




East Herts Council - Gender Pay Gap Report 2021

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Introduction

In 2017 the government introduced legislation that made it statutory for organisations with 250 or more employees to report on their gender pay gap by 30 March 2018 and annually thereafter. East Herts Council published its first gender pay gap report in March 2018.

The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

The data the Council is required to provide includes mean and median pay gaps; mean and median bonus gaps; the proportion of male and female employees who received bonuses; and the proportion of male and female employees in each pay quartile.

The gender pay gap is different from equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

This is East Herts Council's report for the required snapshot date of 31 March 2021.

The figures set out in this report have been calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Review of action plan

Rather than create new actions, in the 2020 gender pay gap report we listed the gender based equality actions in the general equalities action plan (published in November 2020). Here we report our progress for each action.

We said we would:

Embed unconscious bias training into the general equality and diversity training e-learning that all staff are required to complete on an annual basis. Unconscious bias will also feature in more depth in the recruitment training for managers. The unconscious bias guidance will continue to be sent to each panel

and this has been well received by both the HR Committee and managers as a useful guide.

Our progress:

- The mandatory annual equalities e-learning course has been developed to include unconscious bias training and this has been completed by staff this year. Recruitment training will be given to all managers in 2022 as part of a new management development programme and unconscious bias will be included in that training. HR will continue to send out unconscious bias guidance to recruitment panels.

We said we would:

Ask each interview panel chair to give consideration to the diversity of the interview panel and where possible try to ensure the panel is diverse. Where this is not possible try to ensure that other elements of the panel show staff diversity, for example 'meet the team' sessions to demonstrate the diversity at East Herts and to appear as welcoming as possible to applicants of all backgrounds (as covered above HR will prompt this for each recruitment process).

Our progress:

- The HR team have been encouraging managers to try to ensure that interview panels are as diverse as possible and some 'meet the team' sessions have taken place virtually (due to the pandemic) as part of recruitment processes in the past year. Ultimately some teams are limited in terms of how diverse they are so it is not always possible to demonstrate a full range of diversity in every recruitment process however the case studies also demonstrate and welcome diversity for the council see below.

We said we would:

Work with Communications to build a set of varied staff case studies that demonstrate diversity in our workforce and use them as part of our recruitment literature. These will include men in roles in the lower quartiles (especially in Customer Services and Administration) and higher graded female employees. Willing employees would need to be identified to become case studies but we need role models to try to break down more traditional stereotypes and career norms.

Our progress:

- We have developed 4 case studies that demonstrate diversity in our workforce that are published on the Council's job pages of the website. We plan to ask for further staff volunteers to feature on this page.

We said we would:

Purchase an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) that will include an electronic application form and enable name blind recruitment, further reducing the opportunity for bias at the shortlisting stage.

Our progress:

- An ATS has been purchased that enables name blind recruitment. This is in the implementation phase and should be live in early 2022.

Gender Pay Gap Analysis

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap Figures

Table 1.0 shows that the Council's mean gender pay gap is 18% and the median gender pay gap is 17%. Table 2.0 shows that there is no bonus pay gap as the Council does not make bonus payments.

Table 1.0 Gender pay gap

	Gender pay gap 2021	Gender pay gap 2020	+/- percentage points
Mean (Average)	18%	15%	+3%
Median (Middle)	17%	17%	0

The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

Table 2.0 Gender bonus gap

	Gender bonus gap 2021	Gender bonus gap 2020
Mean (Average)	0%	0%
Median (Middle)	0%	0%

Table 3.0 Proportion of employees receiving a bonus

Proportion of employees receiving a bonus	
Men	0%
Women	0%

The Council’s mean gender pay gap has increased by 3 percentage points when compared to 2020. The Council’s overall headcount has reduced by 24 since 31 March 2020 (from 348 headcount last year to 324 this year). This equates to 11 less male and 13 less female employees. As there are far fewer men employed by the Council, the number of men employed by the Council have reduced proportionally more than the women (the ratio as at 31 March 2021 was 28% male to 72% female compared to 31 March 2020 where the ratio was 29% male and 71% female). As the mean is an average calculation and the highest earning male employee and lowest earning remain the same as 2020 but it is averaged over a smaller number, this has brought the mean hourly pay rate for men up further than for women.

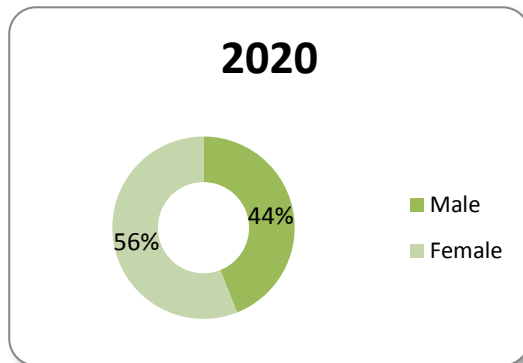
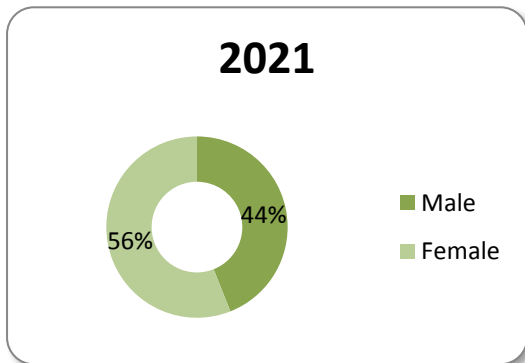
The median figure represents the ‘typical’ man or woman (i.e. the man/woman in the middle of the male/female pay range) and is due to the greater proportion of men in the upper pay quartiles compared with lower pay quartiles, and a greater proportion of women in the lower pay quartiles compared with the upper pay quartiles. The median gender pay gap has remained the same as 2020.

The Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees. We have a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex (or any other protected characteristic). As such, we have a pay and grading structure agreed with Unison; have a published pay policy statement and evaluate all jobs using the HAY job evaluation method. The Council is confident that its gender pay gap

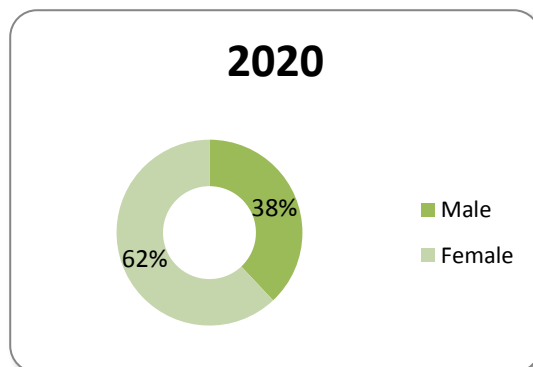
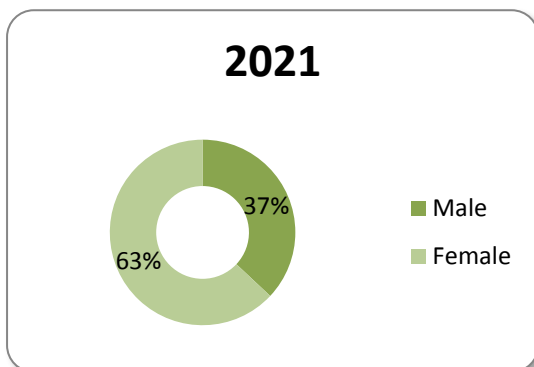
does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work.

Pay quartiles

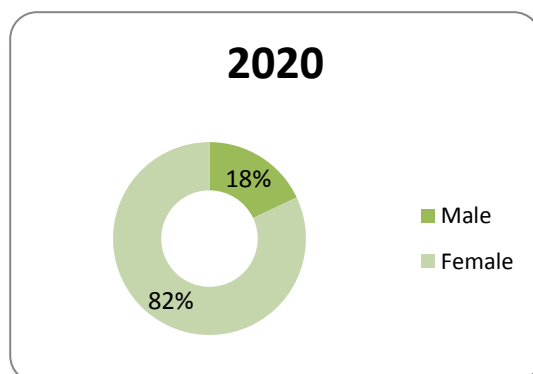
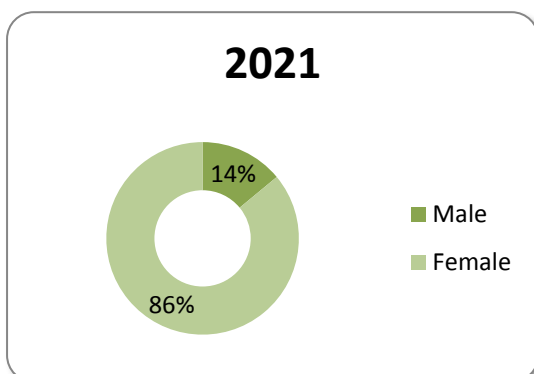
Quartile 1 (upper quartile)



Quartile 2 (upper middle quartile)



Quartile 3 (lower middle quartile)



Quartile 4 (lower quartile)

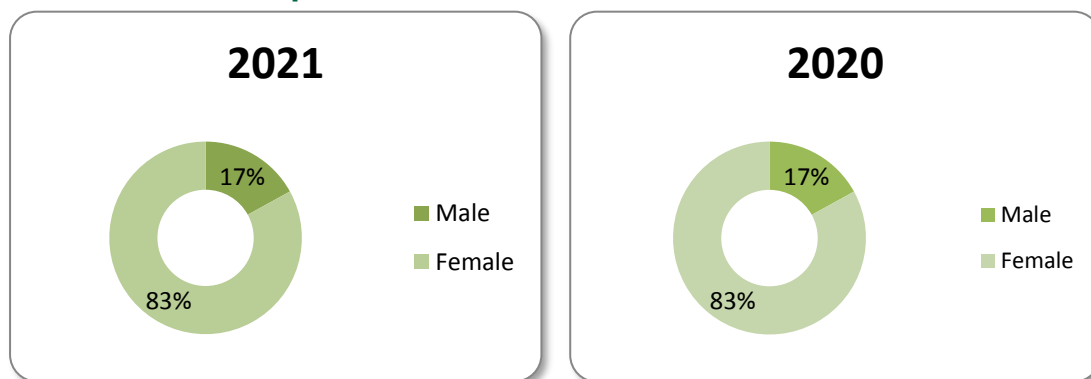


Figure 1.0 Pay quartiles by gender

Figure 1.0 above depicts pay quartiles by gender. This shows the Council's workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rates, with Q1 including the highest-paid 25% of employees (the upper quartile) and Q4 covering the lowest-paid 25% (the lower quartile). In order for there to be no gender pay gap, there would need to be an equal ratio of men to women in each quartile.

The data shows that for Q1, 2 and 4 the percentages are either identical or very similar to 2020. In Q3 the percentage of men has decreased by 4 percentage points. This is disappointing as it has been an ongoing action for the Council to try and increase the number of males in our lower graded posts.

In order to reduce the gender pay gap further there would need to be further increases in the proportion of men in Q3 and Q4. The types of roles typically found in the Council in these quartiles tend to be customer facing or administrative in nature and currently are occupied predominately by women. The Council has outsourced services such as IT, Waste and Grounds Maintenance which are predominately male dominated areas of work but also more likely to be paid in Q3 and Q4. If these services remained in-house the proportion of male and female employees in the lower pay quartiles would be much more even.

The gender segregation in some occupation groups that we experience at the Council is typical for many organisations. In the UK men have a high employment share in skilled trade and high-skill occupation groups (chief executives and senior officials, and managers and directors). In contrast, women have the highest employment share in caring, leisure and other service occupations. Women are also more likely than men to have had breaks from work that have affected their career progression, for example to bring up children (ONS, 2018).

Closing the gap (actions for 22-23)

The Council is in an unusual position in that the gender pay gap is not due to fewer women working in more senior roles than men but because at the lower grades there is a much higher percentage of women than men. The Council remains committed to trying to reduce the gap but this is an ongoing challenge due to the gender dominance in certain occupation groups, as mentioned previously as well as the difficulty of trying to attract men into lower paid jobs to create more balance. The council will continue to promote diversity and continue to support flexible working in line with business needs, this year we introduced 'blended working' which allows most staff to work 50% from home as well as continuing to support flexible working requests which can support caring responsibilities which makes opportunities more attractive to women but as stated the main issue is attracting men into our lower quartiles.

Our apprenticeship opportunity this year has been in customer services and this will continue to be considered as an apprentice route which may also attract more men into this area. The most recent merit based appointment was male and it is hoped there will be opportunities to move into a permanent entry role, we continue to look at apprentice roles which are attractive to both genders.

The Council's Equalities Officer will support HR with the actions set in this report as well as the Council's general annual equalities report.

We have already taken forward several actions since the Council's first gender pay gap report in 2017 and will continue to build on these. Rather than create new actions, the actions below have been taken from the general equalities action plan (published in November 2021) which already considered gender based equality actions for the Council:

- Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme. Offer further equalities based training as identified by annual training needs analysis undertaken by the OD and HR Co-ordinator.
- Continue to provide flexible working opportunities including blended working to support women and job progression.
- Each interview panel chair to continue to give consideration to the diversity of the interview panel and where possible try to ensure the panel is diverse. Where this is not possible try to ensure that other elements of the panel show staff diversity, for example 'meet the team' sessions to

demonstrate the diversity at East Herts and to appear as welcoming as possible to applicants of all backgrounds.

- Work with Communications to add to the existing set of staff case studies on the Council's recruitment pages and develop more variety. We will continue to try and demonstrate diversity in our workforce and if possible they will include men in roles in the lower quartiles (especially in Customer Services and Administration) and higher graded female employees. Willing employees would need to be identified to become case studies but we need role models to try to break down more traditional stereotypes and career norms.
- Implement an ATS that will include an electronic application form which automatically directs applicants to the equalities monitoring form and also enables name blind recruitment
- Deliver management development in 2022 to all line managers to cover Recruitment, Performance Management, Managing difficult behaviour, Managing Change and Managing Absence. This will upskill and support development of all managers including junior managers/team leaders where we have high numbers of women (Pay Quartile 2 = 63% and Pay Quartile 3 = 86%) who we will therefore further support in terms of development and then hopefully progression into the upper quartiles of pay.

Statement

I, Richard Cassidy, Chief Executive of East Herts Council, confirm that the information in this statement is accurate.

Signed

Date

References

Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2018. *Understanding the pay gap in the UK* [online] Available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/understandingthegenderpaygapintheuk/2018-01-17>