

Equality Duty & Gender Pay Gap

March 2024



Equality Duty

Introduction

Staffordshire County Council is proud of the diversity of the county, and recognises that promoting equality and inclusion will improve public services for everyone. The Council has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people. As part of this Act, the public sector equality duty requires the Council to show how it is meeting its responsibilities as an employer, including a requirement to publish information on its workforce, broken down by protected characteristics, which are:

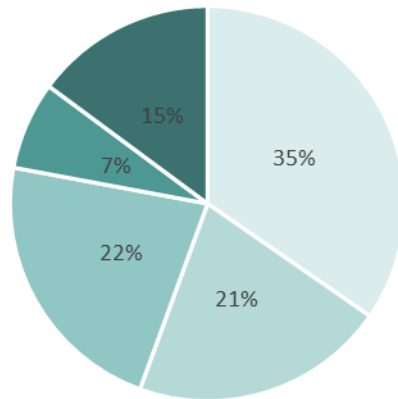
- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

This report forms part of the Council's response to that duty, and provides workforce data which will help us to understand the effectiveness of our own employment policies and processes in promoting equality.

All figures for the 2023-2024 financial year are taken as at 01/01/2024.

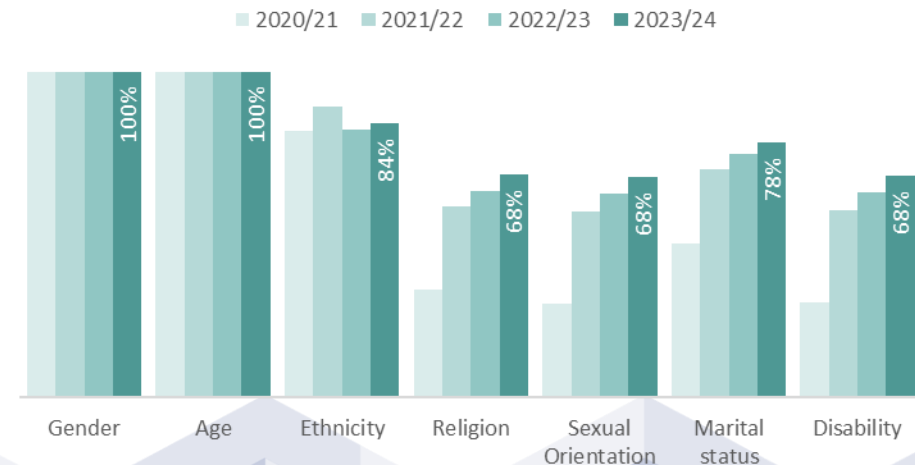
Overview

- As at the 1st January 2024, Staffordshire County Council employed people in 4,562 contracts across 5 directorates, which represents an increase of 8% from last year
- *Finance* is the smallest directorate, accounting for 7% of the workforce, whilst *Children and Families* is the largest at 35%.
- Further progress has been made over the last year in improving the completeness of our equalities data, particularly for Religion, Sexual Orientation and Disability.



Children and Families
 Corporate Services
 Economy, Infrastructure and Skills
 Finance
 Health and Care

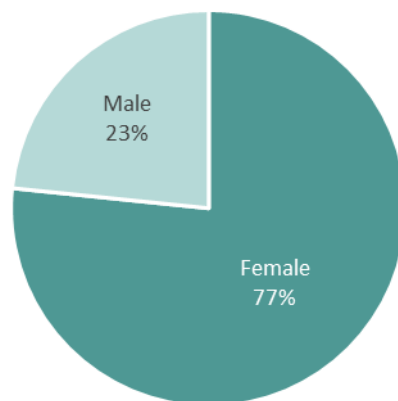
Completion rates by characteristic



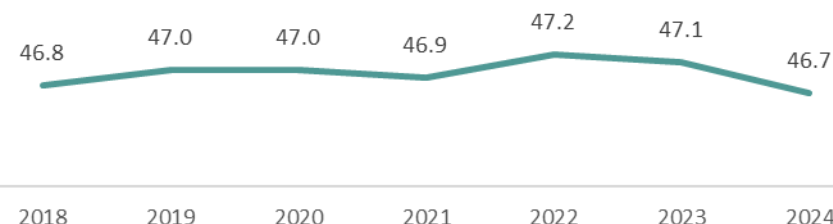
- Please note that although the Council works with a number of partner organisations to deliver its services, particularly in the adult social care sector, the figures in this report only cover those people directly employed by SCC.

Protected characteristics – Sex and Age

- Staffordshire County Council has always had a predominantly female workforce, and, as at January 2024, 77% of the workforce was female.
- The distribution of workers by age group has been consistent year-on-year, but does vary between genders; there are higher proportions of females in the 30-59 age groups, whereas the male workforce has higher proportions of staff in the 60+ age range.

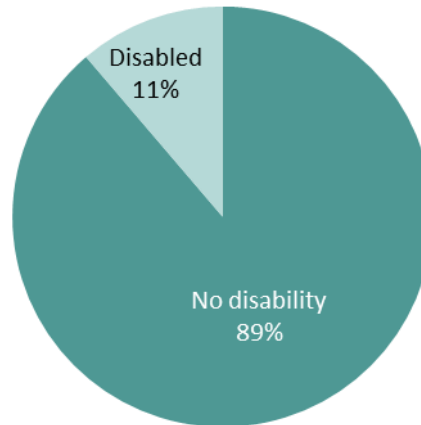


- The County Council’s age profile has remained stable since 2009, and currently 29% of staff are aged 39 or under, 25% are aged 40-49, 32% are aged 50-59, and the remaining 14% are aged 60 or over.
- The average age of the workforce has reduced over the last year to 46.7, although the male workforce continues to average 2-3 years older than the female workforce.

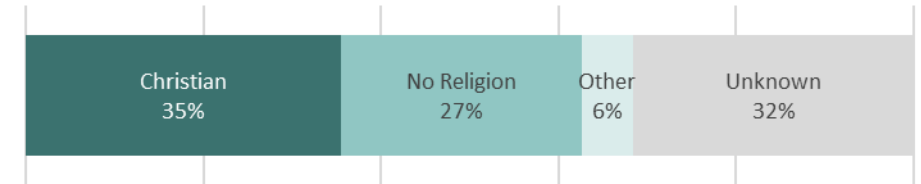


Protected characteristics – Disability and Religion

- Disability information is now held for 68% of staff - 3,113 people - which represents an increase of 8% from last year.
- 341 people indicated that they have a disability, equivalent to 11% of the 'known' workforce and 7% of the workforce as a whole.



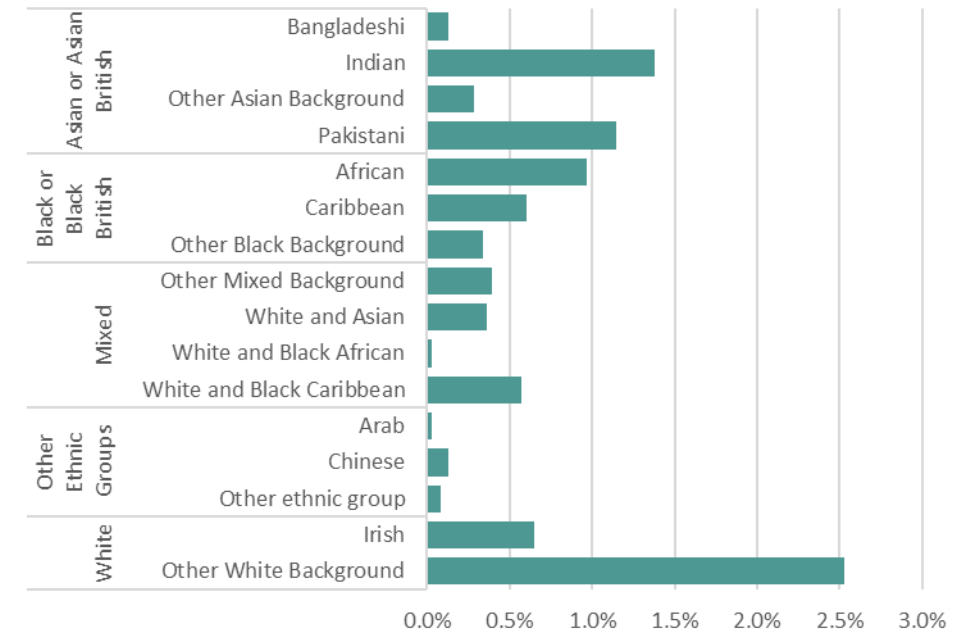
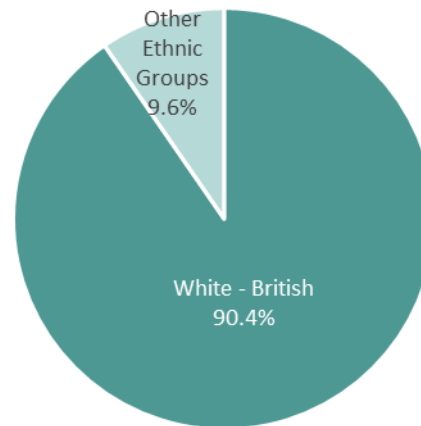
- Information on religion or belief is now held for 68% of staff - 3,122 people - which represents an increase of 8% from last year.



- Christianity is the most commonly cited religion, accounting for 52% of the 'known' workforce and 35% of the workforce as a whole.
- Staff citing 'no religion' account for a further 40% of the 'known' workforce and 27% of the workforce as a whole.
- Although recorded individually, the remaining responses have been grouped as 'Other' for ease of presentation; this group includes Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism, but Agnostic is the most populous response.

Protected characteristics – Race

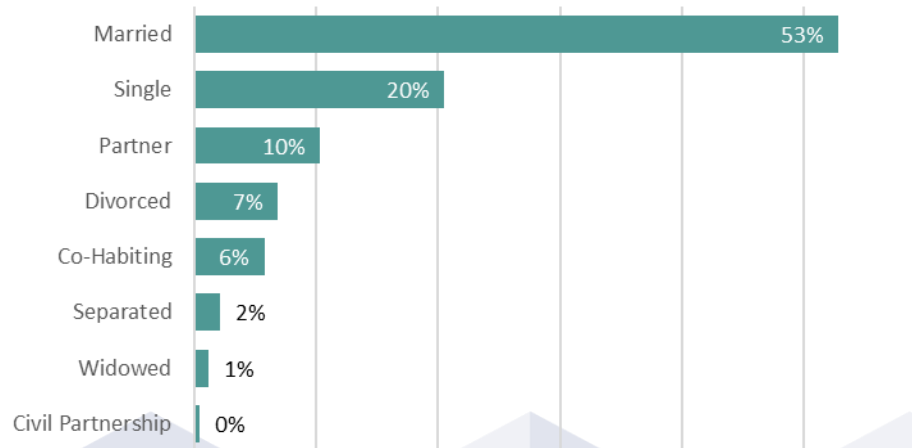
- Information about race is now held for 84% of staff – 3,839 people. Although this is an increase of 2% from last year from last year, the larger workforce means that in real terms we now hold data for more than 350 additional people.
- 9.6% of the known workforce are from ethnic backgrounds other than White – British, increasing from 8.7% last year.
- Within this, Other White Background is the most populous group (2.5%), followed by Asian or Asian British – Indian (1.4%).



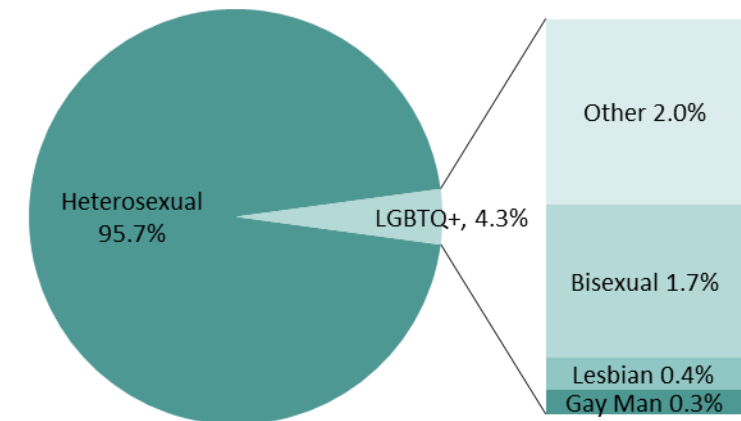
- The figures for the known workforce compare well against data from the 2021 Census, which recorded 90.2% of residents as White – British, and 9.8% from other ethnic groups

Protected characteristics – Marital Status & Sexual Orientation

- Information on marriage and civil partnerships is now held for 78% of staff – 3,574 people. This represents an increase of 5% from last year.
- The current figures remain consistent with those from previous years, although the proportion of staff recorded as Married has again fallen slightly.



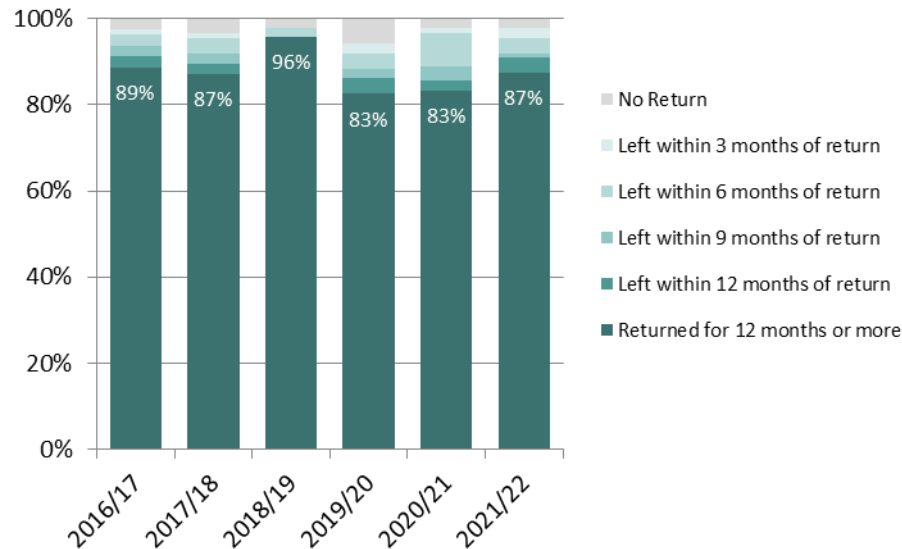
- Information on sexual orientation is now held for 68% of staff – 3,083 people - which represents an increase of 8% from last year.



- Both the number and proportion of staff recorded as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other have increased from last year (previously 3.9%), but remain less diverse than we would expect to see based on estimates for the UK population as a whole.

Protected characteristics – Pregnancy & Gender Reassignment

- The proportion of staff returning from maternity leave for 12 months or more has been consistently high, averaging 88% across the last six years.



- A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.
- The Council currently has too few employees with this characteristic recorded to be able to publish figures whilst maintaining their confidentiality.

Gender Pay Gap

Reporting 'snapshot' date – 31 March 2023

Introduction

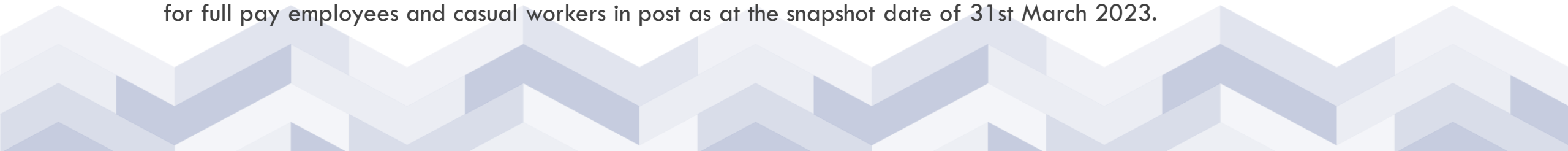
Staffordshire County Council, as a public sector employer of more than 250 employees, is required to report on its gender pay gap in line with 'The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017' for workers in scope.

The gender pay gap differs from that of equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women undertaking the same or similar jobs considered equal value; it is unlawful to pay people who perform the same or similar duties differently because they are male or female. The gender pay gap is a measure of the differences between men and women's average earnings, allowing organisations to be transparent about pay differences and to take positive action to address them.

As stipulated in the legislation we are required to publish the following gender pay data:

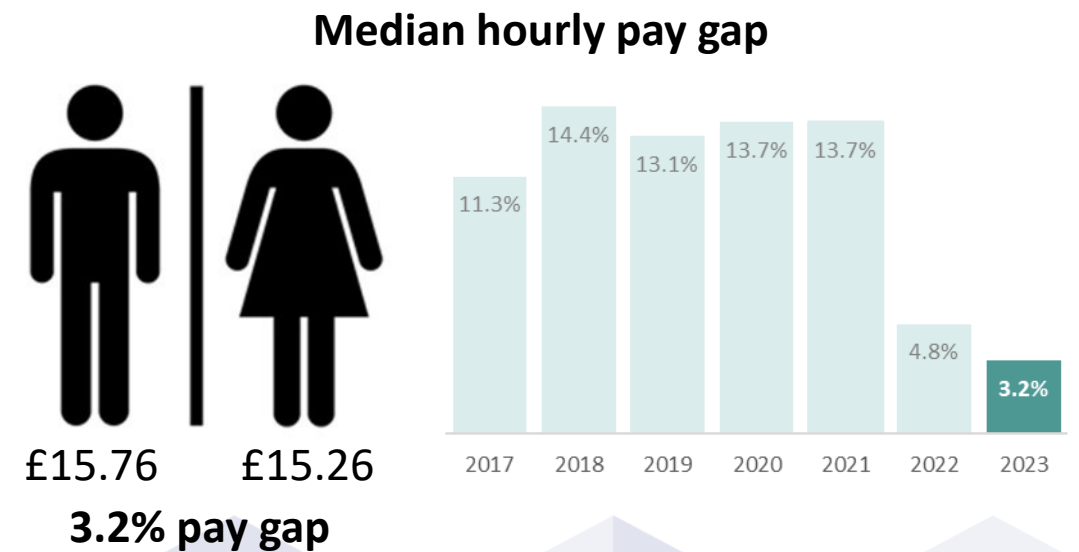
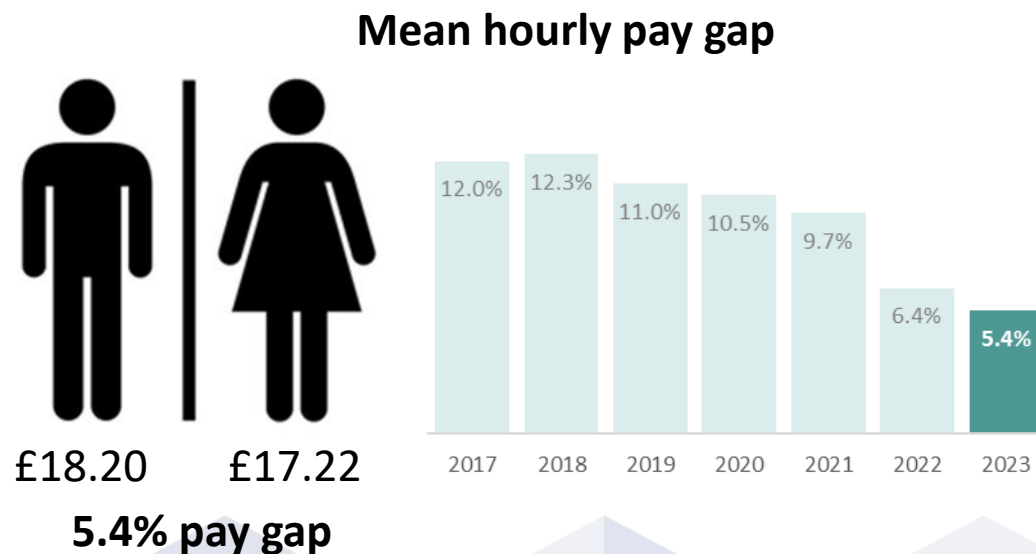
- Gender pay gap (mean and median values)
- Gender bonus gap (mean and median values)
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the organisation's pay structure.

The deadline for publication of this year's Gender Pay Gap figures is 30th March 2024, and will be based on salary data for full pay employees and casual workers in post as at the snapshot date of 31st March 2023.



Gender pay gap – average hourly rates

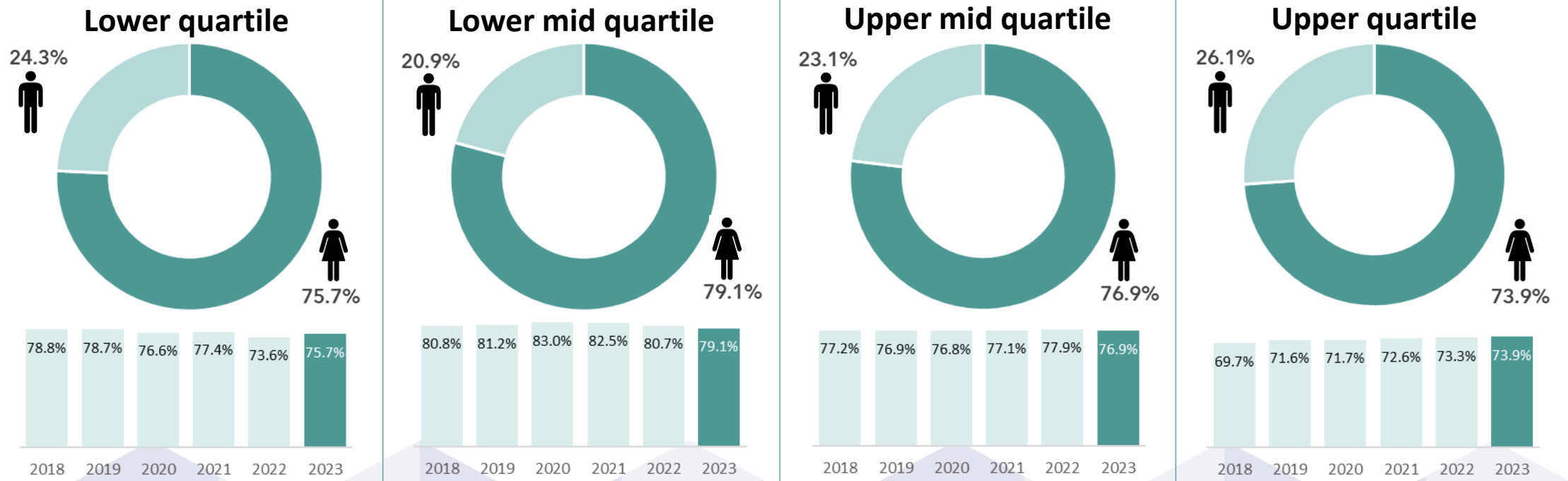
- Our mean and median gender pay gaps have continued to improve and now stand at **5.4%** and **3.2%** respectively.
- It is estimated that the 2022/23 NJC pay award accounted for one third of this improvement.
- Both measures remain significantly lower than national and public sector benchmarks from ONS ASHE Survey, 2023
 - Overall 13.2% mean/14.3% median; Public sector 11.5% mean/14.0% median; Private sector 15.6% mean/18.9% median



- Our bonus pay gap is now 0%, as we no longer have any bonus or performance-related pay arrangements in place.

Gender pay gap – workforce quartiles

- 76.4% of our workforce is female, but the distribution of these staff throughout the pay quartiles varies. The proportion of female staff in the lower mid quartile continues to fall but remains higher than average, whereas the proportion in the upper quartile is lower than average, but continues to rise, and is one of the key drivers in reducing our pay gap.



- The proportion of female staff in the upper quartile has increased every year and is now more than 5 percentage points higher than when we first reported pay gap data in 2017.

Understanding our pay gap

- Since the first gender pay gap publication in March 2018, we have undertaken significant analysis to understand the reasons for our pay gap and have identified the following:
 - Our pay gap fluctuates during the year and is susceptible to change.
 - The make-up of our workforce impacts on reducing our pay gap.
 - There is a greater proportion of women than men in part time lower paid jobs.
 - We have very few part time employees within managerial roles and within the upper pay quartile.
 - There are gender imbalances across the organisation by job category.
 - Historical societal factors which we cannot control, and which may take some years to see change.

Our equality, diversity and gender pay gap commitments

Senior managers and political leaders within the Council are committed to taking steps to achieve greater equality, diversity & inclusion and in turn, reduce our gender pay gap. Actions include:

- Developing our People Strategy to support a more diverse workforce and to create a positive working environment which embodies our values and ensures we provide an inclusive and accessible working environment.
- Improving our workforce data collection and creating a diversity workforce profile to; identify trends, drive improvements and monitor our progress.
- Developing and implementing our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and action plan
- Facilitating the set up of employee forums to enable colleagues from different backgrounds to share their experiences of working at SCC and to help us make positive improvements to our working environment.
- Continuing to develop our Smart Working and Digital agenda, to increase the opportunities for employees to work flexibly where possible, increase the choice of working environment and help balance busy work and home lives.
- Making pay and reward processes more transparent using our job evaluation framework.
- Reviewing all of our People Policies with the principle that they will be inclusive, supportive and consider employee wellbeing.
- Reviewing our recruitment practices and technology to ensure they are truly inclusive which will ensure we attract and retain diverse talent and become an employer of choice.
- Participating in ongoing local initiatives such as Women in Leadership, Menopause at Work and the New Parent Mentoring Scheme.
- Ensuring that managers have the skills to lead, inspire and develop their teams ensuring everyone has the opportunity to grow through our management and leadership development programme.
- Developing our apprenticeship strategy and considering how we can increase underrepresented groups within particular jobs.