



**Northumberland**  
County Council

# Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

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## Introduction

All public sector employers must report and publish gender pay gap information by 31 March on an annual basis.

The Government Equalities Office defines the gender pay gap as the difference between the average (mean or median) earnings of men and women across a workforce.

If a workforce has a high gender pay gap this can indicate issues around pay within the organisation.

Calculations can help identify issues and allow organisations to identify remedial steps to address pay disparities and inequalities.

A gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay which is defined as pay differences between genders when carrying out the same roles/jobs of equal value.

This report complies with the requirements of legislation around content and publication. The information provided within this report is based on a snapshot date of 31 March 2023.

It shows the difference in the average pay between employees of male and female gender (defined as all men and women in the workforce). The report encompasses employees of Northumberland County Council who were in employment on 31 March 2023. This includes all areas of the Council except for school employees, as each school is required to provide its own gender pay gap information.

Fairness and equality remain priorities for us, and we have produced a Pay Policy Statement which supports delivery of those priorities as well as promoting consistency, fairness and transparency to ensure reward is given fairly, irrespective of gender. Our Pay Policy Statement can be viewed on our external website [by clicking here](#).

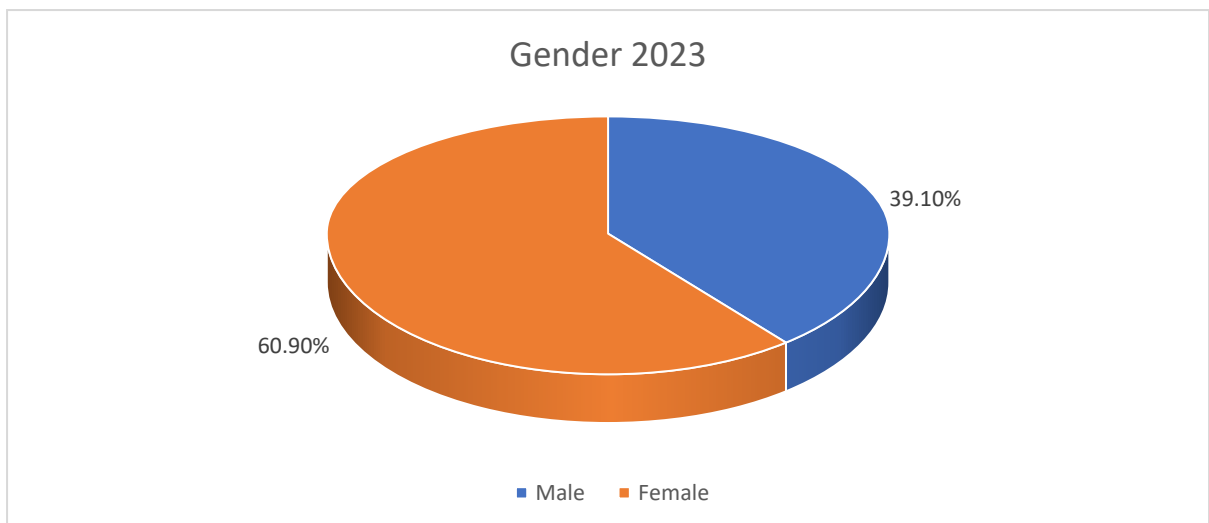
We are proud of what we have achieved as an organisation in addressing and reducing the gender pay gap, and the following report details work that has been undertaken and our plans to ensure we maintain our position.

## Our Gender Pay Gap

### Gender Profile Comparison between 2022 and 2023

A data snapshot on 31 March 2023 showed that females comprised 60.90% of the workforce, with males making up the remaining 39.10%. This is a swing of **0.54%** in favour of female employees.

	2023	2022	Difference
Female	60.90%	60.36%	+0.54%
Male	39.10%	39.64%	-0.54%



## Mean Gender Pay Gap

**What is measured?** – This is the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees

The mean gender pay gap in hourly pay is the difference between the male mean hourly pay and female mean hourly pay.

The mean is the average calculated by dividing the sum of all rates of pay (male or female) by the number of employees.

The mean gender pay gap in hourly pay expressed as a percentage for NCC is **-0.37%** which means that the average hourly rate for men is 0.37% below the hourly rate for women; in simple terms, on average, women within the organisation get paid marginally more than men.

In the previous reporting year, the average hourly rate for men was 0.50% less than women, so the gap between men and women has narrowed slightly.

The gender pay gap in this organisation, has always been historically quite low, and a shift of 0.23% reflects a further shift towards balance.

### 2022/2023 Comparison - Mean Hourly Rate

	2023	2022	Difference
Female	£16.19	£15.16	+£1.03
Male	£16.13	£15.07	+£1.06

## Mean Bonus Gender Pay Gap

The pay framework for NCC does not allow for bonus payments to be made to employees. We do not therefore have data for this part of the report.

## Median Gender Pay Gap

**What is measured?** – This is the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees. The median is the midpoint of a range of values therefore the mid hourly pay point for both males and females within the organisation.

Within NCC the gender gap in median hourly pay between male and female employees is **1.83%**. This means that the median hourly rate of pay for men is 1.83% higher than for women, increasing from the previous year when rates were the same.

The gender pay gap in NCC is substantially below the provisional ONS figure for the 2023 national average median pay gap for all employees, which is 14.3% <sup>1</sup>in favour of male employees.

The Council uses local pay bands with specific pay ranges as set by the National Joint Council for local government services. Bands vary by levels of responsibility and each band has a set range of increments. Eligible employees move through the increments through time regardless of gender. For the purposes of this report, hourly rate is calculated from base pay.

### 2022/2023 Comparison - Median Hourly Rate

	2023	2022	Difference
Female	£13.91	£12.92	+£0.99
Male	£14.17	£12.92	+£1.25

## Median Bonus Gender Pay Gap

The pay framework for NCC does not allow for bonus payments to be made to employees. We do not therefore have data for this part of the report.

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2023>

## Proportion of Males and Females in each Pay Quartile

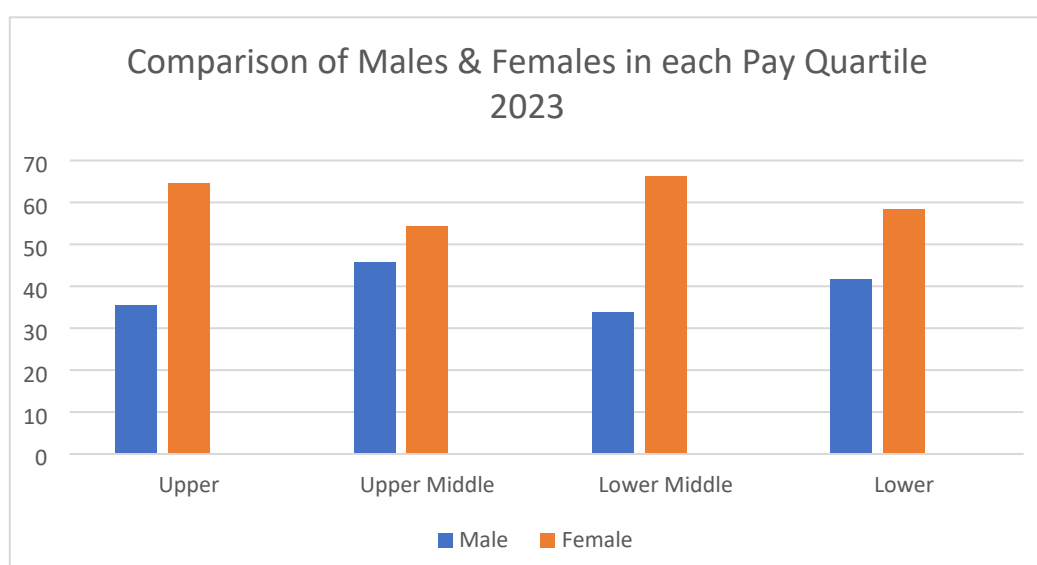
The gender pay gap regulations require reporting for the organisation to be split into 4 quartiles dependent on earnings and gender. For NCC, this is based upon pay bands as follows:

- Upper: Senior manager grades + Pay Bands 7-13
- Upper Middle: Pay Bands 5, 6, 7
- Lower Middle: Pay Bands 4, 5
- Lower: Pay Bands 1, 2, 3, 4

The percentage of female employees has increased across all quartiles other than the upper middle since we last reported our data at the end of March 2023.

### 2022/2023 Quartile Comparison

	Male 2023	Male 2022	Male Variance	Female 2023	Female 2022	Female Variance
Upper	35.45%	36.42%	<b>-0.97%</b>	64.55%	63.58%	<b>+0.97%</b>
Upper middle	45.62%	44.17%	<b>+1.45%</b>	54.38%	55.83%	<b>-1.45%</b>
Lower middle	33.73%	35.00%	<b>-1.27%</b>	66.27%	65.00%	<b>+1.27%</b>
Lower	41.61%	42.96%	<b>-1.35%</b>	58.39%	57.04%	<b>+1.35%</b>



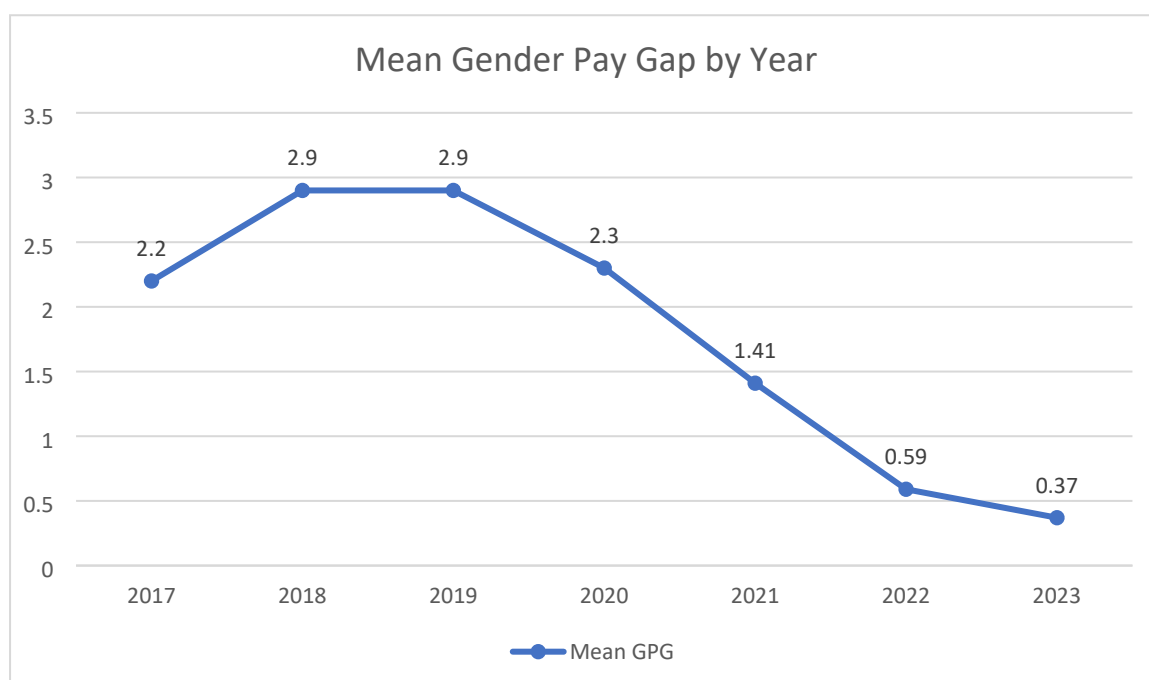
## What does this mean?

The Gender Pay Gap within Northumberland County Council remains one of the lowest compared to other North-East Regional Authorities that have published data to date in 2024. This data has been compared through published data on the government website.

It is also considerably lower than the national average provisional figure for all employees which is 14.3%.<sup>2</sup>

We remain proud of the efforts we have made to ensure that all our employees continue to be treated equally. The fact that women in our organisation get paid narrowly more than men, evidenced by the negative mean pay gap of 0.37%, is very much the exception to the norm across the UK. We continue to work with our workforce to ensure that we maintain a neutral Gender Pay Gap across all pay bands within the organisation.

The gap in pay between men and women within the organisations has been on a downward trend for several years, and this trend has continued.



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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2023>



## How we support Gender and Pay Equality within the Organisation

Northumberland County Council is proud to support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion across its workforce, recognising that the breadth of personal knowledge and experience that each staff member brings to the organisation can ensure that we are an organisation that ensure that its workforce feels that they belong and are valued.

### Staff Networks

To provide a route for staff members to contribute to discussions, Staff Networks have been established, adding value to the experience of staff at Northumberland County Council. It is evident that our current level of investment in the Networks is both valued by our workforce and exceeds what other local authorities offer its staff.

The Council currently supports 8 Staff networks, with the potential for more to be developed. They are:

- Armed Forces Network – Northumberland holds the Gold Standard Award for the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder Network (incorporating Neurodiversity)
- Carers Network
- Enable Disability – Northumberland is certified as Disability Confident Committed
- Menopause Network – Northumberland has signed the Menopause Workplace Pledge
- Mental Wellbeing Network
- Pride Network
- Race Equality Staff Network

The various Network Groups were formed in response to feedback received through our employee surveys; they are run by staff, for staff, and provide opportunities for peer networking, mutual support and staff development, whilst also

- contributing to the council's inclusive culture to support our staff to be the best they can be.
- demonstrating the council values and celebrating the contribution of staff to our success.

- helping us to meet our commitment to go beyond the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Each of the network groups welcomes and encourages membership of all staff from across the council and has a named Director as sponsor who champions the network at a senior level, thereby ensuring that equality and diversity are always at the forefront of senior leadership thinking and ensuring that the values of the Council and the views of our staff are aligned.

To ensure the success of the Networks, the Council recognise that it is important to invest in the support of their coordination.

- Our Staff Engagement Assistant provides full time, dedicated, overarching holistic support to all networks, working closely with the Chairs & Champions, and is involved in the planning, preparation, and delivery of each of the networks whilst also being an active member and former chair of the Carers group and supporting the Network Champions in their roles.
- A dedicated HR Officer supports and provides guidance in network meetings.
- A Communications Assistant attends all network groups to promote the networks, events, and campaigns and maintains the dedicated SharePoint site.
- Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Lead provides overarching strategic and management support for the Networks, working closely with both the Chairs of the groups, and the Network Champions.
- A member of the Business Admin Team attends each of the network meetings to record any key comments and actions.

The council's Staff Network Groups continue to go from strength to strength and remain a driving force behind our commitment to create a workplace environment which promotes diversity, equity and inclusion for all.

Our Staff Network Groups also act as an important barometer and critical friend to measure how well we are meeting our commitments. We consider it important that each Network Group can arrange events that will benefit staff and a dedicated budget has been allocated to support the delivery of identified initiatives to promote the work of the Network whilst also providing additional opportunities for staff to take part.

The Staff Network Groups each meet a minimum of 3 times per year, with often more meetings taking place to reflect and respond to any emerging issues or themes. By investing in our Staff Network Groups, we have ensured that our workforce feel included and valued and that they have somewhere safe and supportive to discuss

issues relevant to them, ensuring that Inclusion and Diversity remain at the core of our values and principles. This has included the Chairs of all Groups contributing to the Council’s Peer Review which took place in January 2024.

### Other Achievements

In addition to the Staff Network Groups

- ✓ We have signed and committed to the Menopause Workplace Pledge
- ✓ We are certified as a Disability Confident organisation.
- ✓ We have pledged to support, and are accredited under, the White Ribbon campaign, against Violence Against Women and Girls
- ✓ We're applying for the next stage of the Trailblazer Award from Race Equality Matters. After successfully obtaining the bronze award last year, we're determined to reach the next stage of this valuable accreditation that recognises our work to address racial inequality within the council.
- ✓ The Council has maintained its Gold Standard Award for the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme. This prestigious award recognises and rewards UK employers and organisations that demonstrate exceptional support for the armed forces community. In 2018, the Council was one of only nine local authorities across the entire UK to receive the coveted Gold Award, which must be revalidated every five years, which was achieved in 2023.



## Conclusion

Since the introduction of reporting requirements, the pay gap within Northumberland County Council has seen a consistent reduction. The figures in this report are testament to the hard work and absolute commitment of our staff in ensuring that this is an organisation which values fairness, transparency and equality.

In the coming months we will reflect upon this data and the data within our broader Workforce Equality Report to identify what we are doing well and what we can do better. We will work with Executive Directors, Service Heads and our Network Groups to drive further improvement, and we will renew efforts to increase the quality of our staff data across the organisation.

## Monitoring Arrangements

Actions will be monitored via the agreed DEI action plan under the delivery of our People and Culture strategy. Reporting will be to the Executive Management team and relevant portfolio holder at regular intervals. The accountable officer with the responsibility for this workstream is the Director of People and Culture.

## Publication Arrangements

This report will be published annually by the Council and will be placed on the Council's website and be made available internally to staff throughout the organisation. The report will also be published on the government website annually to meet legislative requirements.

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### Authors of report

- Julie Stewart – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager
- Craig Smith – Senior Workforce Information Analyst

### Executive approval

- Gill O'Neill – Executive Director of Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities