

# Building a diverse team

Our 2020 Gender Pay Report



# Introduction

Keeping the gas flowing so people are safe and warm at home, looking after those most in need, and preparing the gas network for the future: we've got over 1500 colleagues delivering the services communities across Wales and south west of England rely on, day in, day out.

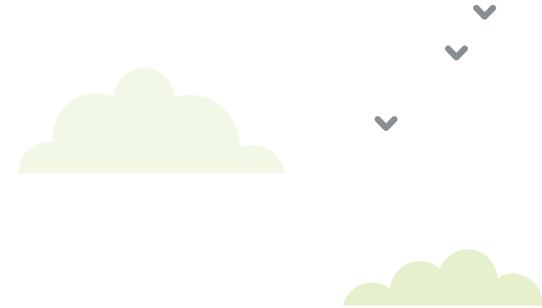
**It's a time of change and challenge in the energy sector.** With Government and industry focussing on addressing the Climate Emergency, the role of gas networks is changing. From just heating homes less than two decades ago, we now heat homes, power businesses and, by supporting renewable energy, keep the lights on.

**In the years to come, we'll have a key part to play in decarbonising heat, power and transport to meet Net Zero.** And our apprentices and the junior colleagues of today will soon become engineers and managers, relied on by millions to maintain the green gas network of the future.

**As we face the future, it's worth looking forward to what a gas engineer will look like in 2050.** They'll be skilled, maintaining pipelines and equipment that transport green gases like biomethane and hydrogen. They'll work with robotics, smart sensors and detecting equipment. And, they'll be more diverse than ever before in gender, ethnicity and sexuality.

At Wales & West Utilities we are approaching the start of a new regulatory cycle. The next price control agreed with our regulator, Ofgem, will set out the money we can invest in our customers' and stakeholder's priorities.

As always, we will have to make tough decisions to prepare our business for the future. But as an organisation we are clear: we'll continue to invest in our people so they have all the skills to meet the needs of our customers. And, we'll work hard to make our workforce inclusive, because we know that to truly meet the needs of the communities we serve, we must reflect them.



**Graham Edwards,**  
Chief Executive



**Sarah Hopkins,**  
People & Engagement  
Director



# Making progress

This is our third Gender Pay report. As we approach the 15th anniversary of launching as Wales & West Utilities in 2005, it's a perfect time to reflect on the progress we've made in evolving our team.

It's also an opportunity for us to set out what action we'll take, and will do in the future, to encourage more women to choose the utilities industry, specifically Wales & West Utilities, as a career.

**We believe we're stronger when we work as a team.** We have a values-based business culture, with four values underpinning everything we do. And our well-defined development programmes help all of our colleagues to meet their potential, irrespective of gender, age, race, disability or sexual orientation.

## Our story to date

**16%**   
of our colleagues are female – an increasing number year on year

**More women**   
than ever before applying for apprenticeships and operational roles

Gender pay gap   
**lower than the national average**

Women playing   
**key leadership & management roles**

**CIPD**   
commend our strategic approach to workforce planning

**5%**   
accredited at Investors in People: Silver level at the first attempt – an accolade only 5% of companies achieve

This report and the data contained within it are based on a snapshot of Wales & West Utilities on 1 April 2019



# Encouraging diversity

We want to encourage diversity. While we have a large number of women working in the office, in leadership, customer service and support roles, there's a smaller number in operations. We're working hard to change this.

 **Doing all we can to change perceptions of the gas industry** – role-modelling some of our outstanding women comfortable with the changes.

 **Embedding our values in recruitment** – we give new recruits all the skills they need to fill roles from Gas Engineer to Planner, Administrator to Asset Manager. We've also removed the requirement for academic qualifications unless they are strictly necessary.

 **Helping to shape education choices** – we engage with schools, colleges and community groups. STEM Ambassadors and experienced female engineers regularly visit schools and clubs to talk about their experiences and the opportunities for girls.

**The gender pay gap is different from equal pay.**

That is the right for men and women to be paid identically for doing the same work, or work of equal value. We have clear job profiles and a well-established pay structure. We are confident that what a colleague earns is based on their job and our pay structure, and is no way affected by their gender or any other characteristic.

 **Focus on wellbeing** – we try to be as family friendly as possible, and have introduced enhanced maternity leave, shared parental leave, flexible working policies and a Carers Policy – a first for a gas network. Our wellbeing strategy supports our colleagues in their lives at home and work.

 **Recognising we can all stereotype** – all recruiting managers receive unconscious bias training, to adjust the way they think and eliminate unwitting discrimination.

 **Promoting our job opportunities to a diverse audience** – we're using new ways to reach out to women (as well as BAME and LGBTQ+ communities), targeting people with an interest in engineering.



# Challenges

Our biggest challenge, and the main driver of our gender pay gap, is a broader societal one, the lack of women in the roles and with the experience we require.

We inherited a male-dominated team when we started operations, and with a low turnover rate, most of those experienced colleagues are still part of our team.

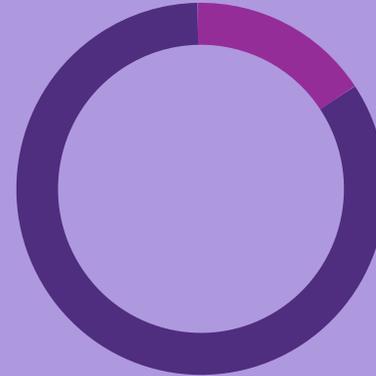
Since 2017, 16% of our new recruits have been female – an increase on previous years. However, in the last two years, as the profile of our workload has changed, we've needed to recruit skilled and experienced Gas Engineers and HGV Drivers. Although we recruited 63 new Gas Engineers and HGV Drivers, we didn't receive any applications from women.



# Our team

1560  
colleagues

♂ 84%  
Male (1309)

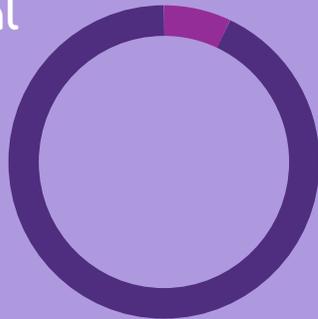


♀ 16%  
Female (251)

2018: Male: 83% | Female: 17%

## Operational

♂ 93%  
Male

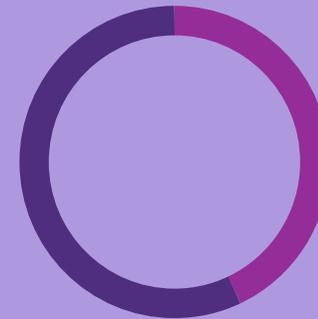


♀ 7%  
Female

2018: Male: 93% | Female: 7%

## Office

♂ 57%  
Male



♀ 43%  
Female

2018: Male: 58% | Female: 42%



# Pay and bonus

Who gets a bonus at Wales & West Utilities?

♂ 16%

of Male employees

♀ 38%

of Female employees

2018: 17% of Males | 39% of Females

2017: 18% of Males | 37% of Females

There are two types of bonuses, which recognise colleagues who do different types of jobs at Wales & West Utilities.



Colleagues in our grade-based structure are eligible for a bonus based on a percentage of their salary, dependant on their performance.



Senior colleagues and our leadership team receive a bonus based on their personal performance and their contribution to the success of our business.

A large number of male colleagues in operational roles are not incentivised by a bonus. They make up a significant percentage of our team and are overwhelmingly male, which is reflected in the low proportion of male colleagues who receive bonuses.

## Definitions

The gender pay gap shows the difference in average pay between men and women who work at Wales & West Utilities. It is worked out in two ways:

1. The mean adds up all salaries and divides the result by the number of men and women respectively. We report the percentage difference.
2. The median lists all male and female salaries in numerical order, and is the respective middle numbers. We report the percentage difference.

The gender bonus gap shows the difference between bonuses received by men and women across Wales & West Utilities – worked out in the same way.



# Pay and bonus

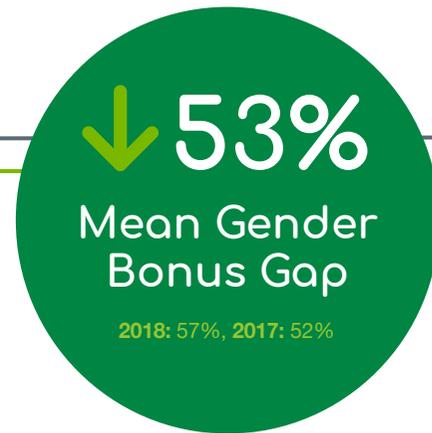
## Gender pay and bonus at Wales & West Utilities



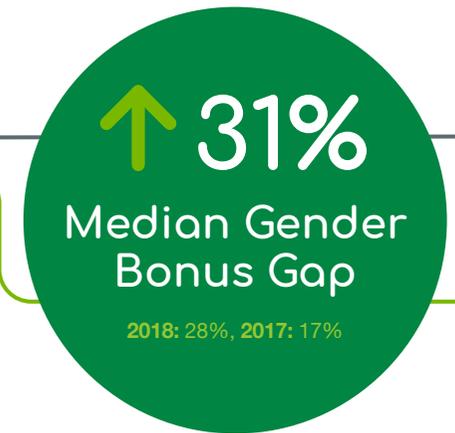
We're proud to report that our mean gender pay gap has reduced by 90% since 2017. This is driven by our structured, grade-based approach with clear and consistent job profiles. And, it reflects the women we have in leadership and management roles.



Our median gender pay gap continues to increase – reflecting the differing roles men and women currently play in our business. Large numbers of men work in lower paid operational positions, while women hold supervisory, middle management roles.



This is driven by the number of men we have in senior positions, while there is only one female member of our nine-strong leadership team.



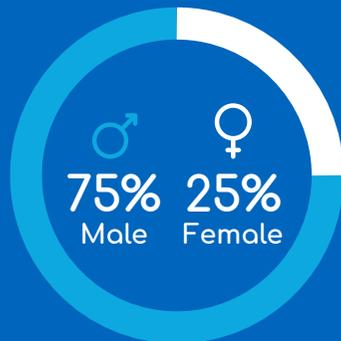
Our median bonus gap reflects the number of female colleagues in administrative and management roles who receive bonuses, while male colleagues on industrial contracts do not get bonuses.



# Our pay distribution

Our pay distribution shows the profile of men and women across the range of pay bands at Wales & West Utilities. Distribution of males and females across our pay structure is shown by calculating the proportions of males and females in four equal parts.

## Lower quartile

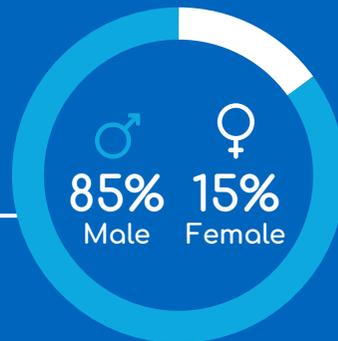


**2018:** Male: 73% | Female: 27%

'Hands-on' operational roles, and office-based administration and customer service roles.

Our pay distribution shows women have their greatest representation in administrative and customer service roles.

## Lower middle

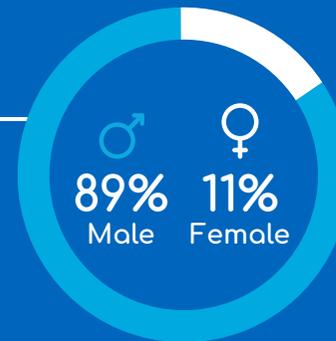


**2018:** Male: 85% | Female: 15%

Supervisory and specialised roles, both in the office and in operations.

Management and specialist positions that fall in the lower middle quarter are still dominated by men, but women play a prominent role, particularly in the office.

## Upper middle

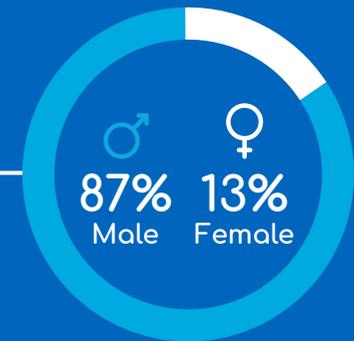


**2018:** Male: 87% | Female: 13%

Our middle management, overseeing specialist roles and leading engineering teams on the network.

Upper middle and upper quartiles remain dominated by men, while female colleagues continue to lead the way in preparing our business for the future.

## Upper quartile



**2018:** Male: 87% | Female: 13%

Senior managers and our leadership team.





## Hannah Clarke

Health, Safety & Environment Manager

Hannah joined our Operations Health, Safety & Environment Team in July 2019. She is responsible for the safety and legal compliance of our engineering teams across South Devon and Cornwall.

A Full and Chartered Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Hannah is currently sitting exams to achieve Chartered Status with the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.

“I am relishing a new challenge, learning from some long serving and experienced colleagues. Having previous jobs in the defence and mining sectors, I have always worked in a male dominated industry – and it doesn’t phase me one bit!

“I have 2 young children and enjoy a fit and active lifestyle. At times life can be a juggling act but one which Wales & West Utilities does its best to help with. I’m looking forward to learning more about the business, the future of energy and the career ahead of me.”

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## Kate Williams

Logistics First Line Manager

Kate’s career at Wales & West Utilities began in 2003 working part time as an Operations Assistant following the birth of her son, Tomas. The skills that Kate developed in that role has stood her career in good stead.

She is now a First Line Manager in our Logistics team, who move materials and equipment round in support of our engineering teams.

“Building a career at Wales & West Utilities has greatly benefited my life. I work hard every day to give back to the company that has given me so much. Working with supportive managers has seen me develop and do things I didn’t think I’d ever do, alongside my family life.

“My gender has never gotten in the way of my career progression. It’s inspiring to see more young women applying for our apprenticeship schemes and engineering roles. Things have changed a lot since I started my career, but I can’t wait to see even more women in positions to myself in the future”

“Working with supportive managers has seen me develop and do things I didn’t think I’d ever do, alongside my family life.”





**Lynette Gould**  
Operations Assistant

Lynette's career in the gas industry started in the 1980's. It's seen her work in a variety of roles since joining our team.

Operations Assistants play a key role in the day-to-day running of our depots, the planning of our work, and to make sure operations run smoothly, helping our local managers plan and schedule work. Lynette is always going above and beyond for her colleagues and customers.

"You definitely could say that the gas industry has shaped my life... I met my husband in work 32 years ago and my son joined Wales & West Utilities this year too!

"The different tasks that my job brings keeps me on my toes. One minute I'm helping a customer that's popped into the office, then I'm making sure we've got the right material for a job and next I'm speaking to a local authority highways team about a road closure.

"My job is to support our operations, helping to meet the needs of our customers. I try to make things run as efficiently as possible. It's a very busy job but a good one that I really enjoy. I've never thought twice about my gender – I'm just one of the team,

**“**  
I've never thought twice about my gender – I'm just one of the team, delivering for those who rely on us.  
**”**



**Helen Mabhena**  
Scheduler

Helen used to be a Doctor's Receptionist. Now she plays a crucial role in planning gas work, liaising with local authorities and customers. Helen is part of a team that schedules nearly 15,000 jobs a year, and focus on keeping disruption to local communities from our work to a minimum.

"Wales & West Utilities is an inclusive place to work and everything possible is done to make people feel welcome and safe - regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or anything else for that matter!

"I speak to customers every day, and it really brings home how diverse an area we serve. I think it's really important that a public service like ours must reflect our communities, so I'm really pleased to see Wales & West Utilities working on increasing the number of women and BAME colleagues. For me, I've never felt anything but part of the team, and I'm proud to say I work for Wales & West Utilities."

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**”**





## Lois Parnell Despatcher

Lois is building a career in the gas industry after joining us in an administrative role. She's part of our Despatch team, supporting our Emergency Gas Engineers.

“At any time of day or night, if you smell gas and call us, one of our emergency engineers will be on their way. In Despatch, we help plan that response, and make sure that the engineer gets to you quickly to keep you safe.

“It was really inspiring seeing this important work up close, so I decided to try and become an emergency engineer myself. I've just completed all my qualifications at a local college and am looking forward to the next step in my career.

“I was the only woman on the course, but that's not going to stop me. With hard work and determination, you can achieve anything here at Wales & West Utilities.”

