

East Herts Council - Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Published February 2026



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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 2025.

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 2024 action plan

In 2024 we said we would:

- 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.

Our progress:

- 76% of staff completed the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme in 2025. 78% of staff completed the new Bullying and Harassment e-learning training introduced in 2024 following The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act 2023, which focused on active measures to prevent sexual harassment. The training needs analysis focused on statutory and mandatory training needs across the council due to a reduction in the overall training budget.

In 2024 we said we would:

- Work with the new ATS provider regarding the reporting options with the aim of getting equalities data at the shortlisting stage.

Our progress:

Due to the new ATS not being implemented until February 2025 we do not yet have a full year of data from the new system. For the annual equalities report 24/25 it was not possible to merge the data from the two systems in order to analyse due to there being different parameters (e.g. age groups) and descriptors (e.g. ethnicity groups). Therefore, we have only analysed the data from the old ATS (10 months' worth) but in 2025/26 we will have a full year's worth of data from the new system and we should be able to report on shortlisting data as well as application and appointment.

In 2024 we said we would:

- Continue to promote equalities-based events such as International Women's Day.

Our progress:

- We have continued to promote equalities-based events where possible.

In 2024 we said we would:

- Develop a strategy to further leverage our apprenticeship levy pot to grow our own approach with professional training and the development of officers into specialists or aspirant leaders. This will address both skills gaps and some equity gaps in the workforce.

Our progress:

- Due to changes in management of the HR team this has not progressed but there is now a new shared Senior HR Business Partner in post who will be reviewing our leadership training in 2026.

Gender Pay Gap Analysis

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap Figures

Table 1.0 shows that the Council's mean gender pay gap is 13% and the median gender pay gap is 9%. 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 2025	Gender pay gap 2024	+/- percentage points
Mean (Average)	9%	13%	-4%
Median (Middle)	12%	9%	+3%

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 2025	Gender bonus gap 2024
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%

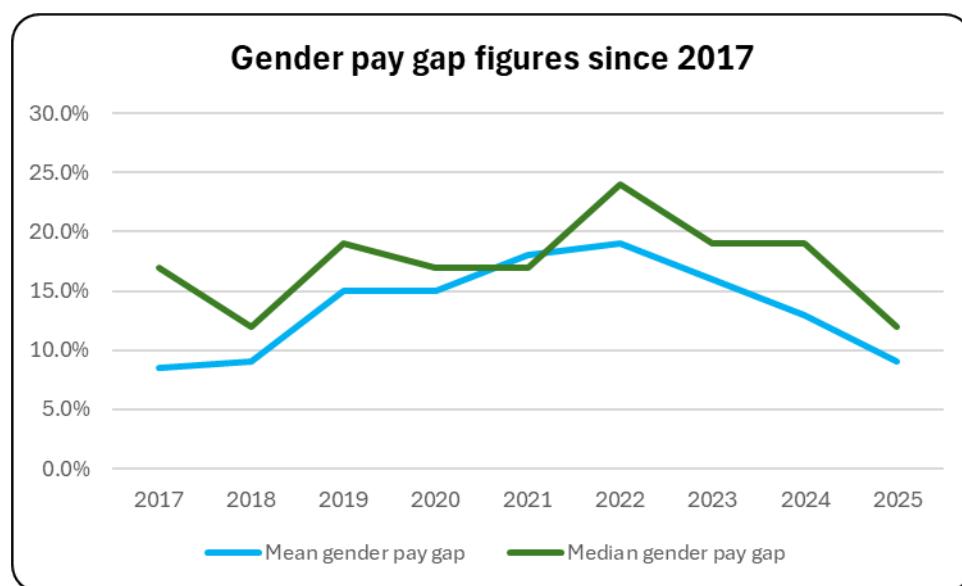


Figure 1.0 Gender pay gap figures 2017-2025

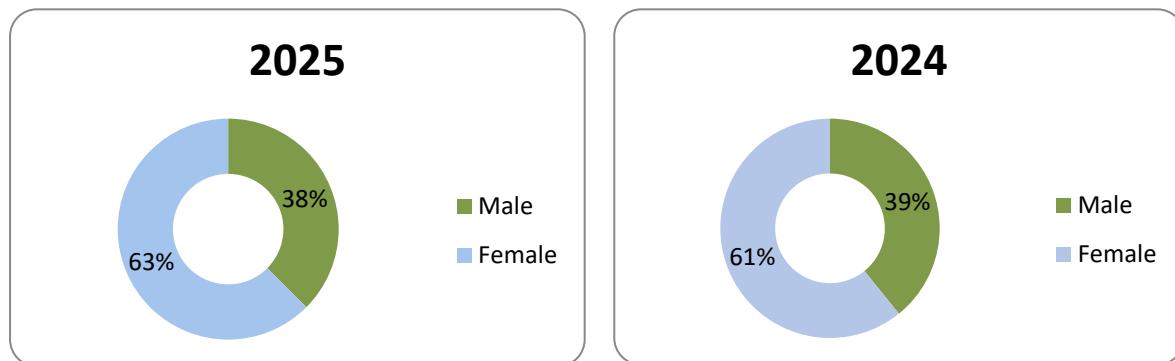
The mean gender pay gap has reduced this year but the median gender pay gap has increased. The mean gender pay gap has dropped by 4 percentage points and the median gender pay gap has increased by 3 percentage points, when compared to 2024. The Council's overall headcount has increased by 25 since 31 March 2024 (from 297 headcount last year to 322 this year). The number of male employees has increased by 8 (93 to 101) and the number of female employees has increased by 17 (204 to 221). The distribution of males and females across the pay grades has also changed slightly; there is 1 more male and 5 more females in Q1, 9 more females in Q2 and 2 less males, 4 more males in Q3 and 2 more females, and 1 more female and 5 more males in Q4. Having more males in the lower quartiles and having more females in Q1 and Q2 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 the middle value for females has gone down whereas the middle value for males has remained very similar to last year, thus increasing the gap. It is unclear what has caused the middle value for females to go down.

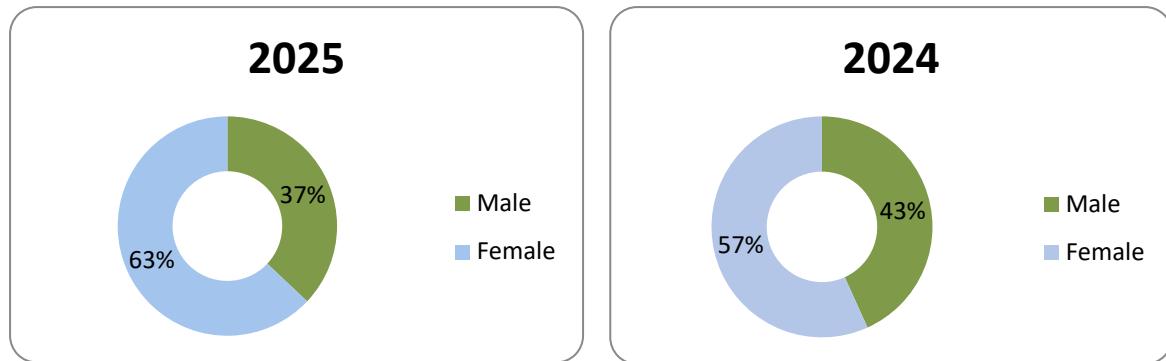
The Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees. We have a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex (or any other protected characteristic). As such, we have a pay and grading structure agreed 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

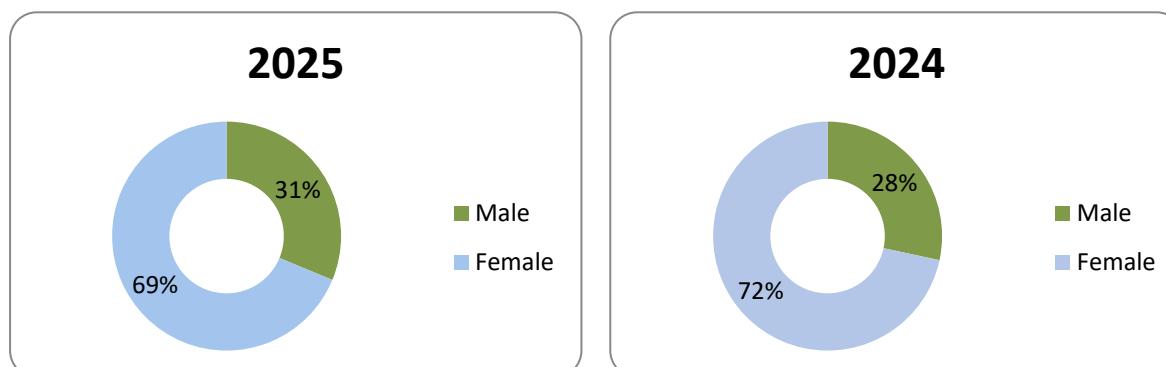
Quartile 1 (upper quartile)



Quartile 2 (upper middle quartile)



Quartile 3 (lower middle quartile)



Quartile 4 (lower quartile)

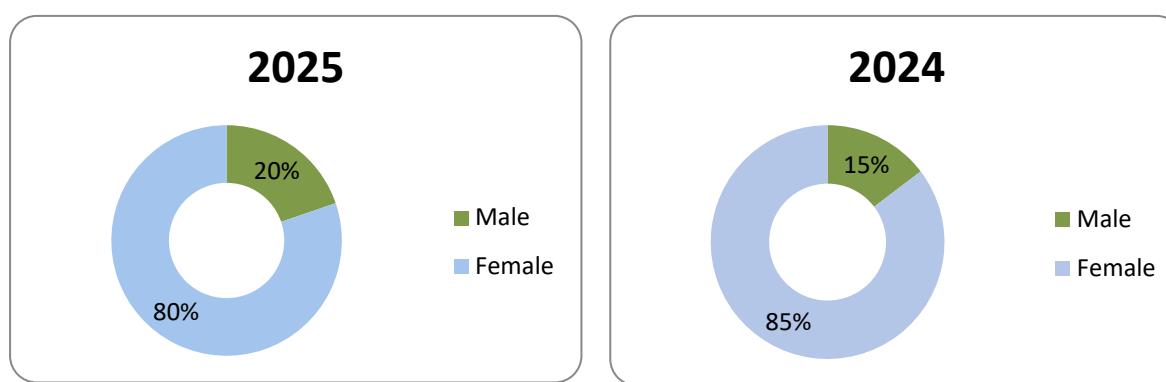


Figure 2.0 Pay quartiles by gender

Figure 2.0 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 females has increased by 1 percentage point. For Q2 the percentage of females has increased by 6 percentage points. In Q3 the percentage of males has increased by 3 percentage points and in Q4 the percentage of males has increased by 5 percentage points.

As discussed above, the mean gender pay gap has reduced this year because there are more males in Q3 and Q4 and more females in Q1 and Q2 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.

The Council 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 August 2025) 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.
- Continue to promote equalities-based events such as International Women's Day.
- Review the development of officers into specialists or aspirant leaders. This will address both skills gaps and some equity gaps in the workforce.

We also plan to review the following policies in 2026:

- Corporate Equality Policy
- Recruitment and Induction Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees

Statement

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

Signed

Date: