

Gender Pay Gap Report

Report for the year 2021-2022

March 2023

Gender Pay Gap Report

This gender pay gap report for the Forestry Commission covers the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022. It publishes the mean and median gender pay gaps, the bonus pay gap and the proportions of male and female employees in each pay quartile.

The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between all men and women in a workforce. If a workforce has a particularly high gender pay gap, this can indicate issues to address such as less women working in higher pay bands.

The gender pay gap is different to equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

The Forestry Commission is committed to equality of opportunity for all and will continuously strive to reduce the gender pay gap.

FC Gender Mix



43.9% of the FC workforce is female, which is an increase of 1.9% from last year's report.

FC Gender Pay Gap



Mean Pay Gap 3.07%



Median Pay Gap -0.28%

The average (mean) hourly rate for males is 3.07% higher than females. The median gender pay gap is lower than the mean gender pay gap at -0.28%. This means that of all the male and female employees of the Forestry Commission, the middle female salary is 0.28% higher than the middle male salary. This has decreased since the 2021-22 pay gap publication which previously had a mean of 4.6% and a median of 6.1%.

Bonus Pay Gap

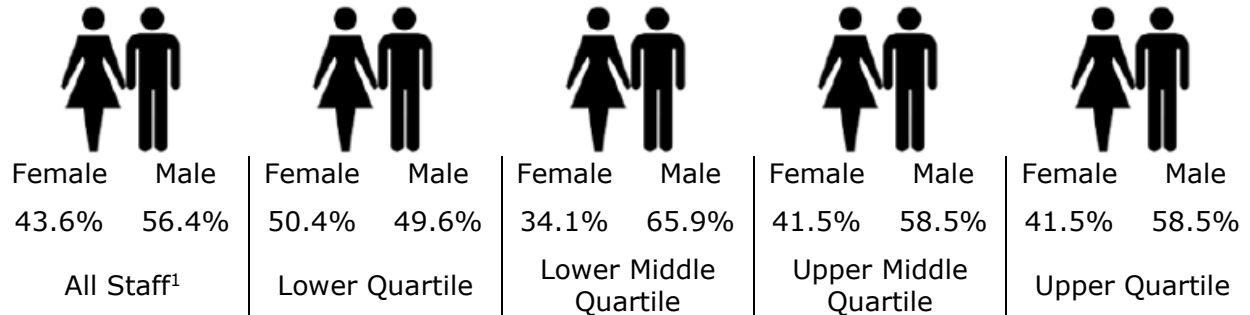
The Forestry Commission only operates a performance bonus for the senior staff group. There were only 2 performance related bonus payments paid to 2 males.

The Forestry Commission offers a non-consolidated bonus to employees that are promoted from operational to non-operational grades, where the difference in salary is less than a 10% uplift.

There were 15 payments of this type, 11 of these bonuses had a value of less than £5. The remaining 4 were paid to 4 males.

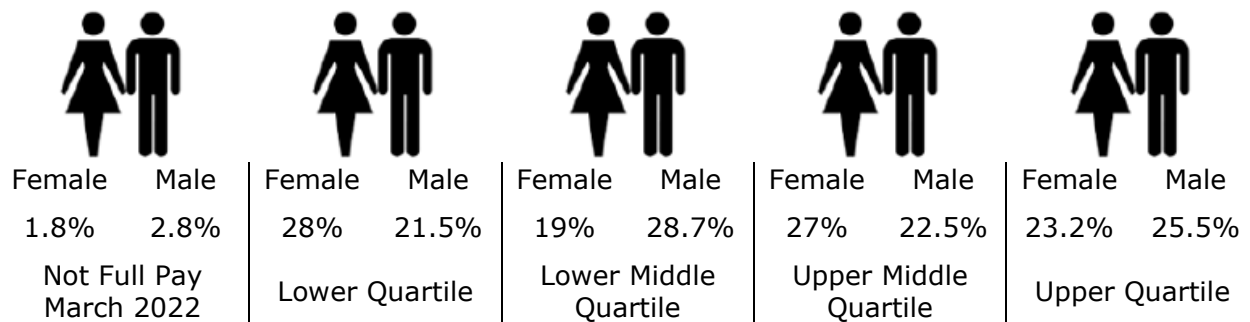
Pay Quartiles

Proportion of men and women in each hourly pay quartile



The male to female ratio at the top two quartiles is close to the overall ratio while at the lower quartile there is more of an equal split. At the Lower middle quartile males are overrepresented (65%) when compared to the overall percentage (56.4%).

Distribution of men and women across hourly pay quartiles



Of all women employed by the Forestry Commission, the majority are within the lower quartile (28%) and upper middle quartile (27%)². To reduce the pay gap further we would need to see more women in the upper quartile which is currently at 23.2%.

Causes of the Gender Pay Gap at FC

Forestry work has historically attracted fewer female candidates than male candidates. This is particularly the case in forestry operational roles. This imbalance is improving, and the proportion of female employees has increased over the past few years from 35% to 43.9%. In 2005 the gender pay gap at the Forestry Commission was 21%. Significant work has been undertaken over recent years to reduce this to the current position.

¹ This measure excludes staff not on full pay at 31 March 2021 (e.g. statutory maternity pay, long term sickness or unpaid career breaks)

² The Forestry Commission workforce is split 56.1% male and 43.9% female. These numbers cover all staff including those not on full pay at 31 March 2022 (e.g. statutory maternity pay, long term sickness or unpaid career breaks)

Working to reduce the Gender Pay Gap

The Forestry Commission is committed to improving our gender pay gap and has several programmes underway looking to reduce it, these include:

Narrowing of Pay Ranges

Historical salary progression within a grade was removed across the Civil Service and recruiting external staff to the bottom of the pay band become the standard procedure. As a result of this, staff with a longer length of service within the same grade would often be paid more by virtue of being employed before the policy change. The Forestry Commission has sought to resolve this by moving grades away from scales to spot points, whereby all employees within a grade are paid the same salary.

Civil Service pay was frozen for most staff in 2021, the two most junior grades had a fixed increase. This increase to lower grades while senior grades remain frozen would likely have had a positive impact on the gender pay difference as the overall range of salaries across all grades was narrowed.

The 2022/23 pay award saw two more grades brought to spot points, meaning a total of three grades are now at a spot point. It is anticipated that this will have a positive impact on the gender pay gap, which should be reflected in the 2022-23 report.

Your Offer

The Forestry Commission is planning to submit a pay flexibility business case in summer 2023. One of the aims of the 'Your Offer' business case is to improve the gender pay gap. If the business case is approved by Defra, the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury, it is anticipated that the reforms to the pay structure will reduce the gender pay gap.

Women in Forestry and Women's staff network

The Women in Forestry programme was formed in 2019 to make positive changes for women in our workplaces.

Using feedback gained from four focus groups held across the country, the programme took on key issues including:

- working to improve welfare facilities for female staff who work out in the forests/ away from our standard facilities.
- helping to introduce female suited PPE.
- creating our internal 'Challenge it, change it' materials which address gender assumptions and negative bias towards women.
- ensuring diversity and inclusion is explored in depth with managers through the Professional Manager Programme.

In late 2022, the work of the Women in Forestry programme wrapped up and the baton was passed to the new Forestry Commission Women's Staff Network.

The aim of the network is to provide mutual support to women within the Forestry Commission and wider Civil Service. It aims to help inform staff about women's issues and gender equality matters and to advise the organisation on how to improve the quality of working life for everyone.

The network contributes to diversity and wellbeing communications via blogs and news stories marking awareness days promoting gender equality and equity as well as organising events and lunch and learn sessions. This includes World Menopause Day, International Women's Day, Women's History Month and other dates, which are promoted on our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Calendar.

FC Policy and Procedures

Through the application of our policies and procedures we are continuously striving to reduce the gender pay gap. For example, we have been considering the language used in job adverts across the board but particularly in senior roles. We want to widen the pool of who applies for senior roles.

A suite of family and inclusivity workforce policies have been updated in collaboration with the trade unions.

The FC passed a 5-star verification process to become an Includability Committed Employer, being recognised for excellence in the areas of mental health, wellbeing, sustainability, talent management and diversity and inclusion. Includability is an inclusive job board and community. This membership and recognition will give us access to a wide range of experts and partners to share best practice with. It will also provide a platform to advertise roles and gain access to a wider and more diverse talent pool. We have started to advertise all our jobs on the includability job board as well as continuing to advertise in other places as appropriate.

Equally Yours training

We are continuing to roll out diversity and inclusion training for all staff through the interactive board game Equally Yours. This will ensure that all employees understand the importance of diversity within their teams and will challenge any bias, stereotypes or discrimination around gender.

Inclusion Ambassadors

We currently have 32 Inclusion Ambassadors (plus 7 Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Ambassadors at Forest Research) who have been trained to tackle both conscious and unconscious discrimination and promote inclusion using regular 'conversation starters' to increase knowledge and understanding of diversity alongside inclusive practice.

Professional Manager Programme

Our Professional Manager Programme (PMP) launched in September 2019 continues to support the growth of future leaders for the organisation. Its aim is to provide a consistent approach to leadership and management development, thus advancing opportunities for all. Open to managers at pay bands 5, 5 ops, 4 and 3, the Professional Manager Programme has been designed for the Forestry Commission, taking the very best in tools, materials and facilitator input the market has to offer.

Due regard has been paid to ensure balanced gender representation for both nominees and mentors participating in the programme. The programme presents an opportunity to nurture the leadership skills of women in the lower and middle quartile pay bands.

The PMP includes an Equally Yours session and an Inclusive Leadership workshop as core elements of the programme.

Stepping Up Diversity Leadership programme

As part of our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy we have committed to funding 3 places on the [Stepping Up](#) 2023 Diversity Leadership programme. This will help us to nurture the next generation of diverse leaders to strengthen the talent pipeline.

Stepping Up aims to unlock potential and develop talent while ensuring a fair representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, disabled, women and LGBTQ+ staff in positions of leadership.