

Gender Pay Gap Report 2024



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn Gymraeg

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About this report

In the UK, all public, private and voluntary sector organisations with 250 or more employees must report annually on their gender pay gap. All employers are legally obliged to give men and women equal pay for work of equal value. However, for lots of reasons, in many organisations there is a difference between the average earnings of male and female employees.

This is known as a Gender Pay Gap (GPG) and it indicates that men might be occupying higher-paying positions in the workplace than women. It does not mean employers have breached equal pay provisions or that women are paid less than men to do the same job.

All organisations that are required to submit and publish their GPG must do so against six different measures. This information is based on a snapshot of pay data on a set date identified within Schedule 1 of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

1

Mean Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-time relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees.

2

Median Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees.

3

Median Bonus Gap

The difference between the median bonus pay paid to eligible male employees and that paid to eligible female employees.

4

Mean Bonus Gap

The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to eligible male employees and that paid to female relevant employees.

5

Bonus Proportions

The proportion of eligible male and female employees who were paid bonus pay during the relevant period.

6

Quartile Pay Bands

The proportion of male and female full-pay employees in the lower, lower-middle, upper-middle and upper quartile pay bands.

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In accordance with the legislation, we have produced and published this report to show North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's GPG as it stood on March 31st 2024. The snapshot aims to produce an overview of the 2023/24 financial year'.

For comparison, we have provided data from the same date in 2023. If you have any questions or comments relating to this report and its contents, please contact us via the: [North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Website](#)

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

EDI is an important business imperative for any employer, not least a humanitarian organisation like the fire and rescue service. Our people are central to our core values “Diversity and Inclusivity”, “Striving for excellence” and “People”.

We know that developing as an organisation with diversity of thought, background and experience will make us a better employer and a better provider of public services. We work hard to create a culture where anyone, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability or faith, can thrive and reach their full potential. In turn, this enables us to better understand and respond to the diverse needs of the communities across North Wales and beyond.

Our Gender Pay Gap

Like other fire and rescue services with a gender-neutral approach to pay across all levels of our organisation, we still have a GPG. The causes are varied and complex, but nothing to do with equal pay issues. For firefighter roles, terms and conditions are nationally negotiated, using role maps and nationally agreed pay scales. However, in spite of an increasing number of women in the workforce, men still dominate the operational workforce and formal leadership roles in particular. Women still make up a larger proportion of fire service staff, but there are sometimes less opportunities to progress into supervisory and formal leadership roles which receive high levels of pay. Furthermore, non-operational roles are graded using an accredited job evaluation scheme and local government pay scales. These differences make it extremely difficult to make like-for-like comparisons. Our service acknowledges the gender diversity and identities of our staff. All of the employee's in our current workforce identify as either male or female.

As of the 31st March 2024, we employed 906 staff. Below you can see a visual representation of our workforce which has been broken down into fire control staff, operational staff and staff in corporate service roles. In line with GPG criteria and guidance, some staff have not been included in this analysis i.e. staff on maternity, staff taking unpaid leave, secondments to name a few. This helps to ensure the figures presented in the report are a true representative and reflection of our workforce.





2024 Staff – 906	Control Staff (31)	Operational Staff (735)	FRS Staff (140)
Female – 192 (21.2%)	25 (80.6%)	88 (12%)	79 (56.4%)
Male – 714 (78.8%)	6 (19.4%)	647 (88%)	61 (43.6%)

2023 Staff – 901	Control Staff (31)	Operational Staff (731)	FRS Staff (139)
Female – 194 (21.5%)	25 (80.6%)	90 (12.3%)	79 (56.8%)
Male – 707 (78.5%)	6 (19.4%)	641 (87.7%)	60 (43.2%)

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) employ more men than women. Historically, Fire and Rescue Services across the United Kingdom are male dominated and although thousands of women have entered the sector in the past thirty years, males still make up a large percentage of teams and departments. However, women are currently well represented within our fire control team and corporate service teams across the service, but men make up the large majority of the operational team. As the operational team is by far the largest team in our service (currently 81.1% of all employees), this can go some way to explain why there is a GPG.

Overall, the gender balance in service's workforce has remained the same in the past year. The Service has 192 (21.2%) women in 2024, compared to 194 (21.5%) women in 2023. There are two less women in operational roles in 2024, compared to 2023 which explains why there is a decrease in the overall percentage. However, when you look at the number of women in **operational firefighter** roles over two years, numbers have increased from 75 in 2022 to 88 in 2024 which equates to a 1.4% increase. Although women are more represented, the Service acknowledge more needs to be done and continued efforts are being made to attract, recruit and retain more women.

From a team of 31, there are 25 females in the **control department** in 2024, exactly the same gender profile as in 2023. Women have traditionally made up a majority of the control team and there is a proven track record of retention and long serving staff within the department. It is worth acknowledging that historically the large majority of leavers in control are women, but the department have consistently achieved a high proportion of female applicants.

The gender profile has remained the same in **corporate services** with 79 (56.4%) women in 2024, compared to 79 (56.8%) in 2023. The number of women in corporate service roles has not increased in the past two years, and this can be explained by various males that have been appointed to fill vacant positions that were previously held by women, but also various males have been recruited into new specialist roles relating to work such as environment, procurement, stores, grievances and complaints, equality and inclusion. This can be seen as a positive trend because the service's positive action work has helped address gender stereotypes and it is positive to see more males apply for office-based roles which were usually taken up by women in the past. Similar to our targeted approach to attract more women into firefighter roles, work experience, transferable skills, and values are the main criteria to help filter suitability, not a person's gender.

Although the Service have not managed to increase the number of women across all roles, a continuation of successful positive action activities will hopefully enable the Service to attract and recruit more women in the future. Through recruitment events, community engagement and positive action, the Service continue to develop further partnerships at a strategic and community level which help connect with girls and women. The Service's continued attendance at local community, pride and sports events, places of worship, religious and cultural celebrations and observances, freshers and careers fairs in educational settings have all led to more women and people from other underrepresented groups joining the service.









Whilst our service is representative of women on the Service Leadership Team (SLT), there is an acknowledgment that the service is on a progressive journey to ensure women continue to progress through supervisory and middle leadership roles. This report highlights some positive trends where women are progressing through the different quartiles. The Service acknowledge that unless women continue to progress in our service (i.e. females being promoted), it is inevitable that the GPG will exist until there are greater numbers of women in the Service, especially in the higher paid roles.

The Service remain committed to identifying and eliminating all barriers in relation to the attraction, recruitment, retention and progression of women. To achieve a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve, further details about our attraction, recruitment and retention strategy are provided on pages 10 and 11.



Earnings 2024

Based on a snapshot of data available on March 31st 2023 in relation to earnings of all staff, our Service's GPG is calculated as follows.

					
	Mean Hourly Rate	2024	£17.63	£19.44	9.30%
		2023	£16.16	£17.78	9.07%
	Median Hourly Rate	2024	£16.60	£19.24	13.72%
		2023	£15.62	£17.59	11.19%
	Proportion of staff in receipt of a CPD payment (i.e. bonus)	2024	15%	26.3%	N/A
		2023	13.3%	23.4%	N/A
	Mean Bonus	2024	£0.32	£0.29	-13.16%
		2023	£0.32	£0.28	-12.18%
	Median Bonus	2024	£0.34	£0.34	0%
		2023	£0.32	£0.32	0%



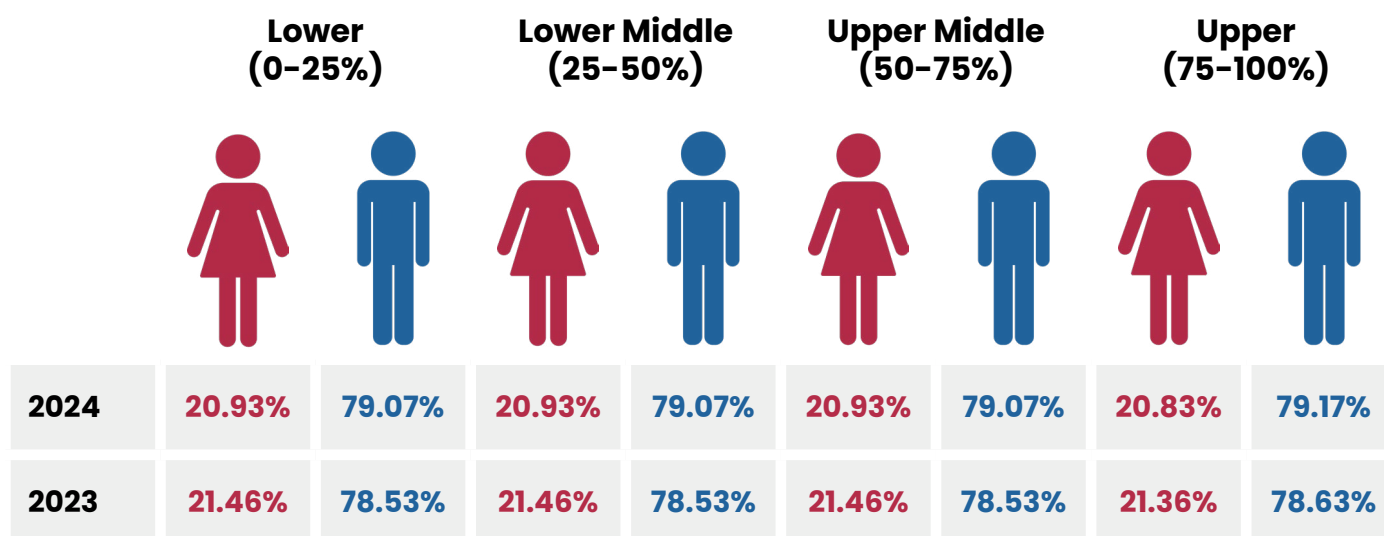
Between 2023 and 2024 the **mean hourly pay** increased from 9.07% to 9.30%. This figure considers all employees, many of which work part time (or on-call retained duty system). With this in mind, the current gap of 9.30%, although above the national average for full-time employees which is 7% (ONS, 2024), the Service's pay gap is well below the national average of 13.3% when you consider all employees (Part-time and Fulltime combined).

With regards to the **median hourly pay** gap, our Service has seen an increase from 11.19% in 2023 to 13.72% in and 2024. This means our Service is slightly above the national average of 13.1% (ONS, 2024), although, the service's median hourly rate of £19.24 is the same as the national average (ONS, 2024).

The Continuous Professional Development (CPD) payment, applicable only to those conditioned to the 'Grey Book' terms and conditions, applies only to operational staff and skews the reporting of bonuses. Analysis of our services bonus gap suggests the mean bonus is below zero which indicates there is parity between men and women. The median bonus gap figure in 2024 is -13.16%, therefore 13.16% in favour of women. This has increased slightly from -12.18% in 2023. For the third consecutive year in a row, the median bonus is 0%, which is positive trend because it indicates there is no pay gap between men and women.



Quartile Pay Bands 2024



When you explore the four quartiles, the figures look very similar to 2023. In our service, women occupy 20.8% of the highest paid jobs and 20.9% of the lowest paid jobs. Compared to 2023, there is a clear indication that women are progressing through the organisation. In corporate service roles, there has been progression in the lower middle quartile. Various promotions, pay rises and outcomes from job evaluation processes have seen many corporate service employees, mostly women receive a pay increase within the same pay scale, while some people have moved up the pay scale, thus receiving a higher level of pay.

In operational roles, there has been a steady flow of new starters enter the service in the **lower** and **lower middle** quartiles. It is particularly pleasing to see more women progress through the middle quartiles which has led to more women earning increased salaries through time served and incremental pay increases. In addition, several female firefighter apprentices have successfully completed their training, thus progressing on to a full firefighter salary and there have been some successes in the promotion process.

Although several women currently hold middle leadership positions and these people fall within the middle quartiles. In this reporting year, one woman has had a temporary promotion to Group Manager, but overall there has been no real changes to the gender profile in the **upper quartile**. There are huge benefits from having a female Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer, plus other women which make up the Service Leadership Team including the Head of Corporate Communications, Head of Human Resources, Head of Fire Control and Head of Finance. In addition, many women also hold 'Deputy Head' roles across multiple departments which is a demonstration that women have been successfully recruited, retained and many of them have progressed in recent years. All women can be positive role models, but those in more senior positions are living proof to those that aspire to become supervisory and senior leaders. Also, female leaders increase visibility in the community and when the public observe women both in person and when they see our female staff in the media, it can have a positive impact.

Staff that leave the service also play a vital role when we explore our GPG data. The services employment data indicates the majority of staff who have retired or left the organisation during the 2023/24 reporting period were males in operational roles, often

long serving and at the top of their respective pay scales. The majority of scheduled leavers in the next year are male and throughout 2025 and beyond, the GPG should naturally start to close. Alongside this trend of most retirements being male firefighters, the pace of change can be accelerated further as the number of women joining continues to increase.

Closing the gender pay gap

The service's existing Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024-2029 and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2024-2029 both include a raft of specific actions and objectives that will progress our gender equality work to ensure we attract, recruit and retain more women across all roles in the organisation.

Specific objectives include:

- Ensure recruitment, selection and progression processes are fair and transparent and aim to reflect the diversity of the community we serve.
- Engage with girls and women through women's charities, community groups, sports teams, schools, colleges and universities to raise awareness of the range of roles in our Service and breakdown negative stereotypes.
- To continue increasing visibility of female role models at taster days, fire station open days and career fairs to build on the 'see it, to be it' strapline.
- Raise further public awareness of our participation in national direct entry programmes as a way of targeting talented and ambitious people who aspire to enter the fire and rescue service in supervisory, middle and senior leadership roles.
- Implement effective redeployment arrangements to ensure any employees facing redundancy or loss of employment (other than for disciplinary reasons) are offered suitable alternative employment and re-training to help retain talented people.
- Modernise our approach to working arrangements, creating a more flexible, agile and inclusive workplace which will be attractive to people with disabilities, health conditions, parental and caring responsibilities.
- To ensure our policies and procedures promote best practice and inclusion, especially in relation to appearance, reasonable adjustments, grievance, dignity at work, discrimination, anti-bullying and harassment.
- Raise awareness of health and wellbeing, particularly specific health concerns that disproportionately impact women and communicating effectively with the entire workforce to reduce the risk of potential negative effects on employees and the organisation.
- Address cultural barriers to ensure the workplace environment is accessible and inclusion to a diverse workforce, especially women from disadvantaged backgrounds and minority identities.
- Collect and analyse personal employment data to support effective and well-informed people management practices including recruitment priorities and positive action.

- Commit to supporting women to maintain and improve their skills within an inclusive working environment that promotes lifelong learning, development and progression.
- Ensure that learning environments are both flexible, easily accessible and inclusive to women across all age groups.
- Further develop our 'Women in the Fire Service' network, and its male allies to provide friendship, mentorship, advice and support to all female colleagues through networking, social and formal events.
- Continue to support the development of the Services' five staff networks which include Firepride; Neurodiversity; Religion, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (REACH); Women in the Fire Service; and our Parents and Carers Networks which is still in its infancy. The five networks each play a role to identify gender-specific barriers and to inform inclusive practices for women across multiple identities and characteristics.

Reference List

Office of National Statistics (2024) Gender Pay Gap in the UK: 2024. Found at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2024>
 Accessed: 29 November 2024.



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