

Surrey County Council Gender Pay Gap Report

March 2023



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Gender Pay Gap Report at 31 March 2023

The 2023 gender pay gap analysis for Surrey County Council (SCC) reveals disparities in pay between male and female employees. Specifically, the data shows that on average male employees are more likely to be paid more than female employees, although this situation has been improving steadily year on year.

This report aims to provide insights into the average pay gaps, distribution of pay across all quartiles, progress we are making and what continued actions we are taking to further improve the situation.

Under government regulations, employers with 250 or more employees, in England, Wales, and Scotland are required to publish their overall mean and median gender pay gaps each year. More information is available from the [Gender pay gap reporting](#).

Positive pay gaps percentages indicate that men are paid more than women, whilst negative pay gap percentages indicate that women are paid more than men.

Summary

In 2023, the mean pay gap for SCC was 8.38%. This is a 32% improvement and narrowing of the mean pay gap compared to 2022 (down from 12.37%).

In 2023, the median pay gap for SCC was 8.82%. This is a 21% improvement and narrowing of the median pay gap compared to 2022 (down from 11.19%).

In 2023, females were more likely to receive a bonus and were more likely to receive a higher bonus amount than males.

Shown as a snapshot as of 31 March 2023, Surrey County Council's data is as follows:

Table 1: Mean and median gender pay gap

Measure	Female	Male	% Gap
Mean	£18.25	£19.92	8.38%
Median	£16.49	£18.09	8.82%

Table 2: Quartile pay bands

Gender	Lower quartile	Lower middle quartile	Upper middle quartile	Upper quartile
Female	78.21%	78.42%	66.51%	68.35%
Male	21.79%	21.58%	33.49%	31.65%

Table 3: Mean and median bonus* gap

Bonus gap	Female	Male	% Difference gap between Male and Female
Mean bonus payment	£1602.34	£1097.51	-46 %
Median bonus payment	£1000	£500	-100%

Table 4: Bonus proportions

Bonus proportion	Female	Male
Total employments in receipt of bonus payment	274	87
Total Relevant Employees	7468	2785
Bonus proportion	3.67%	3.12%

*Bonus payments include:

1. Long Service Awards paid to staff for either 25 or 40 years of service, £150 and £200, respectively.
2. Recognition Awards.
3. Recruitment and Retention payments for social workers.

Covering statement

It's important to note that having a gender pay gap does not necessarily mean there is an equal pay issue. Equal pay means that there should be no difference in the pay and contractual terms of a female and a male doing the same or similar work (or work of equal value) for the same employer. The gender pay gap report and methodology does not measure equal pay, which relates to what males and females are paid for the same or similar jobs or work of equal value. Gender pay gaps may exist because of a propensity for roles and jobs to be traditionally dominated by a particular gender and for these roles to be either better paid or on lower pay scales.

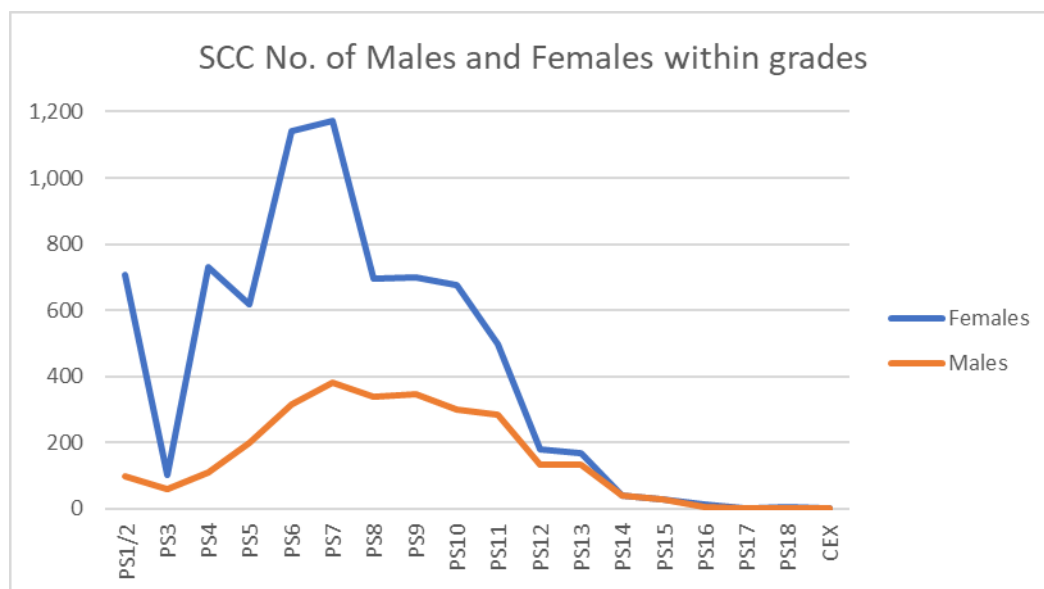
The 2023 Gender Pay data for Surrey County Council (SCC) shows that male employees are more likely to be paid more than female employees, although this situation is improved from 2022 and has been improving steadily year on year.

The majority of SCC's workforce in 2023 (72.9%) is female (from 72.8% 2022). This figure broadly reflects the position for the entire local government workforce in England and Wales, which in November 2021 reported that females made up 75% of the workforce (Local Government Association, 2021).

Surrey County Council's pay policy is gender neutral, ensuring that men and women should receive equal pay for work of equal value. The Council's pay and grading process and structure is underpinned by a robust methodology, which assesses the knowledge and skills for a role alongside the complexity and responsibilities which are required. It is important to note that pay is determined by role, and not by the individual employed.

When comparing pay positions within grades, of all employees paid in the upper quartile range, 68.35% are female, an improvement from 65.15% in 2022.

Women in the lower paid roles are more likely to be in part-time roles, as demonstrated by the number of part time employments (contracts) there are in the lower grades when compared to higher graded roles.



In comparing male and females grading position for our most common roles (PS1 – PS18), there are more females in each grade than males with the exception of PS14 and PS17 where the figures are equal.

Surrey County Council has a high percentage of women in Leadership roles and 70% of the Corporate Leadership Team are female.

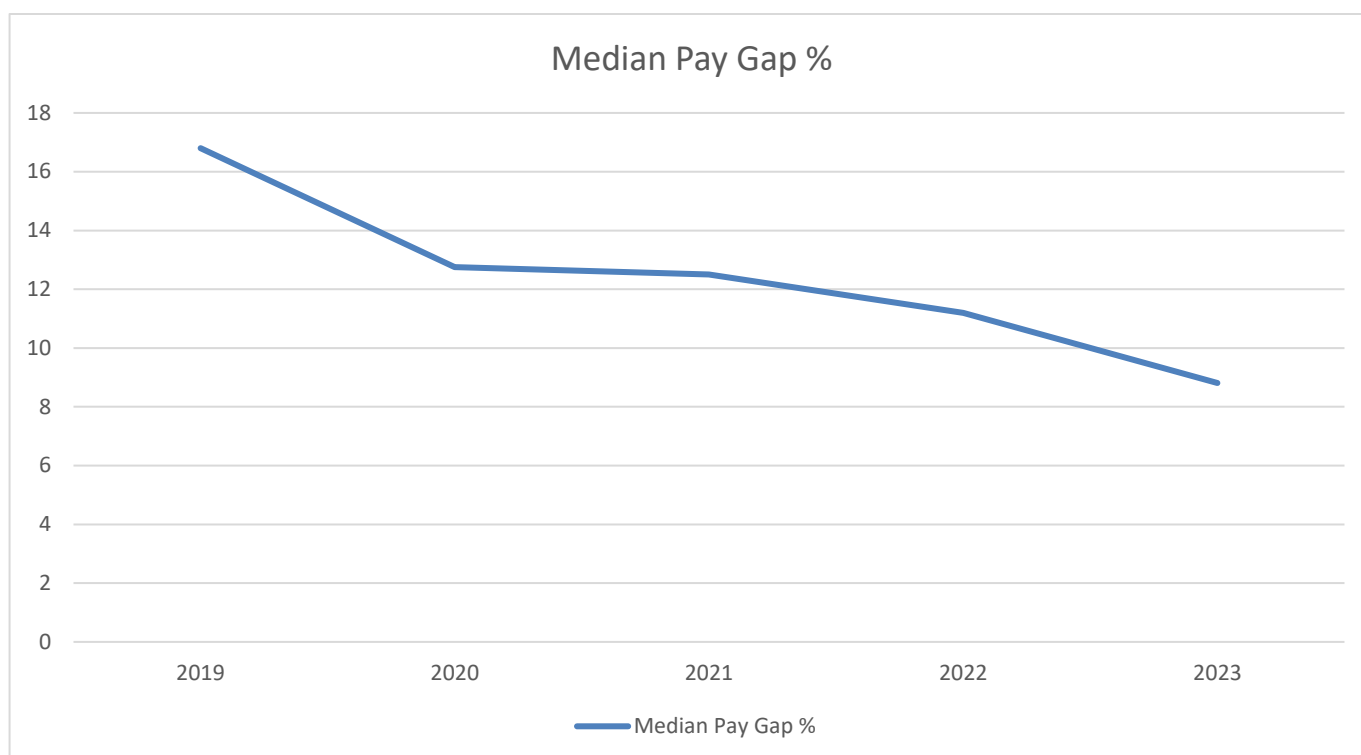
The council's 2022/23 pay deal was weighted towards the organisation's lower pay grades. Consequently, pay grades 1 – 7 received a proportionately higher percentage pay rise than higher pay grades, which contributed towards the narrowing of the gender pay gap in this year.

Median pay gap

Statistically, the median is the middle number in a sorted list of numbers and can be more descriptive than the mean or average. The median pay gap is "the difference between the hourly pay of the median full -pay relevant man and the hourly pay of the median full pay relevant woman" (HM Government: [Making your gender pay gap calculations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-your-gender-pay-gap-calculations)) and is useful in indicating what the 'typical' pay situation is.

A positive pay gap percentage means that men are paid more than women at the midpoint of pay for an organisation, whilst a negative percentage means that women are paid more.

In 2022, the median for SCC was 11.19%. The organisation has seen a drop in median pay gap of 5.6% between 2019 and 2020. In 2023 this gap was further narrowed by 2.37% to 8.82% as it continues to close year on year.



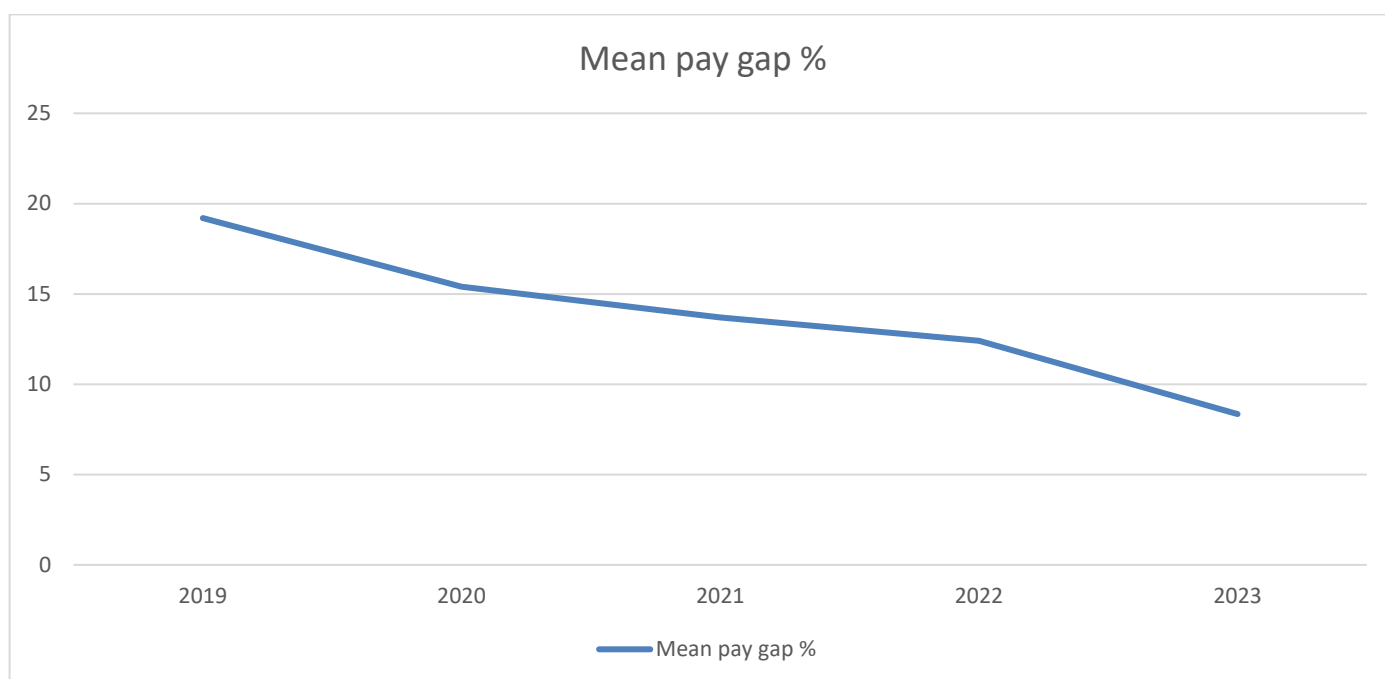
Mean pay gap

The mean pay gap reports the average pay for men and women within an organisation and can be useful “because they place the same value on every number they use, giving a good, overall indication of the gender pay gap” (HM Government). It should be noted, however that very high or very low hourly pay can dominate or distort the figure. For example, mean averages can be useful where most employees in an organisation receive a bonus but could be less useful in an organisation where most of the bonus pay is received by a small number of board members. Here at Surrey County Council our Corporate Leadership Team (equivalent to a typical Board) do not receive bonuses. Bonuses issued are comprised as follows:

1. Long Service Awards paid to staff for either 25 or 40 years of service, £150 and £200, respectively.
2. Recognition Awards.
3. Recruitment and Retention payments for social workers.

A positive pay gap percentage means that on average, men are paid more than women in an organisation.

In 2022, the mean pay gap for SCC was 12.37%. The organisation has seen a reduction in mean pay gap of 8.8% between 2019 and 2020. In 2023 this gap was further narrowed by 3.99% to 8.38% as it continues to close year on year.



What are we doing to tackle the pay gap?

Considerable effort and focus has been injected into this important area and consequently we have seen the gender pay gap within SCC continue to narrow over the last 5 years. We are not complacent however and are continuing activities to further improve the position.

The work SCC is doing to further reduce the gender pay gap should be seen within the context of our wider employee equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) annual plan and associated activities. This reinforces our commitment to making sure that 'no-one is left behind' by developing a workforce which is representative and inclusive and welcomes colleagues from every aspect of our communities and pays attention to welcoming colleagues from all protected characteristics ensuring Surrey County Council is a great place to work and people can be their authentic self. We will continue to pay attention to improving diversity within our leadership and higher paid roles. Protected characteristics cannot be viewed in isolation, and the importance of taking an intersectional perspective and approach will be essential in addressing inequalities for all underrepresented and minority groups.

We are continually analysing our Pulse Survey data to identify areas of the Council where it is reported that we could be doing more to ensure our female staff feel fairly treated by the council and embedding these into our action plans.

We recognise that one action alone cannot bridge the gap. The aim of our actions is to create an environment where women can feel developed, empowered and rewarded and have the confidence to apply for promotions and further career development and have equal chance of being successful as men. Whilst this is true for our female population and written in the specific context of this gender pay gap report, this is also true and beneficial for all of our valued employees.

These actions include:

Joining SCC

1. A review of the council's recruitment and selection processes has been undertaken to ensure they are more inclusive and accessible. This has seen the development of an '*Inclusive and effective recruitment guide*' which will support hiring managers to attract and recruit a more inclusive and diverse workforce, breaking down any stereotypical norms should they exist.

This guide has been completed with input from our various staff Network Groups, including the Women's Network, and has been embedded into our new Recruitment SharePoint Site which will go live during the summer of 2024. To support this initiative, there will be new Recruitment Training for managers which will have inclusive recruitment at its heart, and an associated Resourcing Policy which will underpin this work.

We have tested the new inclusive recruitment methodology with a number of areas across the council with great success, including Residential, Libraries, Customer and Communities and Communications. The methodology covers areas from embracing diverse and innovative approaches to advertising, how roles are publicised and described and to adopting best practice models of candidate assessment.

Whilst we are not complacent, we are proud that recent Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion reviews have commended the progress achieved in making our recruitment processes more inclusive.

2. We are closely monitoring our recruitment data and have finalised EDI reporting for new starters joining us which looks at number and parentage of applications and hires which we will analyse and take action as appropriate.

Working at SCC

3. We are implementing exercises to capture data from all employees on protected characteristics to continually strive to better understand our workforce and how we can best support them.
4. We commissioned reviews of the experiences of disabled, LGBTQ+ and ethnically diverse staff in 2022/23. These reviews adopted an intersectional approach and therefore included a review of the experiences of specific cohorts of both our female and male staff and action plans are now being developed which will outline the work which needs to be done to improve employee experience, retention and development.
5. We have supported the development of all our staff networks, including our Women's staff network through internal publicity, senior sponsorship, provision of a set annual budget, and monthly resource allocation for its chairs. Our networks provide opportunities for staff to let us know how we can improve our culture and retention of staff.
6. Our agile working programme supports both female and male staff to work in more flexible ways. This has enabled our part-time staff, who are predominantly female, to consider increasing their hours or even taking on full time roles whilst balancing other responsibilities as they see this is increasingly possible through our supportive frameworks.
7. SCC is actively working towards the "*Working Families' and Carer Confident*" accreditation programme, making the council more supportive of and attractive to those with parental or caring responsibilities. We have established a Parent/Carer Steering Group where appropriate actions are agreed and implemented. This has included reviewing our flexible working policies and processes, thus making it easier for working parents and carers to work in more senior and better paid/higher salaried roles. These policies and processes will be particularly beneficial to female staff, who are statistically more likely to have caring responsibilities.

8. Women's health in the workplace has been a key area of focus for the Employee Experience Team, with a particular focus on menopause and endometriosis and the support that SCC can provide as an employer, thus supporting the attraction and retention of female staff.
9. We offer a financial package of up to £6000 to new permanent qualified frontline case-holding social workers, team managers and Independent Chairs (These are subject to tax and national insurance deductions and paid pro rata if you are part time). These roles are predominantly filled by female employees. The package comprises:
 - An unconsolidated welcome payment of £1,000 with a corresponding retention period of six months.
 - A further unconsolidated retention payment of £2,000 on completion of six months service, with a corresponding retention period of twelve months.
 - A final unconsolidated retention payment of £3,000 on completion of 18 months service with a corresponding retention period of two years.

Eligible Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS) become eligible to join the scheme upon completion of their Assisted Supported Year in Employment (ASYE).

10. Continuation of our rollout of a reverse mentoring programme for Leaders, which helps support closing the gender pay gap by facilitating mutual learning between employees of different genders. For instance, our junior female employees can mentor senior male employees on topics like diversity, inclusion, and the unique challenges women face in the workplace. This can increase awareness, empathy, and understanding among our male leaders, leading to more equitable pay practices and opportunities for women.
11. We are embedding the Real World Group Engaging Transformational Leadership Model taking positive action, where necessary, to continue to promote and support access to leadership development opportunities for underrepresented groups, and to help them to secure and thrive in leadership roles.
12. We will continue to identify succession planning for our senior leadership positions, reviewing and updating our succession plans accordingly and focussing on diversity of opportunity.

Learning and development at SCC

13. We are reviewing our current and future EDI training provision to ensure staff have the appropriate skills to support Equality, Diversity & Inclusion within the workplace. This includes the continued provision of an organisation-wide training package on unconscious bias, that is open to all staff, with targeted training for managers and senior leadership and a focus on the impact of bias on decision making (including recruitment decisions) and importantly, how to overcome these biases. It will also include training on carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and training on Allyship and understanding shared barriers.
14. We are ensuring that learning and career development opportunities are made available to staff who work part-time or flexible hours as they are not always aware or feel they are accessible. This will predominantly benefit our female staff who make up the majority of part time roles, thus providing them with equal opportunities to develop long term careers and pursue promotion opportunities within Surrey County Council. This includes the promotion of 'job share' opportunities and working with managers to consider creative ways for staff to continue to work part time whilst in more senior roles.
15. The development of a wide ranging and inclusive Career Development Programme. This is not just about development opportunities but around increasing visibility of opportunities and

the support staff can obtain to help progress in their chosen careers. This will include easier located access on our intranet pages for job vacancies, development opportunities and the provision of CV writing and interview skills training as well as career mapping support and access to coaches. This support will be provided to all staff, including those in (predominantly female) lower paid roles to progress their careers within the council.

Reward at SCC

16. We continue to use job evaluation and benchmarking data when setting salary ranges for new roles, so that our pay and grading structures are transparent and gender neutral.
17. Our annual pay review process continues to be gender-neutral and outcomes are automatically applied to all salaries, regardless of sex and gender.
18. The 2022/23 pay deal agreed within SCC included a deliberate focus on improving the pay of staff on lower pay scales, in response to the cost-of-living challenges. This will support the further narrowing of the gender pay gap.

Leaving SCC

19. We will do all we can to discourage people from leaving and determine what we can do to understand any reasons for leaving and try and overcome these reasons and persuade staff to stay. We already have retention schemes in place for our Childrens Social Workers which not only provides continuity of service for our vulnerable children, but these staff are mainly female.
20. We will continually ensure the completion and analysis of Exit interview data. We will be paying particular attention to the reasons any female staff are stating they are leaving SCC, taking the learning from this and developing further actions where necessary or building on existing actions to encourage retention and promotion within the council.

Many of these actions are included in the HM Government Equalities Office paper on [Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations: Evidence-based actions for employers](#). Additional actions listed in this paper, which are being considered for 2024/25 including “Encouraging the uptake of Shared Parental Leave”.

The council will continue to work in collaboration with the Women’s Staff Network (and others) in agreeing impactful actions to further reduce the pay gap.