

Gender Pay Gap Report

2021 - 2022





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Foreward

Above is an independent leading infrastructure services and engineering company designing, maintaining and supporting the utilities infrastructure. As a business, we are committed to supporting our colleagues, the people who are behind the critical services the UK relies on every day and who take personal pride in the way we deliver our services to the public.



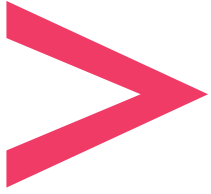
In April 2022, Above was formed following the sale of Amey Utilities to Rubicon Partners.

Like many organisations, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had an impact on our organisation. The full impact of the pandemic is reflected in our 2022 Gender Pay Gap reporting as the consequences for women of increased childcare and home-schooling responsibilities and furlough are realised. We recognise that these pressures are shrinking an already pressurised female talent pool and continue to create the potential for the Gender Pay Gap to widen as a result across the UK. We believe it is ever more critical to remain committed and focused on equality, as we work towards a more gender-balanced workforce.

At Above, we put people at the forefront of everything we do, operating in agile, hybrid and flexible ways to help our colleagues, our

clients and our communities embrace the future. We want to ensure our workforce is diverse and inclusive and our culture continues to be open and fair, where our colleagues can bring their whole selves to work. We are passionate about being an inclusive organisation and seek to provide job opportunities for everyone regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion, nationality or sexual orientation. We are committed to building an organisation that leverages individuals' unique talents so that every social interaction is authentic and responsible.

We recognise that our first year of mandatory Gender Pay Gap reporting as an independent organisation is an important step - in terms of demonstrating transparency and our commitment to encourage greater equality of opportunity for women in our workplace.



Our Gender Pay Gap report suggests that we have areas where we can do more to support gender equality. By scrutinising the detail to understand the reasons behind the high-level numbers, we will build a plan of action that seeks to build on activities already in place and foster new initiatives.

We have a mean Gender Pay Gap of 13.7% favouring males, with our median Gender Pay Gap sitting at 8.7%. These figures compare favourably to the national figures reported by the Office for National Statistics. We actively continue to invest in providing access to training and development opportunities to our entire workforce to encourage and promote progression across the organisation.

Women hold 24% of management positions and 28% of colleague promotions were female (2021 – 2022).

Our female colleagues currently represent 18% of our overall workforce.

Our leadership team continues to strive towards making our organisation a fair and balanced workplace. A number of initiatives are being implemented that are collectively influential in moving Above towards a more gender-balanced workforce.

Our People & Culture team actively support our diversity message across the organisation by positively influencing and challenging our hiring managers to ensure they recognise how their individual behaviours and actions impact our overall ability to create an open, fair and inclusive workplace culture which reflects our company values.

We are committed to increasing greater female representation across the organisation through a variety of initiatives and are maintaining the momentum we have experienced over the last year, as we strive towards a more gender-balanced organisation.

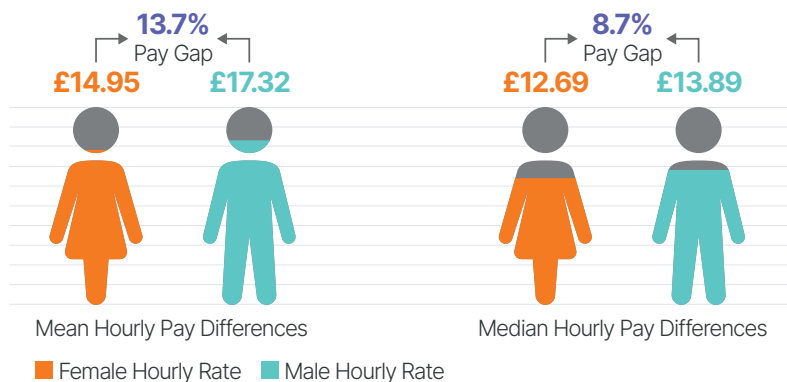
Gender Pay Gap

Mandatory Gender Pay Gap reporting applies to all private and voluntary sector employers in England, Wales and Scotland with at least 250 colleagues as of the snapshot date of 5 April 2022. Those organisations are required to publicly report their Gender Pay Gap metrics as follows on the government-sponsored website, with the aim of eliminating the Gender Pay Gap.

Explaining Gender Pay Gap

- **Mean Gender Pay Gap** – the difference between the average hourly earnings of males and females. This is worked out by adding together all the hourly earnings of pay for each gender and then dividing the total by the total number of people of that gender. The mean gap is the difference between the two numbers, expressed as a percentage.
- **Median Gender Pay Gap** – the difference between the median hourly earnings of males and females. The median is calculated by putting everyone of each gender in order of how much they are paid. The median is the amount paid to the person in the middle. The median gap is the difference between these two numbers, expressed as a percentage.
- **Pay Quartiles** – insight into career paths.

As of 5 April 2022, our mean Gender Pay Gap stood at 13.7% favouring males, with our median gender pay sitting at 8.7%:



These gaps are both below the national mean (13.9%) and well below the median (14.9%) as reported by the Office of National Statistics 2022.

The bonus payment data is excluded from the reporting as these were reported and paid by Amey in March 2022 prior to the acquisition.

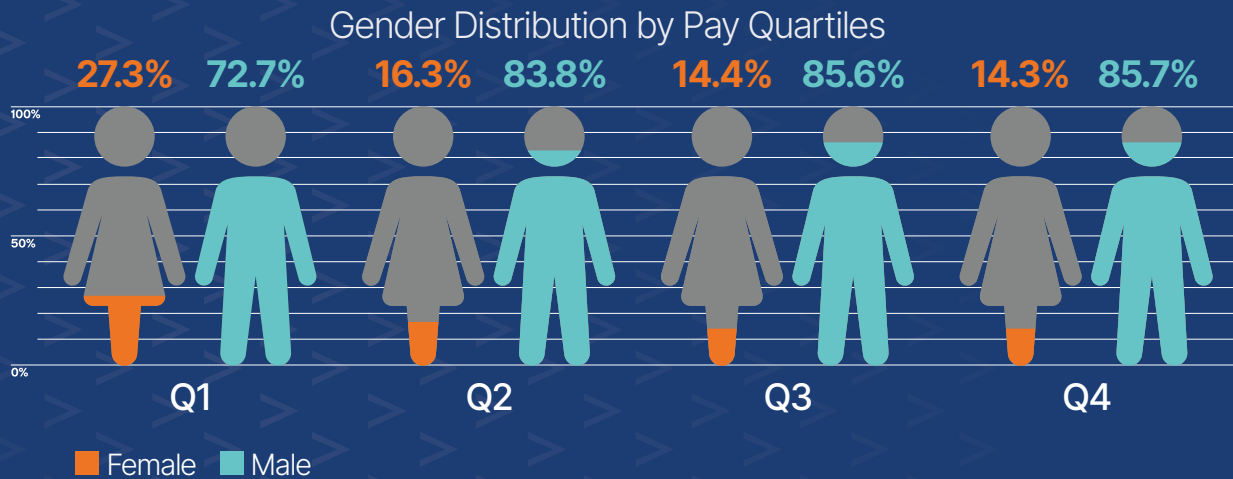
The underlying reason behind the mean gap is predominantly due to the smaller representation of women across all levels of roles in the organisation and a higher representation of males in more senior leadership roles.

The Utility sector is typically male-dominated, and this is reflected across our organisation. We recognise that we have an under representative group of females in some of our more highly skilled roles which contributed to our pay gap as we have a predominance of highly qualified males in higher-paid roles. We are striving to attract female talent into our organisation when roles become vacant.

Not only are we confident that all our People processes and practices ensure that men and women are paid equally for doing equivalent jobs across our organisation, but we are also committed to promoting women in leadership roles. It is great to see this reflected in our current workforce, where women hold 24% of management positions and make up 18% of our overall workforce. This shows the significant contributions and value that women are bringing to our company.

Career Paths and Earnings

Our gender distribution by quartiles, as defined by the regulations, shows us that female colleagues are under-represented across all quartiles, in particular quartiles Q3 and Q4.



Strategy

People & Culture

Our People & Culture philosophy is to attract and retain high-calibre individuals and to leverage their unique talents to help create a diverse workforce, bringing different insights and experiences into our organisation.

We offer enhanced maternity and adoption leave for all our colleagues. We proactively keep in touch with those colleagues and saw a 45% return rate in the reporting year. We recognise the motivational importance of positive senior role models to inspire confidence and success. We acknowledge that our strategy needs to evolve to ensure that we attract and retain a higher proportion of females in our organisation at all levels.

We ensure that all our People policies and tools proactively support flexible and hybrid working across the organisation as we believe that these policies empower our talented and driven colleagues to deliver results and in turn advance their careers in our organisation.



Post - Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we have actively focused attention on establishing our “new normal” at Above. As part of this, we have demonstrated our ongoing commitment to colleague wellbeing through our new partnership with Mates in Mind as we collectively look to raise awareness and positively address mental health. We launched our first colleague engagement survey at Above, to solicit opinions and feedback from across the organisation.

All jobs were guaranteed during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and we grew our headcount during this time adding over 40 permanent roles to our structure.

Our roles are externally benchmarked on an annual basis, enabling us to obtain accurate market rates for each role. We acknowledge pay differentials may remain in certain cases due to factors such as length of service, seniority, and performance.

Where pay differentials exist due to gender and are not justified by length of service, seniority, or performance, we ensure that every effort is made to bridge those gaps.

Recruitment

Our recruitment approaches have a strong focus on ensuring a greater gender balance in potential candidates presented.

We continue to develop alternative pipelines including job centres as we proactively engage different sections of the job market and maximise different channels to promote our employer brand.

As part of this, we ensure our recruitment imagery and language are fully inclusive, reflecting the diverse communities within the areas we operate.

We have partnered with the armed forces to help military spouses and partners get back into the world of work.

We also work with different agencies and job boards that are committed to increasing the proportion of female candidates identified for new roles to source diverse talent.



Strategy

Development

Colleague development is a key focus within our organisation, and we are committed to making the most effective use of the talent, skills and abilities of our colleagues. We support the training and development of all our colleagues and as part of this run a number of training programmes where we actively encourage more females to participate.

We recognise the younger generation brings diverse thoughts and innovative ideas that are vital to the long-term success and sustainability of our sector, and continue to develop our apprenticeship and graduate programmes, creating opportunities to support this age group. 50% of our graduates are female and 100% of our latest apprenticeship cohort were successfully promoted following completion with 16% of these being female.

As part of our wider Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) strategy, we seek to highlight the importance of inclusion across our organisation, with all our colleagues undergoing EDI training as we look for ways in which to advance.

We are also seeking to establish a Diversity & Inclusion Committee with Diversity & Inclusion Champions from across the organisation to encourage and embrace opening dialogue and building awareness on issues relating to respect for diversity and inclusion in business.

Partnerships

We are exploring partnerships with the Women in Engineering Society and Women in Utilities Network and are hoping that our colleagues will be actively involved.

As an inclusive and socially responsible employer, over the course of the coming year, we are looking to sign up to the following five commitments:

- Social Mobility Pledge
- Mental Health at Work
- BITC's Race at Work Charter
- UK Government's Disability Confident Employer
- Energy and Utilities inclusion

Closing remarks

This is our first year reporting our Gender Pay Gap. We recognise the opportunity this presents us to further use this data proactively and identify what actions are required to ensure that we make real progress to close the pay gap that is evident in our sector.

We constantly develop and improve our People & Culture policies and practices to encourage and promote the development and progression of all our colleagues. We will continue to leverage technology to help us identify areas of our organisation that need renewed focus to drive continuous improvement relating to gender equality.

Building on our values detailed below, which were refreshed post the reporting cycle documented in this report, we will continue to work with all of our colleagues, and regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion, nationality or sexual orientation, provide them with opportunities to build their confidence and help them in reaching their full potential.



Our Values

- We act with **respect**
- We give each other **support**
- We treat people **fairly**
- We are **accountable**

Graduate Engineer, Stacy McComb, tells us how her first year with Avoe has provided her with exciting opportunities to expand her knowledge and work with different teams across a range of projects.



“

During my studies for BEng in Civil Engineering at the University of Glasgow, I developed an interest in the water sector. Following my graduation, I was keen to find a role that would provide different opportunities to expand my knowledge through working on multiple, challenging projects. I was thrilled when I found such a role at Avoe, where I have been working as a Graduate Engineer in the water design team for over a year. Throughout my first year, I have been fortunate to work with different design teams on a range of projects, with the main project of my career so far being the Batch 3A Green Recovery Scheme for Severn Trent. I have thoroughly enjoyed working as part of a multi-disciplinary team and evaluating green, nature-based solutions that are available in the current market.

”

Avoe’s People & Culture Director and Executive Chair provide their closing comments on our commitment to attracting and retaining women at Avoe, and reducing the gender pay gap.



Becky Kimber, People & Culture Director

“Our business is all about people. This is why one of our key priorities is to create an inclusive culture that is values driven and makes Avoe a great place to work, where everyone feels valued and trusted. Our sector continues to face gender balance challenges and we are committed to address the gap at all levels. To support this, we are focussing on attracting and retaining women across the business in STEM careers.”



Mark Perkins, Executive Chair

“We recognise that as a sector we face a number of challenges in achieving true equality of opportunity, and our first Gender Pay Gap report does somewhat reflect this position. Given our progress to date, I am extremely optimistic with the commitment across the entire Avoe team, that we will go a long way to ‘correcting’ the balance and we will continue to improve our position at pace. As an Executive Team, we want to lead in this area and become real ‘disrupters’ in the creation and development of our talent pool - a key driver that underpins our progression as a business.”





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