

East Herts Council - Gender Pay Gap Report 2023

Published **date**



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 2023.

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

We said we would:

- Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory annual e-learning training programme, which includes training on unconscious bias in recruitment.

Our progress:

- 92% of staff completed the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme in 2023. This training will be

refreshed and rolled out again in 2024 as part of the performance development review process.

We said we would:

- Offer further equalities-based training as identified by annual training needs analysis undertaken by the OD and HR Manager.

Our progress:

- There was no further equalities-based training in 2023 but the new HR and OD Service Manager who starts in January 2024 will undertake a full training needs analysis for the council (after PDRs are completed) and will arrange further equalities based training if it is identified as being required.

We said we would:

- Each interview panel chair to continue to consider 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.

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. 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.

We said we would:

- Continue to investigate with the ATS provider how to name blind CVs without losing key data

Our progress:

- The ATS provider has procured a new system for name blinding applications. We have tested the system and the results look promising but we do not yet have an implementation date. If we move provider this will be in our specification.

We said we would:

- Continue to refresh case studies aimed at attracting both genders but especially men into lower quartile roles where this is possible

Our progress:

- We did not need to refresh the case studies in 2023 but will continue to keep them under review and update them as necessary.

We said we would:

- Once all managers have been trained in recruitment as part of the management development training in 2023, publish a list of all interview trained managers to encourage recruiting managers to select a mixed panel in terms of gender.

Our progress:

- Due to staff changes in 2023 this was not done. A review of recruitment is planned for the first quarter of 2024 (including methods of assessment) with training available immediately after. The list of trained managers will be published following this.

We said we would:

- Investigate using Plotr which is a Government supported website that connects young people (aged 11-24) to the world of work. Employers can add information about apprenticeships, work experience and entry level roles in order to try and attract young people to work for them. It is hoped that by encouraging more younger people into entry level roles there might be a better mix of males and females.

Our progress:

- Plotr has been dissolved. We are planning to work with the LEP Careers Hub Network to reach out to young people, initial contact has been made to begin this work.

We said we would:

- In addition to management training for current line managers, East Herts is also developing a 'First Step' Introduction to Management Course, the first will be a cohort of 10 who apply with their manager's support, and as well as training mentors will be provided. This scheme is also hoped to attract both genders but with women dominating East Herts especially at Q3 and Q4 it is expected that a number of female employees will apply and that this should support progression in the future.

Our progress:

- Cohort 1 is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the year-long programme. They have received 3 days of leadership development plus mentoring. They will also be taking part in a corporate wide project during the first quarter of 2024. 7 out of the remaining 11 are female.

Gender Pay Gap Analysis

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap Figures

Table 1.0 shows that the Council's mean gender pay gap is 16% and the median gender pay gap is 19%. 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 2023	Gender pay gap 2022	+/- percentage points
Mean (Average)	16%	19%	-3%
Median (Middle)	19%	24%	-5%

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%

Both the mean and median gender pay gaps at the council have reduced this year. The mean gender pay gap has dropped by 3 percentage points and the median gender pay gap reduced by 5 percentage points, when compared to 2022. The Council’s overall headcount has reduced by 9 since 31 March 2022 (from 307 headcount last year to 298 this year). The number of male employees has remained the same at 83 but the number of female employees has reduced by 9. However the distribution of males and females across the pay grades has changed; there is one less male in Q1, 5 less males in Q2 and 2 more female, 4 more males in Q3 and 6 less female, and 2 more males in Q4 and 5 less female. Having more males in the lower quartiles and having 2 more female and one less male in the upper quartiles has had the effect of reducing the mean pay gap.

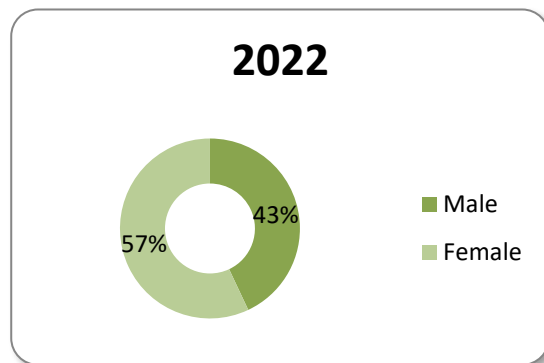
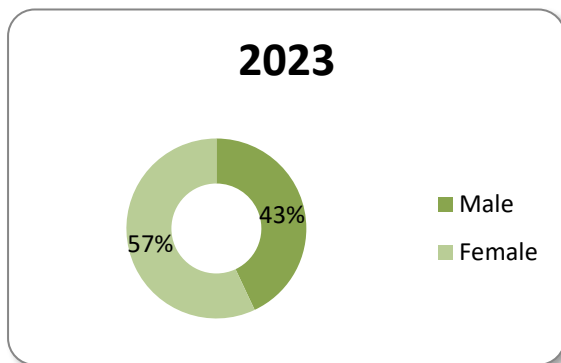
The median figure represents the ‘typical’ man or woman (i.e. the man/woman in the middle of the male/female pay range) and the gap is due to the greater proportion of men in the upper pay quartiles compared with lower pay quartiles, and a greater proportion of women in the lower pay quartiles compared with the upper pay quartiles. This year the gap has reduced because there are more men in the lower pay quartiles and more female in the higher quartiles than last year. This means the middle value for males has moved down and the middle value for females has moved up, thus reducing the gap.

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;

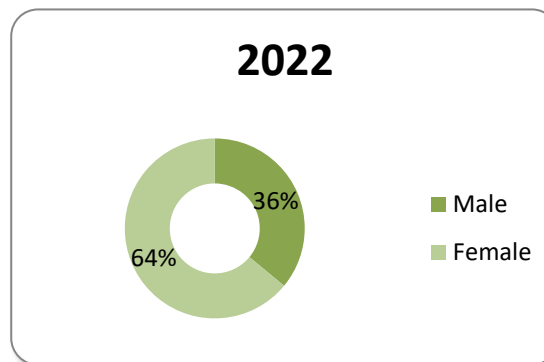
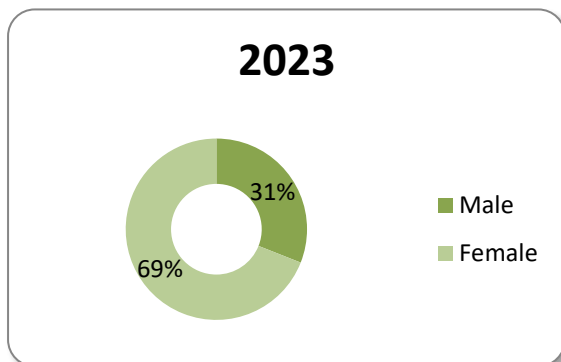
have a published pay policy statement and evaluate all jobs using the HAY job evaluation method. The Council is confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work.

Pay quartiles

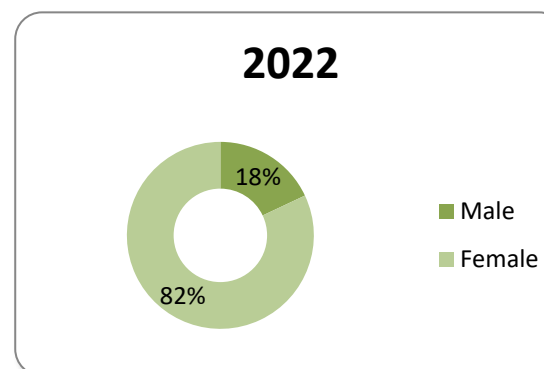
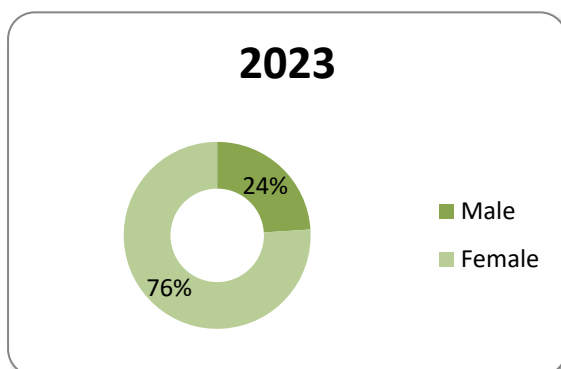
Quartile 1 (upper quartile)



Quartile 2 (upper middle quartile)



Quartile 3 (lower middle quartile)



Quartile 4 (lower quartile)

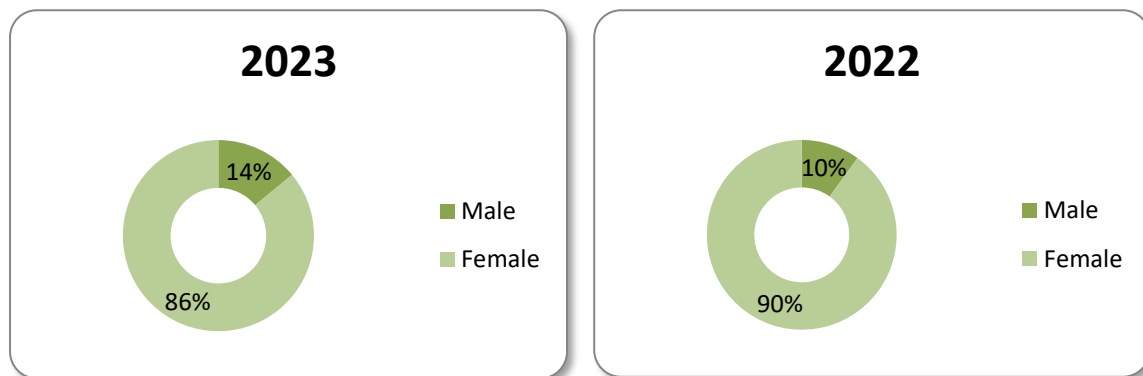


Figure 1.0 Pay quartiles by gender

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 the percentages of males and females have remained the same. For Q2 the percentage of males has dropped by 5 percentage points. In Q3 and Q4 the number of females has dropped by 6 and 5 percentage points respectively.

As discussed above, the gender pay gap has reduced this year because there are more men in the lower pay quartiles and more female in the higher quartiles than last year. 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. If these services remained in-house the proportion of male and female employees in the lower pay quartiles would be much more even.

EHC has a good balance of male and females in senior positions compared to a lot of other organisations and are ambitious to do better across the board. We must be mindful of external factors that can impact this though and remain realistic about what we can achieve.

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, including '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.

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 September 2023) 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 HR and OD Service Manager
- 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.
- The question of blind CVs will be explored as we reprocure this service through our procurement framework

Statement

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

Signed *Richard Cassidy*

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>