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# GENDER PAY GAP REPORT

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April 2024 - March 2025



## Welcome to Northumbrian Water Group's gender pay report for 2025. It sets out progress in one important element of our broader commitment to champion diversity, equity and inclusion across our organisation.

I am pleased to report that our median gender pay gap has reduced to 9.9% – the lowest level we have achieved to date. Our mean gender pay gap has also narrowed. This continued improvement reflects deliberate and sustained focus across the business on strengthening representation, supporting progression and ensuring fair access to opportunity.

We know that improving gender balance requires long-term commitment. It depends on attracting diverse talent, developing skills and confidence, and creating pathways into operational, technical and leadership roles. Encouragingly, women now represent 35% of our apprentices, 55% of graduates and 75% of undergraduates. Female representation across management levels remains strong, supporting balanced decision-making and visible leadership across the organisation.

Our ambition, set out within our TIDE (Together for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity) strategy, is to achieve 35% female representation across our overall workforce. We have continued to make progress toward this target and remain focused on sustaining that momentum. At the same time, we recognise that structural factors – including representation across pay quartiles (the four equal groups we use to compare pay levels across the organisation) and the distribution of roles – continue to influence our gender pay gap, and we are committed to addressing these thoughtfully and transparently.

Initiatives such as our Women in STEM (WiSTEM) network, alongside strengthened recruitment practices and outreach partnerships, are helping to build confidence, visibility and opportunity for women across the organisation. From early careers programmes to senior leadership development, our focus remains on creating an environment in which colleagues of all genders can thrive.

That's why, for the fourth consecutive year, we were named one of the UK's Best Workplaces for Women by Great Place to Work – the only water and sewerage company included in the 'super large' companies category.

While we are encouraged by the progress we have made, we know there is more to do. Our commitment is not simply to reduce a statistic, but to create a workforce that reflects the communities we serve and is equipped to meet the challenges of the future.



**Heidi Mottram CBE**  
Chief Executive  
Northumbrian Water Group



Heidi Mottram, CEO

# Progress and challenges in reducing the gender pay gap

**Gender is one of the most important areas where we seek to make positive change, and pay is one measure of this.**

Annually we publish the median and mean (average) gender pay gap. The mean is the average of a set of numbers, while the median is the middle value in that set, and this is the number we report on as our gender pay gap.

The mean calculation takes all salaries (and specific allowances) by gender divided by the number of people in each gender.

Over the past five years, we have continued to make steady progress in reducing our gender pay gap. On the snapshot date of 5 April 2025, the median gender pay gap fell to 9.9%, compared with 11.3% in the previous year. The mean gender pay gap also reduced.

The positive trend can be attributed to:

- A 9% increase in female headcount versus a 7.1% increase in male headcount.
- A 6.1% increase in the median female pay compared to a 4.5% increase in the median male pay.

We have also seen improved female representation within upper quartile roles – the highest paid 25% of roles in the organisation – although the middle quartiles remain male-dominated and continue to be an area of focus.

Encouragingly, this progress is also reflected within our operational directorates. In Water, the median hourly rate for female colleagues exceeds that of males, demonstrating that parity – and beyond – is achievable within operational roles.

This provides a strong foundation as we continue to address representation across the middle pay quartiles.

Our average (mean) bonus gap in 2025 reflects the fact that, overall, female colleagues received higher bonus payments during the reporting period. Bonus results can vary from year to year and are influenced by individual performance and how roles are distributed across the organisation. If we looked at base salary only, our gender pay gap would be smaller. This shows that bonuses, allowances and other additional payments have a significant impact on the overall gender pay gap position.

In 2022, we commissioned an independent review of our application of the gender pay gap calculation, carried out by DLA Piper. This strengthened our methodology and enabled more detailed and regular analysis of gender pay data to support ongoing transparency and informed action.

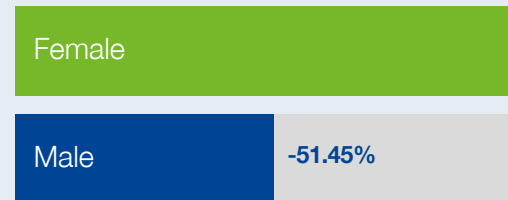
## Mean pay gap



## Median pay gap



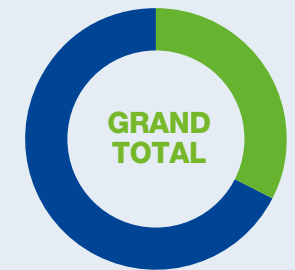
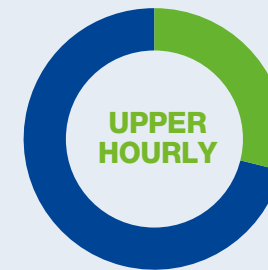
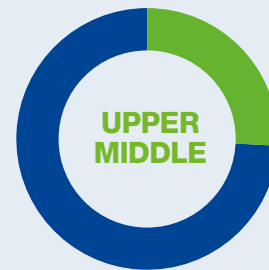
## Mean Bonus gap



## Median Bonus gap



## Pay quartiles



# Recruiting and developing female talent

Improving gender balance across our workforce remains a key priority, and we have set an ambition to exceed 35% female representation by 2030. While progress takes time, particularly in operational and technical environments where representation has historically been lower, we continue to take practical and sustained steps to broaden access to opportunities across the organisation.

We are seeing strong progress in early careers recruitment, with female representation now at 37% across apprenticeships, 55% across graduate roles, and 75% across undergraduate roles. This reflects our continued focus on inclusive attraction and fair selection, alongside targeted engagement with schools, colleges and universities to ensure our opportunities are visible and accessible to a wide and diverse talent pool.

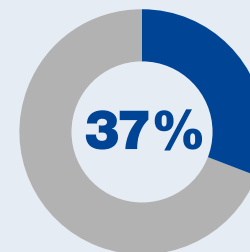
Our apprentice recruitment campaign was refreshed during 2025 to better reflect the full range of careers available across the business. The campaign introduced more inclusive imagery and realistic role preview videos showcasing operational and technical roles. This helped challenge traditional perceptions of the sector and provided clearer insight into day-to-day work, enabling applicants to better understand the opportunities on offer and see themselves reflected in our workforce.

We have widened access to employment through partnerships, and these collaborations support women into sustainable roles and help us attract talent from non-traditional pathways, strengthening the diversity of experience and perspective across our teams.

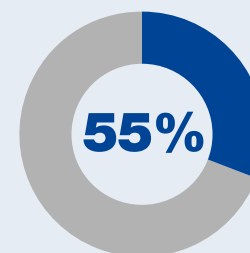
Alongside recruitment, we are investing earlier in the talent pipeline to support long-term representation. Through visible role models and hands-on activities, initiatives like this help challenge gender stereotypes early and build a more balanced future workforce.

We have also strengthened leadership development through our partnerships, giving colleagues access to professional development resources, board readiness support and networking opportunities. Open to all colleagues, this programme supports women and underrepresented groups to build confidence, broaden experience and consider future board-level roles. In 2025, women made up 46% of colleagues completing our Aspiring Managers Programme, and 45% of them subsequently secured management roles.

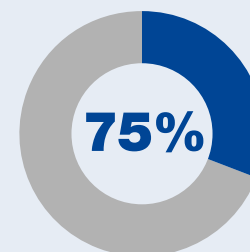
Together, these actions support both immediate recruitment outcomes and the long-term development of a more representative workforce – an essential driver in reducing our gender pay gap over time. This progress is reflected in external recognition, with NWG named one of the UK's Best Workplaces for Women by Great Place to Work (GPTW) for the fourth consecutive year. In the November 2025 GPTW survey, 91% of female colleagues said NWG is a great place to work and 83% said they are developing professionally..



Current female apprenticeships 32 (out of 86)



Current female Building Futures graduate 10 (out of 18)



Current female undergraduates 9 (out of 12)

We are proud to share some key statistics:

**44%** of our **Executive Leadership Team (ELT)** are female

**43%** of **senior (Level 2)** managers are female

**42%** of **Level 3** managers are female

**41%** of **Level 4** managers are female

**41%** **overall** of our managers are female

Female representation is at **37%** across apprenticeships, **55%** across graduate programmes and **75%** across undergraduate roles.

# Apprentice spotlight



In 2025, Sarah Turner secured a competitive engineering apprenticeship with Northumbrian Water, joining our Regional Maintenance team. Currently studying Advanced Manufacturing Engineering at Northumberland Skills, Sarah progressed through a rigorous recruitment process and now works across operational sites gaining hands-on experience in maintenance, instrumentation and control systems.

Sarah's appointment reflects our continued focus on attracting and developing female talent into technical and operational roles, strengthening our early careers pipeline and supporting greater representation within STEM careers.



*Securing the apprenticeship with Northumbrian Water was a dream come true. I've learned so much – from how to use advanced machinery to understanding what it takes to thrive in a real workplace. It's made me feel completely prepared for what's next.*

**Sarah Turner**



# Women in STEM (WiSTEM) network summary



**Our TIDE (Together for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity) strategy outlines our commitment to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce and includes our ambition of exceeding 35% female representation across our overall workforce.**

Our workforce is currently composed of 34% females, up from 32.5% the previous year and marking a continued progress towards our ambition.

In 2023, we established the Women in STEM (WiSTEM) network to support our female colleagues in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) roles and to raise awareness of career opportunities for women and girls. Female representation in these roles has increased from 30% in 2024 to 40% in 2025, demonstrating positive momentum in areas traditionally under-represented by women.

The WiSTEM network continues to play an important role in supporting this progress. With over 520 members across the business, including male allies, the network provides peer support, mentoring, development opportunities and visible role models across operational and technical areas.

Members continue to make active use of the network to share experiences and explore mentoring opportunities. In 2025, the WiSTEM Career and Guidance Working Group launched Mentoring Circles to support early career colleagues who are not yet ready to move into management roles. The programme brings small groups together for a series of structured sessions, where participants discuss real workplace challenges and learn from each other's experiences. Level 3 managers receive mentor training and facilitate the sessions, helping colleagues build confidence, broaden their perspective and develop practical skills for progression.

Partnerships with the Women's Utility Network (WUN), British Water and WISE have provided access to sector-wide development events and resources, strengthening cross-industry collaboration and visibility for women in the utility sector.

Over the past year, WiSTEM has also worked collaboratively with our People Services and Facilities teams to influence practical improvements across the workplace. These include:

- Revised maternal and breastfeeding policy provisions
- Establishing footstool "banks" at core sites
- Installing sanitary bins at 65 operational sites
- Supporting the launch of our Early Careers Community
- Co-developing an Outreach Ambassador approach

The network has delivered in-person and online sessions covering topics such as impostor phenomenon, menopause and hormonal health, and continues to see strong engagement through its book club and Innovation Festival events.

Collaboration has extended beyond NWG, with WiSTEM members working with partners on STEM outreach initiatives and supporting fundraising activity, raising over £1,000 for female-focused local charities.

By supporting confidence, visibility, career development and inclusive workplace practises, WiSTEM continues to strengthen our female talent pipeline, support retention within operational and technical roles, and contributes to improving representation across pay quartiles. Its work remains a key enabler in our ongoing efforts to close the gender pay gap and exceed our 35% representation ambition.

**STEMAZING** is an independent, not-for-profit social enterprise focused on increasing inclusion and visibility in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics). In 2024/25, 18 colleagues from our WiSTEM network took part in its Inspiration Academy, developing confidence and public engagement skills to become visible role models and deliver STEM outreach. A further cohort is planned for 2026, continuing to strengthen our female STEM pipeline.

Our workforce is currently composed of **34% females**, up from **32.5% the previous year** and marking a continued progress towards our ambition.



