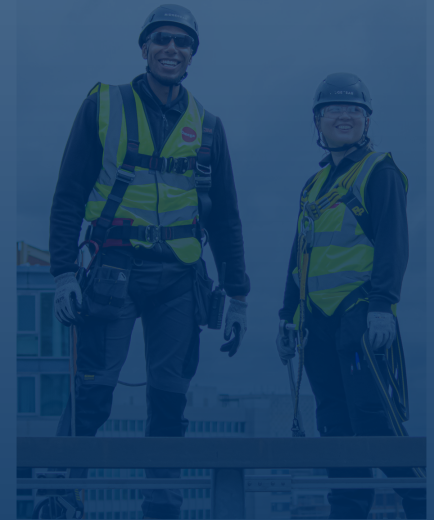




South Staffordshire Plc



Gender pay gap report

2024/25

Introduction

About this report

South Staffordshire Plc is an integrated services group that operates two regulated water supply businesses and offers a range of complementary services and products through its non-regulated divisions: waste, water and infrastructure, compliance, service and software and water consumption supply and logistics. With 3000 employees, valuing and promoting diversity and inclusion is one of our key commitments.

Four of our subsidiary companies (South Staffordshire Water Plc, Hydrosave UK Limited, OnSite Central Limited and Integrated Water Services Limited) have more than 250 employees and are required to publish gender pay gap data in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. These regulations require us to report on our gender pay gap each year – in this case, for the ‘snapshot’ date of 5 April 2024.

As a Group committed to progressing gender equality, we see the value in looking at the Group as a collective, comparing our internal results not just to one another but to the national picture, to ensure we drive forward future change for our people and our customers.



Committed to a diverse and inclusive workplace



Celebrating our achievements

Charley Maher, Group Chief Executive Officer

I'm delighted to share the first South Staffordshire Plc Gender Pay Gap Report with you. Since joining in 2023, my focus has been on how we harness the benefits of being part of a diverse collective of companies, learning from our successes and challenges, and leveraging areas of consistency and growth. By identifying ways to reduce our gender pay gap and taking steps to further gender equality as a Group, we ensure our actions have a long lasting and sustainable impact that creates a better workplace for the future.

We have a lot to celebrate, with a mean gender pay gap of -2.08% in 2024 compared to 3.98% in 2023, and a median gender pay gap that has reduced from 9.69% in 2023 to 5.10% in 2024. Even with these favourable results, we have more progress to make in order to see this level of consistent improvement across each of businesses and we remain committed to closing our gender pay gap further.

One of my proudest moments over this period has been the improvement to our family friendly policies, improving maternity, paternity and adoption leave, alongside the introduction of IVF and fertility leave, and paid parental bereavement leave. Providing this level of support ensures that we provide financial predictability to our people at a period of great change in their lives, which places them in a better position to continue their professional journey with us, as well as making us a more attractive employer for new applicants.

I was also delighted to launch our Women's Network which brings together women from across our Group to celebrate the achievements and contributions of our female workforce. Alongside Unity+, our LGBTQIA+ group, our networks provide important support systems that help create a sense of belonging whilst creating a community of allies who can understand the challenges of being in an under-represented group and champion positive practices.



Our Women's Network has had a meaningful impact in its first year, joining the Women's Utilities Network, who are focused on helping to support and encourage women within the utilities sector. Membership of the Women's Utilities Network gives our team opportunities for personal and professional development through their events and mentoring framework.

WUN

In November, our Women's Network held a fantastic session on all things menopause and perimenopause, to create greater understanding for its members and allies on how we can support women through this milestone in life. With both internal and external speakers, this session helped to break through some of the taboos associated with menopause, promoted awareness of the impact of menopause and has since led to a launch of a menopause policy.

We marked International Women's Day by hosting our first in-person event where I was delighted to join other female leaders in a panel session on gender equality. We then joined a discussion with three of our male leaders on the role of allyship - one of my key focus areas for the future, ensuring that gender equality is a shared responsibility.



As a Group, we are focusing on increasing the number of women we employ across all our businesses, in all roles, to ensure that we are attracting and retaining diverse skill and talent. Our approach to recruitment has also enabled us to increase female representation within our Executive team as well as at Board level for South Staffordshire Water.

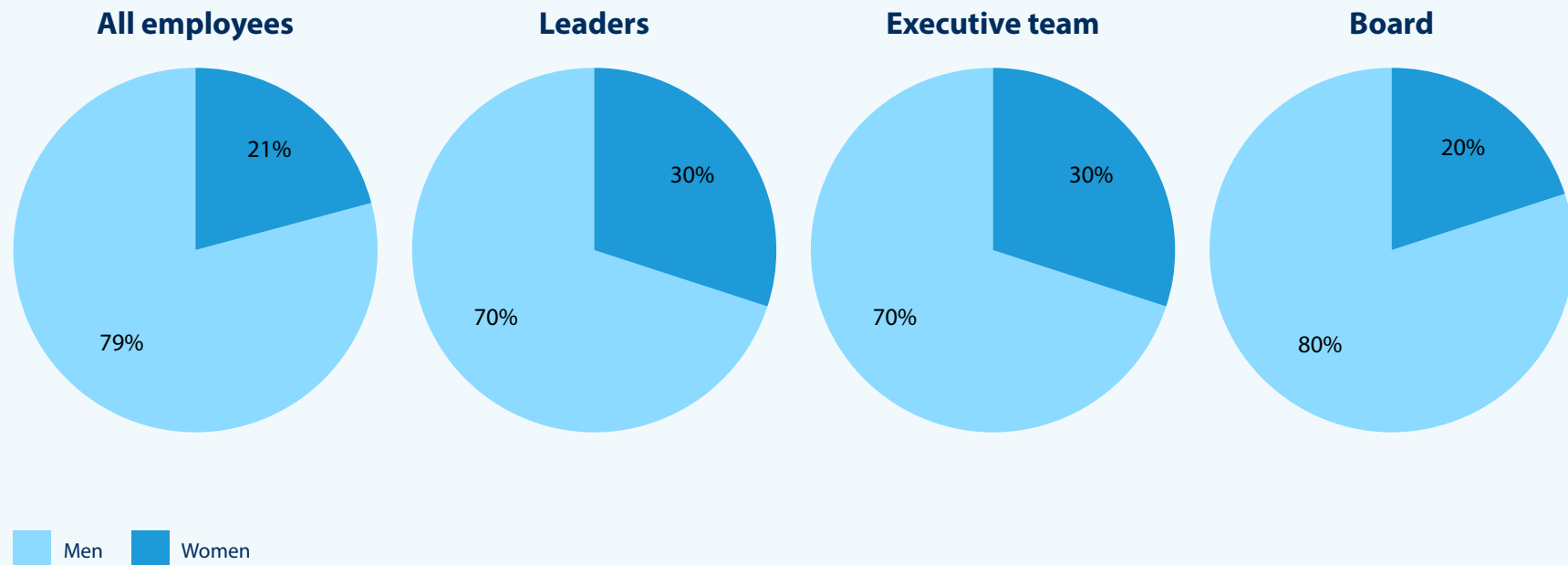
We've made some great progress over the last twelve months and I'm really excited about our future plans and the steps we are taking to provide a more diverse workforce and an inclusive and flexible culture to ensure every individual is valued and supported.

Our people

At South Staffordshire Plc, we believe that our employees are our greatest strength, and we are committed to fostering an inclusive workplace where everyone, regardless of characteristics, has the opportunity to thrive.

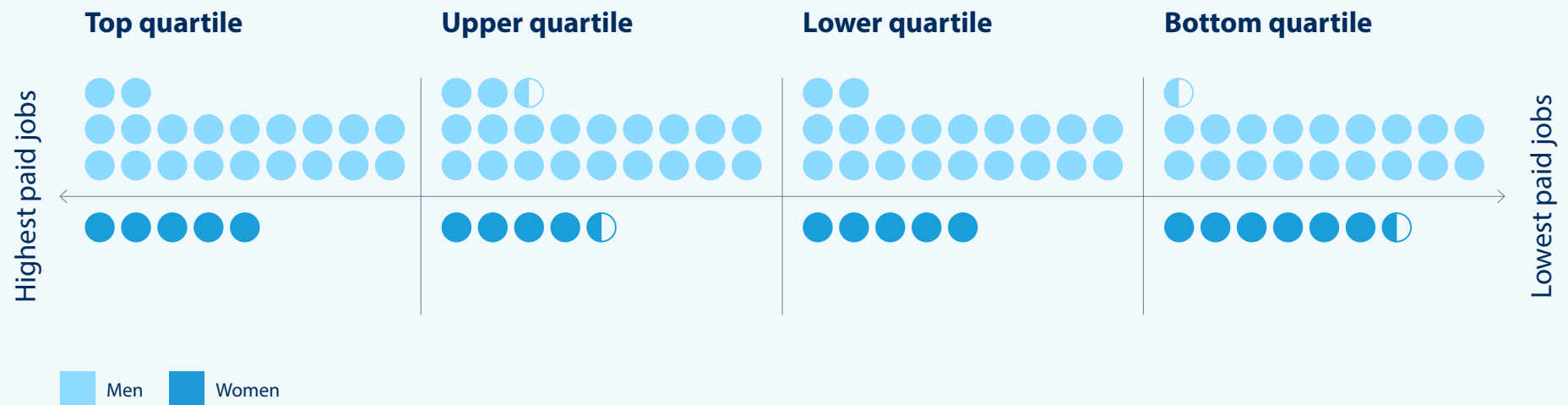
We recognise that a diverse team brings a wealth of perspectives, ideas, and experiences, driving innovation and creativity. As part of our ongoing efforts to create a fair and equitable environment, we are dedicated to ensuring that all employees are compensated fairly, in line with their skills, experience and contributions - irrespective of gender.

In April 2024, our overall gender distribution was:



Our pay distribution

Our pay distribution mirrors our overall gender demographic, with the percentage of men and women in each pay quartile being broadly equal to the gender split seen across South Staffordshire Plc.



Our gender pay gap

Definitions:

The **gender pay gap figures** measure the **difference in average earnings** between men and women across an organisation, regardless of their roles. It reflects the distribution of men and women across different levels and functions, and is not a measure of equal pay for equal work.

Gender bonus gap figures measure the **difference in bonus pay** between men and women, expressed as a percentage of bonuses paid to men.

We measure gender pay in two different ways. The **mean gender gap** represents the difference in average hourly pay and bonuses for all men and women across the business whilst the **median gender gap** represents the difference between the midpoints in hourly pay and bonus for men and women.

Gender pay gap

We are delighted to see an overall improvement in our mean gender pay gap figure from 3.98% in 2023 to -2.08% in 2024, meaning that on average, women across the group were paid 35 pence per hour more than men in this period. Our median gender pay gap also improved from 9.69% in 2023 to 5.10% in 2024.

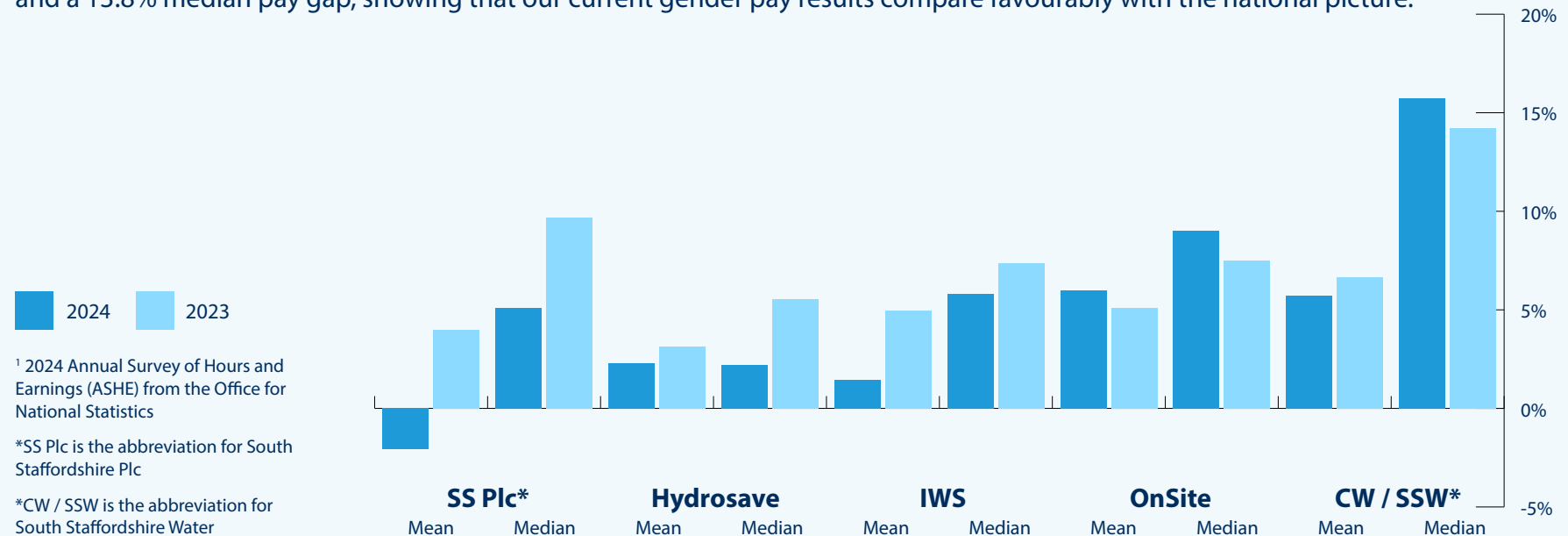
Hydrosave has seen improvements across both gender pay gap figures, with the mean gender pay gap improving to 2.27% and the median to 2.19%.

Similarly in Integrated Water Services, we have seen an improvement of over 3.5% in the mean gender pay gap, with the median also reflecting progress.

In South Staffordshire Water, we continue to see a reducing gender pay gap, from 8% in 2022, to 6.7% in 2023 to 5.72% in 2024. This gradual decrease shows that the positive changes are having a material effect year on year.

The data highlights our OnSite business as an area for future focus, where both the mean and median gender pay gap have widened slightly in the last twelve months.

Looking at the comparative levels, the Office for National Statistics [footnote] report a 13.1% mean gender pay gap nationally, and a 13.8% median pay gap, showing that our current gender pay results compare favourably with the national picture.

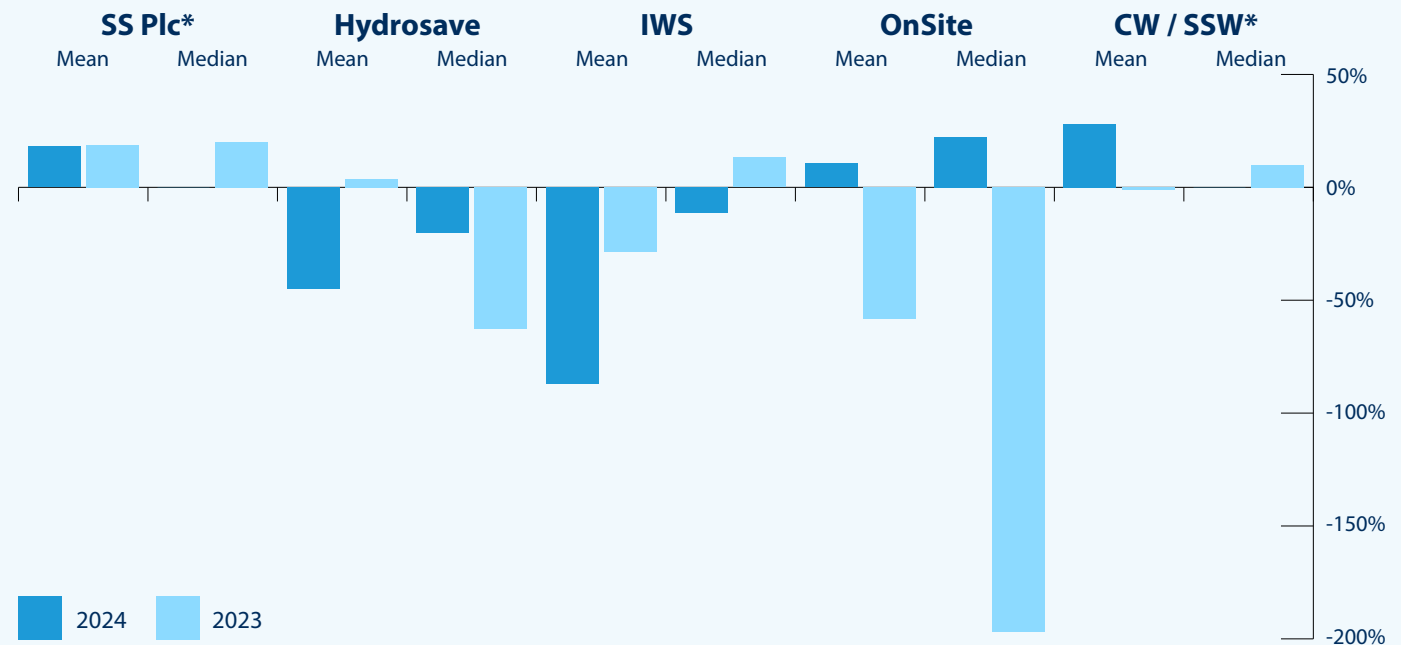


Gender bonus gap

Across South Staffordshire Plc, the mean gender bonus gap has stayed broadly unchanged, whilst the median gender bonus gap has improved from 20% in 2023 to 0% in 2024.

The equal gender balance of the median gender bonus is driven by bonus payments in South Staffordshire Water, where bonuses are paid based on business rather than individual performance, resulting in an equal midpoint bonus for both male and female bonuses.

Several of the businesses have negative gender bonus gaps, where the average bonus received by women was higher than men, which is mainly attributable to the lower number of women in these businesses.



*SS Plc is the abbreviation for South Staffordshire Plc

*CW / SSW is the abbreviation for South Staffordshire Water



Bonus pay recipients

Across the whole organisation, bonuses were paid to 52% of women and 50% of men. By comparison, in 2023, this was 39% of men and 38% of women.

We have taken significant steps in the last year to ensure that variable compensation is tied to clear performance metrics that reflect our balanced scorecard in each business, and bonuses have clearly defined terms and conditions. Taking these measures ensures that bonuses are awarded equitably and objectively, which in turn supports gender bonus equality.

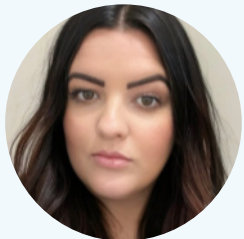
Women who inspire: leadership in action



Hayley Monks

Managing Director at Echo
Managed Services

"Having joined SS PLC as MD at Echo Managed Services in 2024, I am clearly fairly new to the team here; But what a start. As Co-Founder of the Women's Utilities Network I have high expectations of my employer, how they recruit, onboard, reward and operate and I have not been disappointed. From the leadership role-modelling to inclusive events to policies changes and gender balanced boards, SS PLC are making great strides to impact in this area and I feel privileged to be part of the journey."



Amy Anderson

Head of Customer Experience
at South Staffordshire Water

"I joined South Staffordshire Water in April 2010 as Metering Services Assistant on a 12 month temporary contract really unsure of what I wanted to do with my career. I'd previously worked in financial services and the Department for Work and Pensions. The consistent thing in all of this was customers and this is where my passion lies. The introduction of a regulatory customer measure then led me to working in various roles within our customer teams and I've been fortunate to develop my knowledge and skills in the customer space across the end to end of our operations. Over the last 15 years I've seen a huge shift change in the way we support our customers and it makes me feel really proud to work for an organisation so customer and community focused."

I have also had the opportunity to develop my skills in many ways including leadership development programmes and time working within our wider group company Echo Managed Services. In 2018 I became a mom and the ability to work more flexibly has enabled me to feel like I succeed as a mom and at work. I'm really excited to see what the future holds for me and when asked why I've worked here for the length of time I have, it always links back to our people and on a more personal note the mentors I have had over the years who have always believed in me."

Women who inspire: leadership in action



Jade Willis

Business Manager at G Stow

"I joined South Staffordshire as the first female Business Manager of G Stow. With a career spanning the utility sector, I am passionate about challenging gender stereotypes and inspiring my like-minded colleagues to succeed. I chose to join a female-friendly, female-led, and diverse company because I strongly believe in the power of inclusivity and equal opportunity. Charley, as a leader, is both inspirational and motivational, and I strive to emulate these qualities within my own team. In this environment, I feel empowered to contribute my unique perspectives and talents, knowing my abilities will be recognized regardless of gender."

Being a member of the Women's Utility Network (WUN) has been an invaluable resource, providing strong support for leadership, culture, learning, and opportunity sharing. Through open communication and collaboration, we gain knowledge and strength. There are significant opportunities for growth within the company to grow and close the gender pay gap internally by mentoring to support, guide and develop our female professionals to achieve higher-level roles. As a company that embraces collaboration and change, South Staffordshire is one I am proud to be part of and plan to stay with."



Cat Henderson

Head of Compliance &
QUENSH Systems at OnSite

"I joined OnSite in 2010. Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working across several key areas, including Marketing, Procurement, Transport Management, Operations Management, Health, Safety and Quality & Compliance. These diverse roles have provided me with invaluable experience and insight."

I have had the privilege of working alongside passionate and driven colleagues who strive for excellence. I am grateful for the support of management, who have actively encouraged my professional growth by providing valuable training and development opportunities, enabling me to enhance my skills and progress in my career."

OnSite's commitment to supporting its people extends beyond professional development, it also recognises the importance of work-life balance. As someone who understands the challenges of balancing a career while raising a family, I appreciate being part of an organisation that values and supports its employees in achieving both personal and professional fulfilment."

Women who inspire: leadership in action



Heidi Knapton

Head of Universal Metering at
South Staffordshire Water

"I joined South Staffordshire Water in 2018 as Metering Strategy Manager, and can say that right from day one, the support and guidance I've received has been outstanding. I've had some fantastic leaders and mentors who have supported my development across a number of different roles. I have also just returned from maternity leave, having spent a year out of the business with my son James. Getting the maternity / paternity journeys right for employees is often a tricky one, but from the moment I shared my news to present day (a week into returning!) the support has been fantastic. From being supported to change my working hours, to regular check ins from Charley across all stages of my journey, it has been a joy.

I've also received support from the Women's Utilities Network, having joined their Advocate Team in 2022. Through this network I've been able to link in with others going through similar experiences, and have learned so much from the podcasts and blogs (and have created a few of them myself which was so much fun!). I continue to be impressed by both WUN and our Group Business approach to supporting our employees – it feels like I can be my authentic self in all settings, and I'm proud to see such strides forward from a diversity and inclusivity perspective".



Focus for the year ahead

Sara McCann, Group HR Director

Our people focus in the past twelve months has been on 'building strong foundations' ensuring that we have a consistent approach in our values and policies that places our people at the centre of our success. I'm pleased that this groundwork has supported in reducing our overall gender pay gap, reflecting our commitment to gender equality.

Our focus for the future is on 'enabling and empowering', strengthening skills and connections, whilst enhancing accountability. As part of this, our plans to improve our diversity data capture and reporting will ensure we can track and measure whether our efforts to enhance the diversity of our workforce are successful.

Building on the success of our existing Women's Network and Unity+ Network, we are looking forward to launching more employee networks. Having a focus on race and cultural heritage; working parents and carers; and disability and neurodiversity, will enable us to further develop our inclusive and values-led culture, ensuring we continue to be curious and open-minded about our individual differences and recognise the value this brings in building better teams.

As part of our drive to ensuring fair and transparent compensation structure, we will be conducting a job evaluation exercise in 2025, to progress our commitment to increase governance around pay structures.

We continue to evaluate the way in which we attract talent to South Staffordshire Plc, ensuring our job adverts are gender neutral and that we are recruiting from a range of different backgrounds and experiences to provide a diversity of thought within our teams. Our future focus will build upon our apprenticeships offering, investing in our early careers provision to build a diverse future workforce.

Our workplace offering already includes a range of flexible working options and, at a time when many companies are moving away from hybrid working, we are proud of the flexibility this offers our people, in roles where it is operationally viable. We continue to advertise many roles on a flexible basis, embracing more part time and condensed hours working.

And finally, we are proud of the opportunities we have to develop our people through our leadership development programme, RISE, and the benefits our Women's Utilities Network membership offers us, including their confidence building workshops 'I Am Remarkable' sessions.

These future actions ensure that gender equality forms an integral part of our identity and offers an environment where everyone can thrive.



We confirm that the information in this gender pay report is accurate and has been prepared in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Charley and Sara