

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2023



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INTRODUCTION

Since April 2017 employers in Britain with more than 250 employees are required by law to publish their gender pay gap information every year within twelve months of the relevant snapshot date, which is 31 March for local government. Data must be published on both Durham County Council's website (<https://www.durham.gov.uk/genderpaygap>) and through the government gender pay gap reporting website (<https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/>).

The gender pay gap shows the difference in average pay between men and women in the workforce. This data helps us to understand the size and potential causes of pay gaps and to identify any issues that need to be addressed. Gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay which is defined as pay differences between gender when carrying out jobs of equal value.

This document sets out Durham County Council's (DCC) gender pay gap (GPG) data, analysis and plans for long term improvements.

OUR DATA

Results for Mandatory Gender Pay Gap Reporting Requirements

Durham County Council is required to publish the following four types of data annually to meet the government's gender pay gap reporting requirements:

- Gender pay gap (mean and median averages)
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the organisational pay structure
- Gender bonus gap (mean and median averages)
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses

As a large public sector employer, our GPG calculations are based on a total of 8,883 full-pay relevant employees as at 31 March 2023. Data from 31 March 2022 is also included for comparative analysis.

Gender Pay Gap (mean and median averages)

The mean hourly rate is the average hourly wage across the entire organisation, so the mean gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between women's mean hourly wage and men's mean hourly wage.

The median hourly rate is calculated by ranking all employees from the highest paid to the lowest paid and taking the hourly wage of the person in the middle; so the median gender pay gap is the difference between women's median hourly wage (the middle-paid woman) and men's median hourly wage (the middle-paid man).

Mean

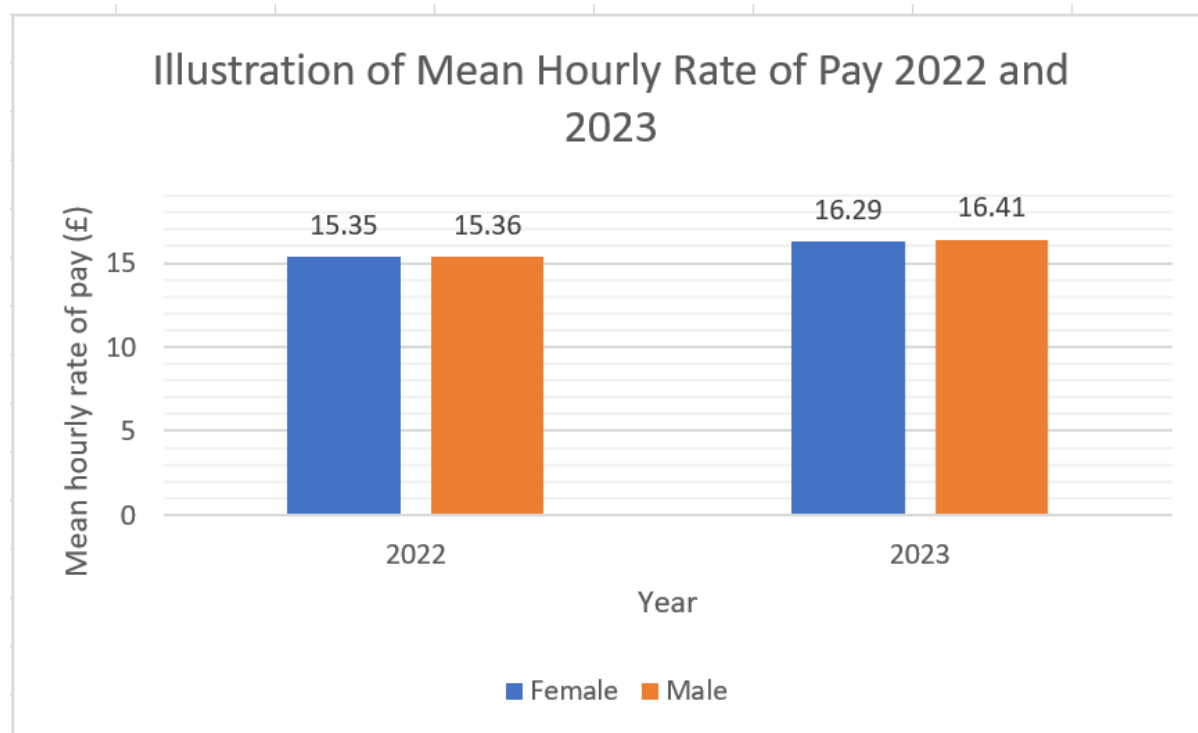
As at 31 March 2023, women's **mean** hourly rate of pay is 0.72% **lower** than men. In terms of money the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees is **-£0.12** (Female Mean £16.29 and Male Mean £16.41)

Female employees have **0.72% lower** pay (using the mean) than male employees.

This represents a deterioration (widening of the gap) on the position as of 31 March 2022 when the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male and female full-pay relevant employees was **-£0.01** (Female Mean £15.35 and Male Mean £15.36)

Female employees had **0.07% lower** pay (using the mean) than male employees in 2022.

Chart 1 – Illustration of Mean Hourly rate of Pay 2022 and 2023



Median

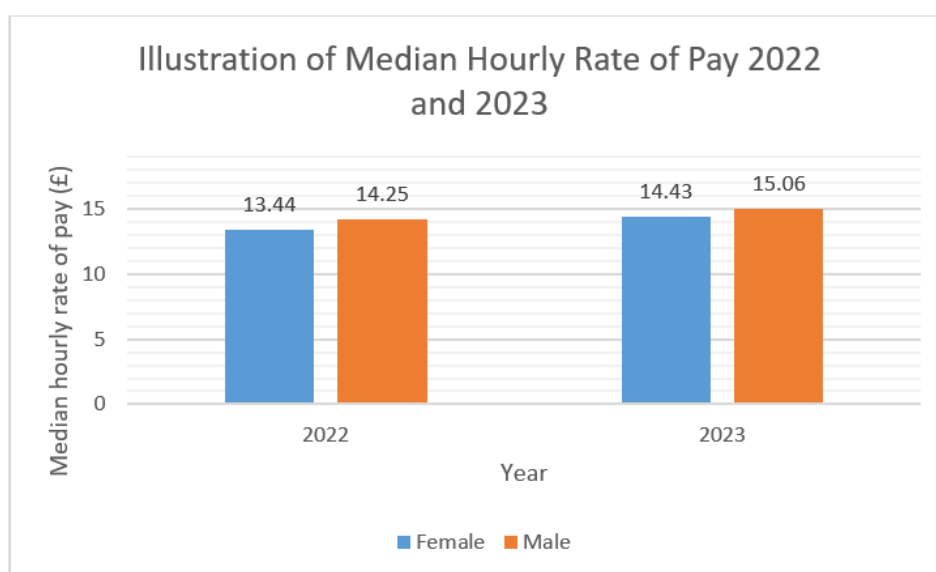
As of 31 March 2023, the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees is **-£0.63** (Female Median £14.43 and Male Median £15.06)

Female employees have **4.19% lower** pay (using the median) than male employees.

This represents an improvement (narrowing of the gap) on the position as of 31 March 2022 when the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male and female full pay relevant employees was **-£0.81** (Female Median £13.44 and Male Median £14.25).

Female employees had **5.68% lower** pay (using the median) than male employees in 2022

Chart 2 – Illustration of Median Hourly rate of Pay 2022 and 2023



Pay quartiles - proportion of men and women in each pay quartile

Pay quartiles are calculated by splitting all employees into four even groups according to their level of pay. Looking at the proportion of women in each quartile gives an indication of women's representation at different levels of the organisation.

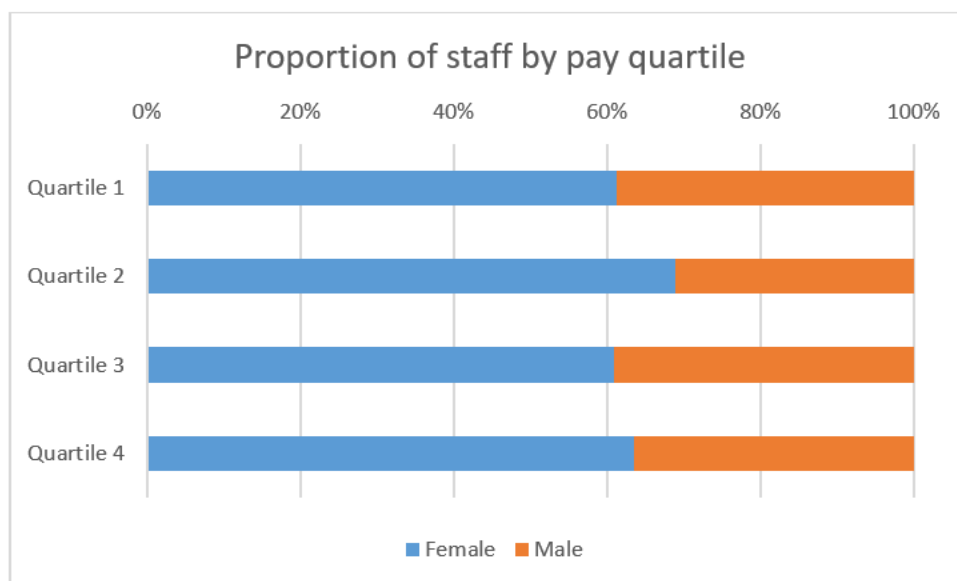
In terms of the calculations, the workforce was split into quartiles as follows:

- Quartile 1 From Apprentice Rate to £12.31
- Quartile 2 From £12.32 to £14.69
- Quartile 3 From £14.694 to £18.34
- Quartile 4 From £18.34 to Chief Executive

Table 1 – Proportion of Male and Female Full-Pay Relevant Employees by Quartile (as at 31 March 2023)

Hourly Pay rate - range	Number in Quartile	Number of females	Percentage of females	Number of males	Percentage of males
Quartile 1 - Up to £12.31	2,220	1,361	61.31	859	38.69
Quartile 2 - £12.32 to £14.69	2,221	1,529	68.84	692	31.16
Quartile 3 - £14.694 to £18.34	2,221	1,353	60.92	868	39.08
Quartile 4 - £18.34 to £107.05	2,221	1,412	63.57	809	36.43
Total	8,883	5,655	63.66	3,228	36.34

Chart 3 – Illustration of Quartile data as at 31 March 2023



Durham County Council has a majority female workforce, of a total 8,883 employees, 63.66% (5,655) are female.

The gender balance across the pay range shows that, proportionally, men are more likely to feature in higher pay quartiles.

Gender Bonus Pay Gap

Durham’s pay framework does not allow bonus payments to employees, therefore, there is no data to report in relation to bonuses.

WHAT DOES OUR DATA MEAN?

Analysis of Durham County Council's data

The Gender Pay Gap results at 31 March 2023 show an improvement (0.08 percentage points) on the previous year in the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees. The potential reasons for this improvement are as follows:

- a) There has been an increase in the number of females occupying roles at 'Tier 5' in 2023 compared to the previous year. The percentage of females occupying Tier 5 manager roles has increased from 52.48% in 2022 to 56.38%, whereas the percentage of males has decreased from 47.52% to 43.62% for the same period.
- b) The pay award which was agreed for NJC Green Book employees (£1,925 increase on all spinal column points) ensured that employees on lower SCPs received a proportionately higher percentage increase on their hourly rate in comparison with higher SCPs.

For example, the £1,925 increase on SCP 3 equated to a 10.19% uplift, whilst the same monetary increase on SCP 31, for example, equated to a 5.45% uplift.

There was however a deterioration in the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees (widening of the gap by 0.65 percentage points from March 2022 to March 2023). The potential reasons for this deterioration are as follows:

- a) Whilst the council currently employs more female employees than male employees (5,655 to 3,228), proportionately there are currently more male employees paid at higher salary points compared to female, there are more female employees paid at bottom rate salary than male employees. 51.11% of female employees are paid in the two lower quartiles, compared to 48.05% of males. 51.95% of male employees are paid in the two upper quartiles, compared to 48.89% of females.
- b) When breaking this down further, females disproportionately account for employees on the lowest paid grades (National Minimum Wage, Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3). Whilst females account for 63.72% of the council's workforce, they account for 75.82% of these lowest paid roles.

(c) In terms of more senior council positions, males disproportionately account for positions at Tier 4 (strategic manager level) and above. Whilst males account for 36.28% of the council's workforce, they account for over 57% of the most senior council positions at Tier 4 and above.

HOW DO WE COMPARE TO OTHERS?

Looking at the data submitted last reporting year (for position as at 31 March 2022), the Gender Pay Gap in Durham was narrower than the majority of the other councils.

At the time of publishing, only one council in the similar size category (5,000 to 19,999 employees) have submitted their data and so it's difficult to make comparisons of our 2023 data.

As a wider comparator, an analysis of similar sized, national councils has been undertaken using last year's data. For 2022/23 reporting year (i.e. position at 31 March 2022) 44 councils of a similar size published their data.

Of these 44 councils, 84.09% reported a higher male mean salary (i.e. 84.09% of councils reported that men were paid more than women), with 56.81% reporting a higher male median salary.

The percentage by which the male mean salary is higher, ranges from 0.07% to 15.5%, with Durham County Council at the lower end of that range (0.07% for 2022 and 0.72% for 2023).

The percentage by which the male median salary is higher, ranges from 0.1% to 19.7%. Again, Durham County Council's reporting median difference in pay was at the lower end of the range (5.68% for 2022 and 4.19% for 2023).

When looking at Durham County Council's GPG figures over time, since 2017 DCC has consistently reported a lower mean GPG than the average from all other single tier authorities in England.

The below table highlights that since 2017/18, Durham County Council's mean gender pay has always been at least 2 percentage points below the English average, with last year's figures being over 4 percentage points less.

Table 2 - Gender Pay Gap – Mean Gender Pay Gap for Durham County Council from 2017/18 to present, in comparison with national average

Table 2: Mean gender pay gap from 2017/18 to 2022/23 for Durham County Council compared to all English single tier local authorities

Reporting period	Durham Mean Gender Pay Gap percentage	All English single tier local authorities Gender Pay Gap Percentage	Percentage points difference between DCC mean GPG and average English GPG
2017/18	3.4	6.9	3.5 less than average
2018/19	1.9	6.3	4.4 less than average
2019/20	3.6	5.9	2.3 less than average
2020/21	2.7	5.9	3.2 less than average
2021/22	1.9	4.9	3.0 less than average
2022/23	0.1	4.8	4.7 less than average

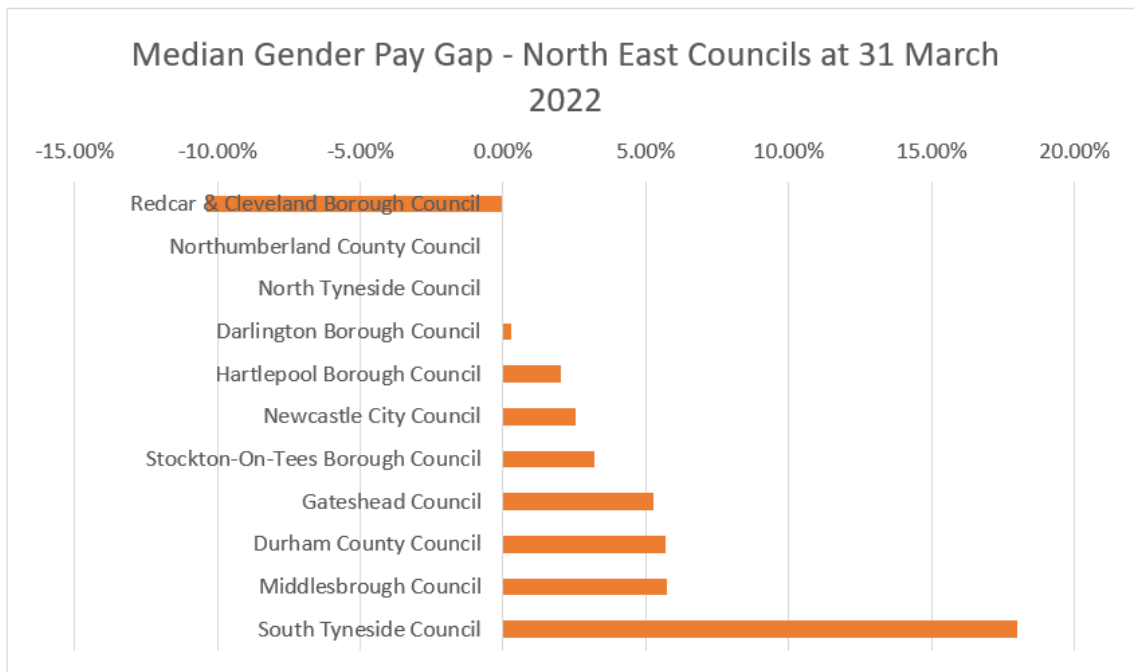
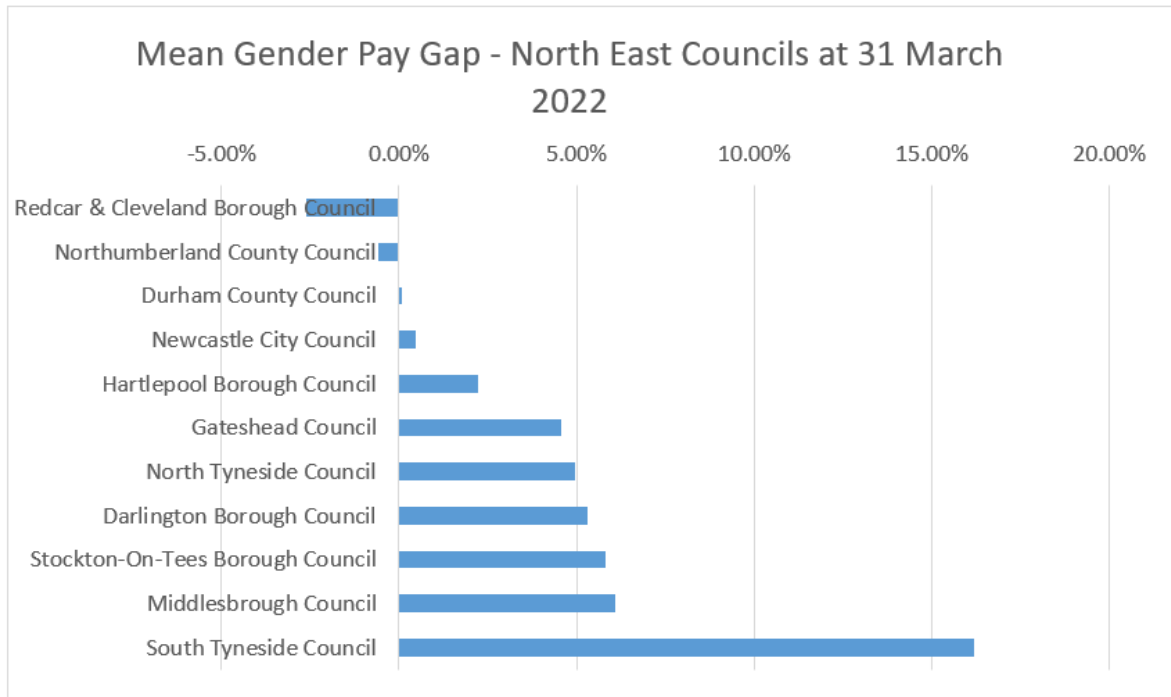
Analysis of last year’s data shows there were 56 County Durham based organisations (excluding Durham County Council) who submitted their GPG data for reporting year 2022/23 (position as at 31 March 2022). Two Durham organisations (in addition to DCC) were within the same size bracket as DCC (5,000 to 19,999 employees), with 12 Durham organisations within the bracket 1,000 to 4,999 employees.

Durham County Council’s pay gap for the position as at 31 March 2022 compared favourably to the average GPG across these 56 organisations. Durham County Council’s mean GPG was over 11 percentage points lower than the average mean GPG across these organisations (0.07% compared to 11.32%).

Similarly, Durham County Council’s median GPG was over 7 percentage points lower than the average median GPG across the 56 organisations (5.68% compared to 12.83%).

DCC had the ninth lowest pay gap within this group in terms of the mean, and the 24th lowest pay gap when looking at the median.

Chart 4 – Variation of mean gender pay gap data regionally (North East Councils)



WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO ADDRESS THE GENDER PAY GAP?

Durham's approach towards pay

In both 2022 and 2023, a £1,925 pay award on all salary points was implemented for NJC 'Green Book' employees, back dated to be effective from 1 April for each year.

Whilst the 2022 and 2023 pay offer applied the same monetary amount to each of the pay points, this proportionately increases the lower pay points by a higher percentage than those higher points e.g., a £1,925 pay increase on SCP 3 (previously £18,887 per annum – Grade 1) equates to a 10.20% pay increase, with the same monetary pay increase on SCP 24 (Grade 9 – previously £29,174) equating to a 6.60% increase).

Recruitment and People Management Policies

Pay gaps experienced by women can arise from barriers faced getting into and progressing at work¹. We currently employ 5,655 women; therefore, we are an attractive employer for women. Our recruitment and selection procedures are designed to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against and that we recruit from as wide a pool as possible. We advertise jobs that are flexible, operate name-blind recruitment and often open vacancies to part-time working or job share. This inclusive approach helps to ensure we receive as many applications as possible from women. Our recruitment and selection policy has undergone a full equality impact assessment which includes action for ongoing monitoring and analysis to ensure and reinforce fair practice.

The council has more recently extended the reach of vacancy adverts through the use of LinkedIn, Indeed and Facebook advertising. This will increase the audience to which the council's adverts reach. In addition, the Organisational Design and Development Team regularly attend recruitment fairs, promoting apprenticeship opportunities and providing information to prospective applicants which promote the range and diversity of opportunities available at the council.

The Organisational Development Team recently attended the "Tech Up Women Networking Event" careers fair at the Radisson Hotel at Durham. The

¹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/pay-gaps-strategy-fair-opportunities-for-all.pdf>

event was attended by other companies including Sunderland Software City, Durham Works, HIRE IT! DIGITAL, Sage and BCS Women.

This event was attended by Durham University learner and graduate women who are eager to commence a career in tech. The attendees were a diversified group of learners, both in terms of age groups (from 19 to 78 years old), different backgrounds, with prerequisites for being enrolled in the university course included having at least 2 GCSEs, a right to work in the UK and facing barriers to education and work. The curriculum of the university course was designed to prepare the cohort for apprenticeships.

Flexible working

As an inclusive employer, the council has a range of flexible working policies and practices in place to promote work-life balance and flexible working patterns, e.g. part-time, shared parental leave, dependent leave and flexitime. The government mandate during the pandemic to 'work from home', helped to greatly improve this agenda, and improved ICT systems, has allowed greater flexibility for more staff to work at home. The council has a hybrid and flexible model of working; these hybrid working opportunities can provide better opportunities for work-life-balance which can contribute positively to people who have caring responsibilities.

Research shows that some elements of pay gaps result from the restrictions women face in balancing work with other aspects of their lives such as caring responsibilities.² We recognise the importance of flexible working practices to support all employees (including men) in the workplace in terms of flexible time and flexible place options. The council has a range of policies and working practices to promote and sustain work life balance including various flexible working patterns e.g. part-time, flexitime, home working, maternity, paternity, adoption, dependent and shared parental leave and flexitime.

Policies are available to all employees however, analysis shows that higher proportions of female employees take advantage of such policies. For example, between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, we received 118 requests to change working hours for the reason of 'Family Leave Policy', and 89.93% of these were submitted by female employees. Family friendly policies therefore assist the council in retaining a highly skilled female workforce.

² <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/pay-gaps-strategy-fair-opportunities-for-all.pdf>

Staff networks

The council has developed and extended its staff networks, including an unpaid carer's network. This network provides informal support and advice for those with caring responsibilities. The group has a membership of 70 staff members, who meet virtually on a regular basis. The members have found this invaluable.

The networks provide an opportunity for people across the council to meet with others, share and discuss experiences, help shape the working environment, arrange events and offer support to other staff.

Our staff networks are:

Menopause Staff Network

Carer's Network

Disability Network

LGBT+ Network

Race, Equality and Diversity Network

Armed Forces Network

We also provide additional support for employees with caring responsibilities through access to individual support via Durham County Carer Support, as we recognise that this level of practical and wellbeing support helps to employees to remain in paid employment and balance their work and care responsibilities.

The HR OD team has also worked with the Commissioning Team in Adults and Health Services and the Alzheimer's Society to roll out a series of 'Dementia Friends' information sessions, with a view to making the organisation Dementia Friendly.

As research suggests that unpaid dementia care is not equally shared between women and men, with globally women undertaking 71% of the unpaid hours of dementia care, making DCC a Dementia Friendly organisation is a positive message that the council acknowledges and recognises the impact of dementia.

The Menopause Pledge

The HR and Employee Services team are continuing to review HR policies, health and wellbeing, and work on menopause awareness which has resulted in the Council "signing the Menopause Pledge".

National research into the topic of Menopause, suggests almost 900,000 women have left their employment due to menopause symptoms. By committing to sign the Menopause Workplace Pledge as an employer, the council has demonstrated our intentions to support women to remain in employment as long as possible through our supportive approach to wellbeing.

In addition, the development of the Menopause staff network will continue. This network will raise awareness within the workplace and amongst managers, as well as providing support, ensuring women can access help and advice.

Wellbeing

Our Wellbeing portal highlights and promotes the understanding of domestic abuse and while domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of age, sexuality and gender, it is statistically more likely to affect women.

Through the Domestic Abuse Policy, employees experiencing domestic abuse can be supported by the council through the offer of practical support, through provision of domestic abuse workplace champions and providing training opportunities for managers to enhance their understanding.

Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions are employees within the council who have been trained and provided with ongoing support and act as a conduit for information and will assist the council to enhance their response to staff members who are affected by domestic abuse within DCC.

In 2022, the DCC Public Health team published its '16 Days of Action' training programme, for both internal and external colleagues. These 16 days of action against gender-based violence provided learning opportunities for employees to raise awareness and call for changes to end violence against women and girls.

Durham County Council is now a 'White Ribbon' accredited organisation, and has pledged to never excuse, commit or remain silent about male violence against women. We are now listed on the White Ribbon website page of accredited organisations (Our Accredited Organisations — White Ribbon UK)

OUR CHALLENGES

Some of the council's job roles can historically be quite gender specific. Roles such as those in front line health, social care and family and young people's services tend to be female dominated, for example as of 31 March 2023 85.01% of roles in 'Social Worker' teams (Children's Social Care) were occupied by female workers. In contrast, more manual and technical roles such as refuse collection, ICT and engineering are usually male dominated, for example as of 31 March 2023, 97.18% of roles in the 'Refuse & Recycling' team, 90.74% of roles in the 'Clean and Green' team and 78.34% of roles of the ICT teams within 'Digital Services', were occupied by male workers. Furthermore, historically lower paid, part-time work equivalent to low hours per week (such as cleaners) has attracted more females. For example, as of 31 March 2023, catering/cleaning roles were 87.74% occupied by female workers.

Recruitment of women into STEM related fields remains a challenge; For years women have been underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) university courses and occupations.

The lack of representation of women in STEM within Higher Education impacts the workforce within STEM industries.

Statistics from the most recent labour market data shows that the STEM sector is continuing to grow at a rapid rate, with more than 1 million more STEM jobs created over the last 7 years. However, the representation of women in STEM remains low, at just over one quarter of the overall STEM workforce. Latest government census figures show that women now make up 26% of the STEM workforce.³

So whilst we ensure our recruitment procedures are fair and welcome applicants from diverse sections of the community, there are often female skill shortages in particular career sectors such as ICT and this is a challenge for all employers.

³ <https://www.stemwomen.com/women-in-stem-statistics-progress-and-challenges>

OUR LONGER TERM PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Durham County Council is a progressive council with ambitious plans to change and evolve and become a more inclusive organisation. The Council's Workforce Strategy aims to ensure that we are thinking about the most important aspects that affect the workforce and which of those need to change in order to modernise our people practices. It provides the organisation with a structured approach to strategic workforce planning. The strategy will identify a number of priorities which will link to improvements to our gender pay gap.

Attracting future talent

We are making changes to way jobs are advertised, with a stronger focus on values and characteristics as well as highlighting wider employment benefits through an increased social media presence, shining a light on what makes the council a fulfilling place to work featuring it's own employees.

We are completing a programme of video filming to depict roles in a modern way, showcasing the varied work and skills needed. Appeal to people from underrepresented groups and highlight the great work women do at the council.

The council's jobs and careers internet page has been updated to promote jobs and careers at the council and includes information on working for the council e.g. employee rewards and benefits, values and behaviours, equality diversity and inclusion. Additional advertising platforms are also being used to extend candidate reach and attraction including recruitment advertising sites and social media which will help attract a diverse range of talent to the council.

Apprenticeships

Our apprenticeship programme is an integral part of the council's approach to address current and future skills needs for new and existing employees.

Apprenticeships help us to attract and retain the very best talent and to benefit from a skilled, motivated, and flexible workforce. Our apprenticeship programme is inclusive and promoted widely through social media campaigns, career events, north east jobs portal and through schools and colleges to ensure we reach the widest candidate pool.

Our apprenticeship strategy identifies how we will use apprenticeships to attract new talent to the organisation as well as identifying opportunities for the development of our existing employees aligned to our strategic approach to workforce planning. Additionally, initiatives such as work experience and

internships opportunities to do project work and gain work experience are in place to help attract women into the workplace

Women are being attracted into more male dominated roles through our apprenticeship programme including Civil Engineering and Countryside Wardens and we are strengthening links with schools, colleges and universities to promote the range of opportunities available.

Inclusion

All HR policies are subject to full equality impact assessment to ensure they do not discriminate, meet our public sector equality duty and progress inclusion. The Workforce Strategy was subject to a high-level equality impact assessment in order to understand the evidence base driving the strategy to ensure our direction of travel is inclusive and responsive and able to adapt to changing employees needs and emerging issues longer term.

Our flexible working policies are evidenced to be attractive to women and we will continue to encourage all employees, male and female, to utilise these policies as improved sharing of home life responsibilities such as caring will facilitate women advancing in their careers and help to close the gender pay gap. This will also encourage a more modern and inclusive workplace in line with our values and behaviours. In addition, the council's Valuing Our Employees' Framework aims to attract, retain, motivate and engage employees together with supporting their wellbeing.

Turnover and Gender

In 2022/23 our employee turnover was 9.28%, of which 59.11% were women leaving the council's employment. Our exit policy has been strengthened to ensure we proactively engage with employees who are leaving the council and seek feedback to improve our employment practices. The information provided by employees on the Exit Interview is being regularly analysed to identify issues and trends affecting turnover, with this information informing the development of recruitment and retention initiatives going forward.

Upskilling and gender

We have an inclusive approach to talent management and have in place a comprehensive Employee Learning and Development programme, including access to over 600 digital and e-learning resources, together with a Leadership and Management Development Programme to support all employees to grow and develop in their roles. Our Leadership and Management Programme covers 1,355 Leaders and Managers, of which

37.12% are male employees and 62.88% are female employees. Our Employee Learning and Development Offer supports employees to develop, grow and progress their careers through bespoke support, development programmes, apprenticeships, coaching, mentoring and career pathways.

We have in place a coaching framework where employees can access coaching delivered by professionally trained colleagues on a one-to-one basis or through an external coach. The coaching framework helps to support employees to reach their full potential and career goals.

International Women's Day and beyond

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality.

We will continue to celebrate and embed the learning from International Women's Day each year.

Diverse by Design

A 'Diverse by Design' gap analysis has also been undertaken to examine various HR activities, including recruitment, staff satisfaction, HR policies and staffing profiles. Diverse by Design is a LGA tool which allows examination of 15 key steps fundamental in helping local government employers to embed fair values, systems and behaviours throughout their organisation. The analysis has identified the following areas of improvement and will allow for inclusive policy development going forward:

- a) Improved analysis of recruitment and selection (R&S) data to monitor effectiveness of the R&S improvement plan, identify trends and address any gaps and/or barriers to recruitment.
- b) Improved analysis of workforce data (such as used in this report) across all protected characteristics to inform evidence based decision making and policy
- c) Analysis of working well survey by gender to understand any differences. Analysis of exit interview data by gender.
- d) Analysis of disciplinary, grievance, harassment data by protected characteristic to understand trends or disproportionality (inc trends in relation to gender)
- e) Consider use of leadership development programmes including those specifically for women
- f) Inclusive messaging and communication e.g. to challenge gender stereotyping
- g) Director champion for women
- h) Introduction of reverse mentoring

- i) Increase role models for under represented groups. This includes both women and men under represented in certain job roles. Include celebration of role models who are relatable and realistic as constantly shining a light on senior staff can seem 'too far removed' and unattainable for most staff.
- j) Equip managers and employees with skills to challenge poor behaviour and language via our training offer, also messaging through campaigns and speakers at manager briefings.
- k) Rethink of how we view equality training to focus more on building awareness about bias and inequality and develop people's interpersonal skills to reduce bias.
- l) Opportunities for staff network chairs to be involved in the induction sessions for new employers to highlight the support available but also to actively show we are an inclusive organisation
- m) There is a new duty to take “reasonable steps” to prevent sexual harassment of employees in the course of their employment (i.e. 3rd party harassment from service users or customers). Although the law has primarily been introduced to protect women, it applies equally to people of all genders.