

Introduction

The Gender Pay Gap (GPG) legislation which was introduced in April 2017 requires private and public sector employers with more than 250 employees to report the following information on an annual basis:

- The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay for male and female employees expressed as a percentage of men's mean pay.
- The difference between the median hourly rate of pay for male and female employees expressed as a percentage of men's median pay.
- The proportion of men and women in each quartile of the pay bands.
- The gender pay gap for any bonuses paid out during the year. (This is not relevant for this report as NSDC do not pay bonuses).

The GPG is not the same as equal pay. Equal pay refers to the fact that, by law, men and women must get equal pay for 'equal work'. The GPG looks at the average earnings for both males and females across all roles in an organisation to see whether there is a disparity.

Workforce Profile

This report provides details of the Council's mean and median GPG as of 31 March 2025. On this 'snapshot' date, there were 735 employees in post. Of those, 607 were in scope for GPG reporting.

	Total number in scope	% of workforce
Male	280	46%
Female	327	54%
Total	607	100%

The total number of people in scope for reporting has decreased slightly – down to 607 from 615 in 2024. The % split of men and women has also changed slightly with a 1% reduction for men, and 1% increase for women but remains relatively consistent.

Our Gender Pay Gap

The data set out in this report was calculated using the standard methodologies referenced in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. This includes calculating an hourly rate for all staff paid on the snapshot date (31 March 2025) using ordinary pay.

Ordinary pay includes basic pay and allowances such as market supplements, shift pay, on-call and stand-by. Payments that are excluded are: payments for overtime, redundancy payments, and sums relating to termination of employment. Also excluded are employees on reduced pay due to family or sick leave.

The GPG is based on the difference between the average hourly pay received by men and women across the Council. We are required to report two measures for this purpose; the mean and the median gender pay gap.

Mean – The mean is calculated by adding up the total salary for each gender (as outlined in the reporting regulations) and then dividing the result by the number of employees of that gender. We

have calculated the mean average for both men and women's hourly pay and reported this expressed as a percentage of men's mean pay.

Median – The median is calculated by producing a list of salaries in numerical order for each gender. The median is determined by identifying the middle number for each gender. We calculate the median for both men and women's hourly pay and report this as a percentage of men's median pay.

Hourly Rate 31.3.2025				
	Men	Women	% Difference	Difference
Mean	£18.04	£17.43	3.41%	Men paid, on average, £0.61 per hour more than women.
Median	£15.07	£16.09	-6.77%	Women paid, on average, £1.02 per hour more than men.

Average pay for both men and women, in terms of median and mean, has increased since March 2024.

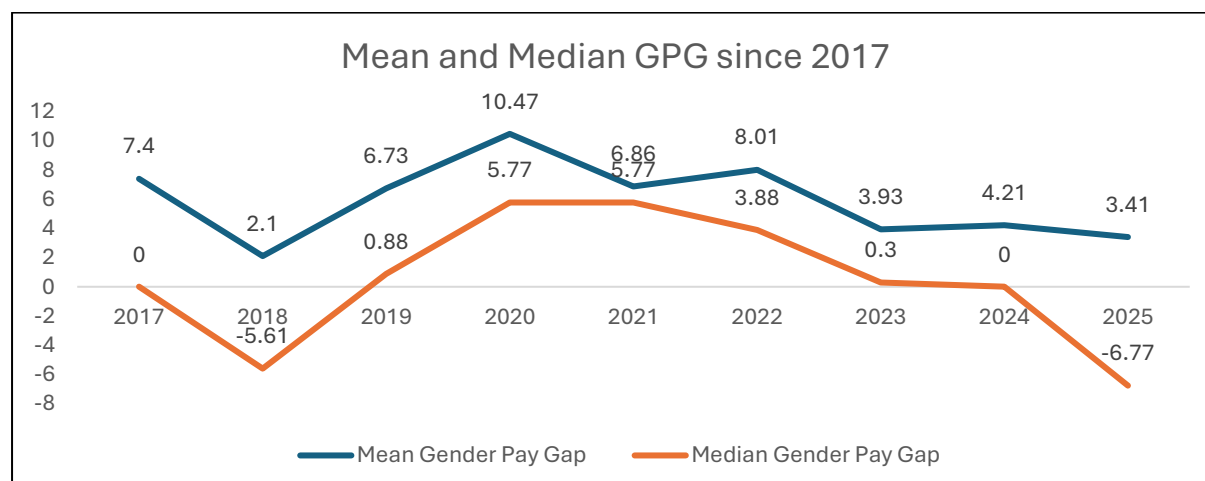
Our Quartile Pay

The quartile data shows the Council's workforce divided into four equal sized groups based on calculated hourly rates of pay. Each quartile is made up of 25% of the workforce. The lower quartile includes employees in receipt of the lowest pay. The upper quartile represents those in receipt of the highest pay. Our pay quartiles by gender as of 31 March 2025 are listed below:

Quartile	Men	Women	Total	% Men	% Women
Lower Quartile	87	65	152	57%	43%
Lower Middle Quartile	61	91	152	40%	60%
Upper Middle Quartile	57	95	152	38%	62%
Upper Quartile	75	76	151	50%	50%

Review

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap



The mean GPG for the Council has changed since 2024 when the difference was 4.21% with men being paid an average of 72p per hour more than women. In 2025 the difference was 3.41% with men being paid, on average, 61p per hour more than women.

The mean GPG has narrowed and is now lower than it was in 2023 prior to the increase in 2024. Aside from 2018, our mean GPG is currently lower / narrower than at any point since reporting began. This demonstrates greater parity between the pay of men and women.

Whilst reduced, the positive number in relation to the mean occurs because men are, on average, being paid more than women across the organisation. This figure can be skewed by having small numbers of men or women in particularly high or low paying roles. As a result, the UK Statistics Authority notes that “the median is generally considered to be the better indicator of ‘average’ earnings”.

The median has continued to decrease and is now -6.77% meaning that, at the midpoint, women are being paid, on average, £1.02 per hour more than men across the organisation. We have previously reported a negative result in this category, in 2018, but this is first time since then that this has been the case although the median GPG has been consistently reducing since 2021.

Our median being lower than our mean (which has always been the case since we began reporting) indicates that the outliers tend to be the highest hourly rates. The median remains more representative of the typical employee pay because it is less affected by these extreme values.

Comparison:

Given that it is considered a better indicator of ‘average earnings’, the [ONS](#) uses the median figure to report on GPG and is currently provisionally reporting a GPG of 6.91% in all occupations across the UK (note that this data is based on their Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) rather than statutory GPG reporting). Our GPG based on the median figure is -6.77% meaning that women are, on average, paid more than men per hour compared to across the UK where men are, on average, paid more per hour than women.

It is not yet possible to compare our results to other Local Authorities.

Breaking data down further:

The GPG for reporting is calculated based on the data for the whole organisation. It is possible to break the data down further to look at the GPG for different categories and to consider whether this highlights any areas of focus.

Full-time and part-time employees:

Breaking down the data into full and part-time employees does provide quite a different picture to when we look at the organisation as whole. When part-time employees are removed from the data, men and women are paid almost the same, based on the mean calculation, per hour. The median calculation is also more significantly in favour of women than when looking at the whole organisation which suggests that, when the outliers at either end of the scale are mitigated, the pay distribution in relation to full-time employees, slightly favours women at the midpoint.

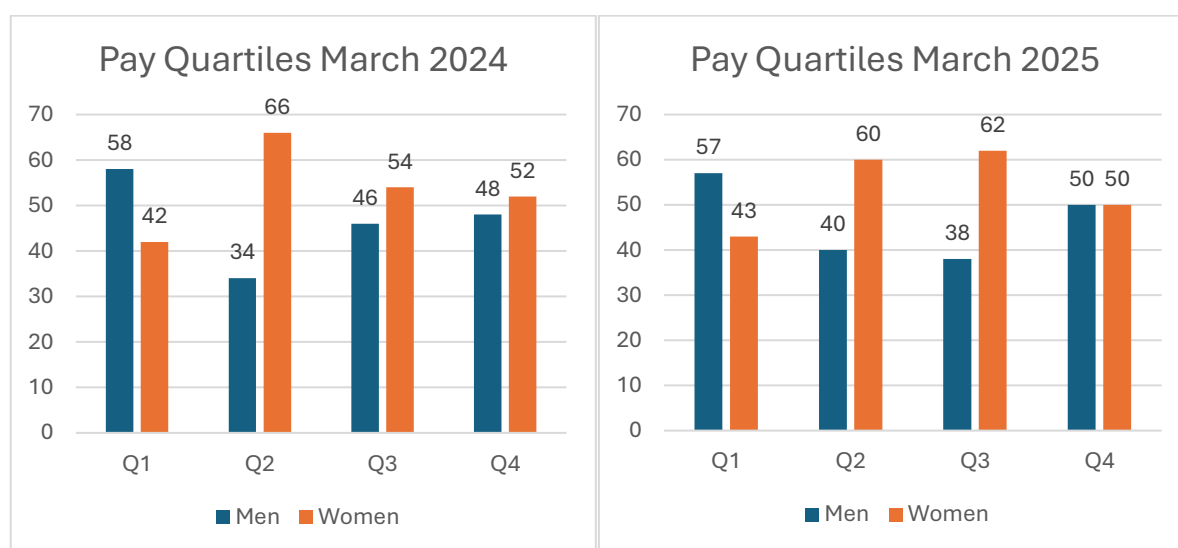
When looking at part-time employees only however, both measures of GPG demonstrate a wider difference in favour of men compared to the results for full-time employees and for the whole organisation.

Different role levels:

At both business manager and officer level, NSDC is close to parity between men and women when considering the mean and, in these cases, the median is either zero – demonstrating parity at business manager level, or a negative number, which favours women, at officer level. These results show that, when Director / Chief Executive level and apprentices are removed from the data, men and women are, on average, in receipt of very similar rates of pay across the organisation. This demonstrates that there are no inherent barriers to women in progressing within the organisation.

The GPG is wider when looking at Director level but this is skewed by the data group being so small even though there are almost equal numbers of men and women at that level.

Quartile Pay



In relation to the whole organisation, proportionally, there are more women than men in the middle quartiles (Q2, Q3), more men in the lower quartile (Q1), and an equal number of women and men in the upper quartile (Q4).

The upper and lower quartiles have remained relatively stable between 2024 and 2025. There has been more change in the middle quartiles with the gap between the proportion of women and men in Q2 reducing and more women falling into quartile 3. This change within the mid quartiles is likely to have supported the reduction in our GPG.

The mean is impacted by particularly high or low earners. In our case, whilst the split of men and women is equal amongst the upper quartile, both the mean and median GPG specifically for this quartile are 'higher' than the result for the whole Council. This is one factor which impacts our overall outcome. The higher GPG measures show that, whilst there are equal men and women in the upper quartile, men within this bracket are earning, on average, more than women in this bracket.

Note that it is possible to overstate this impact given that, in some cases, the same hourly rate may be represented in two quartiles. The action of splitting into quartiles focuses on total numbers of people as opposed to where hourly rates change.

When looking at part – time workers, women are represented at a much higher rate in the lower, lower middle, and upper middle quartile than men (at over 80% in each case when part-time worker data is split into quartiles). In the upper quartile, this reverts to 45% men / 55% women which is much closer

to the overall split of men and women in scope for reporting, and the men and women in the upper quartile for the organisation. This means that, not only are significantly more women in part-time roles than men but, when men are in part-time roles, proportionally, they are represented more highly in the upper quartile. This is why the mean and median GPG for part-time employees is so much higher than for the whole organisation.

Other Factors which may impact our Gender Pay Gap.

Our mean GPG is also likely to be impacted by the market supplements which were paid at the March 2025 snapshot date. Market supplements are awarded to assist with recruitment and retention – a key reason can be due to pressures in the market caused by certain roles being able to attract a higher salary outside of the public sector.

Our mean GPG may also be impacted by the standby and on call payments as these are all included in the calculations.

Another factor which may have a small impact is that, during the 24/25 financial year, the differential for women between those starting and leaving was +22 (22 more women started than left), and only +4 for men (4 more men started than left). Whilst this data does not factor in the level of role individuals were recruited to, it does mean that there was an increase in women at the bottom of the pay scale for their relevant grade given that individuals move up the scale points within a grade based on length of service. As the GPG is based on actual pay as opposed to grade, this may have an impact on our outcomes.

When our data is split into those in full and part-time work, the GPG is much more significant in relation to part-time workers than it is for full-time workers or the whole Council. This is likely due to the much higher numbers of women in part-time work. This may be partly because of the types of roles that are being worked on a part-time basis – whilst they are roles open to everyone they tend to be filled more often by women.

There is also likely a societal factor – it is more common for women to be in part time work as there still tends to be more of an expectation that women will take on more in terms of caring responsibilities whether that be for children or parents. Interestingly though, in more senior roles, or those that fall within the upper quartile of part-time workers, the split between men and women is much closer. This may be linked to flexible working perhaps being seen as less manageable for more senior roles though as opposed to men in more senior roles more regularly working part-time.

It should be noted that the impact of part-time working or full-time working on the GPG is not because those working part-time receive less pay than a full-time equivalent as GPG is based on hourly rate which is the same whether someone carries a role out on a part-time or full-time basis. The impact is caused by a higher proportion of lower paid roles being worked on a part-time basis.

Recommendations

Whilst our data continues to show a positive figure for our mean GPG, it has reduced and remains relatively low, and our median GPG is -6.77%. Given that the GPG in both measures is quite small, when looking at potential reasons for the results, it is the case that several factors make a small difference and that this has a cumulative impact rather than there being any one area where there are significant concerns.

Under the law, men and women must receive equal pay for:

- the same or broadly similar work;
- work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation scheme; or
- work of equal value.

The 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 or disability. To ensure consistency, and transparency, all grades are allocated in line with an agreed job evaluation scheme or paid in line with nationally agreed rates in the case of chief officers.

The Council is, therefore, confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work. Its gender pay gap is more likely the result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries that these roles attract.

Whilst our GPG is relatively narrow overall, over the next 12 months, as a Council, we commit to reviewing the following areas with the aim of continuing to positively impact our gender pay gap:

1. Consideration may be given to taking a targeted approach to recruitment into the roles which are predominantly filled by men. This may include, for example, a focus on encouraging women to apply for surveyor roles, or operative roles. Whilst this may positively impact our mean and median GPG, more diversity in roles can also be positive in itself – bringing a new dimension to the workforce and helping to ensure that we reflect our communities across all areas of the Council (noting that this report is specifically looking at gender). Given that we can also find it difficult to recruit to roles such as surveyors, or repairs operatives, proactive steps to widen our recruiting pool can be beneficial. This may include focussed campaigns, ensuring any photos relating to our services include women, and also a focus on supporting succession and development opportunities for existing staff. It is good to see however the data based on business manager and officer levels which suggests, whilst there are specific roles where men and women are underrepresented (and this does impact our GPG), overall, there are no clear blockers to progression for women.
2. We can also look at our recruitment processes and the employment lifecycle from attraction to exit and identify any barriers that may exist for certain groups and take action to tackle them at each stage of the process. This can include steps such as focussing on those entering or re-entering the workforce or supporting women in the workplace with menopause friendly policies.
3. The Council already has a host of family friendly policies and has flexible and agile working available where this is operationally feasible. This can support both recruitment and retention across a range of roles within the Council and go some way to supporting women to remain in or return to the workforce into roles which accurately match their skills and experience where, in the past, women may be more likely to be underemployed compared to their skills and experience due to their caring responsibilities. Ensuring an open approach to flexible working, including in recruitment processes, may positively impact this.
4. In relation to market supplements, these should continue to be applied appropriately and, once in place, be subject to review. Market supplements are based on the role and not individuals so are not impacted by whether there are men or women in the role. It is important that this continues and that they are only applied where recruitment or retention issues can be evidenced.