



April 2024 - April 2025

Gender Pay Gap Report



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A message from Mark Perkins and Becky Kimber

At Above, we are committed to creating a great place to work, where everybody can grow, contribute and build a meaningful career. This commitment shapes how we attract, develop and support people across our business.

This year, we welcomed more women into the organisation, which is positive and supports our long-term ambition to improve representation. 52% of women who joined entered lower quartile roles, while men who joined were more evenly spread across all quartiles. This reflects long-standing gender representation challenges in technical and operational roles and has impacted our hourly pay gap this year. These patterns continue to guide our work to strengthen attraction and progression pipelines.

The bonus picture is encouraging. The median bonus gap reduced from 38% to 6%. More women received a bonus in this period, however, the overall bonus values were lower, which reflects our continued commitment to fair and consistent recognition.

We remain focused on long-term and sustainable change. Over the past year, we have strengthened our attraction and recruitment pipelines, supported career development and helped build a culture where colleagues continue to feel valued and supported.

Progress is not always linear. Some movements reflect the distribution of new joiners and external labour market conditions. Other indicators show positive shifts in bonus scheme participation and wider opportunities for colleagues as they progress. To achieve sustainable change, we are focused on steady, practical action. We are committed to improving representation and embedding inclusion into every stage of the colleague journey.

Thank you to the teams across Above who support us to drive this agenda. Your work helps us understand where we are making progress and where we need to go further. We will continue to report openly and act with purpose as we continue to build a great place to work where everyone can thrive.

“ We remain focused on long-term and sustainable change. ”



Mark Perkins
Chief Executive



Becky Kimber
People & Culture Director

Who we are

Above is a Tier 1 contractor that works exclusively within the UK's critical utilities sectors, delivering infrastructure, non-infrastructure and engineering solutions built on innovation and agility. Our workforce is a mix of operational and engineering roles, alongside field, leadership and office-based teams. The utilities sector has long faced skills shortages and lower representation of women in technical roles.

This context influences our current profile. As of April 2025, women make up 22% of our workforce and men 78%. The balance is shifting, step by step, and we remain focused on steady, targeted action over time.

Explaining the gender pay gap

Mean

The mean represents the difference between men's and women's average earnings or bonus payments. It is calculated by adding together all hourly earnings or bonus payments for each gender and then dividing the total by the number of individuals in that group. The mean gap is the percentage difference between these two averages.

Median

The median measures the difference between men's and women's median earnings or bonus payments. The median is determined by listing all colleagues of each gender in order of their pay or bonus amount and identifying the middle value. The median gap is the percentage difference between these two figures.

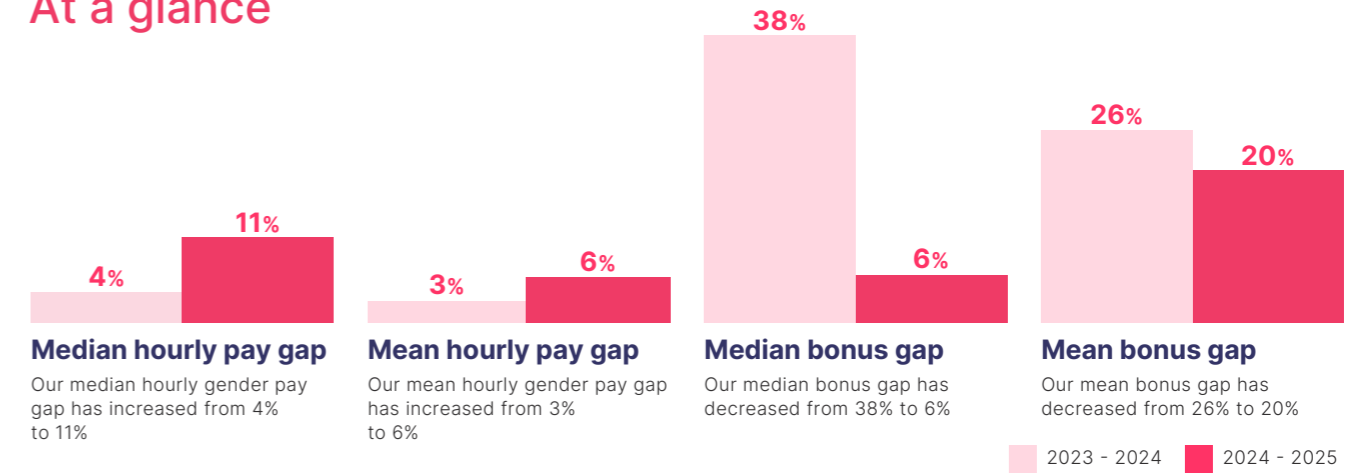
Pay quartiles

Pay quartiles represent the distribution of colleagues who are men and women across different pay levels within the organisation. Colleagues are divided into four equal groups (quartiles) based on their earnings, from the lowest to the highest. This helps illustrate the proportion of men and women in each pay band.



Our gender pay gap

At a glance



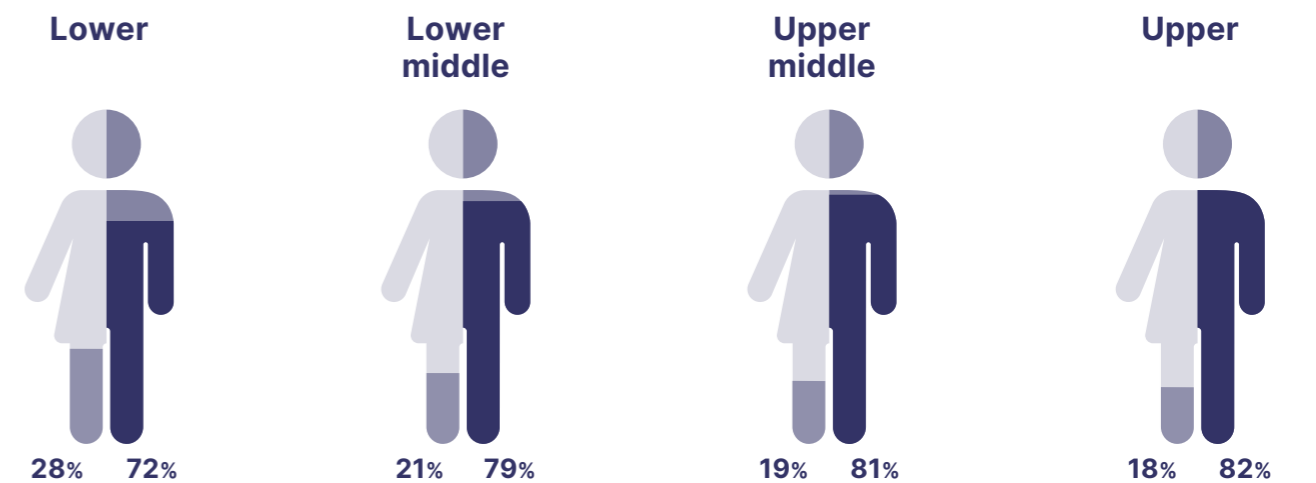
What this means

The widening of the hourly gaps this year reflects workforce composition rather than equal pay issues. 52% of new starters were women who entered lower quartile roles, reflecting sector trends and available talent pipelines. Men who joined were more evenly distributed across the quartiles. This underlines why we are developing stronger recruitment pipelines, more inclusive attraction, and clear progression pathways into a broader range of roles, including higher-paid operational and technical positions.

In contrast, our median bonus gap fell sharply from 38% to 6%. More women received a bonus in this period, with the percentage of women receiving a bonus increased from 14% to 17%. However, the overall bonus values were lower.

For men it has increased from 11% to 15%. This reflects our continued commitment to fair and consistent recognition in a challenging year.

How representation looks across pay



These quartiles show more women in the lower and lower middle bands. This has improved since last year, with a steady picture at the top. This reinforces the importance of our work to support skills growth, opening up access to technical, supervision and management careers and ensuring colleagues can see clear career paths to progress.

What influenced our gender pay gap

Workforce shape

Women represent 22% of our workforce. Representation is lower in operational and engineering roles, which are a large part of our business, and this continues to shape our focus on widening pathways into these careers.

New joiners

A higher share of women who joined this year entered lower-quartile roles.

Sector pipeline

Technical skills shortages and a historic gender imbalance continue to influence who applies and who is qualified for certain roles.

Progression mix

Talent pipeline roles into higher-paid levels are improving but still developing, which shapes the median outcome over time.

Where we have progressed

Early careers. Opening doors

We are shifting from raising awareness to building supported routes into operational and technical roles. Our work focuses on practical steps that help more young people begin their careers with Avoe and see a future in our industry.

We work with schools and colleges to challenge stereotypes and spark interest in utilities and STEM careers. We offer apprenticeships at Levels 2 to 4, degree apprenticeships at Level 6 and graduate roles, with transparent and benchmarked pay frameworks to reduce bias at entry.

Colleagues receive structured development, mentoring, networks and life skills support to help them stay and succeed. Monthly reporting tracks entry volumes, completion of apprentice and graduate schemes so we can see where progress is being made and where further action is needed.

This strengthens our future talent pipeline by helping more people build the skills and confidence needed to progress into technical, operational and leadership roles over time.

Hiring and growth. Fair at every step

As we build stronger career paths into Avoe through early careers and targeted outreach, we also focus on how people join the business at every level. A fair and consistent hiring experience is an essential part of improving representation and widening access to roles

across our teams. This is where our approach to attracting and selecting colleagues continues to develop.

Attract and select

We use structured, skills-based and gender-neutral assessment criteria across all interviews. Inclusive practices are applied consistently across hiring managers through training and improved guidance. Job design and job adverts are regularly reviewed to ensure non-bias language. Flexible and hybrid working continues to grow to support accessibility and help colleagues stay and progress.

Develop and progress

As colleagues join Avoe, we want everyone to see clear opportunities to grow their skills and build their careers. Our focus is on practical support that helps people develop confidence, move into new responsibilities and progress at a pace that works for them. This work sits alongside our efforts to widen representation and strengthen pathways into leadership, operational and technical roles.

We are shifting from identification to active sponsorship and nomination into stretch roles and accredited programmes. We publish clear pathways and entry criteria for all roles and track and promote them through our internal communication channels and People Manager toolkits.

Case studies: Supporting women into leadership

Michelle Wanless

Commercial Finance Director

Michelle's career shows how structured development, visible leaders and supportive teams help women progress into senior roles at Avoe.

She joined the business in 2019 as a Finance Business Partner and was encouraged to take on broader responsibility early in her career. Leaders involved her in key projects, including the work to establish Avoe during separation, which strengthened her confidence and shaped her readiness for progression. This support helped her move into the Head of Finance role, then Financial Controller, and now Commercial Finance Director.

Michelle's progression reflects the impact of creating accessible development pathways, offering visible role models and building a culture where women can grow their careers with confidence.



Avoe is a place where women are encouraged to develop and where the routes into leadership are clear and accessible.

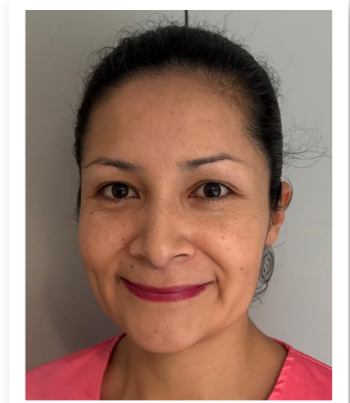
Case studies: Supporting women back into work

Andrea Del Pilar Calderon Diaz Structural Engineer

Andrea joined Avoe through the STEM Returners programme, which provides structured support for people returning to technical careers after a break.

After pausing her career to care for her young children, she used the programme's tailored guidance to rebuild her confidence and return to engineering. She joined Avoe as a Structural Engineer and, after a twelve week placement, secured a permanent role within a welcoming and supportive team.

Supporting returners strengthens Avoe's culture by welcoming skilled colleagues back into technical roles, widening our talent pipeline and helping us make steady progress towards better gender balance across our industry.



I found the programme gave me the confidence to restart my career, and the team at Avoe made me feel valued from day one.

Looking ahead

Over the past year, we have strengthened our approach to fairness, progression and colleague experience, and this continues to be part of how we work every day. The year ahead is about keeping that momentum going through practical improvements, stronger manager support and clearer routes for colleagues to grow.

We have a strong pipeline of work in motion. This includes continued improvements to hiring practices, clearer development pathways and unbiased decision-making at each stage of the journey. We have also strengthened support for returners and taken a fresh look at the help we offer to families. This includes a wider review of our family-friendly policies so that the support we offer is clear, consistent and reflects what colleagues need at different stages of life. Each step helps to create a more consistent and supportive experience for everybody.

We will keep taking proactive steps that will support our ambition to increase representation of women across our business. We will track what works, listen to colleagues and use real experiences to guide our decisions and help us understand where we can keep improving.

Our leadership team is fully committed to this work. Their support provides the clarity, sponsorship and accountability needed to keep improving year on year. It reflects a shared belief in equality, fairness, representation and creating opportunities for everybody. We will continue to report our progress through our regular inclusion updates and monitor progress through our Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) committee, so colleagues can see how our work develops over time.

With strong leadership backing, a clear plan and active involvement from colleagues, we are confident that we will continue to make steady, meaningful progress towards a more equally representative workplace that reflects our values.



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