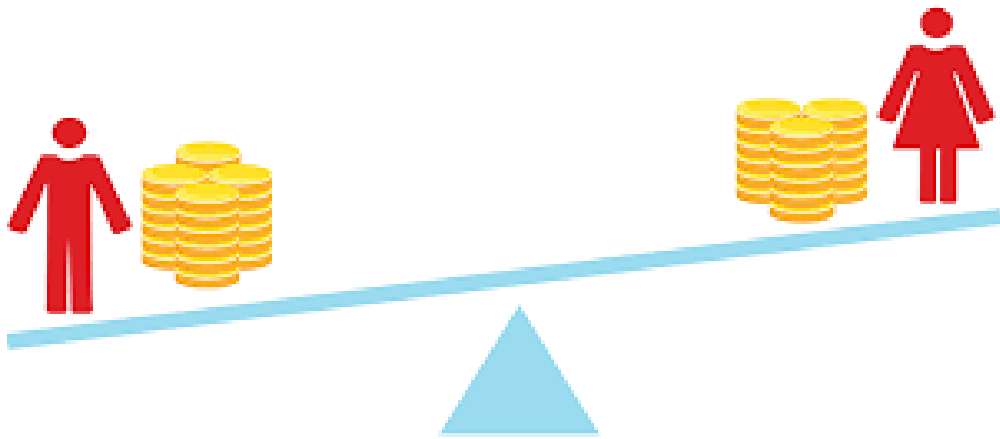


Swale Borough Council

Gender Pay Gap Report 2023



Snapshot Date: 31st March 2023

Gender Pay Gap 2023

Introduction

As a public sector employer with over 250 employees, Swale Borough Council is required to publish data on our gender pay gap – the difference between the average hourly pay of all men and women we employ.

Although we are required to publish this data under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information), by publishing this report Swale Borough Council is reaffirming its commitment to being an inclusive employer. This report is only one way in which we are promoting equality of opportunity for everyone and will help us to identify new ways in which we can become a modern employer of the future.

The information within this report is based on a snapshot of pay on 31st March 2023. This information will only include employees who were employed by Swale Borough Council on this date and in receipt of their normal full pay; it will not include employees who were on reduced pay (such as those on maternity leave).

Gender Pay Gap 2023

What is a gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women across the organisation. The gender pay gap is calculated as a difference in the mean and median hourly rates at the snapshot date and is expressed as a percentage of the average earnings of men.

It is important to note that a gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay.

Equal Pay is about:



Pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. Men and women are paid equally for the same like work.

Gender Pay Gap is about



Differences in average hourly pay and bonuses between all men and women in a workforce, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

-V-

The Gender Pay Gap regulations require employers to publish the following information:

Mean Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male and female employees.

Median Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male and female employees.

Mean Bonus Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male and female employees.

Median Bonus Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male and female employees.

The Proportion of Employees Receiving a Bonus

The proportion of male and female employees who were paid bonus pay.

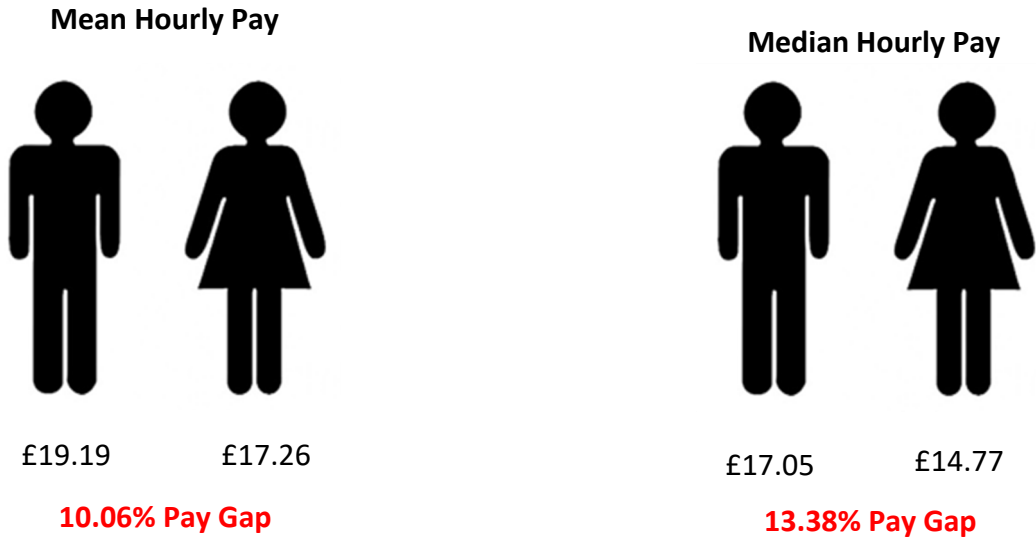
The Quartile Pay Bands

The proportion of male and female employees in each of four pay bands. The pay bands are defined as follows (starting with the highest earners):

- Upper quartile
- Upper middle quartile
- Lower middle quartile
- Lower quartile

Gender Pay Gap 2023

Swale Borough Council's Gender Pay Gap



Proportion of Employees Receiving Bonus Pay



Gender Pay Gap 2023

Summary of data

Swale Borough Council's pay structure follows a standard public sector approach to pay and grading and covers grades from Cleaner job roles to senior managerial levels. Grades vary according to the level of responsibility and each grade is evaluated through a job evaluation process in accordance with the council's Job Evaluation scheme. The council also has a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their gender.

The overall mean gender pay gap at the council is 10.06% which means for all employees (both full time and part time), men earned on average 10.06% more than women hourly.

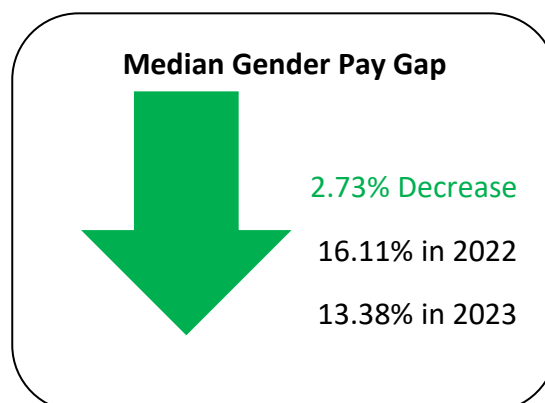
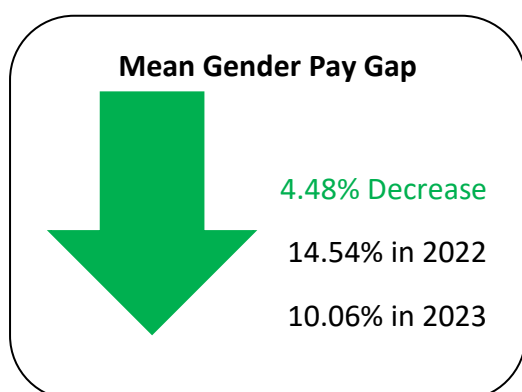
The makeup of the workforce of the council (which is 74% female) can affect the gender pay gap calculations, as can the distribution of the workforce. The majority of female employees within the council are within the lower and middle grades which will distort the overall pay gap, reflecting workforce composition rather than pay inequalities.

The median gender pay gap of 13.38% demonstrates that a higher proportion of men are working in higher level roles than women as the average median hourly rate for a male is £17.05 and for a female this is £14.77.

Bonus pay is defined as any payment or remuneration that is in the form of money or vouchers that relates to productivity, performance, incentive or commission. For the council, this covers cash awards for exceptional performance and long service awards in the form of vouchers.

The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees is -20.16%. Swale Borough Council operates a long service award scheme, where employees are given vouchers after completing a certain amount of service. Long service awards are paid after 10 years' service, and then for every 5 years' service thereafter. The value of the award increases over time, and the same award is offered to female and male staff members. The reason for difference relates to more females receiving the long service award compared to males.

How Does This Compare With 2022?



Gender Pay Gap 2023

There has been a decrease to both mean and median gender pay gaps since the previous year. This due to the appointments of two female members of staff that have been recruited to senior posts.

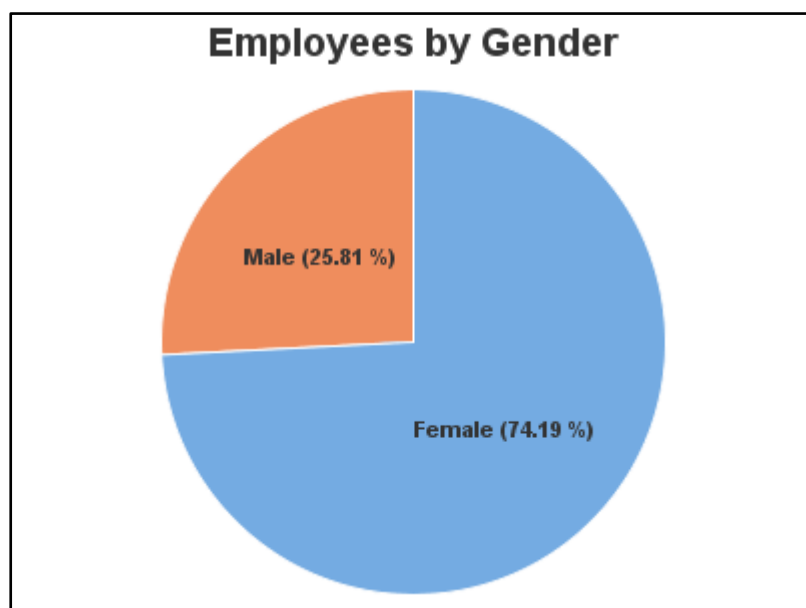
It is important to note that gender pay gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work. Rather its gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which male and females work within the council and the salaries that these roles attract.

There have been very marginal changes to the proportion of males and females within the quartile pay bands:

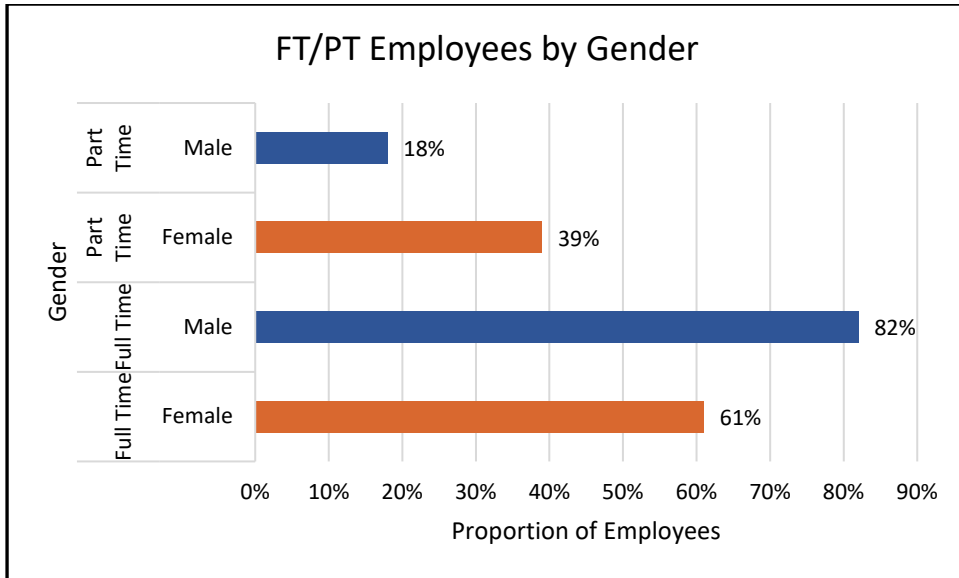
Pay Quartile	Proportion of Males	Proportion of Females	Male Proportion Increase
Upper Quartile	35.71%	64.29%	-1.13%
Upper Middle Quartile	30.43%	69.57%	1.48%
Lower Middle Quartile	16.90%	83.10%	-0.21%
Lower Quartile	20.29%	79.71%	-1.04%

Like most areas of local government, the councils gender split is 74% female and 26% male overall. In order for there to be no gender pay gap, there would need to be an equal ratio of male to female in each quartile. However, the gender split is not evenly spread throughout all the grades within the council as can be seen from gender breakdown for each pay grade in the table. Although the Council employs more females than males, a higher percentage of females are employed within the lower and lower middle quartiles.

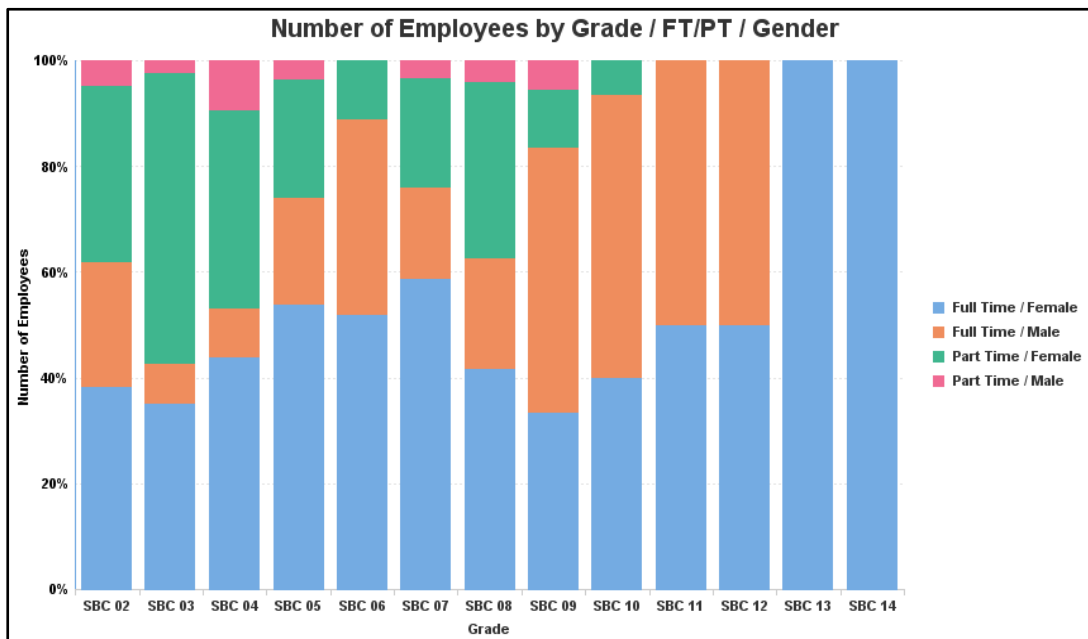
Swale Borough Council's Workforce



Gender Pay Gap 2023



Swale Borough Council employees 186 female members of staff, and 93 male members of staff. In addition, a higher proportion of males employed are working in full time positions whereas more female staff are working in part time positions.



Further analysis show that there are more female workers in the middle pay grades (grades 2-8) than male workers. The jobs at this level are mainly clerical, administrative and lower level of technical roles which seem to attract a higher number of female applicants.

Swale Borough Council also offer numerous family friendly policies and flexible working options such as job share, term time working and from the data it shows that female employees take up of these flexible benefits are at a greater level compared to males which adversely impacts on the council's gender pay gap.

Gender Pay Gap 2023

The following table shows the gender pay gap for full time and part time workers:

Working Pattern	Number of Employees	Mean Hourly Pay Males	Mean Hourly Pay Females	Mean Gender Pay Gap
Full Time	186	£20.27	£18.72	7.65%
Part Time	93	£14.27	£14.95	-4.77%

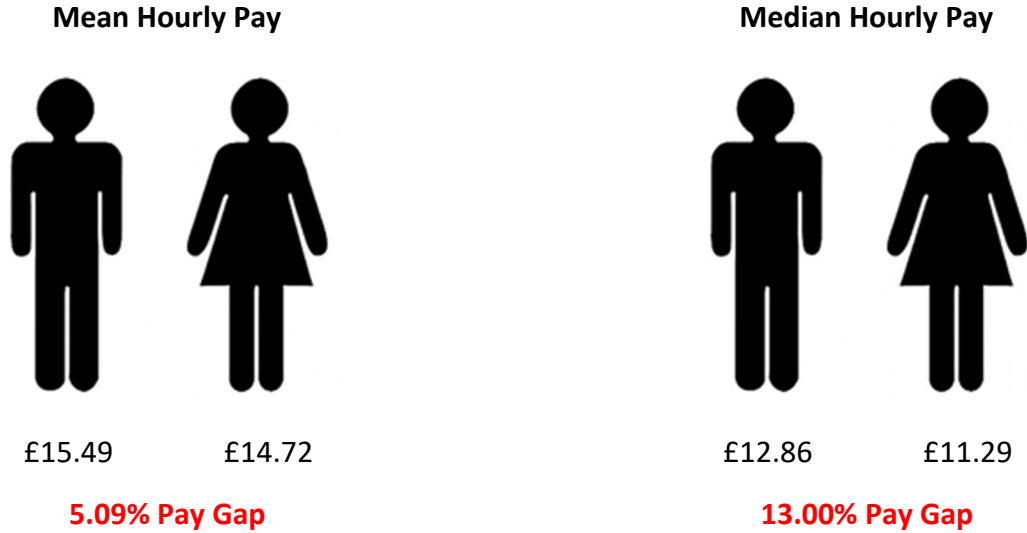
When looking at the workforce by age, the biggest gender pay gap is amongst 40-49 and 50-59 age groups.

Age Range	Number of Employees	Mean Hourly Pay Males	Mean Hourly Pay Females	Mean Gender Pay Gap
18 – 21	6		£11.03	
22 – 29	27	£14.03	£14.25	-1.57%
30 – 39	44	£16.93	£16.63	1.77%
40 – 49	72	£22.81	£19.58	14.16%
50 – 59	82	£21.58	£17.83	17.38%
60 – 65	37	£16.23	£15.98	1.54%
65+	11	£13.59	£15.38	-13.17%

Gender Pay Gap 2023

The Gender Pay Gap For New Starters

Below is the gender pay gap for new starters between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023.



Between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023, Swale Borough Council employed 8 males and 16 females into new roles. The mean hourly rate of pay was higher for new males compared to females.

The council has a very stable workforce with normally a low turnover which means that there are only a few vacancies that give an opportunity for changes in the makeup of the workforce. With such low levels of recruitment and turnover these figures will be difficult to shift significantly in the near future.

Gender Pay Gap 2023

How Does This Compare With Similar Organisations?

When looking at other Councils within Kent, the average mean gender pay gap was 6.58%; the average median gender pay gap was 4.43%.

Council	Mean Pay Gap	Median Pay Gap
Ashford Borough Council ¹	7.3%	6.3%
Canterbury City Council ¹	5.7%	5.5%
Dartford Borough Council ¹	15.2%	20.90%
Dover District Council ¹	4.5%	0%
Folkestone & Hythe District Council ¹	2.4%	-2.2%
Gravesham Borough Council ¹	-2.8%	-8.1%
Maidstone Borough Council ¹	0.24%	-4.59%
Sevenoaks District Council ¹	3.8%	-8.6%
Thanet District Council ¹	-5.8%	-13.38%
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council ¹	22.5%	29.9%
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council ¹	9.9%	5.20%
Kent County Council ¹	11.4%	12.6%
Medway Council ¹	7.7%	5.2%
Kent Average – Local Government	6.58%	4.43%
Swale Borough Council	10.06%	13.38%

Footnotes

¹ gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk (2022/23 submission)

Gender Pay Gap 2023

What Steps Do Swale Borough Council Take To Minimise Any Gender Pay Gap?

Swale Borough Council is committed to providing a fair and balanced work environment to all employees, with equal opportunities provided for everyone. The Council's leadership team monitors its workforce statistics on a quarterly basis which includes information on staff turnover and exit information, recruitment, employee relations matters and the equalities profile. This regular monitoring ensures that trends can be identified, and appropriate action taken if there are areas of concern.

Swale Borough Council has a number of policies relating to pay that ensure transparency, fairness and equity. These include:

- Job evaluation scheme (Ibucon) for all roles. This is a significant part of ensuring gender-neutral in the assessment of roles as it takes no account of individuals and is purely based on the job role and its requirements;
- A well-designed pay scale with no overlapping grades and a restricted number of incremental points;
- Formal authorisation processes for the change in pay;
- A clear policy at appointment which should be at the first point of grade;
- An equal pay approved Market Supplement Policy;
- Enhanced Shared Parental Pay to mirror Maternity Pay;
- Exit interviews to gain feedback on employment experiences;
- The provision of Recruitment & Selection training to ensure interviewers have relevant knowledge and an understanding of Equalities and Diversity including unconscious bias;
- Equal pay report that considers not only gender but disability and race

Actions

Swale Borough Council has a clear approach to pay and reward which is well controlled.

One of the factors that can influence the gender pay gap is the distribution of males and females within the grades. Therefore, the following actions are recommended:

- The recruitment processes to be monitored by the HR team to avoid any unfairness including the wording in advertisements to ensure there is no gender bias.
- To continue increasing managers awareness of 'unconscious bias' as part of the recruitment and selection training.
- Review the recruitment process and to revise the process to ensure a completely unbiased approach to considering candidates for positions.
- Encourage managers to consider job redesign if there are aspects of a job that prevents or stops employees applying for them on a part-time or flexible basis.