23%
I know what the Staff Voices is achieving for staff*	43%	42%	49%	+7%
I feel that I can continue working effectively through a hybrid working model	N/A	78%	83%	+5%

The table below details the most notable declines against the 2022 staff survey. Change management comes through as an area where staff perceptions have weakened compared to last year, the reasons for change being communicated to staff and the management of change have significantly decreased, at 23%-points and 17%-points respectively. This is a continued decline in this area from 2022 where “When changes are needed the reasons are well communicated to me in advance” had already weakened by 9% and “Overall change is well managed” decreased by 16% compared to 2021.

Table 2: Indicators that have deteriorated the most since 2022

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change since 2022
When changes are needed the reasons are well communicated to me in advance	59%	60%	70%	61%	38 %	-23%
There are opportunities to develop my career at the HRA	N/A	N/A	N/A	50%	30 %	-20%
Overall, change is well managed*	47%	44%	64%	48%	31 %	-17%
Senior Leaders are approachable, listen and respond	65%	70%	74%	66%	49 %	-17%

4 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a useful technique to effectively place the 2023 staff survey results into context with other organisations. The public sector benchmarking figures shown below are based on BMG's own database of results from more than 80 public sector organisations, including local authorities, central government departments, and regulatory bodies etc. It is important to recognise, however, that these organisations vary in size (from 60 through to 8,000 staff members). This benchmark has been used as a comparison throughout the report and in combination with previous year results can serve as a useful tool to understand the results. In total, comparison was possible for 52 measures contained within the 2023 survey. Among these, positively, 20 measures are 5%-points or more above the BMG benchmark, 16 questions are in line and 16 are 5%-points below our average. As was noted in previous years, this highlights that the HRA are a strong scoring public sector organisation among those BMG work with in many areas covering the employee experience.

Figure 4: extent of change compared to benchmark scores



The following table shows managers do a good job of telling staff about what is happening within the organisation compared to the benchmark (80% agreement cf. a benchmark of 59%). Additionally, staff are highly satisfied with their physical working conditions (85% agreement cf. a benchmark of 68%), have the IT support to do their job effectively (75% agreement cf. a benchmark of 58%), support the need for change (89% agreement cf. a benchmark of 74%) and have the tools and equipment to do their job (76% agreement cf. a benchmark of 65%).

Table 3: Indicators that are significantly more positive than the BMG Benchmark

	BMG Benchmark	2023	% Difference
My line manager tells me what is going on in the HRA that is relevant to me and my job	59%	80%	+21%
I am satisfied with my physical working conditions/ workstation set up	68%	85%	+17%
I have the IT support I need to do my job effectively	58%	75%	+17%
I support the need for change	74%	89%	+15%
I have the tools / equipment necessary to do my job effectively	65%	76%	+11%

By contrast having clear objectives that staff have to achieve (-18%), being treated with fairness (-14%) and knowing where to access job important information (-12%) do not perform well against the benchmark. This highlights a contrast between the strong physical work environment employees have at the HRA and staff actually understanding what their job means in the grander scope of the organisation.

Table 4: Indicators that are significantly less positive than the BMG Benchmark

	BMG Benchmark	2023	% Difference
I am clear about the objectives I have to achieve in my job	82%	64%	-18%
I am treated with dignity, fairness, and respect in my role at the HRA	84%	70%	-14%

I know where to access the information I need to do my job effectively	71%	59%	-12%
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5 Engagement index

5.1 Introduction

Employee engagement has been a live issue in the management and HR world for over twenty years, and the positive impact an engaged workforce can have on organisational success is undeniable.

David Smith (Chair of the Institute for Employment) states that *“it has always seemed obvious that the way a workforce feels about their place of work will materially affect the performance of that organisation”*. He also goes on to say that *“wise CEOs should question their change providers carefully, and ensure that what they build into change programmes around engagement is well founded and sustainable in the long term”*.

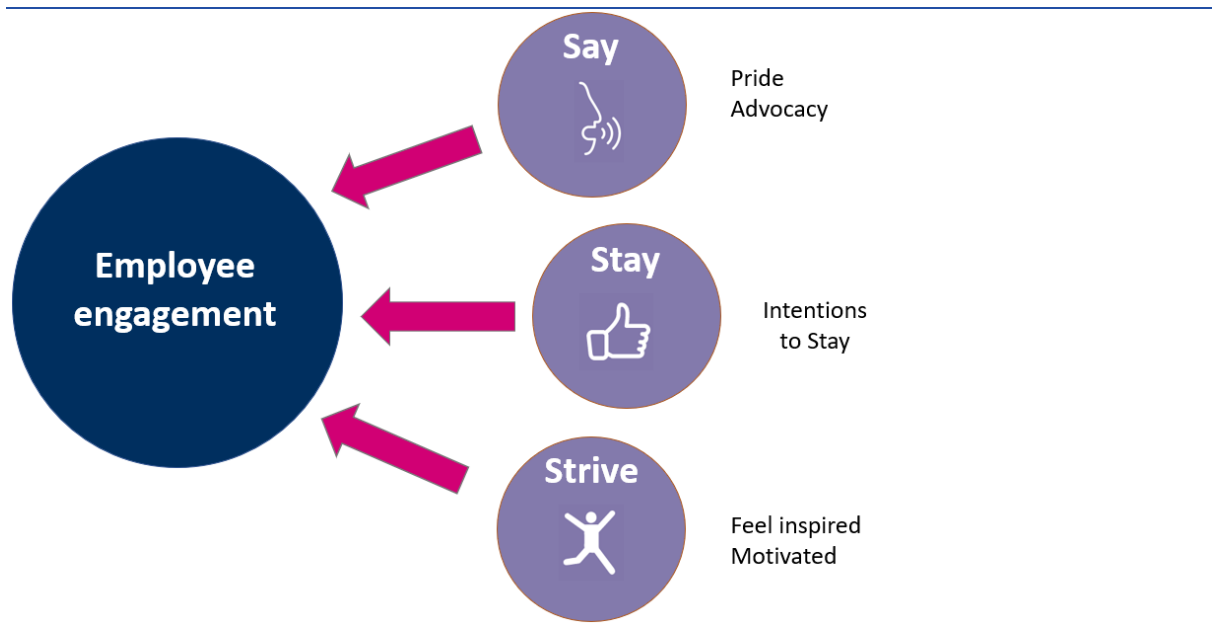
Peter Cheese (Chief Executive at the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD)) highlights that *“the MacLeod report and the Engage for Success movement has further raised the visibility...with a bevy of top business leaders...all saying how important engagement was.”*

Indeed, higher levels of employee engagement can have a substantial impact on a variety of business metrics such as growth, absenteeism and retention. For example, the top quartile (in terms of engagement) of M&S stores reported 25% lower absence compared with the bottom quartile.

In light of the importance of this concept, BMG adopted the ‘Say, Stay, Strive’ engagement index used by HRA in 2014 to provide a consistent measure of engagement over time that can also be widely benchmarked with other organisations. This method has been maintained for the 2023 survey.

The following diagram and table show the concept of the ‘Say, Stay, Strive’ employee engagement model and the specific measures in the HRA survey that are used.

Figure 5: Employee engagement index



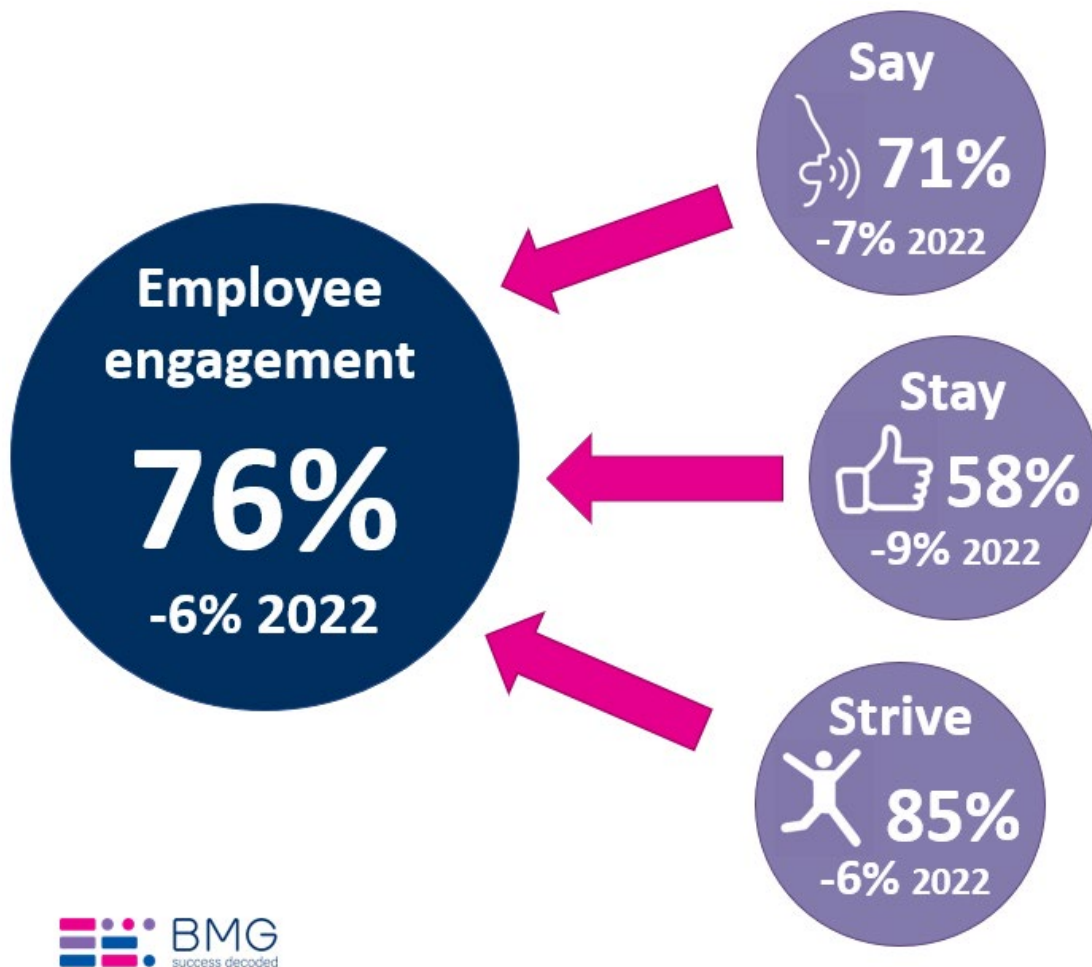
5.2 Employee Engagement

Following on from previous years, we are able to track the level of engagement staff have with their job and the organisation through the Employee Engagement Index based on the 'Say, Stay, Strive' principles.

The following figure and table show that employee engagement is at 76%, a 6%-point decrease on last year and continues a downward trend from 2021. Whilst this presents a slight softening in engagement, it should be noted that the measure had peaked in 2021 and 2022 following a strong uplift. At 76%, engagement is in line with the 2020 levels, and 6%-points above those of 2019. Engagement remains significantly higher than the BMG benchmark (+9%-points). This trend of an engagement peak in 2021 followed by a gradual decline in 2022 and 2023 is a pattern BMG have seen across many other public sector organisations and is not exclusive to the HRA.

The area that saw the greatest decrease is "Stay" with a drop of 9%-points to 58%. (This is in line with the 2020 score of 57%).

Figure 6: Employee Engagement index



Unweighted base size: 205

Engagement measures have continued to soften in 2023 trending down back towards 2020 levels but are still mostly sit above the benchmark. Further detail is provided in the table below on the individual measures from the index.

Table 5: Employee engagement index

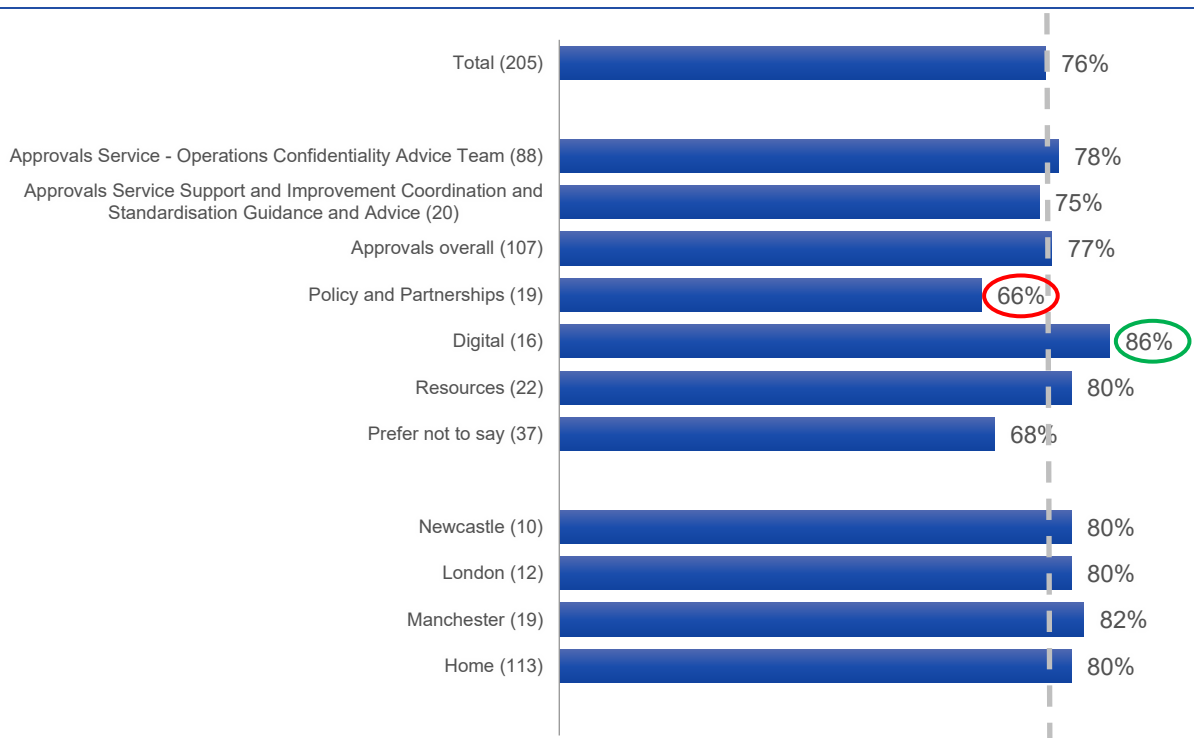
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Theme	Benchmark
I am proud to work for the HRA – % agree	71%	79%	89%	88%	80%	Say 71%	69%
I would recommend the HRA as a good place to work - % agree	61%	65%	82%	77%	70%	Say 71%	63%
% satisfied with present job	61%	70%	75%	69%	63%	Say 71%	70%
Are you likely to be actively looking for a job outside the HRA in the next 12 months? - % no	43%	49%	69%	60%	49%	Stay 58%	N/A
I am motivated to do a good job - % agree	75%	82%	87%	82%	77%	Strive 85%	70%
I am happy to adapt my plans during my working day when I need to* (question wording changed 2023. Previously: I am happy to be flexible at work when required) - % agree	83%	93%	96%	95%	91%	Strive 85%	N/A
I am committed to helping the HRA be successful - % agree	85%	92%	94%	95%	88%	Strive 85%	88%
OVERALL ENGAGEMENT INDEX SCORE	70%	77%	86%	82%	76%	-	67%

5.3 Employee engagement measures by group

Looking by work-related groups, the data shows that engagement is highest in Digital by a considerable margin, followed by Resources with lower levels observed in Policy and Partnerships which was also the least engaged area in 2022.

Engagement levels are very consistent across regions BMG can report on with Manchester skewing slightly higher at 82%.

Figure 7: Engagement by work-related groupings

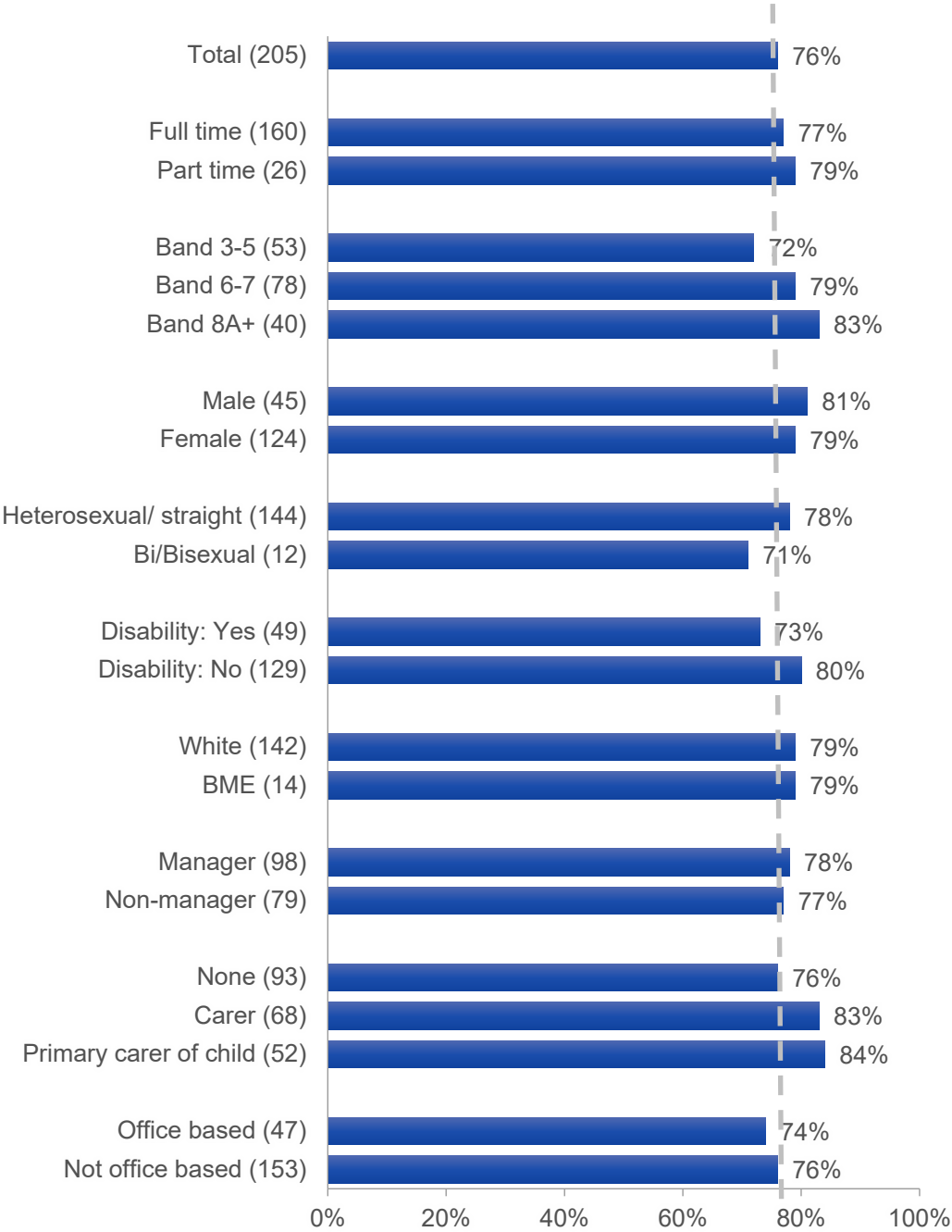


Unweighted base in brackets

Green circles denote where 10% above the total, Red circles denote where 10% below the total

The Figure below highlights the consistency of experience across socio-demographic groups. Most of those who disclosed a response to these demographic questions scored equal to or above the HRA average, though we can see Band 3-5 and Bi-sexual staff have a marginally lower engagement score. Band 8A+ and primary carers of children typically have the highest engagement scores at >80% engagement.

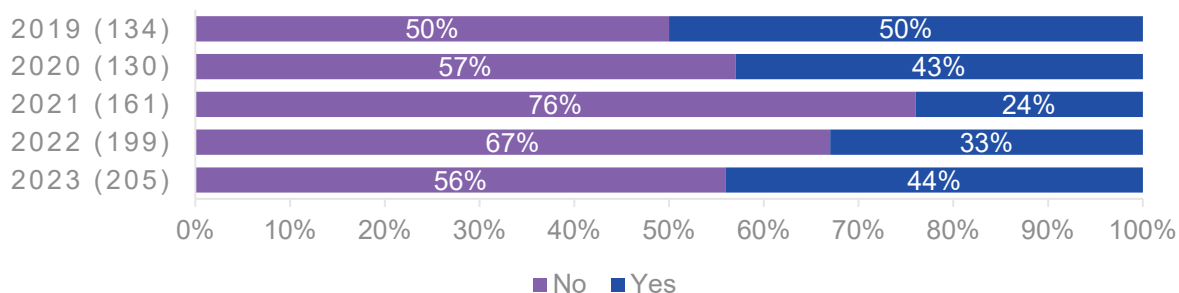
Figure 8: Engagement by socio-demographic groups



Unweighted base in brackets
Green circles denote where 10% above the total, Red circles denote where 10% below the total

A key element of the engagement index is the proportion of staff that state they are *not* looking for a job outside the HRA in the next 12 months. In 2023, there has been a continued increase in the proportion who state they are likely to seek employment elsewhere over the coming 12 months. The proportion of staff who want to stay working at the HRA has returned to similar levels to 2020, and is still above pre pandemic levels in 2019.

Figure 9: Q45. Are you likely to be actively looking for a job outside the HRA in the next 12 months? (Valid responses)



Unweighted base in brackets

It should be noted that the results presented here (Figure 9.) are based on valid responses, whereas all responses are considered for calculating the employee engagement index.

Further analysis of the data suggests that the service area most at risk of losing the highest proportion of their staff is Policy and Partnership, in which 63% of staff said they expect to be looking for a role in a new organisation over the next 12 months. However, it should be noted that this figure is not statistically significantly higher than the total organisation proportion (36%), as there are only 19 employees in this service area. By contrast, staff in Digital are more likely to stay working at the HRA with 56% of staff saying they would not leave the organisation within the next 12 months. This is a trend we also saw in 2022 where HRA digital was the least likely to leave at 69% of total staff wanting to stay at the organisation.

Staff who are based in London are more likely to look for work elsewhere at 42% of staff compared to 30% in Newcastle, 31% of home workers and 37% of Manchester staff. Male staff are more likely to stay at the HRA with 59% of staff not looking for a new job within the next 12 months compared to 52% of female staff.

As we would expect, those who do not feel valued are much more likely to actively search for a new role, than those who feel valued (58% cf. 26%), as are those who feel unable to speak up and challenge the way things are done (58% cf. 29% of those who feel like they can speak up). This highlights the importance of key employee experiences such as feeling valued in determining your likelihood to want to stay with the organisation. This is a common finding in employee engagement research.

6 Key Driver Analysis:

Key Driver Analysis (KDA) was conducted to determine the questions most closely correlated with overall employee engagement on the basis that this can be improved by concentrating efforts on the questions most closely associated with it.

The principle of the method used is based on assessing the statistical correlation between employees' ratings on each of the possible questions within the survey and their engagement score. If the correlation is high, then the question will be "important" in maintaining a high level of engagement.

If it is low, it will imply that the question is less important. The rationale for this is that a high level of correlation implies that improving perceptions on this question will in turn improve engagement scores. If there is little or no correlation, this offers no evidence that improving the factor might have any impact on improving engagement.

From doing this we can see the measures most closely correlated to engagement within the HRA are often tied to making staff feel appreciated for their work, this is clear in the strongest key driver "I am satisfied with the extent to which the HRA values my work" which emphasises employees feeling valued and treated well by the organisation. Staff feeling more positive in these areas would be likely to drive up engagement.

Table 6: Top 5 Key Drivers of Employee Engagement

Rank	Question	2023 %agree	Difference Vs 2022	Difference Vs Benchmark
1	I am satisfied with the extent to which the HRA values my work	57%	-7%	+2%
2	I am treated fairly at work	77%	-6%	-5%
3	I feel valued and recognised for the work I do	66%	-4%	+11%
4	I am treated with dignity, fairness, and respect in my role at the HRA*	70%	-6%	-14%
5	I believe that the HRA is working in a way that demonstrates our values	46%	-15%	--

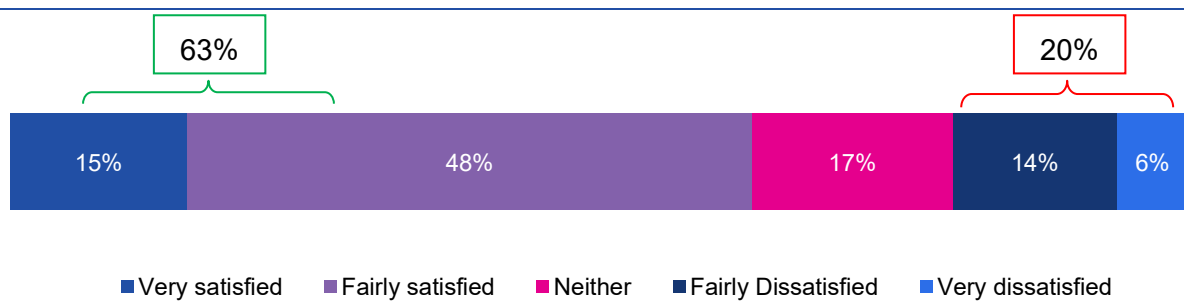
7 Overall satisfaction with the job

7.1 Overall job satisfaction

Staff were asked to rate the extent to which they are satisfied or dissatisfied with their present job. In total 63% indicated that that were either very satisfied (15%), or fairly satisfied (48%) with their job. Conversely, 20% of staff stated they were dissatisfied with their job. Currently the HRA is below BMG's public sector benchmark for this question by 7%-points.

Whilst caution should be applied to the data due to the small sizes of employees surveyed at a Service level, the Services with the highest levels of satisfaction are Digital (80%) by a considerable margin. The next most satisfied Service are the Approvals services at 70% each. The lowest levels recorded were in Policy and Partnership (47%).

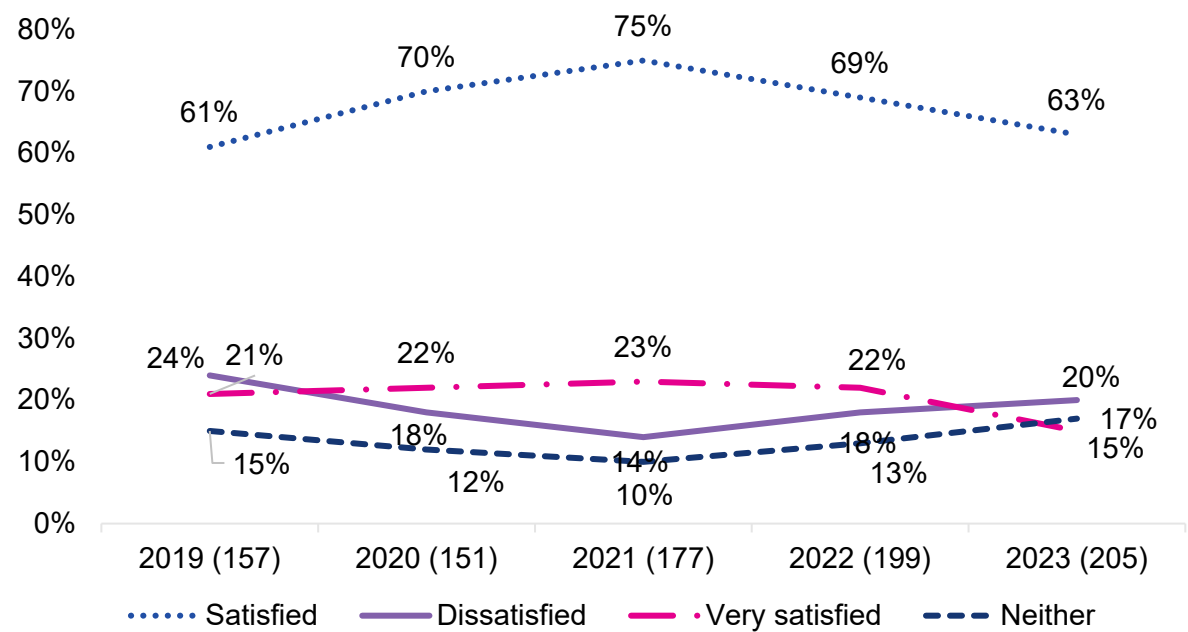
Figure 10: Q2. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job? (Valid responses)



Unweighted base: 205

Compared to 2022, overall satisfaction has weakened notably from 69% to 63%, bringing it in line with 2019 levels where 61% of staff were satisfied. The proportion of staff who are very satisfied has dipped by 7% compared to 2022. However, levels of dissatisfaction have remained roughly similar being only 2% higher than 2022. This shows a shift of staff more towards answering “fairly satisfied” and “neither” rather than outright dissatisfaction with the percentage of neither staff increasing by 4%.

Figure 11: Q2. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job? (Over time)



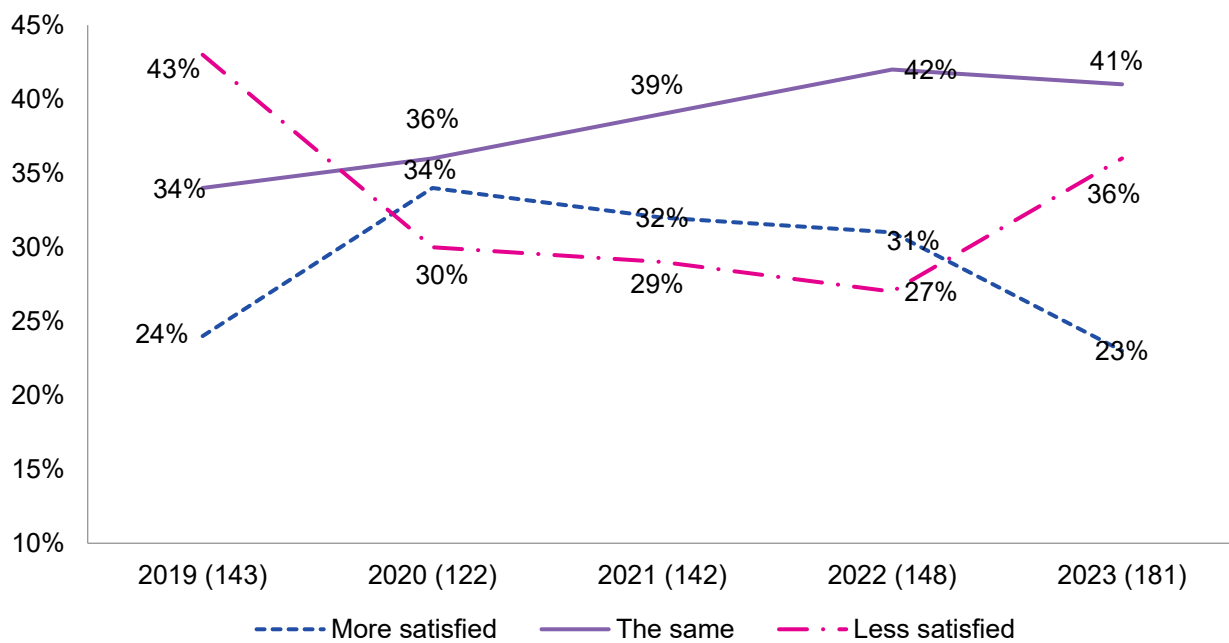
Unweighted base shown in brackets

7.2 Satisfaction compared to this time last year

Towards the end of the survey, staff were also asked how content they are in their job compared to this time last year. The figure below demonstrates that satisfaction levels have fallen considerably compared to last year with 8% less staff feeling satisfied compared to their job last year. At the same time the level of staff who are content with their work compared to last year has remained more or less the same (41% in 2023 compared to 42% in 2022) showing a shift towards general dissatisfaction rather than neutrality since 2022.

Feelings of being as content as last year is very dominant among home based staff at 44% feeling content. Non managers are notably more likely to feel less content that last year at 38% of non-managers in comparison to 29% of managers.

Figure 12: Q43 Overall, how content at work are you compared to this time last year? (Valid responses, Over time)



Unweighted base in parentheses

8 About your job

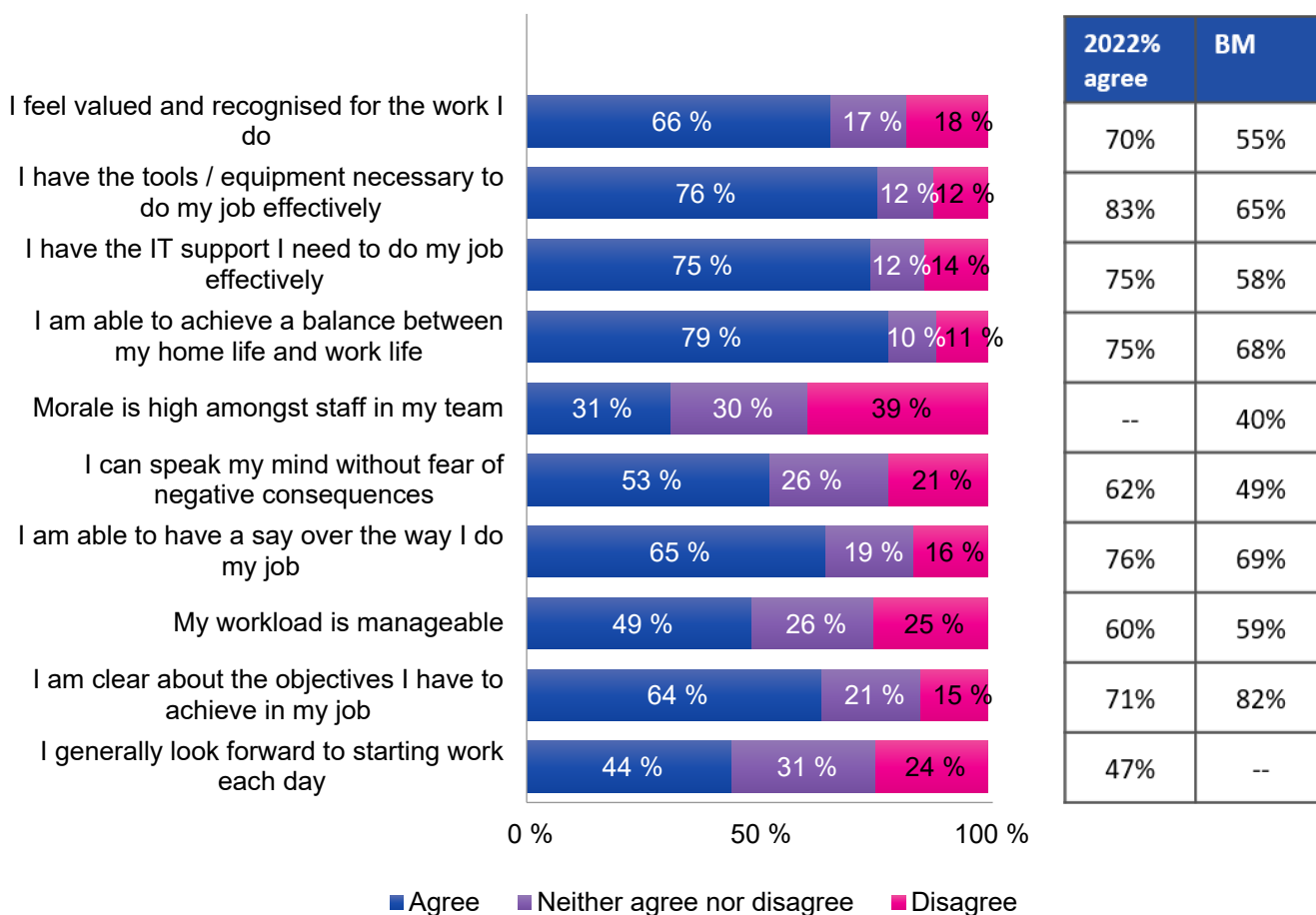
8.1 Attitudes towards the job

Staff's attitudes towards their job are broadly weaker compared to last year. This is in line with similar patterns observed across many organisations where there were strong uplifts in satisfaction and engagement metrics in 2020/2021, followed by a gradual decline in results the following years until they are similar to pre pandemic levels seen in 2019.

The lowest score in this area by a considerable margin is "Morale is high amongst staff in my team*" with less than a third (31%) of staff that agree with this statement. It is worth noting the wording on this question changed quite considerably making it an important metric to follow going forward and not comparable with 2022. There is a strong level of agreement in terms of being able to achieve a balance between home life and work life, showing that despite weaker scores in other aspects of "about your job" questions, employees are able to strike a good work balance, possibly due to the rise of home/ hybrid working.

Comparisons to the BMG benchmark are interesting in this section. The first 4 questions which primarily focus on work equipment, work support and work life balance score considerably above benchmark (all over 10%-points better than the Benchmark). "I have the IT support I need to do my job effectively" scores 17%-points higher than the benchmark, one of the best performing questions against the benchmark in the survey. "I feel valued and recognised for the work I do" is one of the key drivers of engagement and scores strongly against the benchmark showing this as an area HRA perform well in comparison to other public sector organisations. Conversely, questions around workload and clear objectives score very poorly against the benchmark at -10%-points and -18%-points respectively. The latter question having the lowest score in comparison to the benchmark in the survey.

Figure 13: Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning your job at the Health Research Authority? (Valid responses)



Unweighted base: 205

8.2 Job characteristics to improve

Members of staff were shown a list of characteristics of their current job and asked to pick the three that they would most like to improve and then how they would rank them in terms of importance to improve.

Greater pay and benefits is overwhelmingly the area staff would like to see most improved with 27% of staff selecting it as their most important thing to be addressed and 45% of all staff wanting it to be addressed in some form. Staff who are in Band 3-5, and Resources service are most likely to put pay and benefits as the area they would like to see improved the most at 43% and 45% of staff from these groups. Also of note is that while similar amounts of male and female staff raised pay and benefits as an area of improvement (43% vs 46%), 33% of female staff had it as their most important area for change compared to 22% of male staff.

However, discontentment with pay can be an especially challenging area to address due to financial constraints the organisation may have. It is usually beneficial to approach this by improving satisfaction in pay/ benefit related areas, such as job benefits or work-life balance. In particular, since career development has been identified as an area employees would like to see improvement to, supporting progression within the HRA could enable employees to see pay increases without moving to other organisations.

Many staff also identify career development as an area for improvement at 40% of all staff and 12% as their first choice. This is a major area staff have been asking for improvement in 2022 too, though it does not come through quite as strongly in 2023. Staff frustration around this topic is reflected in the weakening of scores in learning and development highlighted in Section 14 of this report.

Table 7: Q4. Please rank the top three characteristics of your current job you would most like to improve (1 being of the greatest importance). Please put numbers 1-3 for the characteristics you would most like to improve.

Theme	% Who selected theme within top 3 areas to improve	% Who ranked theme as most needing improvement
Pay and benefits	45%	27%
Opportunities for career development / progression (for example, promotion)	40%	12%
Feeling valued	29%	10%
Job security	27%	10%
Opportunities for personal development	25%	2%
Opportunities to influence change	24%	7%
Receiving sufficient training to do my job well	20%	7%
Work-life balance/Flexible working	14%	7%
Providing a good quality service to customers	14%	2%
Working with supportive colleagues	14%	4%
Constructive feedback on my performance	13%	4%
Working environment	9%	3%
Effective line management	9%	3%
Environmental sustainability	6%	0%

When staff were asked what they would change at the HRA in an open comment question later in the survey neither of these themes were prominently represented. Staff were concerned around better leadership, management and change management with each theme making up 8% of comments. Comments around more/ better training and development as well as pay and benefits were present but were less common at 4% and 3% of comments.

Discussions around leadership and managing change are relatively new for 2023, leadership only made up 3% of comments in 2022 and change management only 2% of comments. This demonstrates a shift in the topics staff are talking about and what they want to see improved away from development and more leadership and how they implement changes. This can be seen positioned positively as employees being satisfied with learning opportunities at the HRA.

Table 8: What one thing would you change at the HRA to make it a better place for you to work?

Coded theme	Number of comments
Better leadership & management	15
Better change management	15
Being more honest/open/transparent	10
Having a manageable workload	9
More/better training/development opportunities incl. career progression, inductions	8
Better levels of communication/provision of information	8
More/better collaboration between teams/departments inc. being connected with colleagues	8
Being more valued/recognised/respectful	6
More pay/better salary	5
Better equality/diversity/inclusion	4
Face-to-face/in-person interaction incl. office working	4
Other	37
No comment	96

9 About your employment with the HRA

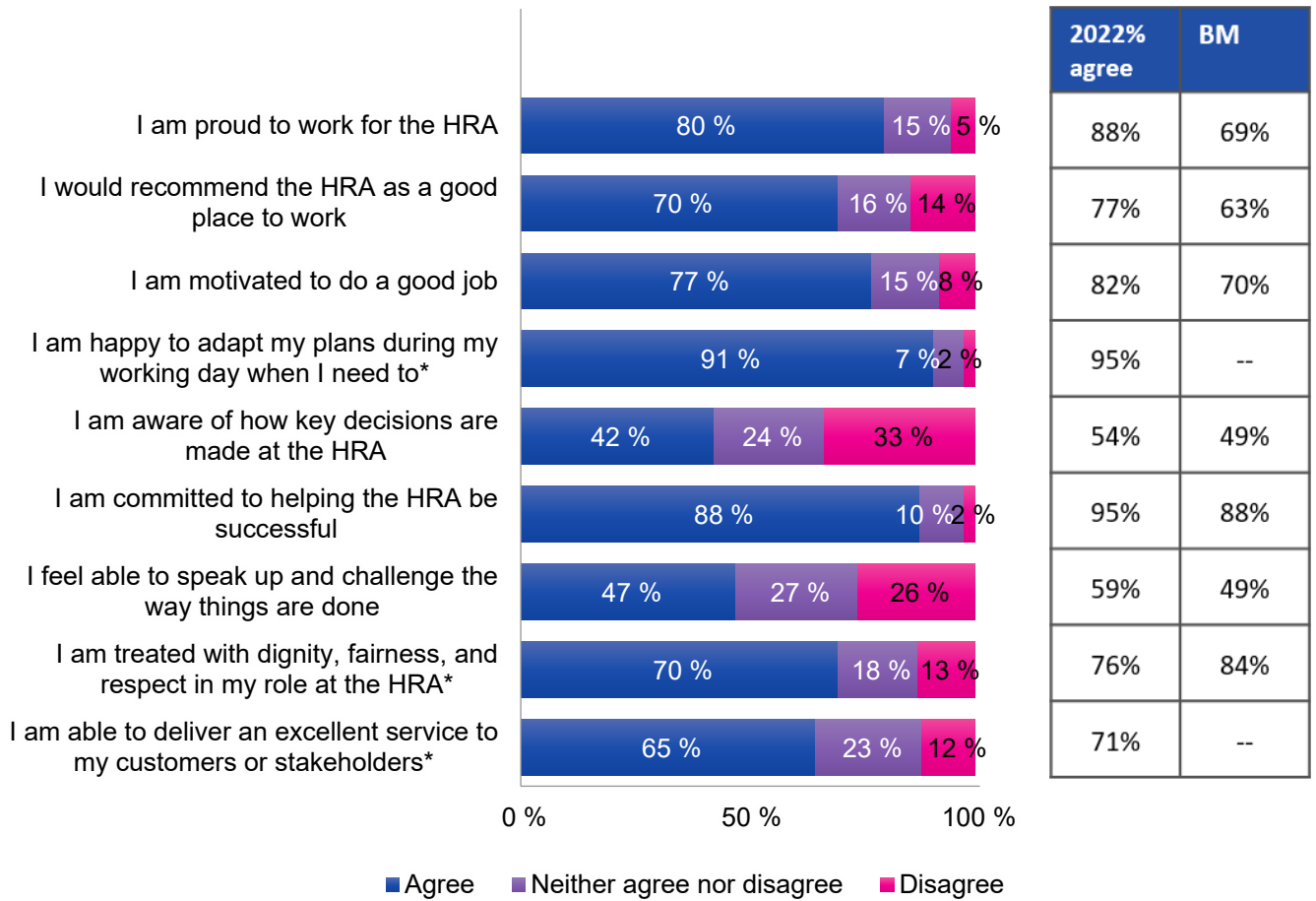
9.1 Employment at the HRA

In 2023 measures relating to employment at the HRA see a continued weakening of results from 2022 with 8 out of 9 questions decreasing by 5%-points or greater. “I am aware of how key decisions are made at the HRA”, and “I feel able to speak up and challenge the way things are done” have reduced by 12%-points each since 2022 both of these statements also tie into change management which was flagged in the previous section as something staff would like to see an improvement in.

Furthermore, 5 out of 7 questions relating to the engagement index and one of the key driver questions (“I am treated with dignity, fairness, and respect in my role at the HRA*”) are part of this theme making it a key area of the survey. Engagement questions are typically outcome based and are driven by the responses to other areas (such as the key drivers mentioned previously). Improving areas relating to staff feeling valued by the HRA will have a strong link with increasing the scores of these questions too.

Comparisons to benchmark are mixed, 3 out of 7 questions score significantly above benchmark, 2 score significantly below and 2 are in line. Engagement questions, such as “I am proud to work for the HRA” and “I would recommend the HRA as a good place to work” and “I am motivated to do a good job” perform well against the benchmark scoring 11%-points, 7%-points and 7%-points higher respectively. On the other hand, “I am treated with dignity, fairness, and respect in my role at the HRA*” is 14%-points lower than the benchmark. This is important to highlight due to this particular question also being one of the top 5 key drivers of engagement at the HRA

Figure 14: Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding working for the HRA? (Valid responses)



Unweighted base: 205

9.2 Comments about employment at the HRA

Employees were asked if they had any further comments on their employment at the HRA. Responses are varied and include a mixture of both positive and negative feedback – although negative sentiments tend to come through the most strongly (which is very common in these circumstances). The most frequently discussed themes that staff spontaneously wrote about were around a lack of transparency within the HRA and a desire for greater support from managers. However, positive sentiment still came through with comments discussing being proud to work for the HRA and a commitment to the organisation.

Table 9: Q6. If you strongly agree or disagree with any of the statements above, why is this?

Coded theme	Number of comments
Lack of transparency (Inc. decision making)	7
Greater support needed from managers	5
Proud to work for HRA	4
Committed to HRA	4
Staff feel devalued	4
Enjoy working for HRA	4
Poor behaviour from colleagues	3
Feel supported/valued as an employee	3
Excessive workload	2
Support from fellow staff	1
Accusations of bullying	1
HRA ensure work-life balance	1
Poor wellbeing for staff	1
Other	28
No comment	74

10 Goals and values

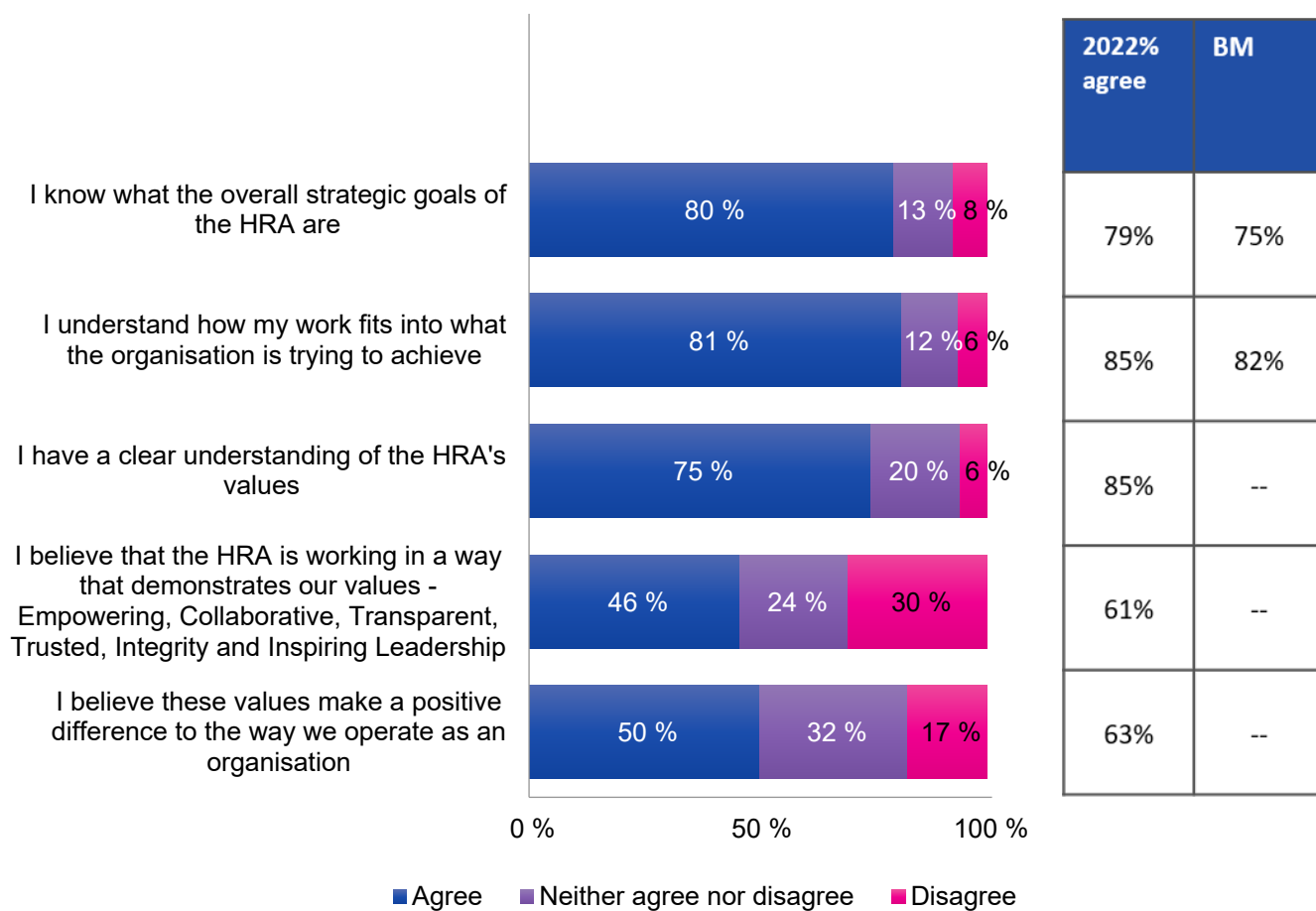
10.1 Goals and values

Staff were asked about their understanding of the HRA's values and about how much these values have an impact on their work through a set of 5 questions. Where HRA performed very strongly is in the levels of understanding that staff have about the values: 80% of staff know what the strategic goals of the HRA are and 81% of employees agree that they know how their work fits into the organisations' goals. Where agreement is lower is in the perception that the values are "lived" within the organisation and impact employees' day-to-day work. "I believe that the HRA is working in a way that demonstrates our values" and "I believe these values make a positive difference to the way we operate as an organisation" see much weaker agreement levels of 46% and 50% respectively. Both questions see a considerable weakening of agreement compared to last year at -15%-points and -13%-points respectively. "I believe that the HRA is working in a way that demonstrates our values" has a sizable amount of disagreement at 30% whilst "I believe these values make a positive difference to the way we operate as an organisation" has a high neutral score of 32% showing an extent of uncertainty in HRA employees.

Home based employees are less likely to understand how their work fits into what the organisation is trying to achieve with 82% of staff agreeing to this statement compared to greater levels in the regional offices (London (92%), Newcastle (90%) and Manchester (95%)). In addition, 74% of home-based employees have a clear understanding of HRA's values where in regional offices the level of agreements is over 80%. This suggests that employees working from home do not have quite as clear a view on the organisations goals as those who work in offices.

Two of the statements have a benchmark comparison- "I know what the overall strategic goals of the HRA are" and "I understand how my work fits into what the organisation is trying to achieve". Knowing what the strategic goals are exceeds the benchmark by 5%-points while understanding how your work fits into what the organisation is trying to achieve is in line with the benchmark.

Figure 15: Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the values and goals of the HRA? (Valid responses)



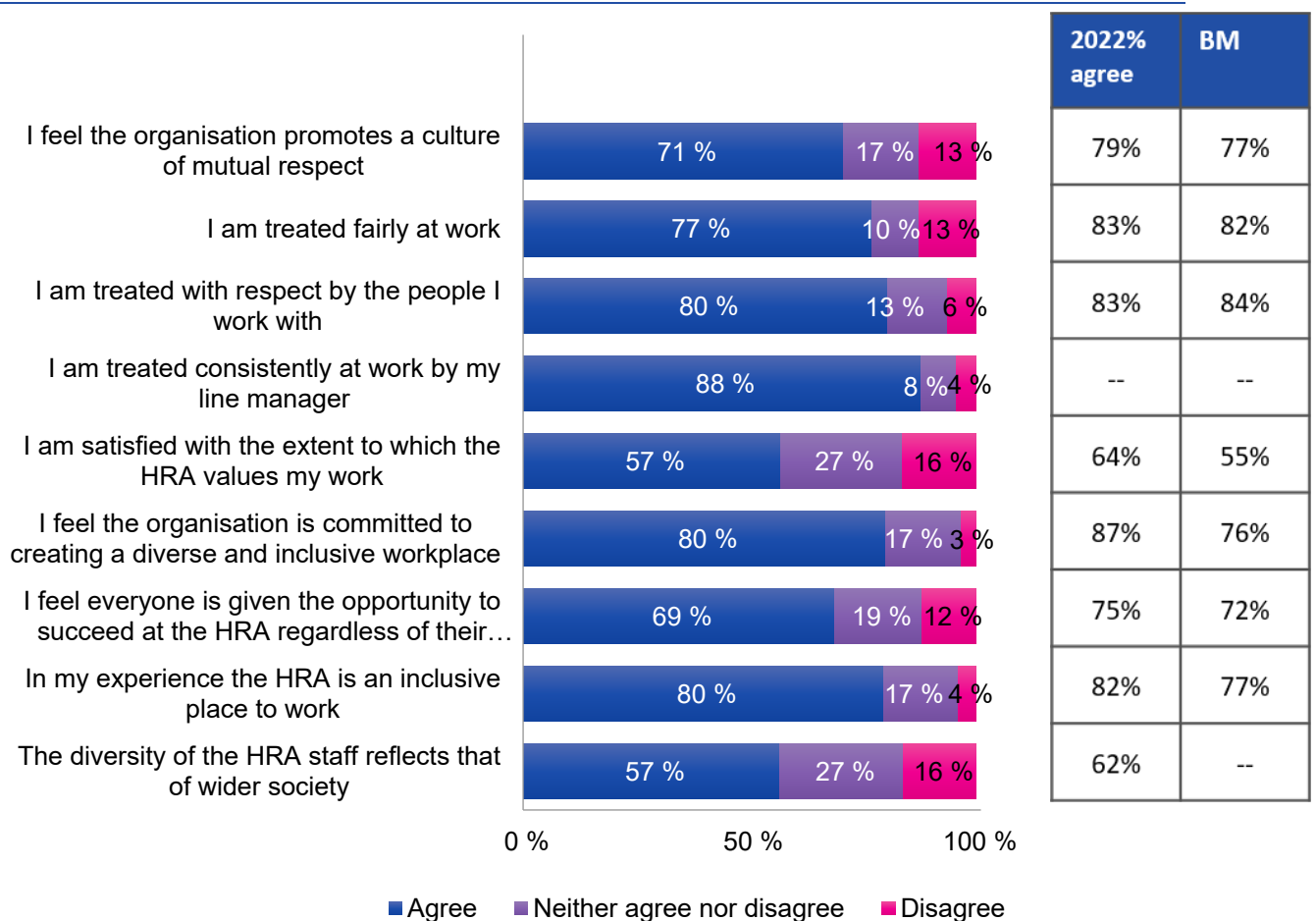
Unweighted base: 205

10.2 Equality and Diversity

After strong growth in this area in 2021 and 2022, the HRA has seen a softening when it comes to equality and diversity returning to levels more in line with 2020 when many of these questions were first added to the survey. I feel the organisation promotes a culture of mutual respect has seen the greatest weakening of -8%-points to 71% agreement. This is also lower than 2021 (79%) but higher than 2020 at 66% agree.

Of the 7 statements that can be compared to the benchmark, 5 are in line, while 2 sit below.

Figure 16: Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning Equality and Diversity at the HRA?



Unweighted base: 205

It is constructive to look at this data in particular by key demographic groups, as there are some noteworthy variations. The colour coding in the table below signifies where results are 10%-points more positive (green) or negative (red) than the HRA total positive score for key demographic groups to emphasise where this variation lies.

As seen in previous years, male staff are more positive about equality and diversity across most measures. BME employees feel notably more positively about being treated fairly at work but interestingly there is also some apprehension around being given opportunity to succeed regardless of background at only 60% agreement. This sentiment is similarly felt by disabled staff where 12%-points fewer than total agree to the previous statement. In addition, disabled staff feel less strong around the organisation creating an inclusive workplace (71%) and the HRA itself being an inclusive place to work (71%), scoring 9%-point less than the HRA total. However, it is important to note that the base size for BME employees, as well as other respondent groups shown below, is somewhat small, so the data should be read with caution. Moreover, some employees chose not to disclose personal characteristics, and these employees are consistently less positive about these measures.

Table 10: Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning Equality and Diversity at the HRA? - Key Demographic Differences (Base sizes in brackets)

	Total positive score	Male (46)	Female (126)	Disability (49)	No disability (132)	Non-BME (144)	BME (15)
I feel the organisation promotes a culture of mutual respect	71 %	85%	74%	69%	77%	78%	73%
I am treated fairly at work	77 %	87%	80%	73%	82%	81%	87%
I am treated with respect by the people I work with	80 %	83%	83%	80%	84%	85%	73%
I feel the organisation is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace	80 %	93%	78%	71%	84%	85%	80%
I feel everyone is given the opportunity to succeed at the HRA regardless of	69 %	80%	69%	57%	76%	76%	60%

their background, beliefs and identity							
In my experience the HRA is an inclusive place to work	80 %	91%	80%	71%	87%	85%	87%
The diversity of the HRA staff reflects that of wider society	57 %	71%	54%	60%	57%	60%	53%

10.3 Further comments on equality and diversity

Employees were asked if they had any further comments on equality and diversity at the HRA. Whilst the vast majority of staff did not have any comments, the most prominent themes that came through among those who did was that the HRA were generally making positive movements on inclusivity and equality, but there was a need for greater transparency.

Table 11: Q9. Please use the following space to add any further comments concerning the equality and diversity at the HRA. This could be a comment in support of your previous answers or suggestions of how you would like to see things improved in the future.

Coded theme	Number of comments
Positive movement on inclusivity/equality	11
Lack of transparency	10
Greater inclusivity	5
Poor leadership	4
Poor management	3
Good culture	2
More work to be done increasing equality/diversity for specific groups	1
Lack of career progression/poor recruitment practices (inc. specifically for minority staff)	1
Lack of diversity in the leadership	1
Poor behaviour from colleagues (inc. via emails/telephone)	1
Positive about HRA generally	1
Other	26
No comment	151

11 About management

11.1 Line Management

Staff were asked how much they agreed with a number of statements about their line managers. Views towards line management are positive, with 9 in 10 staff agreeing that their line manager: trust them to do their job well; and is approachable, listens and responds. These are 2 of the highest scoring questions in the survey. My line manager tells me what is going on in the HRA is the best performing question against the benchmark at +21%-points highlighting line management as a relative strength of the HRA compared to other organisations.

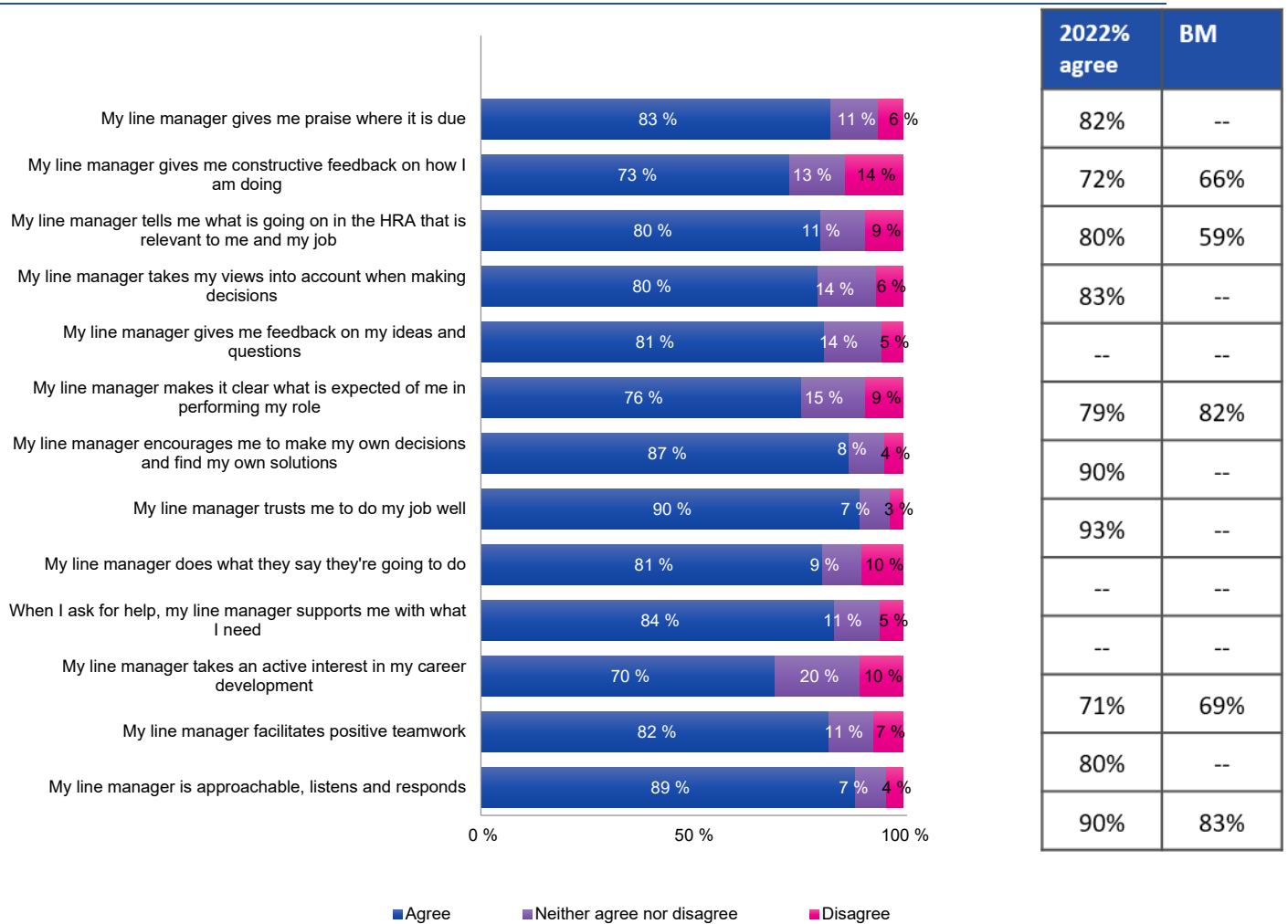
The views expressed about line management maintain the positivity the HRA have seen in this area over the last few surveys. Questions in this theme have remained relatively stable demonstrating great consistency. Line management remains the highest scoring theme in the survey with 10/13 statements scoring over 80%.

Half of staff who completed the survey (48%), state that they manage employees as part of their role. This is in line with 2022 (49%), 3%-points higher than in 2021, and 16%-points higher than in 2020.

An interesting observation this year is that the gulf between manager and non-manger workload and work life balance has shrunk.

- 49% of managers say they have a manageable workload compared to 52% of non-managers, a 3%-point difference. In 2022 this difference was 30%-points (47% managers and 77% non-managers).
- 76% of managers say they achieve a good work life balance compared to 81% non-managers, a 5%-point difference. In 2022 this difference was 16%-points (69% managers and 85% non-managers).

Figure 17: Q10. Below are a number of statements about your line manager (this is the person who would normally carry out your annual appraisal). To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement? (Valid responses) My line manager...



Unweighted bases: 205

The majority of employees (7%) agree that they have the opportunity to attend regular team meetings (at least monthly). This is up 4%-points from 2022, and remains above the benchmark (cf. 80%).

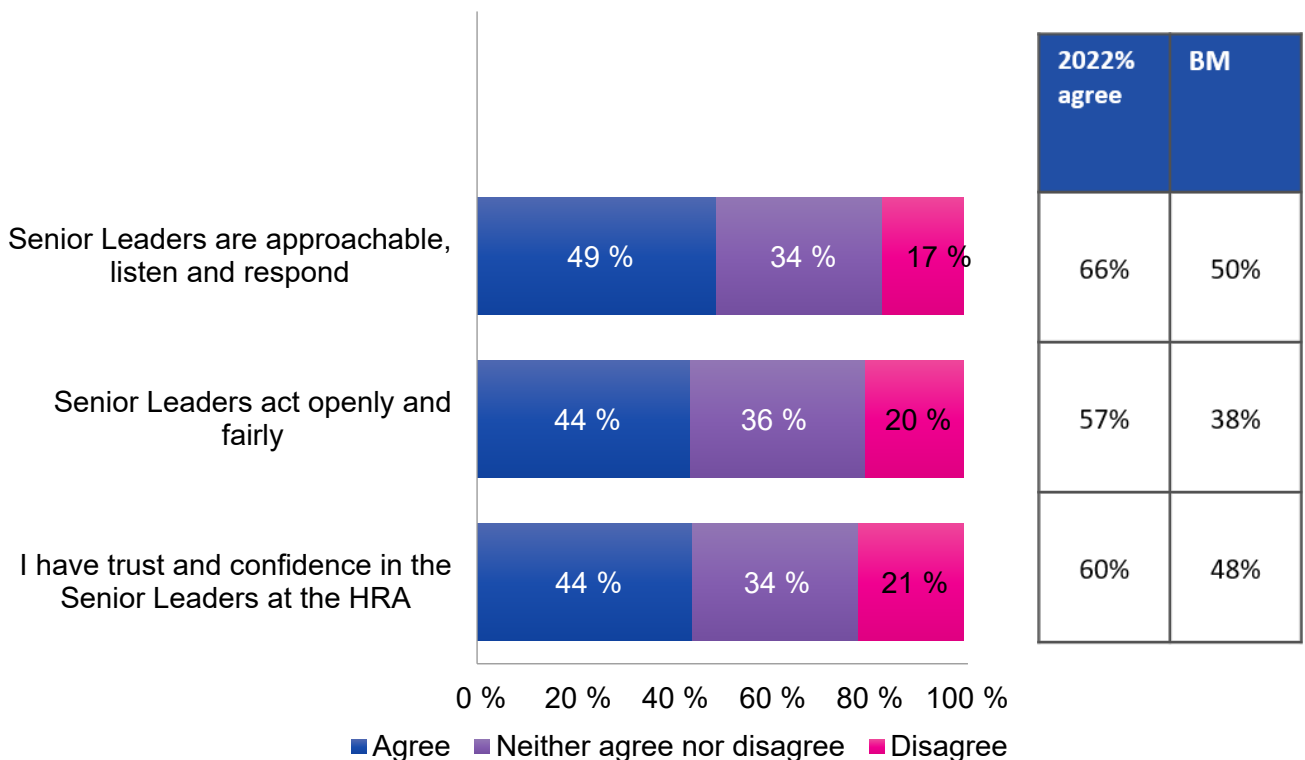
11.2 Senior Leaders

Perceptions of senior leaders have notably decreased compared to 2022 with the three questions weakening by 17%-points, 13%-points and 16%-points respectively. In 2022 senior leadership was an area the HRA performed considerably above benchmark but in 2023 the organisation is more in line with other public sector organisations.

Employees based in London are generally more positive about senior leadership with 75% of employees that find senior leadership to be approachable, to listen and respond. This question has agreement of 50% in Newcastle, 53% in Manchester and 51% of home workers by contrast.

As is common for perceptions of senior leaders across all types of organisations, there are high levels of neutrality, with around a third of staff (34%-36%) saying their neither agree nor disagree with the statements. This can make improving perceptions of senior leaders more challenging, if staff do not understand why this area of the organisation is relevant to their day-to-day role. The caution here is that staff without a strong opinion can be influenced positively or negatively more quickly, and therefore results for this question may be influenced more quickly than other measures. This would be an important thing to action as senior leaders was one of the most commented on areas employees would like to see improved at the HRA.

Figure 18: Q13. Below are a number of statements about the Senior Leaders at HRA (these are Executive Committee members). To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement? (Valid responses)



Staff Survey 2023

Unweighted base: 205

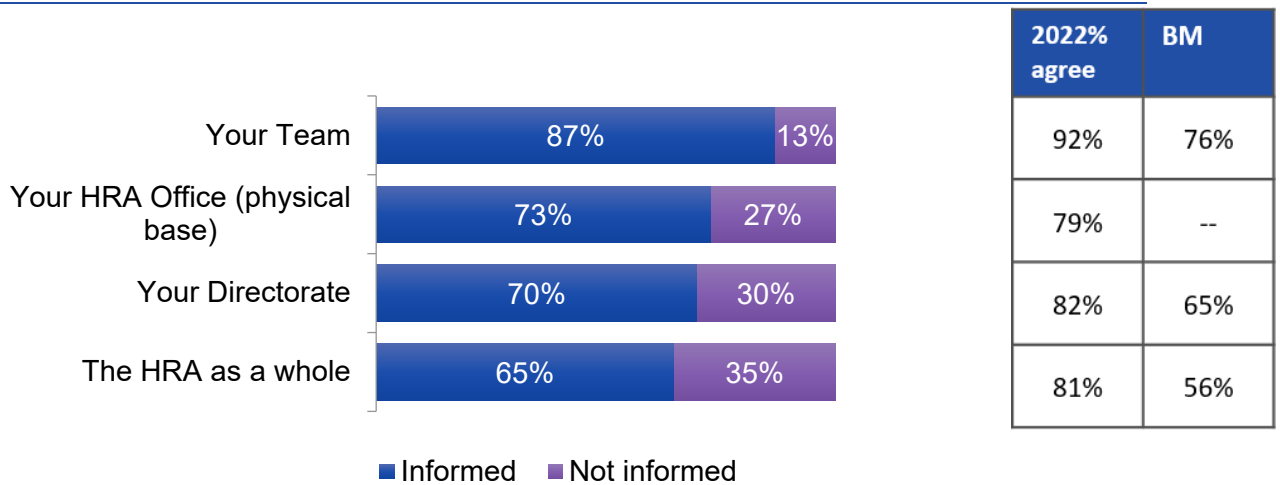
12 About communication and information sharing

12.1 Feeling informed

All employees were asked how well informed they feel about what is going on and how things are changing in their team, their HRA Office (physical base), their Directorate, and the HRA as a whole.

Over the last 12 months staff generally feel less informed than they did in 2022. Communication is often key for making staff aware of changes in the organisation making it an important area to examine. It is still worth noting that across the HRA, staff are considerably better informed than the public sector average.

Figure 19: Q14. How well informed do you feel about what is going on and how things are changing in each of the following? (Valid responses, % informed)



Unweighted bases: 155-205

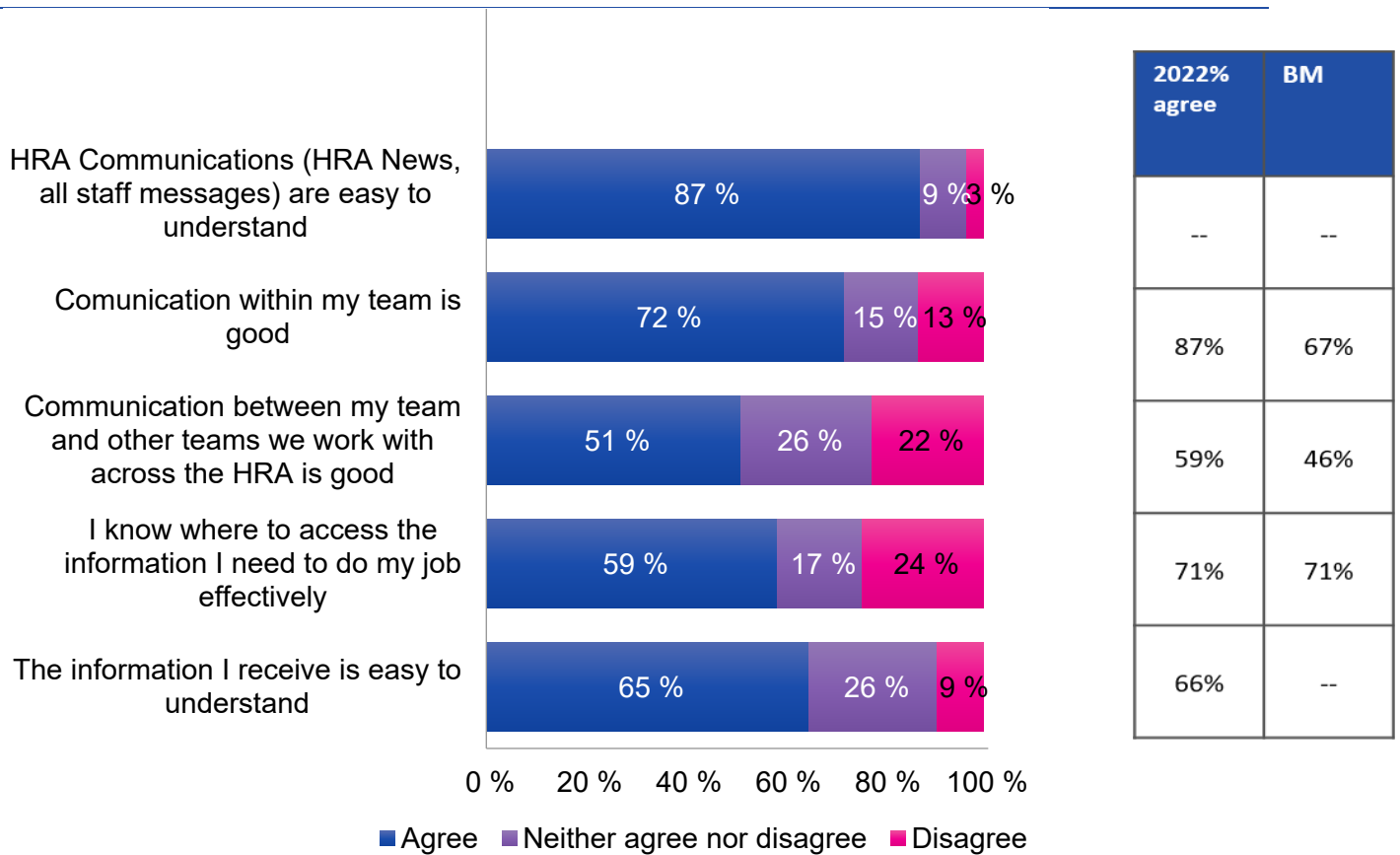
12.2 Attitudes towards communication

Opinions of communication at the HRA has notably declined compared to last year. Of particular note is access to the information staff need to do their job effectively which is down 12%-points compared to both 2022 and the benchmark. This is in large, being driven by home workers of which 57% agree to this question compared to the regional offices of Manchester, London and Newcastle which have agree scores of 74%, 67% and 80% respectively. With home-based employees making up the majority of staff in 2023, it is key to think about new/different methods of communication that would be more accessible to these workers. Additionally, only 37% of Policy and Partnership staff feel they are able to access the information they need to do their job.

Communication clarity is very high, with almost 9 in 10 staff agreeing (87%) and little disagreement. When contrasted with the previous point, this highlights the struggle staff have with HRA communications is possibly more around the access of the communication sources not the quality of communications themselves.

Communications within and between teams has struggled compared to 2022 with more neutrality than previous years (26% in 2023 compared to 21% in 2022). However, agreement is still above benchmark in this regard which is encouraging to see.

Figure 20: Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning communication across the HRA? (Valid responses)



Unweighted bases: 205

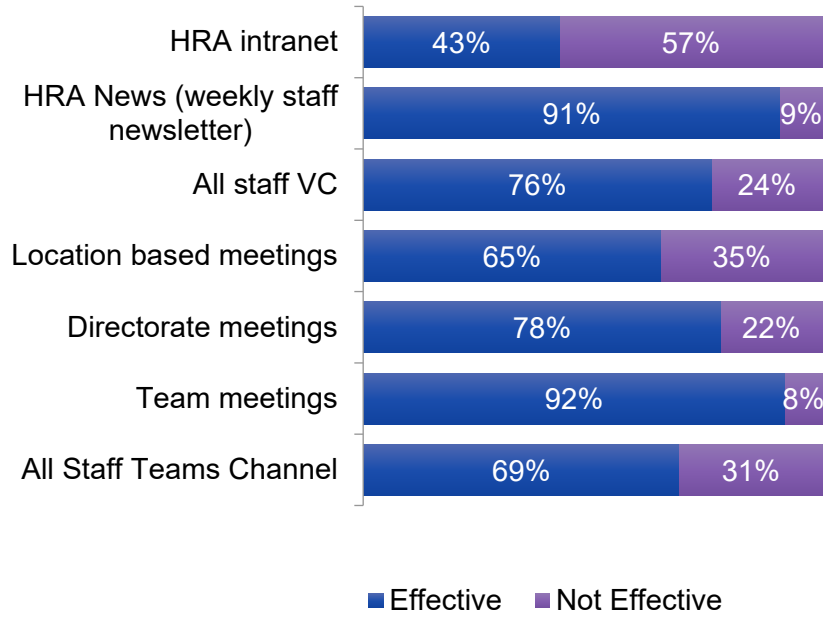
12.3 Effectiveness of communication methods

All employees were asked to rate the effectiveness of each of the different channels the HRA uses to communicate with its workforce. The most effective channels are still Team meetings (92%) and the weekly staff newsletter (91%). The least effective communication method is the HRA intranet (43%) which is down 20%-points compared to 2022. Other channels of communication have also dropped by around 10%, such as All staff VCs (-12%) and Directorate meetings (-8%). With a move to more home working a reassessment of communication channels to suit the new way of working may be appropriate.

Figure 21: Q16. How effective or ineffective do you feel the following communication methods are at keeping you informed about what's going on at the HRA? (Valid responses, % effective)

2022% agree
63%
97%
88%
64%

Staff Survey 2023



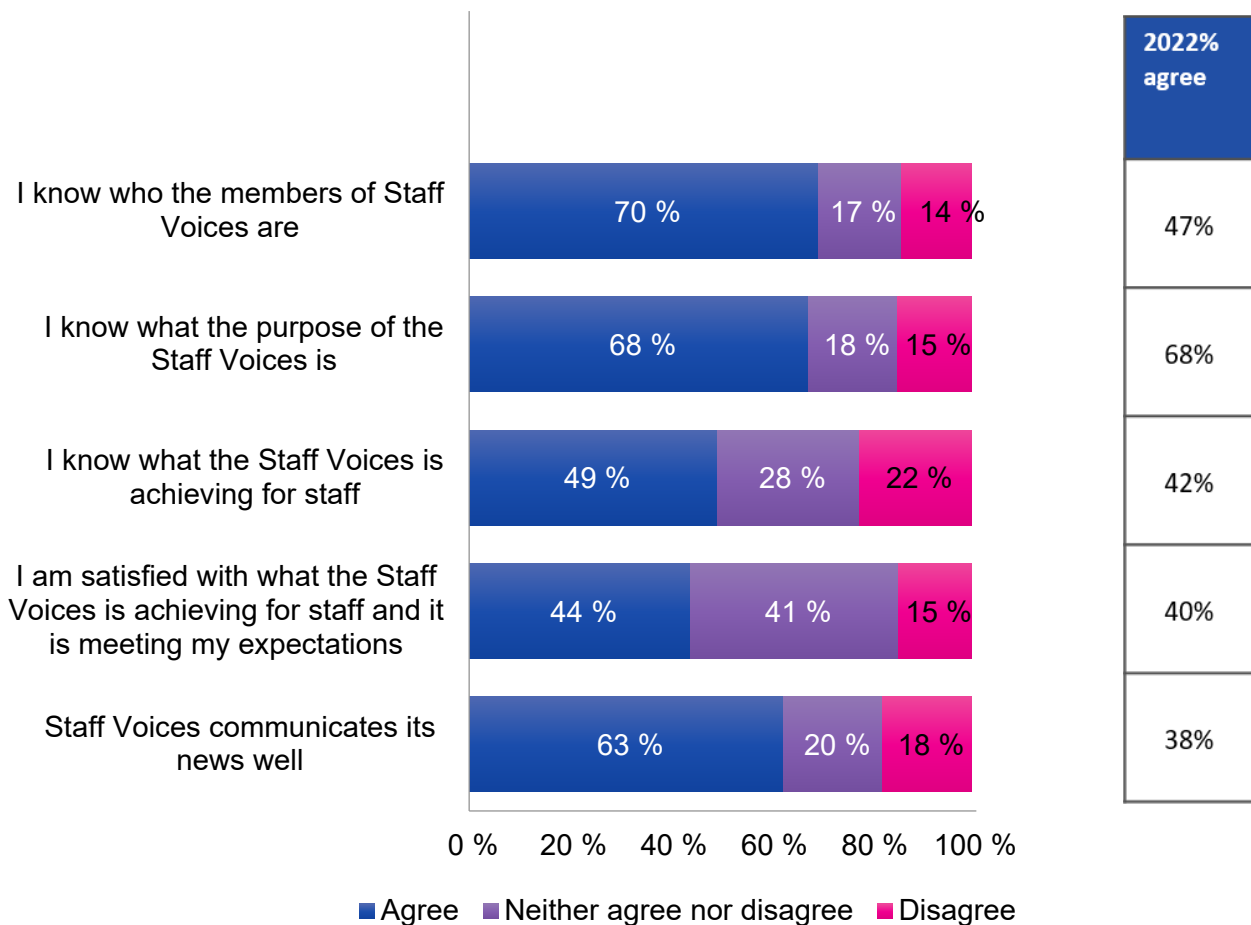
Unweighted base: 161-205

12.4 HRA Staff Voices

In seeking to understand the effectiveness of the HRA’s communication channels, staff were asked specifically about the Staff Voices (previously the Staff Partnership Forum). They were asked how far they agreed with a series of statements about their understanding and perception of the Staff Voices. The responses to these questions were varied, with agreement ranging from 70% to staff knowing who the members of the Staff Voices are and 68% knowing what the purpose of what the Staff Voices is to 44% of employees being satisfied with what the staff voices is achieving for staff.

The shift to Staff Voices from the Staff Partnership Forum has been a great success for the HRA. This set of questions has seen the most sizable increases in the entire survey. In particular knowledge of who the Staff Voices are, has increased by 23%-points compared to 2022 and the notion of Staff Voices communicating its news well has increased from 25% to 63% agreement.

Figure 22: Q17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the HRA Staff Voices? (Valid responses)



Unweighted bases: 205

Those who did not strongly agree that the Forum communicates its news well were asked how they would prefer the Forum to communicate so that it would better suit their needs. The most common preference was to have more direct communications via emails/ MS teams meetings. Other staff would appreciate more regular short updates or summaries or to provide information in a better/ more engaging way.

Table 12: Q17c. You mentioned that you don't completely agree that the Staff Forum communicates its news well. How would you prefer the Staff Forum to communicate to better suit your needs?

Coded theme	Number of comments
Direct communication (emails/MS teams meeting)	10
Regular short updates/summary	9
Provide information in a better/more engaging way	8
Have a segment/section in all staff VC/HRA news/intranet	5
They need to consult/listen to us more	5
Actually share something/I can't recall seeing anything shared	3
I don't know who the representatives are/who is in the staff forum	3
Regular meetings (monthly/quarterly/etc)	1
Other	2
No comments	139

Trade Unions

Staff were asked about their awareness that HRA have recognised Unison/MiP as a trade union. Awareness is high, at 71%, although only 28% are members. Staff who said they are members were then asked whether they knew who their representatives were. Three fifths (60%) say they know who their representatives are, which is down 8%-points compared to last year and a further 6% points down from 2021.

Those who are not members were asked whether they would be interested in finding out more about joining and two fifths said they would (43%). This represents an increase of 10%-points compared to last years which returns the percentage back to 2021 levels.

Table 13: Q18. Are you aware the HRA recognised Unison / MiP as a trade union at the HRA? (Valid responses) Q18a. Are you a member of Unison / MiP? Q20. If you are a member of Unison/MiP, do you know who your representatives are? (Valid responses) Q21. If you are not a member of Unison or MiP, do you know who the local representatives are if you would like to know more about joining? (Valid responses, where not a member)

Are you aware that Unison and MiP (Managers in Partnership) are recognised trade unions at the HRA?	2023	2022	2021
Yes	71%	76%	80%
No	29%	24%	20%
Are you a member of Unison/MiP?			
Yes	28%	21%	--
No/PNTS	72%	79%	--
If you are a member of Unison or MiP, do you know who your local representatives are?			
Yes	60%	68%	74%
No/PNTS	40%	32%	26%
If you are not a member of Unison or MiP, do you know where to find information about trade unions at the HRA, including how to join?			
Yes	43%	33%	44%
No/PNTS	57%	67%	56%

A follow up question was also asked to staff to help understand what might encourage others to join or what could be a barrier to joining.

This year a lack of information and awareness were the two biggest barriers to staff. In previous years costs was seen as the biggest barrier which is now the third most commented on theme with 12 comments.

Table 14: Q19. If you have any ideas about what might encourage more people to join Unison / MiP or what could be a barrier to joining

Coded theme	Number of comments
Need more information on role of the union	22
Lack of awareness	18
Cost	12
Need more information on Union benefits	10
People just don't want to join	3
Bad experience with unions	2
Does union membership make a difference/what's the point?	2
More representatives needed	1
Political beliefs	1
More incentives	1
Other	8
No Comment	147

13 Managing change

13.1 Attitudes towards managing change

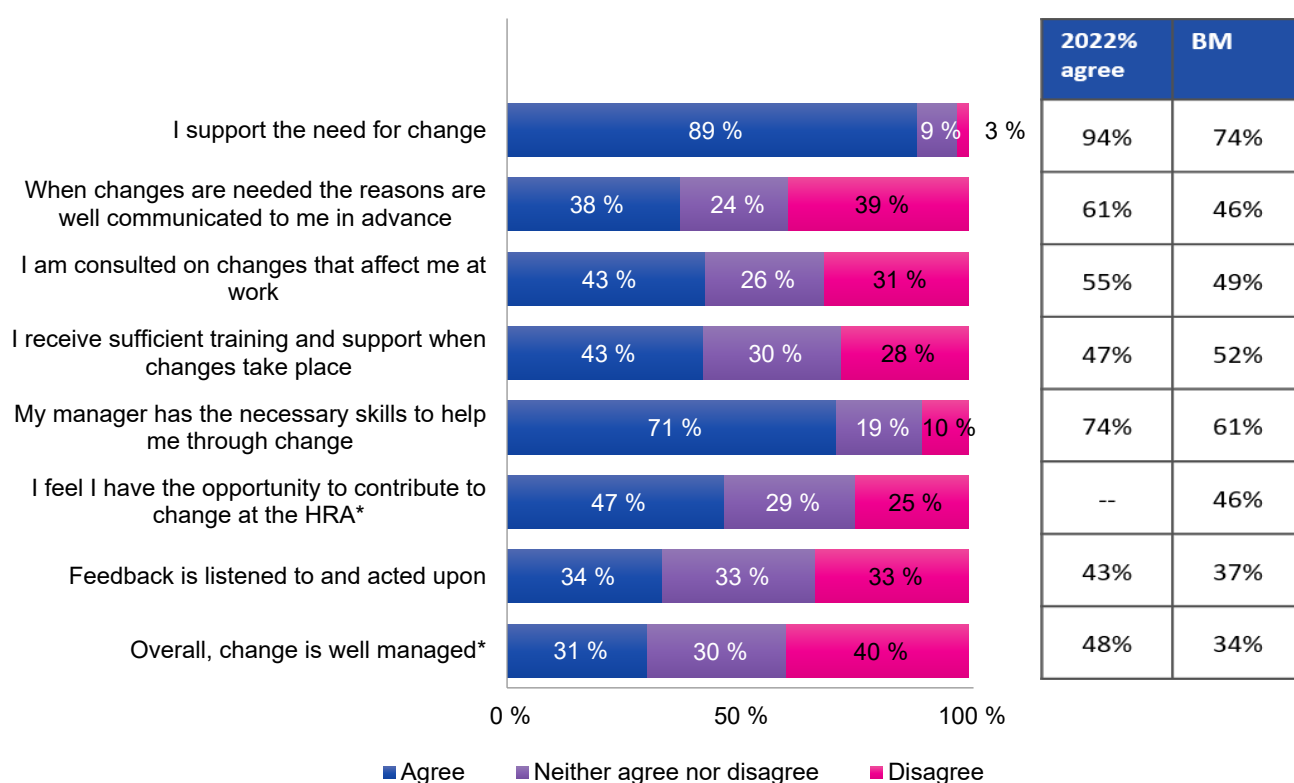
Managing change has seen a continued weakening from 2022 after peaking in 2021.

Where agreement is low, this is driven by higher levels of both disagreement and neutrality, in particular, “Overall, change here is well-managed*”, “Feedback is listened to and acted upon” and “When changes are needed the reasons are well communicated to me in advance”. Disagreement with these statements ranges from 33% to 40% which are some of the highest levels of disagreement in the survey while neutrality is between 24% and 33%.

There is not too much location variance when it comes to managing change, but there are some discrepancies based on grade. Grade band 6-7 are typically less likely to agree to change management perceptions with only 1 in 5 staff from this grade (20%) agreeing that change is managed well.

A strong well communicated action plan from senior leadership could lead to improvements in this area. Furthermore, there is clear support among staff for change where it is necessary; 89% say they support it. While lower than 2022 this still sits considerably above the benchmark.

Figure 23: Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning how change is managed in your workplace, for example, in relation to the HRA's Service Improvement Programme? (Valid responses)

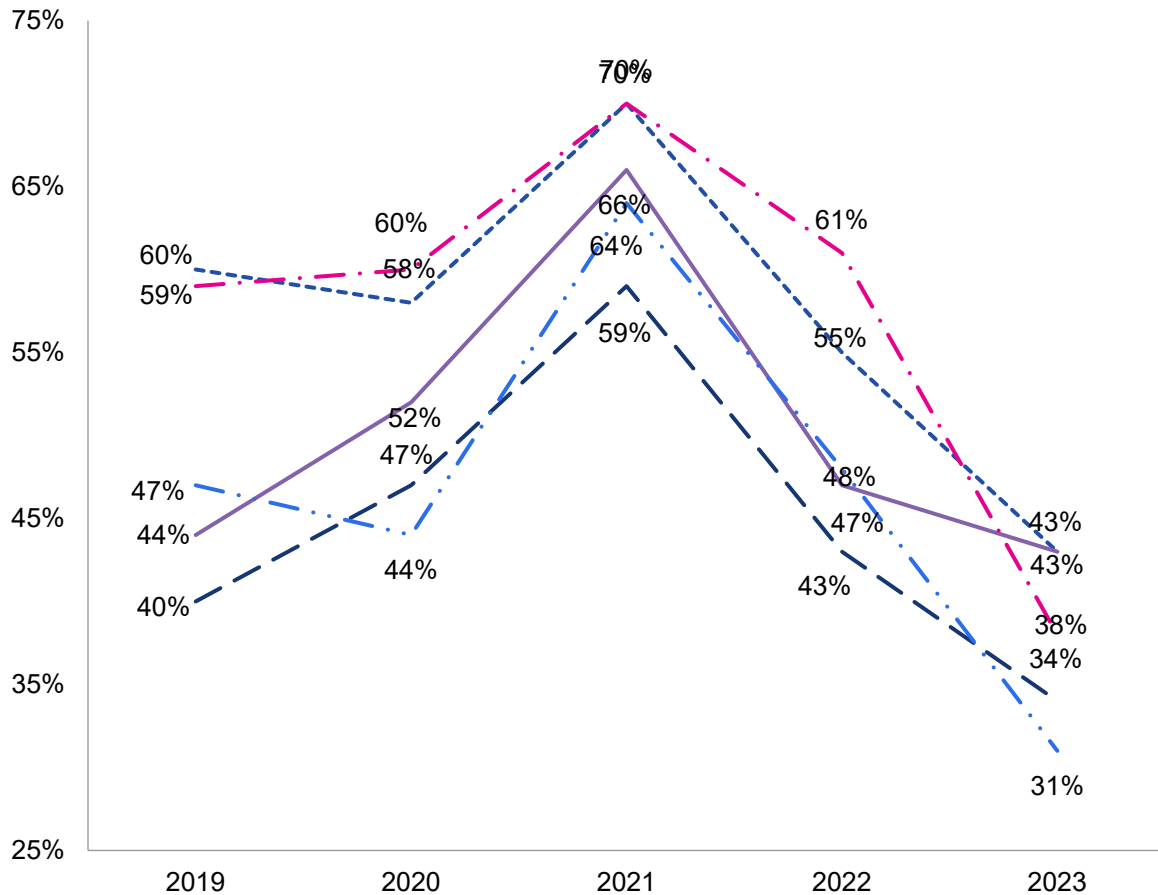


Staff Survey 2023

Unweighted base 205

As well as being weaker than 2022 many scores in this theme are also below 2020 and 2019 in many instances highlighting this as an area for focus.

Figure 24: Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning how change is managed in your workplace, for example, in relation to the HRA's Service Improvement Programme? (Long term trend)



- I am consulted on changes that affect me at work
- I receive sufficient training and support when changes take place
- . - When changes are needed the reasons are well communicated to me in advance
- - Feedback is listened to and acted upon
- . . Overall, change is well managed*

13.2 Further comments on managing change

Staff were asked if they had any further comments on managing change across the HRA. The most common issues staff encountered during processes of change were: a lack of clarity on decisions, poor communication and staff feeling ignored. With greater clarity and communication provided by leadership, employees at the HRA may appreciate changes at the organisation more.

Table 15: Q24. Do you have any further comments on managing change across the HRA?

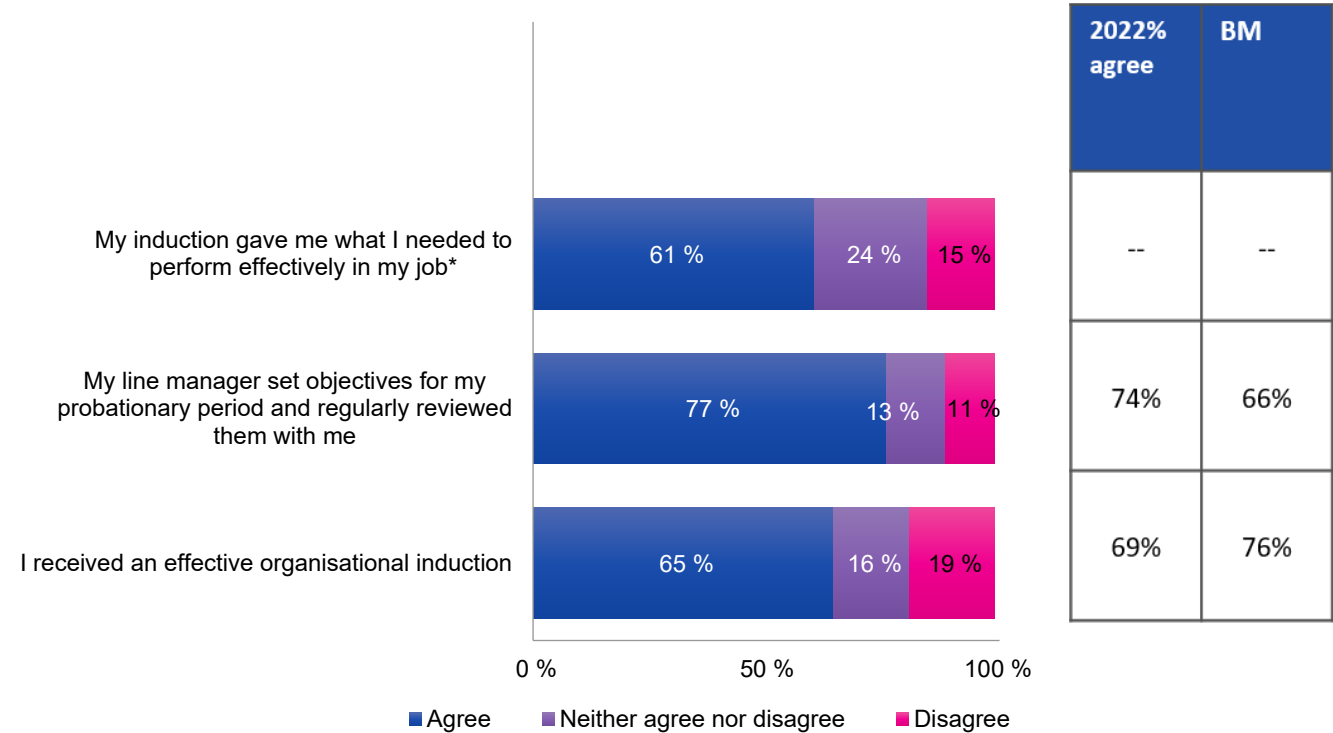
Coded theme	Number of comments
Lack of clarity on decisions and changes	30
Poor communications	20
Staff are ignored/ not listened to	16
Better planning	10
Poor embedding of change	8
General dissatisfaction with SIP	7
Inconsistent implementation	7
Impact on workload	4
Positive about change	4
Training for new starters/when taking on new roles	3
Impact on wellbeing	2
More training on changes	1
Poor timing of the changes	1
Other	6
No Comment	141

14 Support and development

14.1 Inductions

Those who joined the HRA in the last 12 months were asked their views on the induction they received. These questions have remained stable compared to 2022. Over three quarters (77%) of staff agree that their line manager set objectives for their probationary period.

Figure 25: Q25. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning your induction? (Valid responses, those who have been with the HRA less than 12 months)

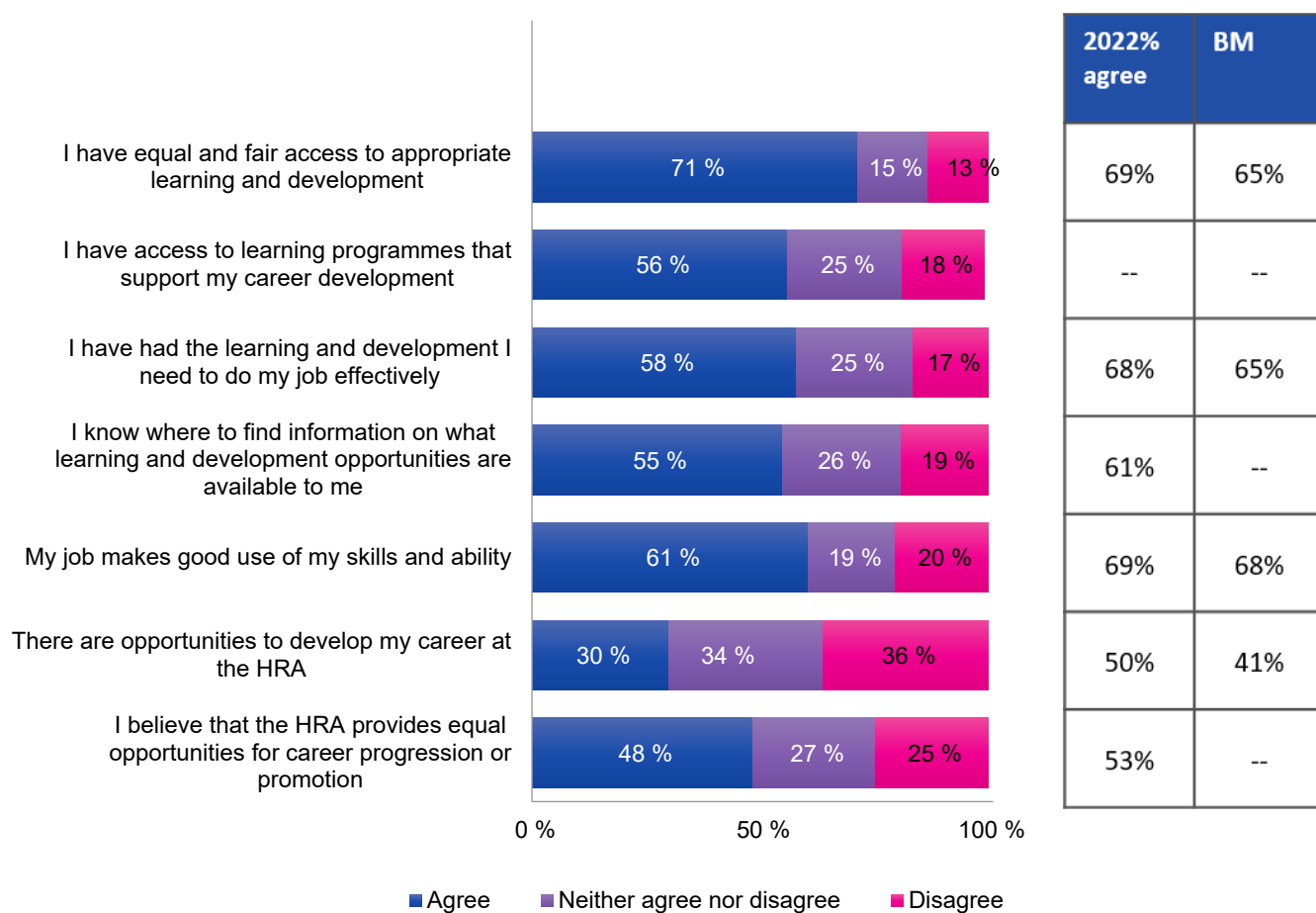


Unweighted base: 41-47

14.2 Attitudes towards learning and development

There have been some large declines in perceptions of learning and development in 2023. At a thematic level learning and development questions score between 50% and 60%, making it one of the lowest scoring themes and an area the organisation could look to action. Of particular note is employees having opportunities to develop their career with less than a third (30%) agreeing to this statement and 36% of staff actively disagree. This is a fairly even sentiment across the organisation. Having equal and fair access to learning and development scores well for the HRA at 71% above both the 2022 score and benchmark (+2%-points and +6%-points respectively).

Figure 26: Q26. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning learning and development? (Valid responses)



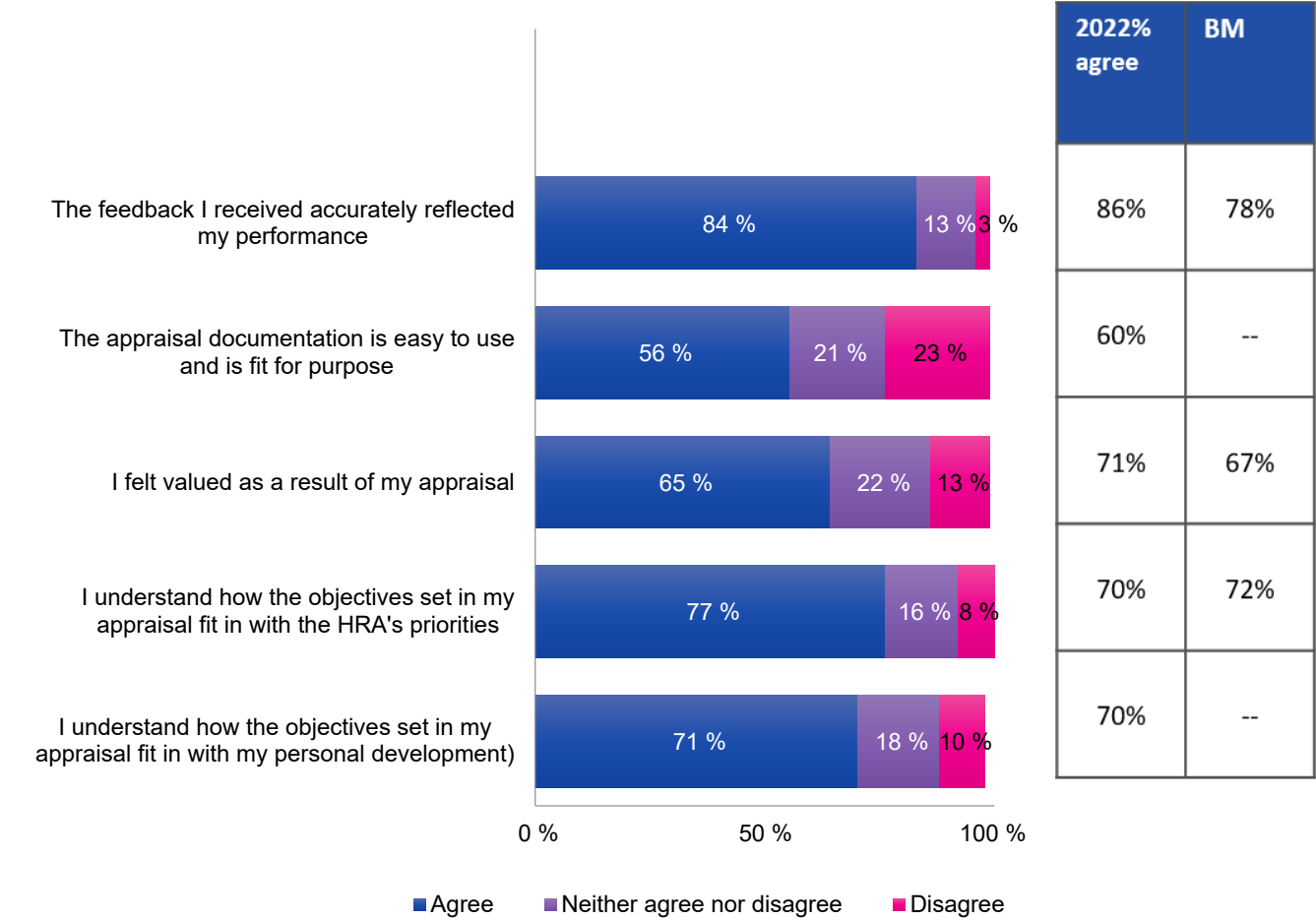
Unweighted bases: 157

14.3 Appraisals

Of those who have been at HRA for long enough (more than 12 months), 98% have had an appraisal in the last 12 months, which is in line with previous years.

Staff who stated they had an appraisal in the last 12 months were then asked their opinions on the process. Three of the five statements have stayed roughly in line with 2022 with some minor variance. Agreement that “I understand how the objectives set in my appraisal fit within HRA’s priorities” increased by 7%-points to 77%, while “feeling valued as a result of my appraisal” has regressed by 6%-points to the same score as 2021 (65%). The question “The appraisal documentation is easy to use and is fit for purpose” does have a large proportion of staff disagreeing, making documentation easier to use may lead to an improvement in other areas of appraisals.

Figure 27: Q28. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning your most recent appraisal? (All valid responses, where had an appraisal)



Unweighted base: 153

14.4 Further comments on learning, development, induction, appraisal and performance

The survey asked employees to add any other comments to supplement their responses concerning learning, development, induction, appraisal and performance. As was witnessed over the last few years the vast majority of comments relate to the lack of effective appraisals, including the documentation. This further reiterates the previous point around issues with appraisal documentations and that addressing this problem may lead to an improvement in the appraisal process.

Table 16: Q29. Please use the following space to add any further comments concerning learning, development, induction, appraisal and performance.

Coded theme	Number of comments
Lack of effective appraisals (Including appraisal documentation)	13
Training limited due to another factor (grade, cost, workload)	8
More training needed (Including job specific training)	5
Limited career development	5
Better training needed	4
Training is good	3
Impact of restructure on training/job role	1
Appraisals are good	1
Poor training and support for new starters	1
Other	8
No comment	117

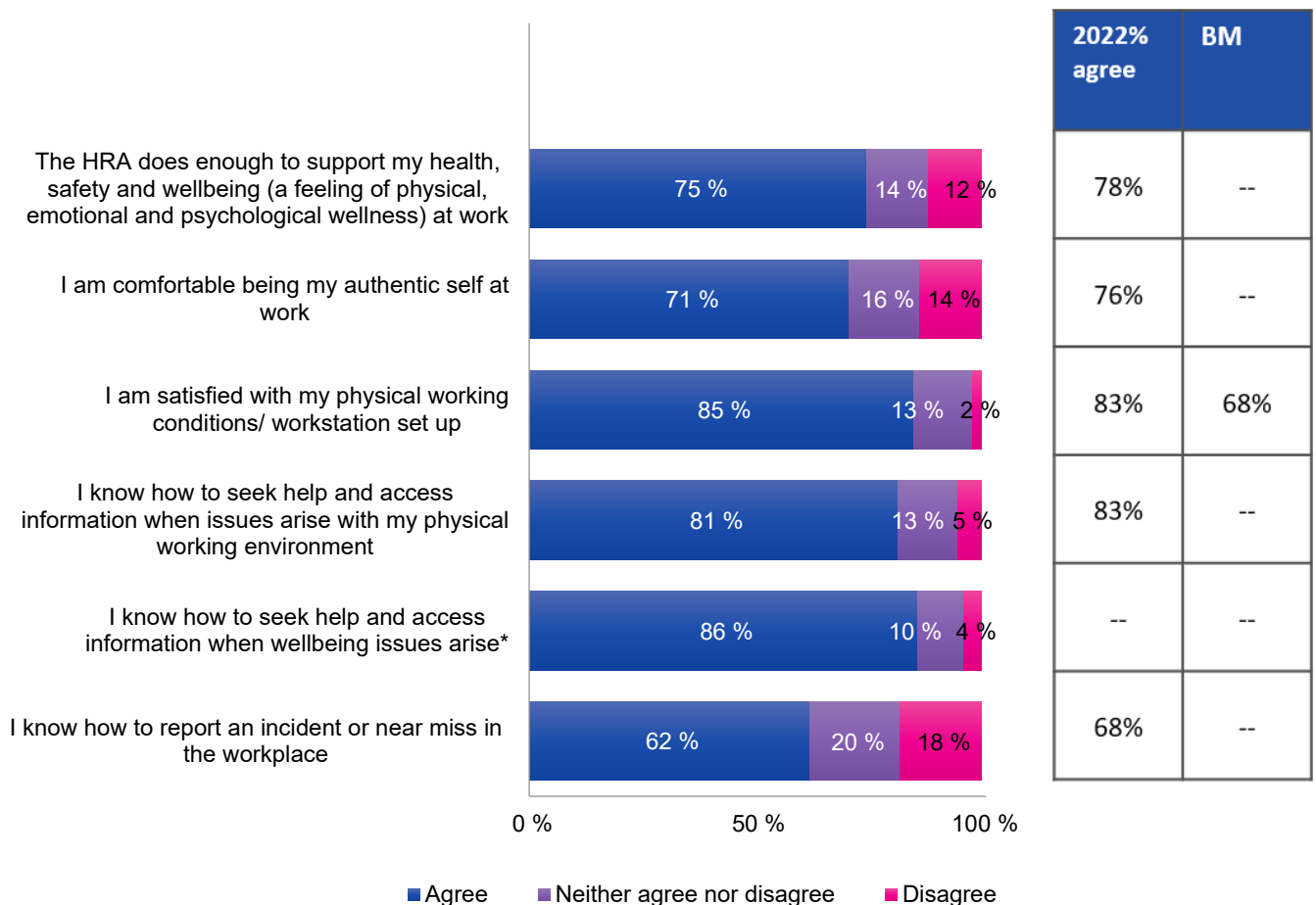
15 About your wellbeing

15.1 Attitudes towards health, safety and wellbeing

Perceptions of health and wellbeing remains a strong performing area in the HRA. Overall, 85% of staff are satisfied with their physical working conditions, and three quarters of staff (75%) say that the HRA does enough to support their health, safety and wellbeing. Similarly high proportions of staff know how to seek help and access information when issues arise with both their work environment (81%) and wellbeing (86%). Broadly, disagreement with statements related to the topic of health, safety and wellbeing is low, although it is highest in relation to knowing how to report an incident (18%), followed by staff feeling like they can be their authentic self at work (14%).

Of the staff that have raised a health, safety or wellbeing issue at work in the last 12 months (34), 71% are satisfied with how it was resolved. This is the highest this score has been since 2019 which is a positive sign of progress.

Figure 28: Q30. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning your health, safety and wellbeing? (Valid responses)



In regards to health and wellbeing, staff were asked whether they are able to take sufficient breaks during the working day, when they work in the office, and also when they work at home. More than, 3 in 5 employees (63%) said they always or often are able to take breaks when they work in the office, and just over half (55%) said they could when they work from home. Responses to the question breakdown as follows:

-

Table 17: Q32/ Q33 To what extent does the following apply to you at the HRA when working in the office/ home? I am able to take sufficient breaks during the working day.

	I am able to take sufficient breaks during the working day when working in the office?	I am able to take sufficient breaks during the working day when working from home
<i>Sample Bases</i>	100	203
Always	27%	22%
Often	36%	33%
Sometimes	31%	34%
Seldom	5%	11%
Never/NA	1%	0%

15.2 Disability Policy

Staff were asked whether they were aware of the HRA's Disability Leave Policy. Nearly 4 out of 5 (79%) said that they were. This is 4%-points higher than in 2022 and 5% lower than 2021 showing some fluctuation.

Among those with a disability, awareness increases to 94%.

Among managers who are aware of the policy (78 staff), 44% said they have used it to assist them in managing their, or their staff's disability, whilst 56% said they had not used it. Those who are aware of it were also asked whether they have ever felt pressure from a manager to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties. Only 6% of these staff felt pressure to work compared to 87% who said no and 7% who entered prefer not to say. This means that out of 49 people who disclosed that they have a disability, 46 knew of the policy, whilst 3 said they did not.

15.3 Harassment, bullying or abuse

Staff were asked whether they had experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from customers or the public in the last 12 months. Seven percent of staff said they had (7%), which is 2%-points more than in 2022 and 2021.

Similarly, all staff were also asked whether they had experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months, to which 11% said they had, an increase from 6% and 5% in 2022 and 2021. Finally, the 23 staff who said they had experienced bullying/ harassment from staff were asked if they had specifically

experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from a manager in the last 12 months. In total 26% of those who answered this question said yes which makes up 3% of all staff. Those who had experienced such behaviour from colleagues or managers in the last 12 months were asked whether they reported it. Of the 34 staff members asked this question half (50%) reported the behaviour, 44% did not and 6% preferred not to say.

Staff were then asked whether they have experienced discrimination at work. Of all staff, 2% said they had experienced discrimination from a manager or team leader, and 5% said they had experienced this from other colleagues. Staff who had experienced discrimination were asked on what grounds they believed it to have been based. The most common factors were disability and gender cited by 27% of respondents (3 responses each). Other factors cited by at least 2 employees were; age, caring responsibility, ethnic background, working pattern and grade.

Those who had experienced discrimination were asked whether they felt able to report it. Of the 10 staff responses, 4 (40%) staff members said “yes”, while 6 (60%) said “no”.

Table 18: Q36-41 around bullying, harassment and discrimination

Have you experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from our customers, volunteers or the public in the last 12 months?	2023	2022	2021
Yes	7%	5%	5%
No	92%	94%	94%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	1%
Have you experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months?			
Yes	11%	6%	5%
No	83%	91%	90%
Prefer not to say	5%	3%	5%
Have you experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from a manager in the last 12 months?			
Yes	26%	45%	--
No	74%	55%	--
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	--
In relation to the last time you experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, did you or a colleague report it?			
Yes	50%	62%	--
No	44%	33%	--

Staff Survey 2023

Prefer not to say	6%	5%	--
In the last 12 months have you personally experienced discrimination at work from any of the following?			
Manager / team leader	2%	3%	2%
Other colleagues	5%	5%	6%
Neither of these	95%	95%	90%
On which of the following grounds have you experienced discrimination at work during the past 12 months?			
Disability	27%	17%	15%
Gender	27%	33%	15%
Age	18%	25%	38%
Caring responsibilities	18%	17%	15%
Ethnic background	18%	17%	23%
Grade, pay band or responsibility level	18%	50%	46%
Working pattern	18%	0%	8%
Any other grounds	18%	17%	31%
Gender reassignment or perceived gender	9%	8%	0%
Sexual orientation	9%	17%	77%
Working location	9%	0%	0%
Main spoken/written language or language ability	0%	17%	8%
Religion or belief	0%	0%	8%
Social or educational background	0%	0%	8%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	8%
Regarding this instance, have you felt able to report it?			
Yes	40%	17%	23%
No	60%	67%	69%
Prefer not to say	0%	17%	8%

15.4 Final comments on wellbeing

The most common theme when asked about to comment on health, safety and wellbeing at the HRA was general positivity on this subject, though there were some concerns around high workloads and a lack of respect from some individuals within the organisation.

Table 19: Q42 Please use the following space to add any further comments concerning health, safety and wellbeing.

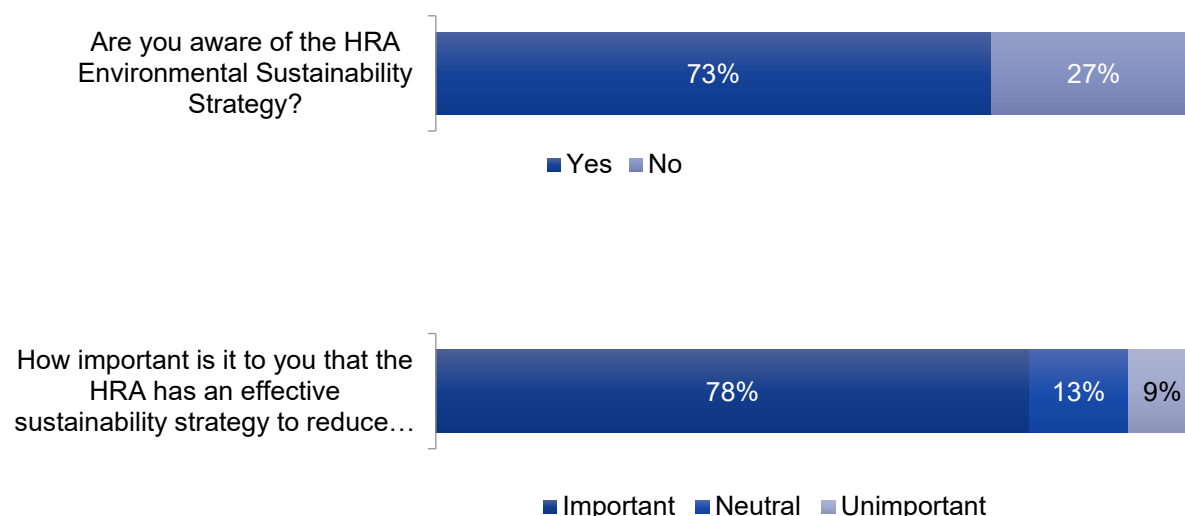
Coded theme	Number of comments
Positive about health, safety and wellbeing	8
Lack of respect/unkind behaviour from external individuals	6
Workloads are too high	6
Poor experience when reporting/requesting something previously	4
More needed for improving mental health	3
Not all staff are treated fairly	2
Office environment not appropriate for physical wellbeing	1
Issues with the disability policy/disability leave policy	1
Other	14
No comment	168

16 Environmental Sustainability

Now that new ways of working established during the Covid 19 pandemic have become more normal practise at the organisation (as reflected by the large increase in home-based employees) a full section based on Future Ways of Working (FWW) was not deemed necessary in 2023 and was replaced with questions around environmental sustainability. Some of the FWW questions have been maintained and moved to the next section. Since this is a new section for the survey and relatively specific to the HRA there is no past year or benchmark to compare against.

Employees were initially asked on their awareness of the HRA’s environmental sustainability strategy, which just under three quarters (73%) of staff were aware of. This awareness was mostly uniform across the organisation. Furthermore, just under 8 in 10 staff (78%) feel that it is important to have a strong sustainability strategy to reduce environmental impact.

Figure 29: ENV1 Environment and Sustainability - Are you aware of the HRA Environmental Sustainability Strategy?// ENV2 Environment and Sustainability - How important is it to you that the HRA has an effective sustainability strategy to reduce the organisation's environmental impact?



Unweighted bases: 205

The remaining three questions in this section asked about the environmental implications of working from home and traveling to the office. Just under a quarter (23%) of employees have an office-based contract and 77% had a home-based contract which provides a very clear picture of how many employees at the HRA work at home in 2023. The 48 staff who said they did have office-based contracts were then asked how they got to the office generally. The majority of these staff (65%) took some form of public transport while 21% walked or cycled and just 15% used personal transport such as a car. The remaining 157 staff who worked from

home were asked if they were confident that they could reduce their environmental impact working from home. Most of these staff (62%) were confident they were making a positive impact while only 13% were unconfident. A quarter of staff (25%) did not feel anything either way.

Table 20: ENV3-5: Questions around traveling to work

Do you have an office-based contract (at least two days a week in an HRA office)?	2023
Yes	23%
No	77%
When travelling to the office do you use. Please choose the option which represents most of the journey, and which you use most often.	
Active travel (EG walking, running, or cycling)	21%
Personal transport (EG car or taxi)	15%
Public transport (EG bus, tram, train)	65%
Are you confident about what you can do to reduce the environmental impact of working from home?	
Confident	62%
Neither	25%
Unconfident	13%

Lastly, employees were asked if there was anything else they would like the HRA to do to reduce environmental impact, however not enough staff commented on this section to be able to provide a thematic breakdown. One area mentioned in a few comments was around the HRA having unnecessary in person meetings, requiring travel which can be avoided by moving the meetings online.

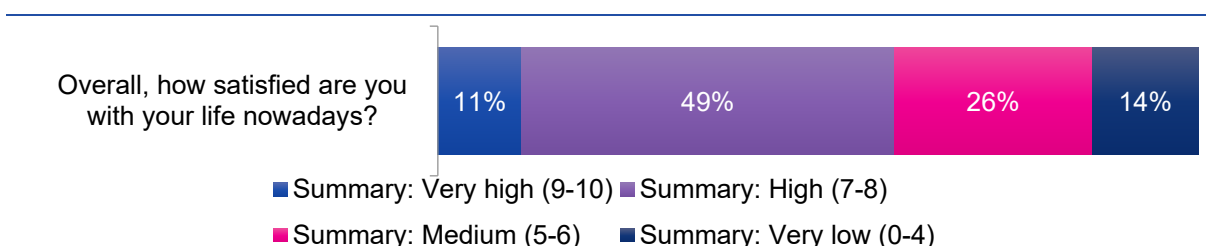
17 Further comments

17.1 Future Ways of Working

Lastly, staff were asked some final few questions based on their current ways of working and for any additional comments. Employees were asked how satisfied they were with life nowadays. 6 in 10 (60%) staff were mostly satisfied with their life (scores 7-10) with 11% being very satisfied (9-10) with their life and only 14% not particularly satisfied (0-4). This is 11%-point less than the number of satisfied staff in 2022 (71% ,7-10) this is mostly a shift towards greater neutrality with the number of staff who are satisfied with their life to a medium degree (5-6) increasing 7%-points from 19% in 2022 to 26% in 2023.

Very high satisfaction is fairly high among home workers at 15% scoring 9-10 which is higher than the HRA total (11%). Regional office workers are often fairly satisfied at scores 7-8 at 60% in Newcastle, 75% in London and 53% in Manchester but only a single regional office workers rated 9-10.

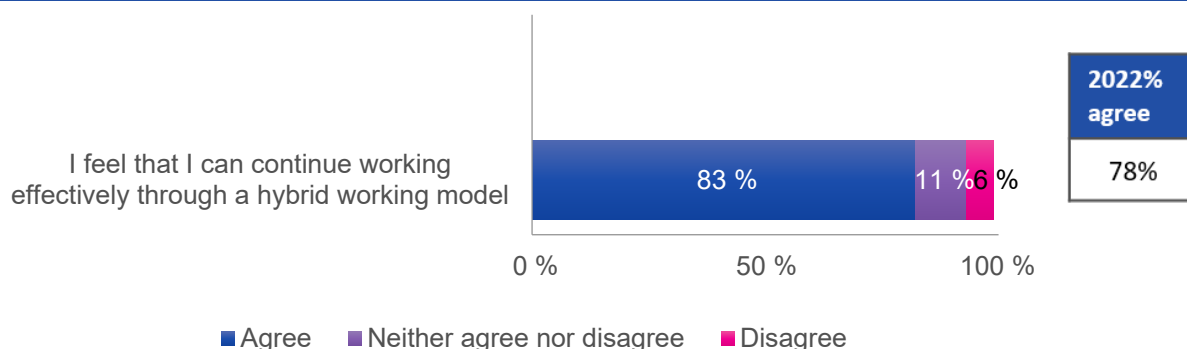
Figure 30: Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? (0 = Not at all satisfied/ 10 = Completely satisfied)



Unweighted base: 205

Over four fifths (83%) of employees agree that “ they can continue working effectively through a hybrid working model which is reflected in the high number of home working based staff that have answered the survey in 2023.

Figure 31: FFW3 Any further comments - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about hybrid working? I feel that I can continue working effectively through a hybrid working model.



Unweighted bases: 205

Since many staff are working in a home/ hybrid working environment they were asked if they could suggest anything to improve the social interaction in a home hybrid environment. More meetings between staff, whether it be in person or online was the sentiment that most strongly came through, with other informal meetings such as social events or coffee catch-ups also suggested.

Table 21: FWW6 What are your ideas to improve social connection and interaction in a hybrid environment (where some people work from home and some people work from our five offices at least some of the time)? Please tell us what you would like to see?

Coded theme	Number of comments
Face-to-face meetings/office working	18
More meetings incl. micro-teams	11
Social events incl. quizzes/ meals out/baking events	9
Informal meetings/chats inc. coffee catch-ups	6
Team away days	3
Other	6
No comment	151

17.2 Final comments

Returning to a question discussed earlier in the report, staff were asked what one thing they would change to make the HRA a better place to work. The most commented on themes were around better leadership and managing change. This is reflected in the struggles highlighted prior in this report and highlights a desire among staff to see strong leadership and a strong action plan that employees would benefit from. Many of these comments addressed a potential solution to this which is around greater transparency and openness. This reiterates issues employees had with communication mentioned earlier in the report. Leadership and organisation change that is shown through clear and transparent communication channels for home workers would be key for staff satisfaction. Other commented on themes include better development opportunities, team working and workload management.

Table 22: Qnew What one thing would you change at the HRA to make it a better place for you to work

Coded theme	Number of comments
Better leadership & management	15
Better change management	15
Being more honest/open/transparent	10
Having a manageable workload	9
More/better training/development opportunities incl. career progression, inductions	8
Better levels of communication/provision of information	8
More/better collaboration between teams/departments inc. being connected with colleagues	8
Being more valued/recognised/respectful	6
More pay/better salary	5
Better equality/diversity/inclusion	4
Face-to-face/in-person interaction incl. office working	4
Other	37
No comment	96

Finally, employees were asked what the best thing about working at the HRA was. The flexible work pattern was by far the most commented on theme which can also be seen in staff's satisfaction with the hybrid working policy. Work colleagues, job satisfaction and the supportive work environment were also mentioned as benefits of working at the HRA.

Table 23: QNEW2 Comment - What's the best thing about working at the HRA?

Coded theme	Number of comments
Flexible working patterns incl. hybrid working	46
Work colleagues/team (friendly/caring)	32
Job satisfaction/making a difference	26
Working from home	18
Supportive environment	17
Work-life balance	13
Working culture incl. common sense of purpose	9
Training & development opportunities incl. induction programme	4
Good management/leadership	4
Autonomous working	3
Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity (EDI)	3
Interesting/variety of work	3
Other	9
No comment	84

18 Profile

The following table presents the profile of the sample that responded to the survey.

Table 24: Respondent profile

	Unweighted base	%
Gender	Unweighted base	%
Male	46	20%
Female	126	61%
Non-binary	<10	(-)
Prefer not to say	32	16%
Employment status	Unweighted base	%
Full time	163	80%
Part time	26	13%
Prefer not to say	16	8%
Primary location	Unweighted base	%
Bristol	<10	(-)
Newcastle	10	5%
London	12	6%
Manchester	19	9%
Nottingham	<10	(-)
Home	115	56%
Prefer not to say	36	18%
Directorate	Unweighted base	%
Approvals Service - Operations Division & Confidentiality Advice Team	89	43%
Approvals Service –Support and Improvement, Coordination and Standardisation, Guidance and Advice	20	10%
Digital	16	8%
Policy and Partnerships	19	9%
Resources	22	11%
Prefer not to say	30	15%
Ethnicity	Unweighted base	%
Non-BME	144	70%
BME	15	8%
Prefer not to say	46	22%
Disability	Unweighted base	%
Yes	49	24%
No	132	64%
Prefer not to say	24	12%

Job Grade	Unweighted base	%
Band 3-5	54	26%
Band 6-7	79	39%
Band 8A+	41	20%
Prefer not to say	31	15%
Manager	Unweighted base	%
Yes	99	48%
No	81	40%
Prefer not to say	25	12%
Consider yourself a Trans person	Unweighted base	%
Yes	<10	(-)
No	190	93%
Prefer not to say	14	7%
Sexual Orientation	Unweighted base	%
Heterosexual/ straight	146	71%
Bi/Bisexual	12	6%
Gay/ lesbian	<10	(-)
Other	<10	(-)
Prefer not to say	38	19%
Age range	Unweighted base	%
16-24	<10	(-)
25-34	50	24%
35-44	58	28%
45-54	31	15%
55-64	10	5%
65+	<10	(-)
Prefer not to say	49	24%
Religion	Unweighted base	%
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	46	22%
Buddhist	<10	(-)
Hindu	<10	(-)
Jewish	<10	(-)
Muslim	<10	(-)
Sikh	<10	(-)
Atheist	25	12%
Other	<10	(-)
No religion	67	33%
Prefer not to say	53	26%

19 Appendix 1: Statement of Terms

Compliance with International Standards

BMG complies with the International Standard for Quality Management Systems requirements (ISO 9001:2015) and the International Standard for Market, opinion and social research service requirements (ISO 20252:2012) and The International Standard for Information Security Management (ISO 27001:2013).

Interpretation and publication of results

The interpretation of the results as reported in this document pertain to the research problem and are supported by the empirical findings of this research project and, where applicable, by other data. These interpretations and recommendations are based on empirical findings and are distinguishable from personal views and opinions.

BMG will not publish any part of these results without the written and informed consent of the client.

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We recognise we have a duty of care to all those undertaking and participating in research and strive to protect subjects from undue harm arising as a consequence of their participation in research. This requires that subjects' participation should be as fully informed as possible and no group should be disadvantaged by routinely being excluded from consideration. All adequate steps shall be taken by both agency and client to ensure that the identity of each respondent participating in the research is protected.

With more than 25 years' experience, BMG Research has established a strong reputation for delivering high quality research and consultancy.

BMG serves both the public and the private sector, providing market and customer insight which is vital in the development of plans, the support of campaigns and the evaluation of performance.

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