



Gender Pay Gap Report

2022-2023

Introducing Above

Moving Life Forward

Who we are

We are a leading engineering company that aims to move life forward. We embrace the future, creating cutting-edge and sustainable utility infrastructure solutions that help improve people's lives, grow the economy and transform communities.

We are passionate about the areas where we work and live and support them by leaving a positive legacy, engaging with colleagues, clients and communities along the journey so they feel proud of what we do.

Our winning behaviours

We act with **Respect**



- We are considerate in every way that we communicate
- We listen to each other and value different opinions
- We challenge in a positive way and provide clear and timely feedback

What we do

We are an expert, responsible and agile partner, providing vital services to the UK's leading utilities networks.

We design, build and deliver innovative large-scale projects across the UK, supporting the Water, Power and Telecommunications sectors.

Our innovative and flexible approach helps clients to maintain and improve their assets, enhance customer experience and protect the environment. We play a crucial role in keeping the water running, the lights on and people connected.

We treat people **Fairly**



- We are open-minded and flexible, giving everyone an equal opportunity to succeed
- We are transparent and consistent in our decision-making
- We take an active role in creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels safe to bring their 'whole' selves to work

We give each other **Support**



- We care about our colleagues and look after our health and wellbeing
- We take time to understand how people are feeling and lift each other up
- We work as a team, winning and learning together

We are **Accountable**



- We take ownership and pride in delivering great service.
- We set clear targets, and regularly communicate progress.
- We are proactive and agile, sharing best practice and suggesting ways to improve.

Foreword from our Executive Chair

We aim to increase the diversity of our organisation and, in turn, the wider utilities sector.

We are committed to being an inclusive employer, ensuring that we attract and retain employees from all genders, ages, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations and abilities – creating spaces where everyone feels empowered, motivated, trusted and valued, regardless of their background.

Above was formed in April 2022 and during our first year as an independent business, we have launched new values, a new HSEQ ethos as well as systems, policies and processes to support us in creating the right culture and foundations to enable our people and business to grow.

This industry has traditionally suffered from a gender pay gap due to the underrepresentation of women and our workforce composition reflects this.

Of the 749 employees that we employed in April 2023, 79% of these were male and 21% were female. This is slightly above the industry average of 20% (as reported by Energy & Utility Skills 2020-2021), we are continuing to prioritise attracting and retaining more females into the business and have made good progress in some areas.

April 2022 to April 2023 Performance:

- Our mean gender pay gap reduced from 13.71% to 13.0%
- We increased our female headcount by 32%, from 118 to 156
- There was a 44% increase in our manager population which was made up of 32% females and 68% males - a higher ratio than our overall headcount figures of 21% female and 79% male.

These are steps in the right direction and the case studies contained in this report will showcase some of our success stories. However, there is more to be done; our median pay gap increased from 8.7% to 13.3%; our bonus mean for 2022-2023 was 13.7% and the median was 28.4%. This is the first year that we have reported on our bonus figures as these were paid by Amey during the last reporting period.

We are a progressive, growing business committed to building sustainability into all that we do. During the next twelve months, there will be many opportunities for new and existing colleagues to grow with us and develop their careers.

We will continue to work on closing our gender pay gap by building on the insights we have gathered and the partnerships we have developed during 2022-2023 and we look forward to making further progress in 2024.



Mark Perkins
Above Executive Chair

Explaining the Gender Pay Gap

In April 2017 regulations came into effect which meant that companies with more than 250 employees were required to publish information on their gender pay gap.

Mean Gender Pay Gap

This is 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

This is the difference between the median hourly earnings of males and females. The median is calculated by putting every person 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

This shows where our males and females sit across the pay quartiles.

Above's Gender Pay Gap

We are committed to being an inclusive employer, ensuring that we attract and retain high-calibre individuals from diverse backgrounds and pay them fairly.

Mean Gender Pay Gap

As of 5 April 2023, our mean gender pay gap stood at 13.0% favouring males. This shows a reduction in our mean gender pay gap compared to 13.7% in April 2022. Our mean is 1.4% above the national mean (11.6%) as reported by the Office of National Statistics in 2023. Our median gender pay gap is 13.3%, which has increased from 8.7% in April 2022 and is 5.6% above the national median (7.7%) as reported by the Office of National Statistics in 2023.

Median Gender Pay Gap

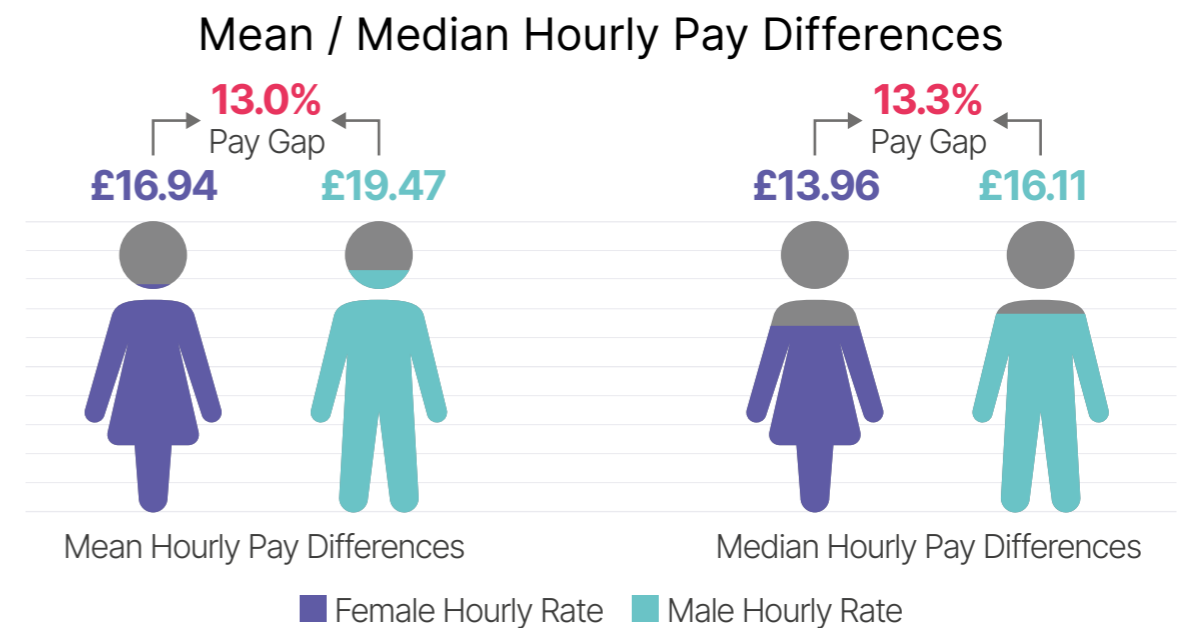
The median has increased due to several factors. Above transitioned away from its previous owner Amey in April 2022; this created new opportunities as it enabled us to recruit a new centralised function including several new senior hires. Now the business is established we do not expect to see this level of change in future years. Other factors include promotions, out-of-cycle salary increases and annual salary review, which, also had an impact.

Bonus Pay

The mean bonus pay gap is 13.7% and our median bonus pay is 28.4% favouring males. These gaps are both above the national mean (13.4%) and the median (14.3%) as reported by the Office of National Statistics in 2023. Of the employees who received a bonus, 10.6% were males and 12.2% were female.

Female Hourly Pay

On reviewing the female population, it is evident that good progress has been made in hiring and promoting females into more senior roles. There are now 14 females earning over £30 per hour, this has increased by 56% since last year and the number of females earning over £20 per hour has increased by 63%. However, due to the lower number of females employed by the organisation, the median figure is impacted by the percentage of females earning the lower pay rates.



Gender Distribution By Pay Quartiles

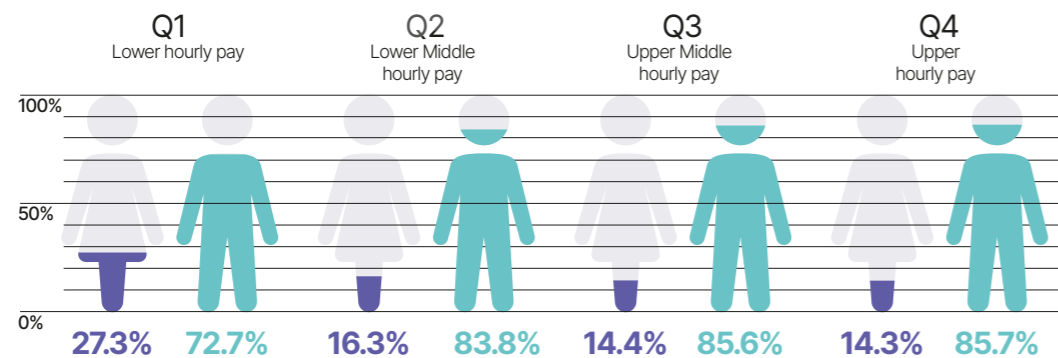
The gender distribution by quartiles, as defined by the regulations, shows us that female employees remain under-represented across all quartiles, in particular quartiles Q3 and Q4.

During the past year, we have increased the number of females in the Q1 - Q3 pay bands, with the largest increase of 4.8% seen in Q2, which is a positive step in the right direction.

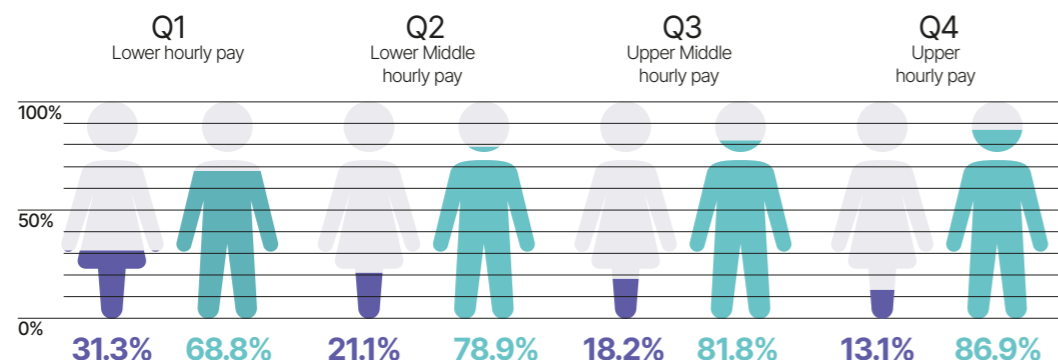
However, we have seen a slight decrease in the number of females in the Q4 upper hourly pay, which is an area that requires further work.



Gender Distribution by Pay Quartiles - 2022



Gender Distribution by Pay Quartiles - 2023



■ Female ■ Male

Case Studies Women in Avove



Ami Crump Network Valve Technician

In her role as a Network Valve Technician working across the Midlands.

Ami is responsible for the water network, carrying out checks on the valves and hydrants, undertaking water sampling, monitoring air pressure and carrying out surveys and checks for pre-planned works.

Ami is keen to progress her career to either become a Site Manager or move into Health and Safety.

“I enjoy the hands-on nature of the role, and love working on site with a team of experienced colleagues and learning from their expertise. We work together to come up with efficient and effective solutions.

There are lots of opportunities at Avove to develop and I firmly believe that we can all achieve what we want to if we put our minds to it and work hard.

This is a great place to start your career and I am proud to work for a company that encourages a new generation to get into the industry.”



Marianne McEvoy Water Quality and Control Officer

Marianne, who joined Avove in January 2023, ensures that we are working towards Water Quality First at the Vyrnwy Aqueduct Modernisation Programme.

She is involved in various stages of cleaning a 16km water pipeline where we are using groundbreaking smart pigging technology to clean the pipes.

Marianne’s role is vital to the project to ensure that customers across the North West have the finest quality drinking water. Marianne has worked in the industry for more than 20 years working as a Scientist and Quality Control Technician.

“This is the first time Avove has appointed a Water Quality and Control Officer, so I’ve been able to put all my experience and expertise into practice to develop a first-class Water Quality Audit that we have installed and can roll out across the business.

I work out on site and enjoy collaborating with the project teams. I like working at Avove as it’s an evolving company. As this is the only role currently of its kind in Avove, and as a female leading this, I am delighted to have the opportunity to shape how we deliver Water Quality First and to be part of such a big project for the organisation and our client.”

Closing the Gap

Our Progress



We understand our crucial role in the social and economic development of our communities including our employees.

Equality, Diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

We are creating an inclusive working environment where everyone can thrive and achieve their full potential.

To enable us to do that, we are growing a culture based on our vision to move life forward and our values.

We call this The Above Way and it is our pathway to ensuring that every colleague feels empowered, motivated, trusted and valued.

To support our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, we have signed up to eight core EDI commitments.

- Energy & Utilities Inclusion Pledge
- Armed Forces Covenant
- Disability Confident Committed Employer
- Mental Health at Work Commitment
- Race at Work Charter
- Social Mobility Pledge
- Joined the Womens Utilities Network
- Joined the Women in Engineering Society

Supporting Women in Avove

We celebrated our partnership with Women in Engineering (WES) with a series of well-publicised interviews with talented and inspiring women across Avove as part of International Women in Engineering Day 2023.

Our relationship with WES demonstrates our commitment to our female employees and the WES vision of a better and more diverse world. Our WES membership acts as a vehicle to support, retain and attract female engineers.

Our Womens Utilities Network (WUN) partnership enables our female employees to access the services provided by the WUN and attend online and in-person events.

Other benefits include showcasing Avove to the WUN network, promotion of job vacancies to the network of 3,150 women, and the opportunity to be WUN's 'featured' job and supporting over 3,500 members from across the Utility sector.

Avove employees also have access to the WUN's mentoring programme.

Our EDI Commitments & Partnerships



To find out more information on our EDI commitments, you can visit Avove's Diversity and Inclusion Page [here](#).

Case Study

Attracting Future Talent

Sponsoring Scottish Hockey's Aspiring Girls

In September 2022 we became sponsors of Scotland's Aspiring Girls Under 18s hockey team with the Avove logo taking pride of place on the front of the team's Under 18s home and away kit throughout 2023.

We launched our partnership during Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week campaign #SheCanSheWill. This sponsorship deal aimed to raise awareness of the career opportunities in the utilities sector for females, whilst supporting the athletes to develop into tomorrow's senior internationalists.



Colleague Engagement

Avove carries out an annual engagement survey, in July 2022 we launched our first colleague engagement survey and achieved an excellent engagement score of 74%. We scored highly on our employees' commitment to their jobs, safety and the extent to which their manager cares about them as an individual.

We identified several areas where our female employees responded more favourably than our male employees. 68% of our female employees said that they would recommend Avove as a great place to work compared to 55% of males. 84% of females said they could easily raise issues about their mental health compared to 72% of our male employees. We are continuing to build and grow a culture where our female employees feel safe to speak up and feel supported with their mental health and would recommend Avove as a great place to work.

In July 2023, we launched our second survey, we achieved an excellent completion rate and engagement score of 80%.

The results from this survey will be published in the 2023-24 reporting period.

Hybrid and Flexible working

We launched a new hybrid working policy to help demonstrate Avove's commitment to flexible working and supporting our colleagues to work in ways which suit them and our business needs. This policy provides the framework around which childcare, caring responsibilities or other challenges that are still often faced by a higher proportion of women, can be accommodated around core working hours and operational commitments. We see the value and flexibility this brings to our colleagues and recognise that this is important to them.

Learning and Development

In January 2023, we launched our first Leadership programme. 28% of the delegates invited onto the programme were females, this is 7% higher than our overall female population at 21%.

All employees have the opportunity to request professional training, during the reporting period we saw 13 employees take up this opportunity with 62% of these being females.

Case Studies

Women in Avove



Sarah Jane Howard
Finance Administration Manager

Sarah started her career as an apprentice working in retail and throughout her career has worked her way up to management positions across different industries.

Sarah loves working with people and found her passion working with numbers, and joined Avove's Accounts Payable Team.

In December 2022, Sarah was promoted to Finance Administration Manager leading a new team assisting with the finances within the commercial area of the business.

"Throughout my career, I have worked extremely hard, and my determination and strong work ethic have been recognised. At Avove they look at the skills you bring to the role and treat you equally.

As a woman within this industry, I bring a strong analytical side. As a mum, I have to multi-task so can easily manage multiple priorities.

As a female manager, I have a voice that is heard, and I am given opportunities to shape how the business operates."

Alexandra Griffith
Principal Commercial Manager



Alex has worked for the organisation for more than 16 years and started her career as a planner. Alex's initial role working in clean water planning gave her experience of working both out on-site and in an office environment.

Looking for a new challenge, Alex changed her career path to work in the Commercial team as a Commercial Assistant. Due to her hard work, determination and a genuine love for working in the water industry, she has made her way up the ladder to her current role as Principal Commercial Manager working on wastewater.

"Leading the Commercial function of an account is so interesting. Every day is different and I enjoy being involved in projects from the initial scoping to the final result.

Throughout my career I have worked hard and this has been recognised by the company. I truly believe, as a female working in a male-dominated industry, that having a diverse workforce across the business brings massive benefits to how we approach our projects and deliver excellence for our colleagues, clients and customers."

Looking Ahead

Our Ambition

We have created initiatives and set targets to reduce the Gender Pay Gap for 2024-2026



Encourage females to join Avove / Utilities:

- Promoting jobs to females through targeted advertising, and utilising our partnerships with WES & WUN
- Maximise case studies and other methods to promote and celebrate successful females in our business
- Our new Early Career specialist will encourage school/college leavers to choose a career at Avove

Raise awareness around EDI:

- Launch EDI training initiatives and events to upskill and raise awareness for everyone
- Increase awareness for all employees on the impact of providing a safe space for women to discuss challenges in the workplace

Upskilling people managers in hiring decisions:

- Continuing to upskill our hiring managers to recognise the benefits of having a more diverse and inclusive hiring process

Succession plan and high potential programme for our future female leaders:

- Through our PDR process, we will identify high potential females, enabling our female employees to seek opportunities for career path progression
- We will identify one female in each area of our business to provide membership to the WES community, increasing the reach of the resources provided by WES and creating advocates throughout Avove

Promote family friendly ways of working:

- Reviewing our flexible working and family-friendly policies and benefits in line with our values and EDI strategy to ensure these are attractive and competitive
- Proactively promoting our family-friendly policies and benefits on our website and as part of the recruitment process
- Utilise our exit survey data to better understand the reasons females leave and to help build our retention strategy



"Our ambition is to create a great place to work, where everyone can be themselves and achieve their full potential, that is underpinned by our core values. We have started to make progress in driving key initiatives to increase female representation and have set clear targets to drive this agenda. We are excited and confident that we can create an environment that supports women in the workplace and helps us attract, retain and generate great career opportunities to develop all women across Avove."

Becky Kimber
People & Culture Director



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