

Building a diverse team

OUR GENDER PAY REPORT 2020-21



WALES & WEST
UTILITIES

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Introduction

It is an understatement to say the last 12 months have been challenging. A once-in-a-lifetime global pandemic has changed the way we live and how we work. At Wales & West Utilities, this challenge reminded us all of the responsibility we have: keeping the gas flowing safely and reliably to keep people safe and warm at home, and supporting vital infrastructure like hospitals. Across Wales and south west England, almost 7.5m people, spending much more time at home, have relied on us more than ever.

That we were able to continue to deliver for the communities we serve is a testament to the hard work of our colleagues – of whom we are both incredibly proud. Round the clock, in wind, rain and snow, our team have been out, responding to gas emergencies, connecting new homes and businesses, and preparing the gas network for the future.

Alongside the pandemic, we are at a critical point in the UK's response to the Climate Emergency. With the impact of climate change becoming more apparent, the energy sector is focused on decarbonisation – in particular that of heat. Independent research shows that converting the existing safe and reliable gas network to transport green gases will help us rise to that challenge too. Converting homes and businesses to hydrogen and biomethane will allow communities to go green while keeping the impact on customers' homes and on energy bills to a minimum – £500 a year less than full electrification by 2050.



All of our team members are going to have a key role to play in this transition, and as we face the future, it's worth looking forward to what our team will look like by 2050. Gas engineers will be skilled, maintaining green gas pipelines, working with robotics, smart sensors and detecting equipment. Our office team will work in the office and at home – with new ways of collaboration helping us make the most of our time together.

And our team will be much more diverse than ever before, in gender, ethnicity and sexuality. We are committed to becoming a sustainable business and have a team that reflects the communities we serve. The enforced disruption of the pandemic has highlighted the importance of diversity and the benefits it can deliver, considering the strengths of all our colleagues and the potential they offer. Valuing difference brings us together, and we believe this will help us maintain our performance and a successful, thriving and fair culture.

So while we'll continue to invest in pipe, we'll be investing in our people too, making sure they have all the skills to meet the needs of our customers. And we'll work hard to make our workforce more diverse and more inclusive, because we know that to truly meet the needs of the communities we serve, we must reflect them.

Sarah Hopkins
People & Engagement Director

Graham Edwards
Chief Executive



Our performance

Summary

17% of our team are female – an increasing number year on year

-2% mean gender pay gap – significantly lower than the national average

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development commend our strategic approach to workforce planning

More women than ever applying for our apprenticeships and operational roles

Women are playing key leadership and management roles – designing the future of our business and our industry

We retain our Silver level Investors in People accreditation – an accolade only 5% of companies achieve

We developed our first Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, becoming more accessible to women, the BAME and LGBTQ+ communities, and those living with disabilities, so we reflect the different and diverse communities we serve

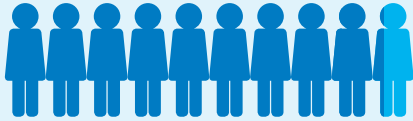
Our team

- **1,617 colleagues** (2019: 1,560)
- **17% female** (2019: 16%)
- **83% male** (2019: 84%)



In Operations...

- **7% female** (2019: no change)
- **93% male** (2019: no change)



In the (home) office...

- **44% female** (2019: 43%)
- **56% male** (2019: 57%)



Our office team have been working at home since March 2020. In the future, we'll adopt a hybrid working system, helping our team build on the benefits of home working while maintaining work life balance, and enabling team working in the office. Colleagues have told us that they missed connecting, collaborating and informal opportunities for networking with others and although technology has helped to keep us connected, it is not a complete substitute for being together.

The Coronavirus pandemic gave us opportunity to stop and reflect on the way we work. A hybrid approach reflects changes in expectations of our team and will help make Wales & West Utilities an even more inclusive place to work.



Pay and bonus

The gender pay gap shows the difference in average pay between men and women that work at Wales & West Utilities in two ways.

- The mean adds up all salaries and divides the result by the number of men and women respectively. We report the percentage difference.
- The median lists all male and female salaries in numerical order and is the respective middle numbers. We report the percentage difference.

The gender pay gap is different from equal pay – the right for men and women to be paid identically for doing the same work, or work of equal values. With clear job profiles and a well-established pay structure, we are confident that what a colleague earns is based on their job and our pay structure, and is not affected by their gender or any other characteristic.

MEAN GENDER PAY GAP

2021	2019	NATIONAL MEAN GENDER PAY GAP:
-2%	1%	14.6%

We're proud that our mean gender pay gap has reduced by 120% since 2017, when it stood at 10%. This is driven by our structured, grade-based approach with clear

and consistent job profiles. And it reflects the increasing number of women we have in senior leadership and management roles.

MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP

2021	2019	NATIONAL MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP:
-10%	-10%	15.5%

Our median gender pay gap remains 10% due to the differing roles men and women play in our team. Large numbers of men work in lower-paid operational positions, while women hold supervisory and management roles. This gap has increased from -4% in 2017, driven by recruitment of a large number of gas engineering operatives, primarily in south west England. For many of these roles, we did not get a single female applicant.

WHO GETS A BONUS

2021	2019	
40%	38%	FEMALE COLLEAGUES
16%	16%	MALE COLLEAGUES

There are two types of bonuses at Wales & West Utilities, recognising colleagues who do different types of jobs.

Colleagues in our grade-based structure are eligible for a bonus based on a percentage of their salary dependent on their performance.

Senior management and our leadership team receive a bonus based on their contribution to delivering for our customers, and their own personal performance.

Our Operations team are incentivised in different ways. Instead of a bonus, they receive overtime, standby and callout payments, and performance-related incentives. This is reflected in the low proportion of male colleagues who receive bonuses.

MEAN GENDER BONUS GAP

2021	2019
49%	53%

Our mean gender bonus gap continues to fall as an increasing number of women take senior roles, with two women now on our seven-strong leadership team.

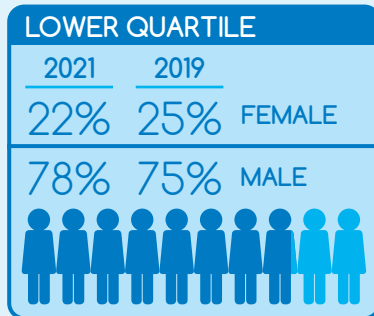
MEDIAN GENDER BONUS GAP

2021	2019
42%	31%

However, our median gender bonus gap has increased. While an increasing number of women are in senior positions within our organisation and have received bonuses, the majority of women are still in lower quartiles, where bonuses are of a lower value.

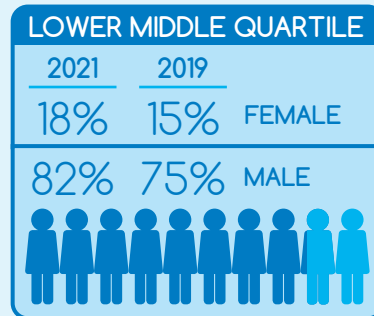
Pay distribution

These charts show the gender profile of our team at different pay bands. It's calculated by splitting our organisation into four equal parts based on what they earn.

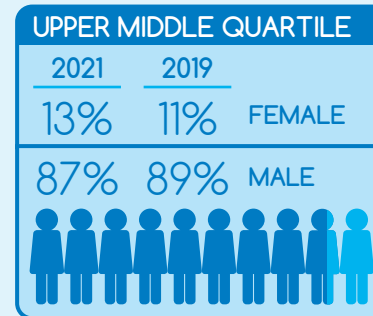


Colleagues in 'hands-on' operational and office-based administration roles, alongside customer service roles, are in the lower quartile.

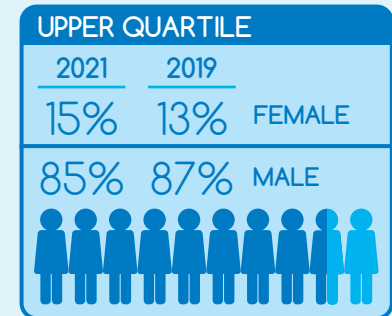
Women have their highest representation in this quartile, but percentage has reduced due to large numbers of experienced gas engineers joining our team who were predominantly male, throughout 2019 and 2020. Women have decreased in this quartile but have increased in all others, which shows women moving into more senior roles.



Supervisory and specialised roles, both in the office and Operations, make up this quartile.



Our middle management oversee office-based functions and lead engineering teams on the network. The year-on-year increase in this quartile reflects the growing role women play in our business in management positions in Operations and in the office.



Our senior team has got more diverse in the last 12 months, with a second woman joining our leadership team and a number of women taking up new senior management roles. They will all play key roles as we rise to meet the challenges of the future.

Case study

Kate Williams

Kate Williams switched careers after having a baby made her reassess her role in a solicitors' firm. She believes it has been a mix of fate, supportive managers and self-belief that have led her to a fulfilling career in the gas industry.

Kate, 46 and from Blackwood, explains:

"When my son was six months old I wanted to go back to work but I didn't want to go back to working in a solicitors' firm. So I decided to go along to a job agency and see what was on offer.

"Whilst there, they received a call detailing how Transco, Wales & West Utilities' predecessor, was looking for a depot clerk – someone to help with the planning and administration of work."

Kate was successful in applying for the job and on her first day quickly realised she was going to be the only woman based at the depot. Not deterred by the male-dominated industry of the early 2000s, she soon recognised that with supportive managers and senior leaders, the opportunities for her were at her fingertips.

"Throughout my time here, I have had nothing but the utmost support and encouragement from senior leaders, who have recognised my potential, allowing me to develop a career path."

"When the company was looking to establish a specialist Logistics team, I was working as a depot clerk, but my manager put me forward to work alongside other senior managers on the three-month programme, which was fairly daunting."

"Once the team was up and running, a role was yet to be filled and I thought 'why not?' and

applied – successfully – going on to manage 40 men in the Logistics team – mainly truck drivers.

"This was a big jump for me, and I'd be lying if I didn't say it was overwhelming at first, but I knew I could do the job."

Kate was quick to earn the respect of her colleagues, proving her worth in leading the Logistics team in Wales, supporting delivery of engineering work – essential to keep the gas flowing to local homes and businesses.

"My initial role at Wales & West Utilities was down to being in the right place at the right time, but since then I have always had managers who have invested in my career and encouraged me to push myself. I started as the only woman in a depot, and while most were supportive, over the last few years and especially since Wales & West Utilities started operations, I've seen a change in culture and attitudes of many. The industry has certainly evolved over the past few decades and we are seeing a much more diverse group of people join the gas industry."

"As we face the challenges of the future, opportunities for men and women alike in the energy industry are vast. People are recognised for the work they do and their commitment to their job. With the right attitude you will go far."

"This is a great industry to work in, and there is a terrific network of mentors – engineers and managers who have been there, done that. They'll really push you to go beyond your comfort zone, helping you to reach your career potential."



Our story so far

When we started operations in 2005, most industry insiders and commentators didn't give independent gas networks much of a chance. Smaller than gas networks had been historically, our size has allowed us to be more responsive to the needs of customers across Wales and south west England.

Our first focus was health and safety: developing our own systems and processes so we could be sure our network and the communities we serve were as safe as they could possibly be. More than a decade on, this foundation of health and safety has stood us in good stead, with eight ROSPA Gold medals secured in successive years, as well as numerous other awards and accreditations.

On this solid foundation, we built a customer service record to be proud of, designing our services to meet customer needs and expectations. We go above and beyond, offering a bespoke customer experience and evolving as technology does. In 2005, you could write, call and try to email us. Now 16 years on, whether you phone, text, tweet, DM or live chat us, we'll respond to you quickly. And if we do get things wrong, we're committed to putting them right – resolving problems and leaving you happy within 24 hours. To make sure you know we are as good as we can be, we've secured challenging external verification; the

Institute of Customer Service ServiceMark and the British Standard for Inclusive Service Provision helps us compare ourselves to top performing customer service companies and share best practice to meet the changing needs of customers.

In 2013, our leadership team began a review of the fundamental purpose of our business, engaging with colleagues right across the diverse operating area. This was designed to make sure that the organisation could meet regulatory challenges while continuing to deliver what customers, stakeholders and communities want and need.

This process resulted in the development of our ambition, priorities and values, which set out what we'll do to deliver for our customers. They guide key business decisions and are reflected in our day-to-day work, while informing the way we do things. And they helped underpin our move to being a responsible business – taking more care of the society and environment we operate in.

“Wales & West Utilities have put their values at the heart of what they do and truly embedded responsible business through their operations and decision making.”

BITC



This responsibility has seen us partner with fire services and other trusted organisations to support the most in need, and during the pandemic, help charities who support more 14,000 of the most vulnerable in Wales and south west England. Our commitment to responsible business practices has seen us twice rewarded by BITC Cymru – firstly as Wales' most responsible business and during the pandemic as a responsible business champion for our commitment to supporting our local communities.

With the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, we are committed to playing our part in helping the UK decarbonise and get to net zero. So we're working alongside other UK gas networks to explore how we can convert the existing safe and reliable gas network to transport green gas and biomethane, which will help communities go green cheaper and with less disruption than the alternatives. And we're getting our own house in order too. Acting on feedback from our customers and stakeholders, between 2021-2026 we're focusing on becoming a sustainable business, reducing the impact on the environment of our vehicles, depots, and our operations, while reusing or recycling 80% of our waste by 2026. We will also adopt the principle of biodiversity net gain, an approach that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was previously.

We're updating our ambition, priorities and values to reflect this new focus, and to deliver it, are going to need a team that is more diverse and inclusive than ever. Not only in background, but in skills too. For the first time, we're recruiting cyber security specialists and data modellers, econometrics analysts and sustainability managers. If we are to recruit the most talented and able in the range of roles that are essential to deliver for our customers, the Wales & West Utilities of 2050 will look different than the company we inherited in 2005.



Creating an inclusive culture

We want to encourage diversity. While we have a large number of women working in the office, in leadership, customer service and support roles, there's a smaller number in operations.

We're working hard to change this and make our whole team more diverse and inclusive.

- **Doing all we can to change perceptions of the gas industry** – role-modelling some of our outstanding women.
- **Focus on wellbeing** – we try to be as family friendly as possible and have introduced enhanced maternity leave, shared parental leave, flexible working policies and a Carers Policy – a first for a gas network. Our wellbeing strategy supports our colleagues in their lives at home and work.
- **Building on the lessons learned during the Coronavirus pandemic**, we will be adopting a hybrid working model in the future, that balances the benefits of working from home with the opportunities for connection and collaboration the office offers. Colleagues have told us that they have felt disconnected and isolated at times, so a mixture of working in the office and remotely will address concerns around

wellbeing and mental health, while continuing to enhance flexibility.

- **Embedding our values in recruitment** – we give new recruits all the skills they need to fill roles from gas engineer to planner, administrator to asset manager. We've also removed the requirement for academic qualifications unless they are strictly necessary.
- **Our structured approach to development** means an equality of opportunity irrespective of gender/sexuality.
- **Recognising we can all stereotype** – all recruiting managers receive unconscious bias training, to adjust the way they think and eliminate unwitting discrimination.
- **Helping to shape education choices** – we engage with schools, colleges and community

groups. STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) ambassadors and experienced female engineers regularly visit schools and clubs to talk about their experiences and the opportunities for girls.

- **Promoting our job opportunities to a diverse audience** – we're using new ways to reach out to women (as well as BAME and LGBTQ+ communities), targeting people with an interest in engineering.



Case study

Sarah Burgess

Sarah Burgess has a career spanning 27 years after deciding to embark on a hands-on job at the age of just 16. Realising the opportunities the gas industry presented, she has worked hard in a number of roles and was the first female Gas Emergency Service First Line Manager at Wales & West Utilities.

Sarah, 47, explains her motivations:

“At school I knew I wanted a job that allowed me to use my hands and engineering really appealed to me. I decided to apply for an apprenticeship in the gas industry and was thrilled to be offered a role and wasted no time – starting it straight after finishing my GCSEs.

“This involved a mix of college work and on the job learning, which I loved. It allowed me to really get my teeth stuck into the job and I haven’t looked back.”

Sarah stayed in the gas industry through reorganisation, working for Transco, before joining Wales & West Utilities in 2005.

“The opportunities were there for the taking and I progressed quickly to become a technician. At the time I had two young children to juggle, but having a supportive husband at home, I

concentrated on my career as I loved my job as an engineer.

“I enjoy a challenge, but helping customers and keeping them safe is the biggest kick of the job – it’s fulfilling and rewarding. And it’s a bit of a cliché, but not knowing what job might come in next is still really exciting for me.”

Sarah has been in her role as a Gas Emergency Service First Line Manager for four years now and encourages anyone to follow their heart – grabbing the opportunities that are available.

“I’m a huge believer in there being the right role for the right person. There are opportunities for everyone – regardless of their gender, race or beliefs. Of course, there are differences between the sexes but in this industry, we need different techniques to do different things.

“Some people might think I’m a female working in a male dominated industry, but to me and everyone that knows me, I’m just someone doing a job they love.

“Wales & West Utilities and the wider industry provides people with many chances to progress and I, for one, am delighted with the journey it continues to take me on.”



Case study

Travis Wheatle

Travis Wheatle joined Wales & West Utilities' graduate training programme in 2015 with his eyes firmly fixed on developing a career path. After just six years in the industry, he is well on the way to accomplishing this.

Travis explains:

"The graduate training was a fantastic grounding for a role within the industry and quickly allowed me to learn about different aspects of the company. I spent two years on the programme, and it gave me the opportunity to work both in the office and in hands-on roles in Operations. Alongside my manager, I quickly realised that Operations was where my skills lay."

Travis has since held managerial roles in Bristol and Swindon, leading teams repairing gas leaks, connecting new homes and businesses, and preparing the gas network to transport green gases like hydrogen and biomethane.

He has also worked hard to complete a master's in Engineering Management, juggling this alongside working full time and becoming a father for the first time. In early 2021, he became a Trainee Performance Manager – supervising six managers and 56 engineers across Exeter.

"During the past five years I've had lots of opportunities. I'm happy that I have got to where I am in a short period of time."

"I want to progress further and would love to work in progressively more senior roles. I think I thrive on the responsibility – sometimes it's easy to forget just how important keeping the gas flowing is, but it really helps me focus on what's important. As I continue building my engineering career I want to learn more and push myself further. The business is great at providing the support necessary to help you achieve your career aspirations, but you've got to have the drive to do it in the first place."

"I have a fantastic network of experienced people who have helped point me in the right direction and give me the support I need to make the best of my ability."

Travis is now looking to become a Chartered Engineer and won't stop until he reaches the pinnacle of his career.

"You can't always be successful – I've failed a number of times, but the way I see it, for every failure, you're closer to success. The gas industry is great, and the opportunities are endless."



Diversity and inclusion

Traditionally the gas industry has been an industry dominated by white men. In the future, as we decarbonise the energy system in the UK, the work that a gas network will be doing will change. The skills and competencies we need in the future will be very different from today. From big data to robotics, cyber security to econometrics, becoming an even more inclusive and diverse place to work is essential if we are to continue to deliver for our customers today and in the future.

Increasing the diversity of our team not only allows us to recognise the differences between and individuality of all our colleagues, it also acknowledges that more diverse teams make better, more informed and considered decisions.

Making Wales & West Utilities a more inclusive place to work will help all our colleagues feel that their contribution matters and they are able to do their job, irrespective of their background, identify or individual circumstances.

This year we have launched Women@WWU, an informal group of women right across our business. From senior leaders to apprentices, it gives women an opportunity to share their experiences, informal support and advice with one another.

We are also exploring the possibility of an LGBTQ+ network, connecting colleagues from across our business to talk about their experiences in a safe and welcoming space. Alongside this, and responding to stakeholder and colleague feedback, we are developing a Trans strategy. We hope that this will reassure colleagues of the support that they will receive if they choose to transition.

In 2019, we signed the Armed Forces Covenant, which underlines our commitment to be a welcoming and inclusive employer of former military personnel. We remain focused on supporting service leavers joining our business, and those who have previously served.

Evolving strategy

Recognising the changes brought to our communities by the Coronavirus pandemic, we are reviewing our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and delivery programmes, to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our colleagues today – and those who may work for us in the future.



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