

Clear  
Business

# Gender Pay Gap Report 2024



## A message from **Lee Hull**, CEO

I once again have pleasure in delivering our Gender Pay Gap report, reflecting our gender pay data in **April 2024**.

I'm pleased to report that we remain well below the national average, with a median Gender Pay Gap of **10.3%**. In addition, our female colleague population has increased slightly to **38%**.

I recognise that we can do better with the male / female split within our upper pay quartile and that the downward trend has not continued this year in relation to our gender bonus gap. However, I remain confident that our salaries are based on regular external benchmarking, and that reward decisions are fair, objective and subject to a high level of scrutinisation and calibration.

Rather, a deeper analysis of the data shows a change in our organisation structure, with more sales and technical roles existing across the business, both of which are associated with relatively higher market rates of pay and a male dominated candidate pool.

For these reasons, we've been placing a significant emphasis on inclusive hiring strategies, seeking to widen our candidate pool for sales and technical roles in particular. I'm delighted to share some of these initiatives within this report, and proud that our Talent Acquisition team were shortlisted for SheCanCode's Power Up award for Best In-House Recruiter 2024.

We continue to be a strong family-friendly employer with enhanced parental leave packages, flexible and hybrid working and career breaks to name but a few. We're also ahead of the game in relation to the upcoming Employment Rights Bill, in that we already offer a day one right to request a flexible working arrangement, we've launched a clear Menopause Support policy and equality and diversity is already an integral part of our People strategy.

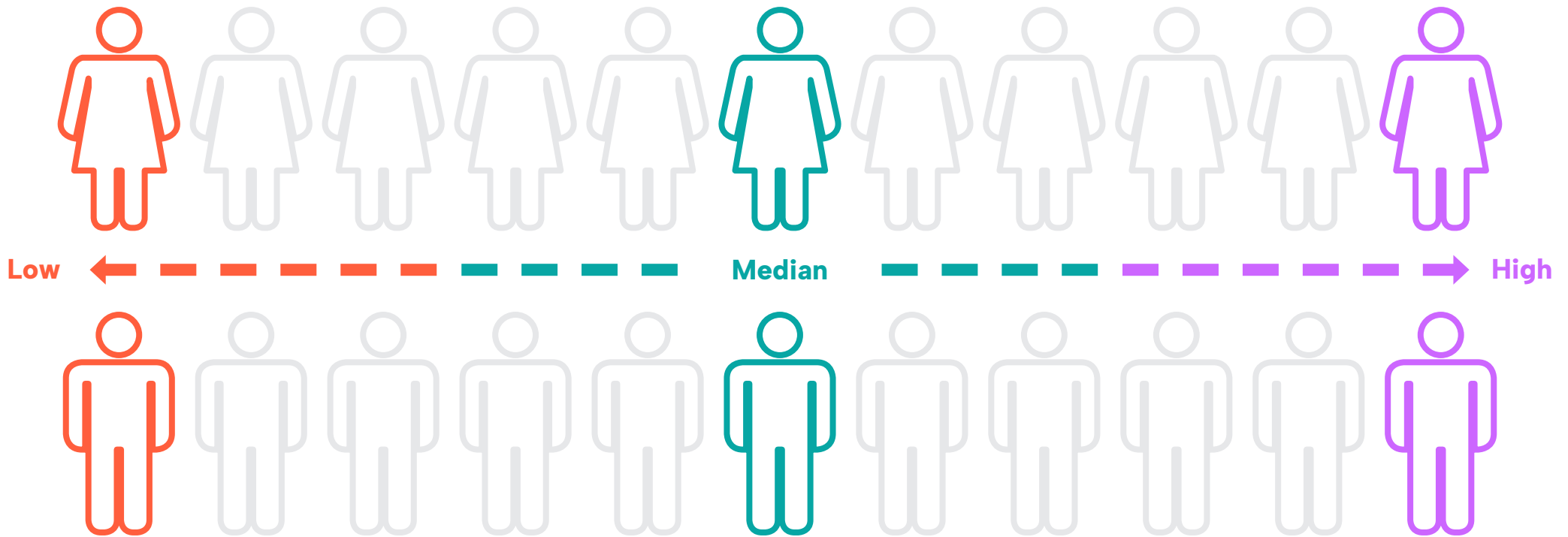
In addition, we take our responsibility to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace extremely seriously, and the recent legislation changes in this area have given us a welcome opportunity to review our prevention measures to ensure they're robust, and to remind colleagues and managers of how their actions are crucial in helping to prevent it. All of our leadership team have been trained on the new legislation and sexual harassment prevention, and are championing our internal initiatives in this area.

We welcome the insight this report gives us and will continue to work hard on gender diversity and inclusivity across all of our business.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L R Hull".

# What is a **Gender Pay Gap** and how is it **calculated**?



## What is a median calculation

Imagine if all the employees formed a male line and female line in hourly wage order. The person in the middle of those two lines would have the median salary. 50% of employees earn more, and 50% earn less.

## What is a mean calculation

Add up the salaries of a gender and divide by the number of individuals of that gender. This is what is generally accepted as 'the average'.

## What is the pay gap?

Men and women take on different roles within the company and because of the differing mix of salary for the roles and the number of males and females doing those roles, a Gender Pay Gap can emerge.

## How is the Gender Pay Gap measured?

The Gender Pay Gap is the difference in the average hourly rate of pay between males and females. This is done on a median and a mean basis.

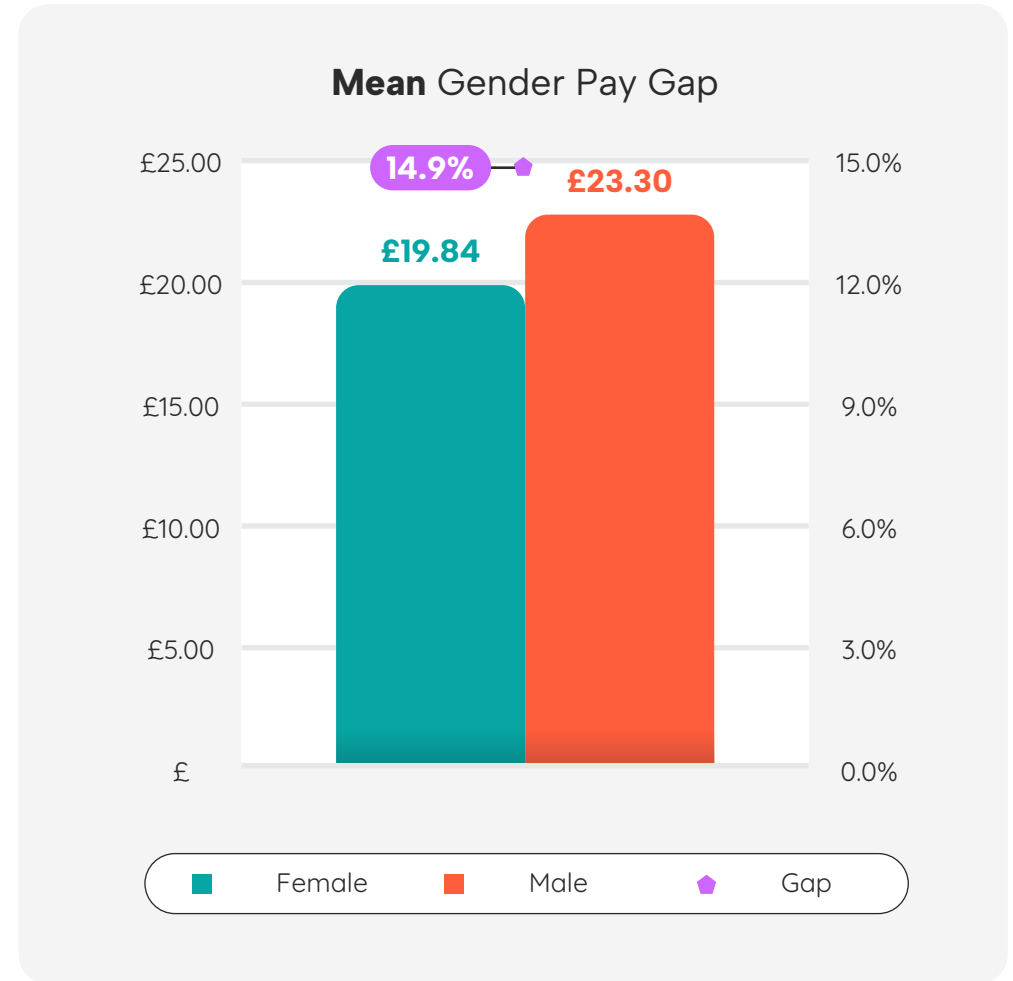
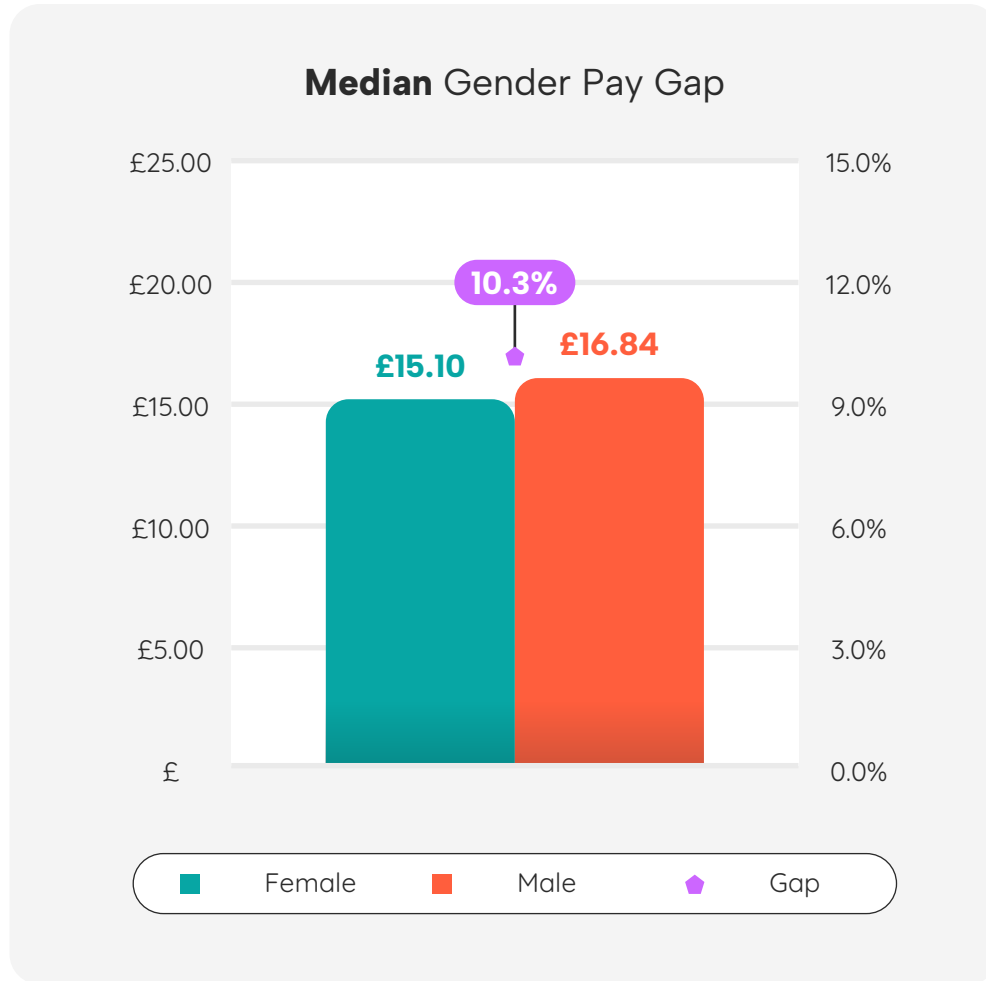
## How are the pay quartiles calculated?

Pay quartiles are calculated by ranking rates of pay from lowest to highest and dividing those rankings into four equal-sized groups, calculating the percentage of how many males and females are in each.

## How are the bonus figures calculated?

Bonus pay is calculated using the proportion of males receiving a bonus payment and the proportion of females receiving a bonus payment in the snapshot period.

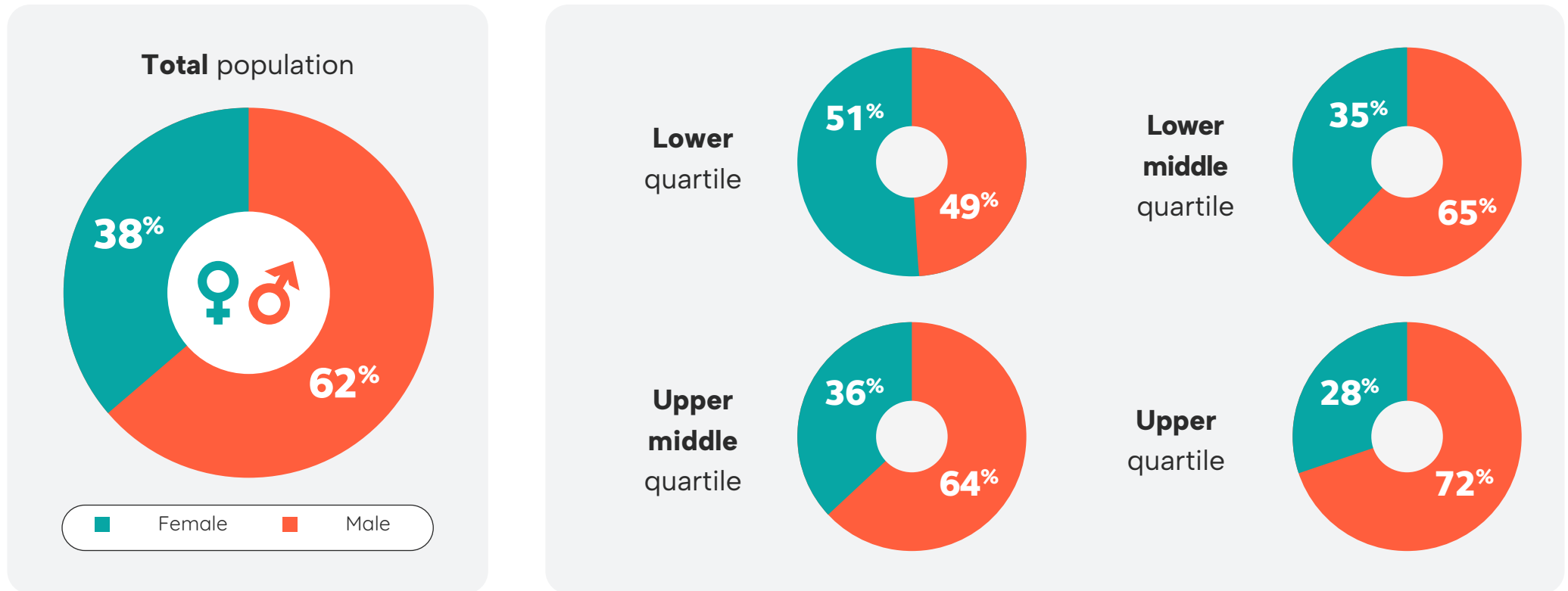
# Our results: Gender Pay Gap



Verastar Ltd, trading as Clear Business has a median gender pay gap of **10.3%**, below the national average of 13.1% (ons.gov.uk: Gender Pay Gap in the UK 2024). Our mean gender pay gap is **14.9%**.

As a business, gender equality and diversity remains a key focus for us, and we're committed to driving our figures down even further and remaining well below the national average.

## Our results: Pay quartiles



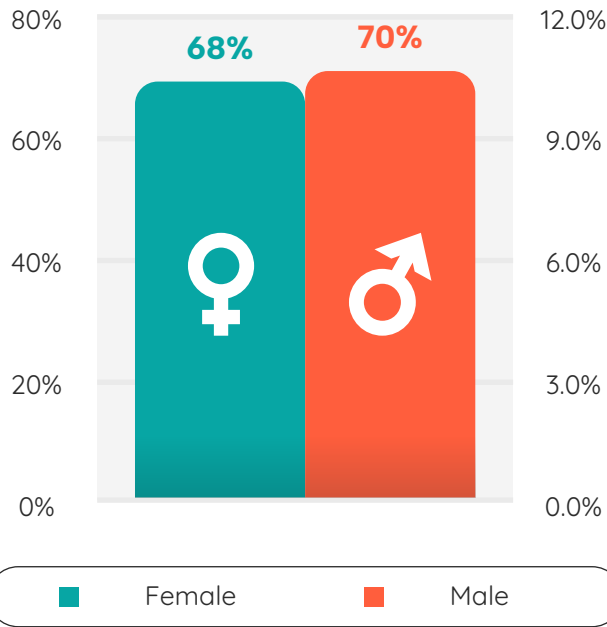
Our total female population has increased from 37% to **38%**. We're proud of this small positive step, since the structure of our organisation changed over the reporting period, with an increase in more traditionally male-dominated sales and data roles than in previous years.

The gender split in our lower pay quartile is almost even, whereas males represent 72% of our upper quartile pay. Again, this is explained by the changes in our organisational structure. We employ more males than females in these sales and technical roles due to labour market constraints, and so the increase in roles within these slightly higher paid professions has led to a change in the gender distribution across our pay quartiles. In addition, we refreshed the talent in our leadership team, and an overlap in some senior roles during the reporting period has impacted the results.

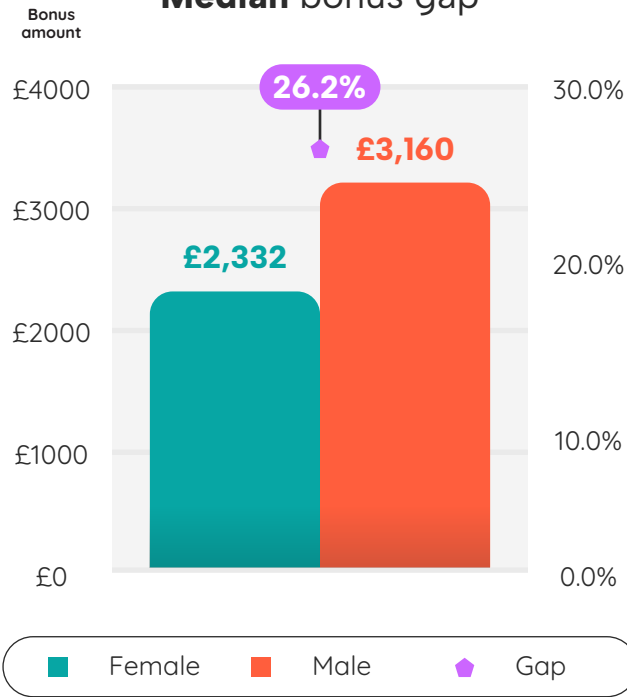
Since the reporting period, we've been working hard to increase diversity across the business, with a particular focus on attracting more women into sales and technology. Further details on our initiatives can be found later in the report, and we continue to strive for improvements in this area.

# Our results: Bonus

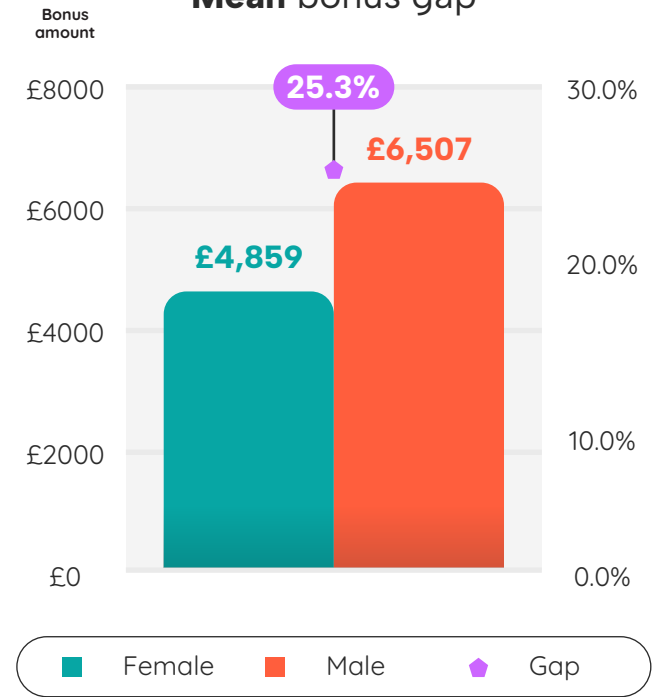
### Proportion **receiving** a bonus



### Median bonus gap



### Mean bonus gap



The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus is relatively even. All roles within the business are eligible for bonus payments (or commission). Any colleague not receiving a bonus is due to the application of agreed, objective criteria, including start date and business performance.

In this year's report, wider gaps do exist in both the median and mean bonus gaps, which are **26.2%** and **25.3%** respectively, whereas this result had been improving dramatically in previous years. An analysis of the results has shown that this can be explained by the previously mentioned changes to our organisational structure, with more roles within our sales and technical teams. Bonuses are based on a percentage of salary, so these higher paid professions lead to slightly higher bonus awards. In addition, there was an overlap in some of our most senior roles during the reporting period, as new individuals joined and others left the business.

We remain committed to fairness and objectivity in our bonus decisions, which are directly linked to performance. Performance is measured against an agreed scoring matrix, with equal consideration given to both achievement of goals and behaviour consistent with our core values. Performance measures are also calibrated across teams and departments, including a deep analysis of the measures awarded to our leadership community.

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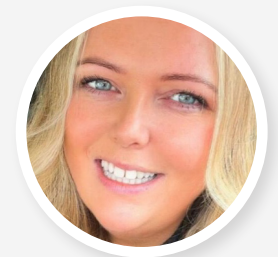
# **Our ongoing commitment** to gender equality & diversity

Over the last 12 months, we've continued to work hard on our gender equality and diversity strategy, to build on the great foundations we already have in place.

# Hiring practices

As stated in last year's report, we've been focussing on our hiring strategies in particular. As our workforce is changing, we're conscious we need to work harder to attract female talent in the more traditionally male-dominated sales and technical roles. Here's what we've been doing:

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Clear Salary Advertising            | We include a salary indication for the roles we advertise, to avoid any surprises or uncomfortable negotiations.   |
| Flexible Hours and Hybrid Working   | We make it clear on all of our adverts that there's an opportunity for our roles to be performed flexibly, and / or through a hybrid working arrangement.  |
| Gender Bias Decoding                | All of our advert wording goes through a gender bias decoder, to ensure we're not subconsciously using gendered language to put anyone off applying.   |
| Targeted Jobs Boards                | We advertise on boards such as womenintech.co.uk, to widen the talent pool to include as many female applicants as possible.   |
| Targeted Candidate Searches         | Our Talent Acquisition team use tools such as LinkedIn to directly connect with both male and female passive potential candidates, and we're exploring programmatic advertising to reach an even broader candidate pool across multiple platforms.   |
| Female Representation at Interviews | Where possible, we ensure that both male and female colleagues are involved in the hiring process, especially for sales and technical roles.   |
| Female Representation on Shortlists | We challenge our hiring partners to ensure there is always a female candidate on the shortlist for our senior hires.   |
| Internal Roadshows                  | We continue to hold regular roadshows to showcase different teams and roles available across the business (including Data and Technology), during which colleagues can speak to others performing those roles and find out what's involved.  |
| Support for Internal Mobility       | <p>To support colleagues seeking a career change, we hold workshops and 121 development sessions on CV writing and interview preparation, to support internal transfers and promotions.</p> <p>We're delighted that our very own Kayleigh Tomany has been recognised for all the hard work in this area, by being shortlisted for SheCanCode's Power Up award for Best In-House Recruiter 2024.</p> <p><b>"As a Senior Talent Acquisition Consultant, I focus on creating opportunities for individuals struggling to enter the tech and data market. Hosting community lunch and learns for those interested in specific fields to expand their knowledge is key. Championing inclusion and diversity, I have made it my mission to break the mould."</b></p> <p>Kayleigh and the rest of our brilliant Talent Acquisition team continue to seek new ways to find and attract diverse talent into our business.</p> |





## Supporting our colleagues to **work flexibly**

In last year's report, we outlined a thorough review of our flexible working practices across each of our teams where we explored what more we can do to support colleagues who want more flexibility. Following this we introduced a suite of changes, including more flexibility in working hours and lunch breaks.

Colleague feedback shows this has been well received, but we didn't just leave it there. We know that where people work part time, there's often a tendency to put in significant extra hours to be able to deliver. We've actively identified where this might be happening and worked with the colleagues to put measures in place to ensure their working arrangements remain fair, whilst still enjoying the flexibility they need.

In addition, we know the importance of a diverse leadership team, and are committed to retaining the gender balance we already enjoy within our senior team. We've therefore ensured that our leadership community are also benefitting from flexible working arrangements to support their own work/life integration.

# Sexual harassment prevention

Prior to October 2024, we already had several measures in place to help identify, prevent and address sexual harassment at work, but the new duty gave us a welcome opportunity to review our measures to ensure they're robust. Here's what we've done:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Reviewed and updated our Anti-Harassment and Bullying policy</b>                                | Included in this policy are a commitment to a zero-tolerance approach, definitions and examples of sexual harassment, what colleagues should do if they witness or experience it, how any complaints will be investigated, and a range of sources of support.                          |
| <b>We have a team in place to handle any complaints and offer expert advice</b>                    | The People team includes those with a thorough understanding of employment law and sound experience of supporting managers to handle any complaints swiftly and sensitively.   |
| <b>We track the data</b>   | We keep a record of all employee relations cases, the gender split of our workforce and exit interview details, so we can analyse trends and take both corrective and preventative action.   |
| <b>We've placed more focus on sexual harassment prevention in our Essential Learning programme</b> | We've built on our anti-harassment and bullying e-learning to include a module focused on sexual harassment, so all colleagues understand what it is and their role in helping to prevent it. All colleagues must complete this on joining, and then annually as a refresher.          |
| <b>Targeted Candidate Searches</b>   | Our Talent Acquisition team use tools such as LinkedIn to directly connect with both male and female passive potential candidates, and we're exploring programmatic advertising to reach an even broader candidate pool across multiple platforms.                                     |
| <b>Raised Awareness amongst our Mental Health First Aiders.</b>                                    | We have a group of colleagues who may be the first source of support for some colleagues experiencing difficulties. They have been briefed to understand our internal procedures and to know exactly where to direct any colleagues who might raise concerns around sexual harassment. |
| <b>Female Representation on Shortlists</b>   | We challenge our hiring partners to ensure there is always a female candidate on the shortlist for our senior hires.   |
| <b>Colleague Discussion Forum</b>  | We used International Women's Day as a great opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of sexual harassment prevention at work.   |

# International Women's Day

Once again, we hosted a company-wide event to celebrate International Women's Day.

This year's theme, **#AccelerateAction**, was all about inspiring colleagues to make pledges that drive gender equality - both within our business and in wider society. To support this, we encouraged the use of our existing volunteering day and charity matched funding to help bring these pledges to life.

The event was led by our Customer Care Director, **Stacey Clarke**, who is also our **Equality and Diversity Lead**. During the event we were joined by a number of female and male colleagues from across the business, for a panel Q&A hosted by our People & Culture Manager, **Melissa Hickman**. Together, they explored topics such as resilience, breaking barriers, career growth, and allyship—under the theme “**Advice to My Younger Self**”.

We were also pleased to welcome an Employment Lawyer - Suzanne Pipe who specialises in **Sexual Harassment prevention**. She provided insights into the **impactful steps we can all take to accelerate action**, as well as the power of **giving and receiving feedback** on this important issue.

**Women Leaders** in the business have also had an opportunity to attend a Women in Leadership Workshop with **Instep** – covering personal and professional growth, using imposter syndrome as a strength and how gendered language, societal influences and workplace dynamics can shape motivation and leadership styles.

Finally, to keep the conversation going from the day, we equipped managers with resources to continue discussions and drive meaningful initiatives in team meetings.



## A note from our **Chief People Officer**

“Equality, diversity and inclusion, and gender diversity in particular, has been a key part of our People Strategy. We’ve been working hard to ensure that our colleague experience is inclusive and I’m delighted to see the progress we’re making in this area. I’m also proud to be part of a leadership team with a healthy gender balance and a passion for inclusivity. We continue to listen to our people and seek new ways to build on the progress we’ve already made.”

**Jo Dogherty** – Chief People Officer