



Gender Pay Gap Report 2021



Be Inclusive

About this report

In the UK all employers are legally obliged to give men and women equal pay for work of equal value. However, for lots of reasons, in many organisations there is a difference between the average earnings of male and female employees.

This is known as a gender pay gap (GPG) and it indicates that men might be occupying higher-paying positions in the workplace than women. It does not mean employers have breached equal pay provisions or that women are paid less to the same job as men.

All public, private and voluntary sector organisations with 250 or more employees must report annually on their GPG. They must do so against six different measures, based on a snapshot of pay data on a set date identified within Schedule 1 of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

1

Mean Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees.

2

Median Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees.

3

Median Bonus Gap

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

4

Mean Bonus Gap

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

5

Bonus Proportions

The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during the relevant period.

6

Quartile Pay Bands

The proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower, lower-middle, upper-middle and upper quartile pay bands.

In accordance with the legislation, we have produced and published this report to show Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's GPG as it stood on March 31st 2021. For comparison, we have provided data from the same date in 2020.

If you have any questions or comments relating to this report and its contents, please email equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

EDI is an important business imperative for any employer, not least a humanitarian organisation like the fire and rescue service. We have enshrined this commitment as one of our core values – to “be inclusive” in all that we do.

We know that developing as an organisation with diversity of thought, background and experience will make us a better employer and a better provider of public services. We work hard to create a culture where anyone, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability or faith, can thrive and reach their full potential. In turn, this enables us to better understand and respond to the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

Our Gender Pay Gap

Like other fire and rescue services with a gender neutral approach to pay across all levels of our organisation, we still have a Gender Pay Gap. The causes are varied and complex, but nothing to do with equal pay issues.

For firefighter roles, terms and conditions are nationally negotiated, using role maps and nationally agreed pay scales. However, in spite of an increasing number of women in the workforce men still dominate the operational workforce and senior roles in particular.

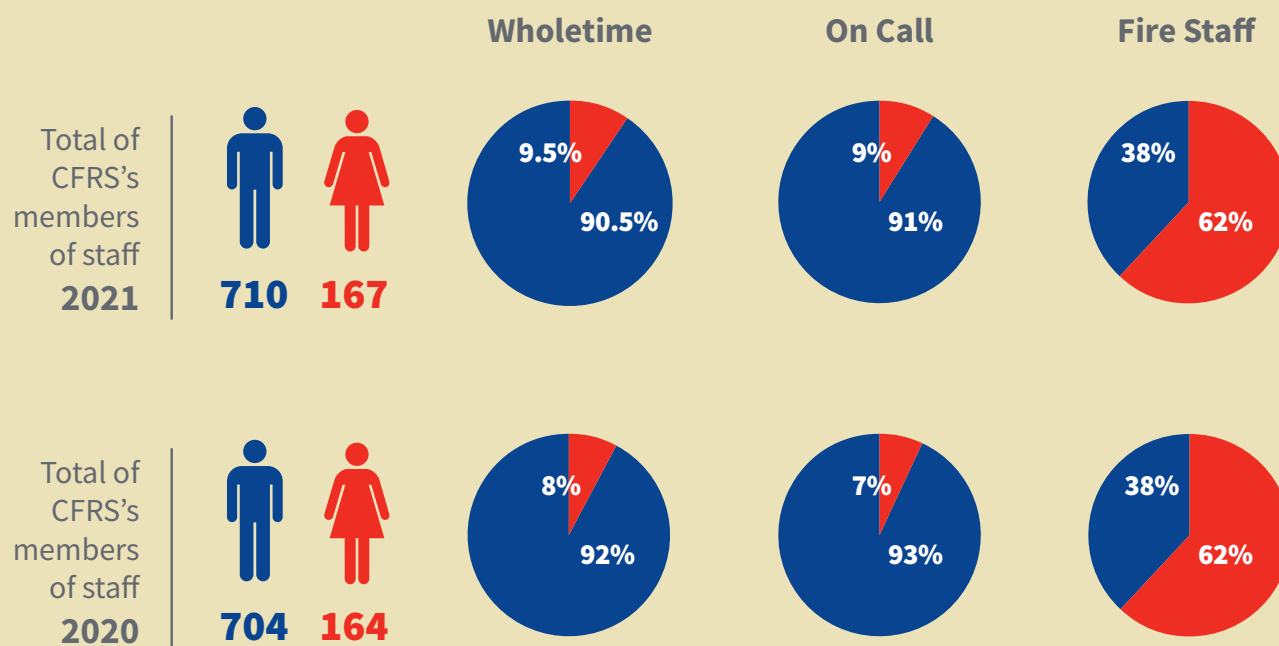
Many of the fire staff roles traditionally held by women, particularly in human resources and other professional disciplines, no longer exist within our Service. They sit with Cheshire Constabulary, with whom we share corporate services, and cannot be counted in our establishment. Furthermore, non-operational roles are graded using an accredited job evaluation scheme and local government pay scales.

These differences make it difficult to make like-for-like comparisons.



This year's data

At March 31st 2021, we employed 877 staff. However, in line with the government's GPG guidance, we have only counted 867 staff in most sections of our analysis because 10 members of staff were new starters and had not received a full month's pay by that date. However, in accordance with the guidance, we have included all 877 staff in our analysis of bonus pay.











Overall we still employ many more men than women. However, compared to 2020 we have seen a 1.5% increase in women in wholetime firefighter positions and a 2% increase in women in on call firefighter positions. Over a two year period, female representation has increased by 2.5% in wholetime roles and by 4% in on call roles. This can be attributed in part to targeted recruitment activity and work to ensure policies are family friendly and attractive to prospective applicants. The increase in female representation can also be explained by men making up the majority of people leaving the organisation.

As was the case in 2019 and 2020, women remain better represented in fire staff roles in spite of many becoming police employees in 2017. While there is only one woman on the Service Management Team (SMT), there are three female heads of department on the extended SMT employed by the police (and not therefore included in our salary data).

Although the overall number of female employees has continued to increase over the past year, it is inevitable that the GPG will exist until there are greater numbers of women in the Service. We remain committed to eliminating all barriers in relation to the attraction and progression of women, to achieve an even more diverse workforce in 2022/23. Further details about our attraction, recruitment and retention strategy are provided on page 7.

Earnings 2021

Based on a snapshot of data available on March 31st 2021 in relation to earnings of all staff, our Service's GPG is calculated as follows.

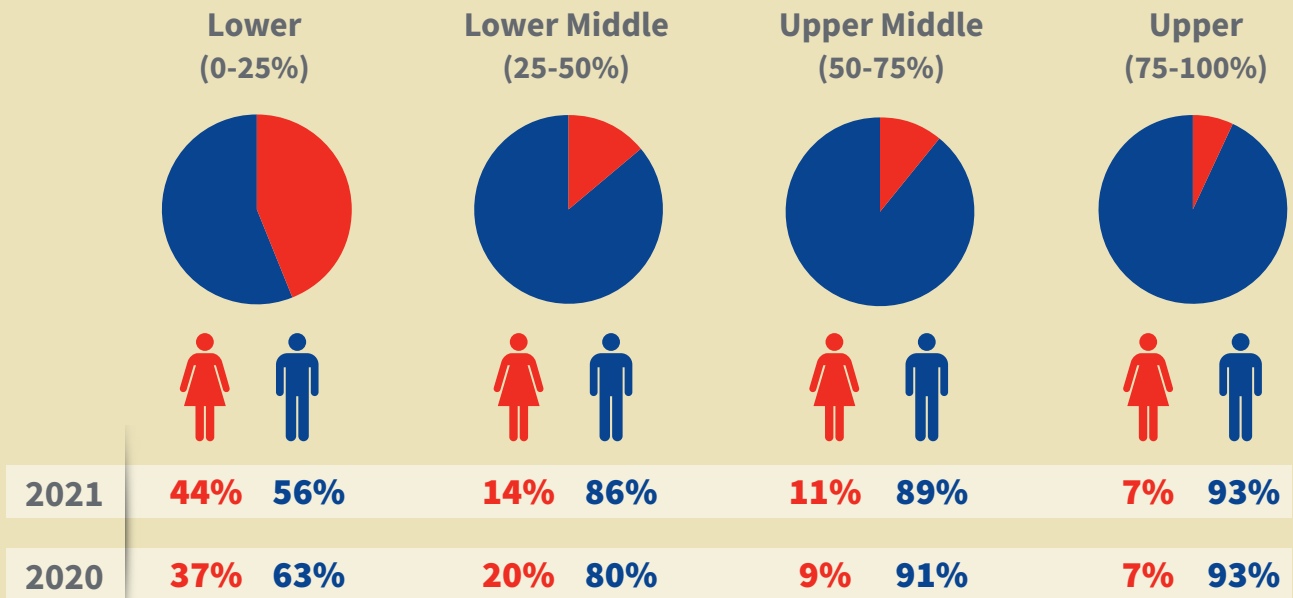
					
1 	Mean Hourly Rate	2021	£13.50	£16.80	19.62%
		2020	£12.66	£15.20	16.56%
2 	Median Hourly Rate	2021	£12.85	£14.86	13.50%
		2020	£11.11	£14.23	22%
3 	Proportion of Staff in receipt of a bonus	2021	20%	67%	
		2020	12%	53%	
4 	Mean Bonus	2021	£745.32	£676.73	-10.13
		2020	£858.08	£692.87	-24%
5 	Median Bonus	2021	£719.77	£775.50	7.18%
		2020	£760.50	£760.50	0%

Between 2020 and 2021 the GPG increased from 16.56% to 19.62%. This mirrors a national trend which has seen the UK GPG increase from 14.6% to 15.4% (ONS, 2021). Despite the increase in the past year and the work still required to close the gap further, the GPG is still much lower than the 24.6% recorded in 2019, demonstrating sustained progress.

When interpreting the data it is important to consider the impacts of the differences in conditions of service between firefighters and fire staff. For example, firefighters (who are majority male) on certain duty systems have access to allowances and typically more opportunities to work overtime.

The continuous professional development (CPD) payment, required through the Grey Book terms and conditions, applies only to operational staff and skews the reporting of bonuses. However, women in general received larger bonus payments than their male comparators. This is due to a greater proportion of women receiving recognition payments for their work, which are typically of greater monetary value than CPD payments, for example.

6 Quartile Pay Bands 2021



Compared to 2020, there are 7% more women in the lowest salary quartile but 6% fewer in the lower middle quartile. This increase in women in the lowest quartile is reflective of our success in attracting female recruits to a new operational and non-operational apprenticeship roles, for which they are paid the living wage until they qualify. It is one of the factors why the GPG has increased this year.

There has been no change in female representation in the highest paying roles, but there was 2% increase in women in the upper middle quartile, as result of a number of female fire officers achieving promotion to watch and station manager level.



Closing the gender pay gap

Our new People Strategy (2022-2025) and EDI Strategy (2021-2024) set out an ambitious raft of actions aimed at building on our work to date to attract more women into our Service at all levels and ensure they are able to progress at the same rate as their male colleagues.

These include:

- **engaging with girls and women** through community groups and sports teams, schools, colleges and universities to raise awareness of fire and rescue service careers, breakdown negative stereotypes and introduce positive female role models
- a modern, inclusive and forward-thinking approach to **recruitment**, incorporating the bold use of social media, creative campaigns and positive action activities to appeal to the best people from all underrepresented groups
- **eliminating barriers** in recruitment and selection processes, particularly in practical and fitness assessments, to ensure female candidates are not unfairly disadvantaged and have the support of a 'buddy' from within the Service if they would like one
- building on our reputation as an inclusive employer, by continuing to develop and implement **progressive female-friendly policies** such as our world-class maternity and adoption leave provision, our forward-thinking menopause policy and our uniform and facilities policies
- developing and highlighting **a wider range of career pathways** for all female colleagues seeking to progress to middle or senior management roles, underpinned by coaching, mentoring and tailored support
- continuing to promote the **Step In** development programme, launched in 2021, to provide development for new supervisors and aspiring leaders. This programme complements the existing **Step Up** programme for existing supervisors and managers
- raising awareness of our **High Potential Development Scheme** (HPDS) among female colleagues and potential external candidates who have the talent and ambition to become future operational leaders
- continuing to offer **degree sponsorship programmes** to upskill and provide progression opportunities for all staff, providing an academic pathway for both operational and fire staff to gain a degree and ultimately apply for the HPDS
- encouraging involvement in 'off the job' **opportunities for personal and professional development**, such as our annual International Women's Day conference and the Women in the Fire Service weekend
- further developing our **Limitless women's network**, and its male allies group, to provide friendship, mentorship, advice and support to all female colleagues through regular events
- fully establish our Race Equality and Cultural Heritage (REACH) and neurodiversity staff networks and build stronger links with the Fire pride LGBT+ network, to support **women with multiple identities**, from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Reference List

Office of National Statistics (2021) Gender Pay Gap in the UK: 2021.

Found at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2021>

**“There’s no
glass ceiling
at the top of
our ladder”**



As a Firefighter, you'll succeed because of who you are, not what you are. Your gender, race or sexual orientation will never come into it. Once you've completed your training, you could be earning more than £30,000 in just 18 months, with that figure climbing as high as your ambition will take you. There's also 45 weeks full pay maternity and adoption policies in place, as well as up to 35 days annual leave. Find out what becoming a Firefighter could mean for you.

Make a difference to other people's lives - starting with your own.



Cheshire
Fire & Rescue Service

www.cheshirefire.careers