

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Gender Pay Gap Report

February 2025

Key Points

- Dartford Borough Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees;
- Figures show that there is a gender pay gap at the Council, but this is the result of the roles in which males and females work within the Council and the salaries that these roles attract;
- Of the Council's top ten salaries, four are female including two of the Council's three directors;
- The Council's mean gender pay gap has increased by 1.72% and the median gender pay gap has reduced by 0.02% in the past year;
- Since 2018, the Council has reduced its mean gender pay gap by 7.38% and its median gender pay gap by 7.17%.

Gender Pay Gap Legislation

As an employer of over 250 people, the Council is required by law to carry out gender pay reporting under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. The Government's ambition is to 'eliminate the gender pay gap within a generation'.

Gender pay reporting involves carrying out calculations that show the difference between the average earnings of men and women within the Council. It does not involve publishing individual employee's data.

We are required to publish our gender pay gap information on our own website and a Government website by 30th March each year using a snapshot of the previous March data.

A **Gender Pay Gap** and **Equal Pay** are often confused and are not the same. Issues of equal pay arise where men and women are paid differently by the same employer for doing the same work or work of equal value.

The gender pay gap shows the differences in average pay between men and women capturing any pay inequalities resulting from differences in the sorts of jobs performed by men and women.

Therefore, some of the causes of a gender pay gap are often outside of the control of any one employer. Nationally there is a gender pay gap of 13.1%.

Reporting Requirements

The Regulations clearly define what gender pay gap figures need to be calculated and what pay data should and should not be included. The calculations required involve determining an hourly rate for all employees (on full-pay) on the snapshot date using their basic salary and other relevant payments including shift allowance and call-out. The calculations do not include things like overtime or redundancy payments.

The overall gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the median (actual midpoint) or mean (average) of the basic annual earnings of men and women expressed as a percentage of the median or mean basic annual earnings of men.

There are six basic calculations:

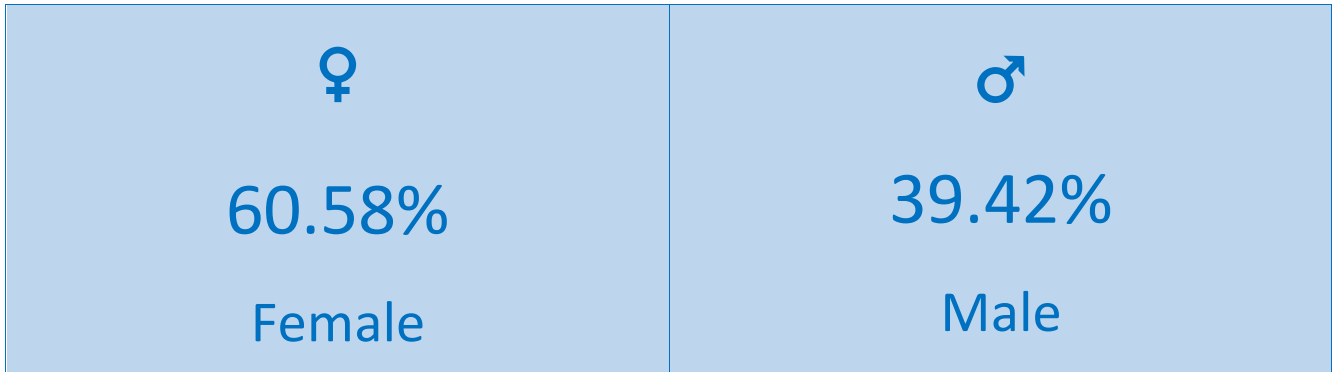
Mean Gender Pay Gap	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of full-pay male employees and that of full-pay female employees.
Median Gender Pay Gap	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of full-pay male employees and that of full-pay female employees.
Quartile Pay Bands	The proportions of male and female full-pay employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands.
Mean Bonus Gap	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees.
Median Bonus Gap	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees.
Bonus Proportions	The proportions of male and female full-pay employees who were paid any bonus pay during the relevant period.

Dartford Borough Council Gender Pay Gap Figures

All figures below are based on a snapshot date of 31st March 2024.

Workforce Profile

The total headcount for the Council was 312 employees, made up of 189 females and 123 males.



Mean Gender Pay Gap

The average mean hourly rate of pay for a male was £21.68. For a female the average mean hourly rate of pay was £18.20.

A 'mean' average involves adding up all the relevant pay and dividing the total by the number of employees.	Mean Gender Pay Gap: 16.05%	The UK Public Sector national average is 12.9%
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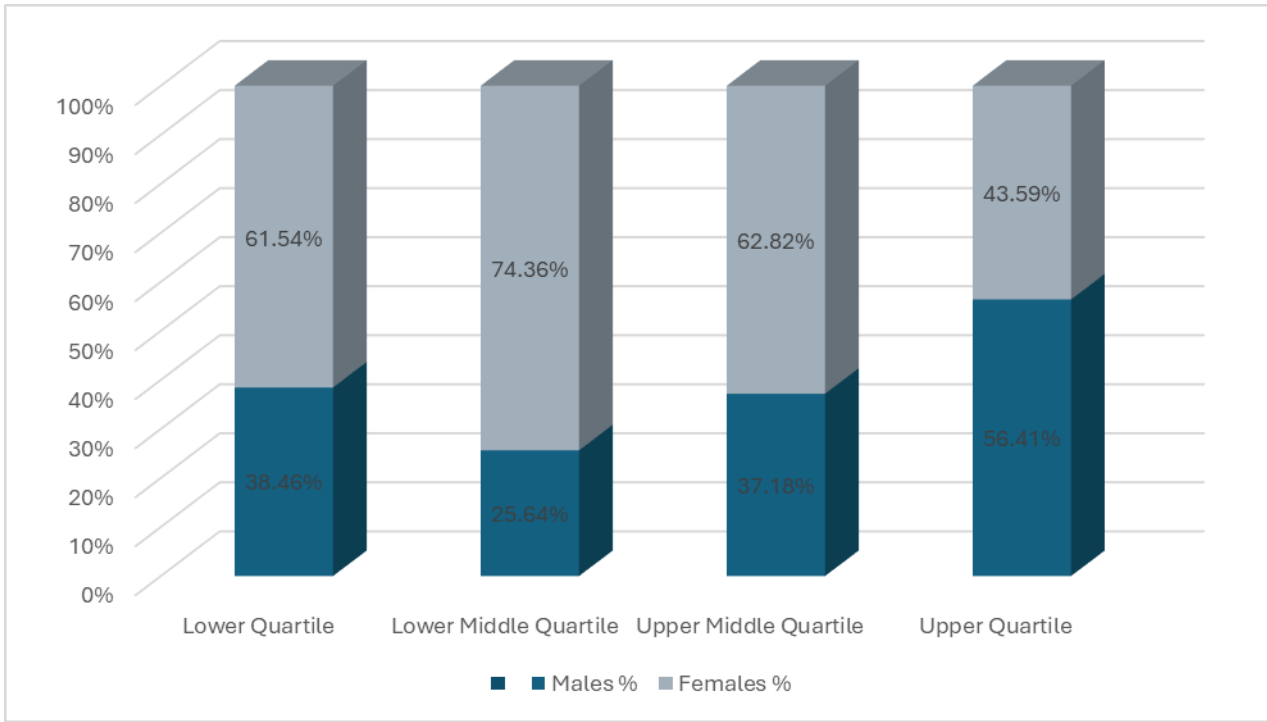
Median Gender Pay Gap

The average median hourly rate was £20.22 for a male and £16.11 for a female.

A median average involves listing all employees in numerical order of pay and the median average is the middle one.	Median Gender Pay Gap: 20.33%	The UK Public Sector national average is 13.5%
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Quartile Pay Bands

For this calculation the workforce is split into four equal parts and the proportions of male and female employees in each quartile are shown.



Number of employees in each quartile:

	Lower Quartile	Lower Middle Quartile	Upper Middle Quartile	Upper Quartile
Male	30	20	29	44
Female	48	58	49	34

Bonus Gap and Proportions

The requirement to report on differences in bonus payments does not apply as the Council does not pay any bonus payments.

Why is there a pay gap?

The causes of the gender pay gap are a complex mix of work, society and family factors and an employer that has completely eliminated unequal pay may still have a wide gender pay gap.

Social pressures and norms influence gender roles and often shape the types of occupations and career paths which men and women follow, and therefore their level of pay. For example, men and women traditionally work in different occupational groups and nationally, females are under-represented in some of the higher paid jobs such as science and technology and in roles such as Chief Executives. Women are also more likely than men to work part-time and to take time out from their careers for family reasons which may slow the pace at which they typically progress to higher paid posts.

The gender pay gap exists within Dartford Borough Council as the majority (60.58%) of the workforce is female and are predominately employed in the lower quartile pay bands, with fewer employed at the more senior levels. However, the Council is proud that it supports females at the highest level. Out of the top ten most senior positions in the Council, four are female including two of the Council's three directors.

The Council's workforce profile suggests that it is the lack of men in lower graded jobs that is the cause of the extent of the gap. Dartford Borough Council have contracted out several services (e.g. refuse collection, street cleansing, repair and maintenance of our council houses, grounds maintenance) where there are traditionally lower paid jobs filled by men in the majority. The contracting out of these services goes some way to explain why the Council's gender pay gap is higher than other comparative councils.

The Council has no direct control over the career choices or work/life balance choices that individuals make and women are often attracted to roles at the Council because of the flexible working and family friendly policies we adopt.

The Council's mean gender pay gap has increased by 1.72% and the median gender pay gap has reduced by 0.02% in the past year. Since 2018, the Council has reduced its mean gender pay gap by 7.38% and its median gender pay gap by 7.17%.

The Council uses a job evaluation system scheme (Hay) to assess the value of all jobs across the Council. The job evaluation scheme evaluates the post and makes no reference to gender or any other personal characteristics of existing or potential post holders. Salaries are paid according to the grade of the post and any salary increase occurs irrespective of an employee's gender.

Dartford Borough Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees, regardless of sex, race, religion or belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or caring responsibilities. It has a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex (or any other characteristic set out above). Therefore, the Council is confident that it is paying the same salary to roles of equal value and that its gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which males and females work within the Council and the salaries that these roles attract.

The Council's Commitment

Notwithstanding the above, Dartford Borough Council is committed to doing everything it can to reduce the gender pay gap further.

What we currently do

- We have a robust job evaluation and grading structure;
- We have a clear pay policy which states that all employees will be appointed on the starter level of each grade, except in exceptional circumstances;
- We pay The Living Wage Foundation UK Living Wage to those who would otherwise be paid below this rate, which is higher than the Government's National Living Wage;
- We have a clear and consistent approach to pay and formal authorisation processes for any changes in pay;
- We report annually on our workforce demographics;
- We have a successful apprenticeship programme;
- We operate a name-blind recruitment process and remove candidates' personal information to ensure that people will be shortlisted for interview on merit;
- All staff have received unconscious bias training, which has increased managers' awareness of unconscious biases during recruitment and interview processes;
- We pay a higher level of benefit than statutory levels for maternity, adoption, shared parental and paternity leave;
- We encourage flexible working widely, with multiple options available including hybrid working;
- We maintain awareness of our flexible working and family friendly policies and arrangements for employees to promote equal opportunity by promoting them on the intranet, the Employee Wellbeing Hub, at the point of recruitment and during new starter induction.

What we are planning to do

- We will continue to try to attract more men to apply for lower graded roles by ensuring that job profiles and recruitment adverts are written in gender neutral language and in such a way to attract male, as well as female, applicants;
- We will continue to look at other targeted positive recruitment actions;
- We will continue to promote our apprenticeship opportunities to both new recruits and existing staff to support career progression;
- We will continue to regularly monitor, review and develop practices that provide equality of opportunity for all, regardless of gender.