

Gender Pay Gap 2025



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1. Introduction

Gender pay gap reporting legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations each year. It identifies the difference between the average (mean and median) earnings of male and female employees, comparing hourly rates of pay and any bonuses staff may receive. The aim of the report is to identify any imbalance in pay between genders and encourages organisations to consider positive steps to address any identified gaps.

This report details the difference in the average earnings between males and females employed by County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS), provides a rationale for any differences in earnings (where applicable) and the strategies the Service intends to deploy to address any differences.

It is important to note that gender pay gap reporting is different to equal pay auditing. An equal pay audit involves comparing the pay of males and females doing equal work within an organisation.

CDDFRS is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion and ensuring equal opportunities to all our employees.

This document will be published on our website <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/>, in addition to a submission on <https://www.gov.uk/report-gender-pay-gap-data>.

2. Social and sector specific factors

The gender pay gap is a longstanding occurrence and its causes are complex. Social pressures and norms influence gender roles and often shape the types of occupations and career paths which people choose to follow, and therefore their level of pay. Women are also more likely than men to work part-time and to take time out from their careers for family reasons (www.equalityhumanrights.com). Research conducted by ACAS suggests that gender pay gap can vary by occupation, age group and working patterns: [Equal pay and the law: Equal pay - Acas](#)

The Service has been historically a predominantly male dominated organisation, with Firefighters being traditionally a male occupation. As of 31 March 2024, 9.3

per cent (3,184) of firefighters of known gender were women compared with 8.7 per cent (2,987) in 2023, and 6.4 per cent (2,231) in 2019, [Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics: England, year ending March 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

What have we reported?

CDDFRS is required to publish pay information for all employees using a sample of data taken on 31 March 2024. The calculations take into consideration the various terms and conditions of employment, which includes Grey Book (which relates to operational employees), Green Book (which relates to predominantly corporate employees or non-operational employees) and Gold Book (which relates to Strategic Managers).

There are 6 calculations that must be considered:

- The mean (average) gender pay gap.
- The median (middle) gender pay gap.
- The mean bonus pay gap.
- The median bonus pay gap.
- The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment.
- The proportion of males and females in quartile pay bands.

For the purposes of gender pay gap reporting the data is based on ordinary pay received by relevant employees. The method for calculating this information and an explanation of ordinary pay and relevant employees is published on the UK government website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gender-pay-gap-reporting-make-your-calculations>. CDDFRS do not pay bonus payments therefore calculations three, four and five are not applicable and will not feature in this report.

3. CDDFRS Gender Pay Gap Data 31 March 2024

As at the 31 March 2024, CDDFRS employed 588 employees which is a decrease of 10 employee since the report published in 2024, when there were 598 employees.

473 are male, this figure equates to 80% of the workforce which is a slight drop on the percentage of males in the workforce reported last year. In comparison to

the figures reported during the last reporting period, CDDFRS has seen a decrease of 13 male employees during the year.

115 employees are female which equates to 19% of the workforce, which has increased during the year, by 5. There has been a decrease in the number of wholetime (including Control), female employees since the report published in 2024, which has decreased to 53 from 56.

10 employees which equates to 1% of the Service prefer not to say.

Since the 2024 report, there have been 69 new employees, 21.7% (15) of new employees were female.

The breakdown of our staff is detailed in the table below.

Table 1

CDDFRS employee break down by gender as 31 March 2024

	Female	Male	Total	Variance since 2024 report
Wholetime (including Control)	53	263	316	-12
On-call (Operational staff)	12	163	175	-3
Corporate	50	47	97	+5
Total	115	473	588	-10

Table 2

CDDFRS employee break down by gender as 31 March 2023

	Female	Male	Total	Variance since 2023 report
Wholetime (including Control)	54	274	328	+3
On-call (Operational staff)	11	167	178	+2

	Female	Male	Total	Variance since 2023 report
Corporate	47	45	92	-13
Total	112	486	598	-8

Mean and Median gender pay gap.

The **mean** gender pay gap calculation shows the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay those male and female employees receive as an average and can provide an overall indication of the size of the gender pay gap within an organisation.

The **median** gender pay gap calculation is the difference between the middle hourly rate of pay for male and female employees and gives an indication of what a 'typical' situation looks like i.e., what most people earn.

Table 3 demonstrates what the male and female mean, and median rates of pay are, the difference between the rates of pay by gender and the overall percentage gap within CDDFRS.

Table 3

CDDFRS mean and median rates of pay

	Female hourly rate	Male hourly rate	Difference	Gender pay gap
Mean	£17.06	£18.05	-£0.99	5.50%
Median	£16.54	£17.01	-£0.47	2.76%

The CDDFRS **mean gender pay gap is 5.50%** this is lower than the national average figure of 7.0%, based on full time workers. [Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peopleinwork/earningsandproductivity/genderpaygap/articles/genderpaygapintheuk2024) (Office of National Statistics, Gender pay gap in the UK 2024). The gap means that female staff earn on average 5.50% less than male staff which equates to £0.99 per hour. This means the gap has increased by £0.51 per hour since 2023 where it sat at £0.48. the reason for this is that during this period the Service lost 7 of its highest paid female staff to roles elsewhere.

The CDDFRS **median gender pay gap is 2.76%** which shows that at the mid salary point of the organisation, male staff are paid £0.47 per hour more than females.

Bonus payments

CDDFRS does not offer a bonus scheme therefore the following calculations are not applicable within this report:

- Mean bonus pay gap.
- Median bonus pay gap.
- The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment.

4. Salary quartile bands - Identifying the proportion of females and males within each quartile band.

The following tables demonstrate what proportion of male and female (full pay relevant employees) fall into four quartile pay bands. This is done by dividing our workforce into four equal parts:

- High
- Mid Upper
- Mid Low
- Low

Table 4 shows the percentage of females within each band, comparing with the figures CDDFRS reported during the last reporting period.

Table 4

Salary quartile bands – Female 2020/2024 comparison

	High	Mid Upper	Mid Low	Low
2020	15.9%	7.9%	6.7%	36%
2021	15.2%	14.1%	5.7%	35%
2022	15.2%	11.3%	9.9%	34.2%
2023	18.4%	10.2%	10.9%	36.7%
2024	17.0%	10.2%	14.3%	36.7%

Variance 2023-24	-1.4%	0%	+3.4%	0%
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Table 4a shows the percentage of males within each band, comparing the figures CDDFRS reported during the last reporting period.

Table 4a

Salary quartile bands – Male 2020/2024 comparison

	High	Mid Upper	Mid Low	Low
2020	84.1%	92.1%	93.3%	64%
2021	84.8%	85.9%	94.2%	65%
2022	84.8%	88.7%	90.1%	65.8%
2023	81.6%	89.8%	89.1%	63.3%
2024	83.0%	89.8%	85.7%	63.3%
Variance 2023-24	+1.4%	0%	-3.4%	0%

Tables 5 to 5c below break down the quartile data further. Each table compares 2024 with our previous reported data by hourly rate, gender, and the number of employees in each band.

Table 5 Quartile band – High

Salary quartile bands – Hourly rate break down and annual comparison.

Band 1 High	Hourly Rate	Female	%Female	Male	%Male	Total
2020	£16.14 – £65.73	22	15.9%	116	84.1%	138
2021	£16.47 - £67.04	24	15.4%	132	84.6%	156
2022	£16.71 - £68.05	23	15.2%	128	84.8%	151
2023	£17.88 – £68.05	27	18.4%	120	81.6%	147

Band 1 High	Hourly Rate	Female	%Female	Male	%Male	Total
2024	£18.84 - £74.31	25	17.0%	122	83.0%	147

Table 5a Quartile band – Mid Upper

Salary quartile bands – Hourly rate break down and annual comparison.

Band 2 Mid Upper	Hourly Rate	Female	%Female	Male	%Male	Total
2020	£14.60 - £16.14	13	7.9%	151	92.1%	164
2021	£14.89 - £16.47	22	14.1%	134	85.9%	156
2022	£15.12 - £16.71	17	11.3%	134	88.7%	151
2023	£16.17 - £17.88	15	10.2%	131	89.9%	147
2024	£16.99 - £18.84	15	10.2%	131	89.8%	147

Table 5b Quartile band - Mid Lower

Salary quartile bands – Hourly rate break down and annual comparison.

Band 3 Mid lower	Hourly Rate	Female	%Female	Male	%Male	Total
2020	£14.60 - £14.21	11	6.7%	153	93.3%	164
2021	£14.49 - £16.47 -	9	5.8%	147	94.2%	156
2022	£15.12 - £14.71	15	9.9%	137	90.1%	152
2023	£16.17 - £15.74	16	10.9%	131	89.1%	147

Band 3 Mid lower	Hourly Rate	Female	%Female	Male	%Male	Total
2024	£16.48 - £16.99	21	14.3%	126	85.7%	147

Table 5c Quartile band – Low

Salary quartile bands – Hourly rate break down and annual comparison.

Band 4 low	Hourly Rate	Female	%Female	Male	%Male	Total
2020	£4.15 - £14.09	51	36%	90	64%	141
2021	£4.30 - £14.49	55	35.03%	102	64.97	157
2022	£4.80 - £14.71	52	34.2%	100	65.8%	152
2023	£7.48 - £15.74	54	36.7%	94	63.3%	148
2024	£6.39 - £16.35	54	36.7%	93	63.3%	147

Table 6

This table illustrates the numbers of females working within our organisation per quartile banding. Figures from the last reporting period are included to enable comparison.

Salary quartile bands – Breakdown by number of females in role

	Corporate	Wholetime (including Control)	On call (Operational)
High 2021	15	9	0
High 2022	15	8	0
High 2023	19	8	0

	Corporate	Wholetime (including Control)	On call (Operational)
High 2024	15	10	0
Mid Upper 2021	6	15	1
Mid Upper 2022	5	11	1
Mid Upper 2023	1	12	2
Mid Upper 2024	4	9	2
Mid Lower 2021	0	6	3
Mid Lower 2022	0	12	3
Mid Lower 2023	0	11	5
Mid Lower 2024	0	16	5
Low 2021	30	19	6
Low 2022	30	18	4
Low 2023	27	23	4
Low 2024	32	13	9

5. What does our data mean?

In the 2023 reporting period CDDFRS reported a mean gender pay gap of 2.80% however in this reporting period, 2024, it has increased to 5.50% demonstrating a significant increase of 3.20%. This is partly due to the highest paid operational female (Director level) transferring to another Service, leaving our highest paid female operational member of staff at Watch Manager level.

A seventh cohort of apprentices were welcomed into the Service in August 2023 and therefore reflected in the data as of 31 March 2024. The gender split was 6 males and 4 females (40%) therefore, aiding the lesser decline in a financial aspect. Cohort six apprentices did have an equal split of females and males however this will still be impacting positively, given that as all cohorts of apprentices' progress through the programme and transition from apprentice to development firefighter, to ultimately competent rates of pay, this will continue to be a positive impact on decreasing the gender pay gap within CDDFRS.

From the six cohorts of firefighter apprentices to date 44% have been female and 56% have been male.

Due to the age profile of operational employees within CDDFRS there has been further retirements as anticipated and there were resignations from corporate colleagues who have moved to other organisations. The age profile within CDDFRS will continue to impact on the workforce and will impact on the gender pay gap in future years.

As CDDFRS reported last year the organisational change that took place during 2022/2023 resulted in only a few numbers of corporate roles falling within the high and mid upper quartile bands. The high quartile has since seen a decrease of females from 19 to 15 during 2023/2024. This could be associated with the nationally agreed pay award for operational staff of 7% compared to £1,290 that corporate staff received as well as some higher paid female corporate staff moving to other organisations. This has resulted in 4 females now being in mid upper quartile, compared to the 1 in the previous year data.

In line with the approach the Service took during the last reporting year, we have further examined where a gender pay gap may exist. Tables 5 to 5c and 6 look at the four employee groups (which are governed by the terms and conditions detailed within section 3) and compares the data year on year.

Looking at Table 6, from 2023 – 2024, the mid upper and low quartiles have remained the same with the number of females represented but high has seen a decrease of 2 and mid lower has seen an increase of 5. Hourly rates have increased more for operational staff which is shown in the changes within the staff groups.

The overall representation of females within CDDFRS has remained at 19% the same as last year in comparison to the two years previous to that where it was 17.7% respectively. The number of females within operational roles in CDDFRS continues to steadily increase and had risen to 13.2% at the point the data was collated for this report. CDDFRS will continue to work hard on continuing to increase the overall percentage of females in operational wholetime roles.

6. Next Steps - Where do we need to focus our attention?

This report has identified our female representation by headcount and percentage has increase slightly during the reporting period. The highest proportion of our female workforce are currently employed on Green Book terms and conditions in corporate roles which are paid on different pay scales to colleagues on Grey Book terms and conditions. 51.5% of corporate employees are females. On-call female representation remains significantly low at 6.86% but has increased slightly from previous year where it sat at 6.18%

Structure

The structure within CDDFRS is very much led by the operational requirements to provide an emergency response service which requires a large proportion of senior roles to be occupied by wholetime operational employees.

CDDFRS has a small corporate function, which results in opportunity for progression being limited for both genders. This scenario is also the case within the on-call duty system and Control section where roles are only available to Watch Manager level, except for one Station Manager within Control.

On-call recruitment, retention, and progression

On-call employees represent a moderate proportion of the entire workforce headcount (30%), however, similarly with wholetime recruitment campaigns there are significantly small numbers of female applicants in comparison to males and as reported previously within this report the number of female employees within this category has only increased by 1 in the reporting year.

Analysis of the on-call recruitment campaigns suggests that the role of an on-call firefighter does attract interest from female applicants. However, it is evident that at certain points of the recruitment process female applicants will either voluntarily leave the process or do not meet the national standards required for the role. As part of a service wide project looking at the on-call provision, we continue to look at what steps can be taken to encourage applicants from underrepresented groups in the coming years.

7. What have we done in the last reporting period?

Recruitment

It is acknowledged by CDDFRS that there is still work to be done within the community to understand the barriers faced to attract a diverse workforce and CDDFRS being recognised as an employer of choice. Recruitment of a whole-time course has commenced during this reporting period but they are not expected to commence employment until end of quarter 2 of the next reporting period. Positive Action Workshops have been held at Bishop Auckland Fire Station and online sessions on various parts of the recruitment process have taken place to encourage individuals from underrepresented groups. Positive Action workshops were also held prior to the recruitment of apprentice cohort 7 who were appointed in August 2023 with a female ratio of 40%. Plans for Cohort 8 recruitment are in place for 2025.

The work that CDDFRS has undertaken over the past 18-months in building contacts and networks with groups and organisations of underrepresented groups within the areas of County Durham and Darlington will also be utilised to aid targeted recruitment campaigns to encourage applications from underrepresented groups of the workforce.

The Service continues to recruit on-call employees continuously rather than in designated periods and the recruitment processes has been aligned to enable on-call employees to transition into the whole-time workforce if required.

CDDFRS's Hybrid Working Procedure allows flexibility to individuals to work from home when their role can facilitate it. It is acknowledged that this procedure is used predominately by the corporate staff group.

8. What will we continue to do?

CDDFRS will continue to employ a workforce that reflects the community it serves that is highly skilled, agile, engaged, and safe in their diverse roles, whilst ensuring where possible, employees have opportunities, choice and pathways for promotion and development. CDDFRS will continue to work towards having a responsive and diverse workforce which integrates with partners and

professional experts across the wider skills set. The Service is eager to ensure that all employees enjoy their role and have a fulfilling and rewarding career.

The People Strategy and Leadership Framework set out a structure for engaging and developing employees assisting to enable the cultural changes which are necessary to deliver the Service's vision and strategic priorities whilst ensuring our values and code of ethics are at the center of all we do. To do this the Service will:

- Continue to work closely with communities, charities, and partner agencies to break down barriers and understand perceptions which currently contribute to females not considering the FRS (Fire & Rescue Services) as an employer of choice.
- Continuously review and monitor the recruitment and selection processes to ensure complete transparency and inclusivity at all stages and implement the principles of safer Recruitment.
- Continue to work with our local schools and colleges in maintaining our award-winning FF apprenticeship scheme.
- Build on the positive action work that has been undertaken and develop a continuous programme of events and materials to encourage applications from underrepresented groups.
- Going forward we will be partnering with social enterprise group, Teakisi to try and attract candidates from minoritised communities to apply for the fire service to help build on our inclusive workforce policies

Policies and Procedures

- Review policies and procedures to ensure the Service is proactively supporting and encouraging females within our workforce.
- Review policies and procedures to ensure that they are transparent, support flexible working and provide family friendly options enabling greater attraction, retention, and development of the best people.
- Review family specific policies to ensure we are offering maximum opportunity to both parents irrelevant of gender.

Career pathways

- Build on the work that has commenced in relation to building clear pathways to encourage women to advance in their careers.
- Continue to provide all employees with a choice of development, succession planning, talent management and mentoring opportunities.

CDDFRS will continue to work towards eradicating the gender pay gap and the work that has been undertaken to date by reducing the gender pay demonstrates the Services commitment to a time when there is no gender pay gap.

CDDFRS will continue to report on an annual basis the progress that is being made and what steps are being taken.

Joanne Sanderson
People & OD (Organisational Development) Co-ordinator
October 2024