

Harlow Council Gender Pay Gap Report

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Introduction

Harlow District Council is required to publish an annual Gender Pay Gap report in accordance with the Equality Act (2010) (Gender Pay Gap information) Regulations 2017. The information contained with this report is for the snapshot date of 31 March 2025.

Gender Pay Gap Data

The gender pay gap is defined as the average pay gap between male and female staff in hourly pay and is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

- The mean gender pay gap is 12.2%
- The median gender pay gap is 9.98%
- The proportion of males and females who received bonus payments is 0%*
- The mean gender pay gap in bonus pay is 0%*
- The median gender pay gap in bonus pay is 0%*

Harlow District Council had a gender split (at the snapshot date) for all employees classified as 'Relevant' for the Gender Pay Gap report (as outlined in the Gender Pay Gap guidance criteria) of 67.95% Female and 32.05% Male.

*No bonus payments were made.

The Council's percentage of male and female split into pay quartile percentage figures are as follows:

Pay Quartile	Male	Female
Lower Quartile	24.74%	75.26%
Lower Middle Quartile	18.56%	81.44%
Upper Middle Quartile	33.67%	66.33%
Upper Quartile	51.02%	48.98%

The figures in this report are calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 using data from the Council's HR and Payroll System (iTrent), using the reporting period of March 2025 payroll.

The mean and median gender pay gaps are shown as a percentage difference, based on the gross hourly rates of ordinary pay on the 'snapshot' date 31 March 2025. The hourly rate calculated for each employee is used from March 2025 monthly pay period.

This is the hourly pay differences for mean and median for both Male and Female

Hourly Pay	Mean (Average)	Median (Average)
Male	£22.58	£20.34
Female	£19.82	£18.31

Mean and Median Pay

The mean hourly rate is the calculation of the average hourly wage across the entire organisation, so the mean gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between the female mean hourly wage and male mean hourly wage. The median hourly rate calculation is completed by ranking all employees from the lowest to highest paid subsequently taking the hourly wage of the person in the middle (or an average of the two-middle people); so, the median gender pay gap is the difference between the female median hourly wage (the middle-paid woman) and male median hourly wage (the middle-paid man).

The average median hourly rate of pay for a male is £20.34, for female the average median hourly rate of pay is £18.31. The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees is **9.98%**. The mean gender pay gap is still greater than the median pay gap. This suggests that there are a higher proportion of men that receive higher levels of pay which is demonstrated by the proportion of men than women in the highest salary quartile who are directly paid by the council.

Long Service

On an annual basis the Council acknowledges the importance of employees who are committed to their work and awards those who have achieved 21 years' service with the Council an award of a £200 voucher in recognition of their length of service and commitment to the Authority. The criterion used for assessment of this award is length of service only. In the 2024/2025 financial year (paid in November 2024), 5 women received an award of £200 vouchers each.

Pay Evaluation

The council is committed to treating all employees equally, and we have a clear equal pay policy. Most council employees are on grades based on National Joint Council (NJC) pay and conditions. There are twenty grades underpinned by a robust job evaluation system. This ensures that employees are carrying out work of equal value are paid on the same grade, see [pay grades](#) for more information.

As a result, the council is confident that the pay gap is not due to men and women being paid differently for the same or equivalent work. Instead, the pay gap is because of the roles in which men and women work and the prevalence of men in more senior roles throughout the council.

The data used for pay gap reporting is based on actual salaries and therefore if an employee is part time their salary will be lower than their full time equivalent as they are working fewer hours; the hourly rate remains the same however.

External Impacts

As the organisation flattens its structure in response to budgetary pressures the opportunities for promotion out of the lower pay quartiles may become less frequent. In addition, across the UK, more women take up part time working than men which will impact gender pay gaps. Flexible working practices are applied across all posts in the organisation including remote and hybrid working (known as Dynamic Working in Harlow). When roles become vacant, management are asked to consider the application of flexible working

How does Harlow District Council's Pay Gap compare with that of other organisations?

Many organisations have a gender pay gap and Harlow District Council's gap compares favourably with that of other organisations, including those within the public sector.

Gender Pay Gap estimates compiled from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earning (release date 23 October 2025) show the following:

	Harlow District Council	Harlow District (Geographical Area)	Public Sector	Whole Economy
Mean	9.98%	11.1%	12.3%	13.4%
Median	12.2%	2.8%	13.5%	12.8%

Closing the Gap

In October 2013, The Living Wage Foundation accredited Harlow District council as the first council to become a Living Wage Employer. The Living Wage is an hourly rate set independently and updated annually. The Living Wage is calculated according to the basic cost of living using the “Minimum Income Standard” for the UK. This favourably impacts all employees paid in the lower pay quartile.

The council offers a variety of flexible working arrangements for all employees which can help meet family commitments and is an equal opportunities employer. In August 2025 the Hybrid working policy has been replaced with the Dynamic working policy. This new policy is not about remote working by default, it is about working well, together. That means being in the office most of the time, working collaboratively, and taking advantage of our high-quality workspaces.

The council use skills-based assessment tasks and use structured interviews for recruitment and promotion and will continue to undertake these processes as part of our recruitment practices.

The council is committed to further developing employees’ management skills through improving access to training opportunities such as ILM3 and ILM5 management development programmes and it will look to undertake this by utilising its Apprenticeship Levy, where possible.

The Springboard training programme has been offered by the council for many years; this consists of several workshops aimed at women to enable them to develop their skills both personally and professionally. The council will continue its commitment to this training.

Harlow District Council continues to promote gender diversity in all areas of its workforce.

In the meantime, Harlow District Council is committed to reporting on an annual basis on what it is doing to reduce the gender pay gap and the progress that is making.

References

Hourly Pay

Pay will include:

- Basic pay
- Paid leave, including annual leave, sick leave, maternity, paternity, adoption, or parental leave (except where an employee is paid less than usual because of being on any such leave)
- Area and other allowances
- Shift premium pay
- Pay for piece work

It will not include:

- Overtime and expenses paid

Full-pay Relevant Employee

'Full-pay relevant employee' means a relevant employee who is not, during the relevant pay period, being paid at a reduced rate or zero because of the employee being on leave. Employees who receive no pay at all during the relevant pay period, whether this is because of being on leave, are excluded from the gender pay gap calculations.

'Leave' includes:

- Annual leave
- Maternity, paternity, adoption, parental or shared parental leave
- Sick leave
- Special leave

ⁱ Office for National Statistics, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) Gender Pay Gap, October 2017:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/annualsurveyofhoursandearningsashegenderpaygaptables>

