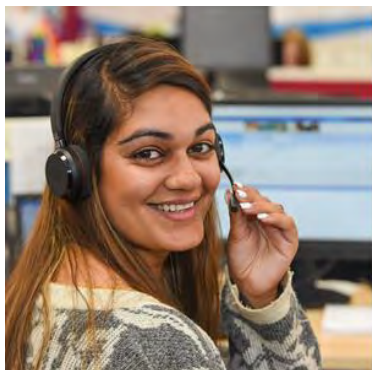


Our people



Gender, equality and diversity

As a company with more than 250 employees, we are legally required to publish a gender pay gap report each year.

Our report for 2021/22 is based on the snapshot date of 5 April 2021. At the time, we directly employed 448 people across the following business functions in our Cambridge and South Staffs operating areas.

- Wholesale service.
- Retail and customer service.
- Finance, regulation and business support.
- Water quality and compliance.
- Tankering.
- Human resources, and health and safety.

Overall, our gender workforce split is 76% male (2021: 77%) and 24% female (2021: 23%); 67% of our people are employed within the wholesale function, including in

the areas of water production and our field-based operations.

In terms of the difference between the hourly pay and bonuses of our male and female employees, the key points to note are as follows.

- The mean difference between the hourly pay of our male and female employees is 2% (2021: 4%), while the median difference is 6% (2021: 5%).

- The mean and median difference in bonus pay (shown as male employees earning more than female employees) is 28% and 19%, respectively. This accounts for a management bonus and productivity-based bonus schemes.
- The proportions of male and female employees receiving a bonus during the reporting year was 9% and 17%, respectively.

Our business – and the England and Wales water sector as a whole – is primarily engineering based, with high numbers of employees working in technical, field-based or manual roles that have traditionally been male dominated. While we have seen improvements in our gender pay gap in recent years, we know there is more to do – and that this will take time. We are committed to doing everything we can to reduce the gender pay gap and took the following steps during the reporting year.

- We continued to **re-shape the way in which we attract new talent** and how we present ourselves as a business that is embedded in the communities we serve. This includes using gender-neutral language in our job adverts, focusing instead on skills, ability and opportunities for development as a way of attracting more female applicants.
- We **worked proactively with schools, colleges and universities**, attending careers fairs (where COVID-19 restrictions permitted) and sharing information about the opportunities we have available. We also offer work experience and have a successful apprenticeship programme.
- We **continued to encourage a flexible working approach**. The second year of the COVID-19 pandemic led us to create an environment where home working for part of the week has become the new normal for our office-based people. There is no doubt that strengthening our approach to flexible working in the year ahead will enable us to continue to recruit and retain the right people to drive our work programmes in the future.

When it comes to diversity, we are mindful that the water sector is not yet representative of the UK workforce for sex and gender; black, Asian and minority ethnic communities;

disability and the under-24s. To address this, we have committed to work collaboratively with others within and outside the sector to drive change.

For example, we work with Energy and Utilities Skills and are a signatory of its Inclusion Commitment. We are also playing our part to ensure the work force in the energy and utilities sectors are more inclusive and diverse, to help us attract and retain talent, drive innovation and ensure our business reflects the communities we serve. We are also a signatory of the Social Mobility Pledge, a global coalition of businesses and universities that encourages organisations to be a force for good by putting social mobility at the heart of their purpose. And we have an equality, diversity and inclusion policy in place.

In addition, we have designed our application processes to ensure we select applicants fairly and equitably. We make every reasonable effort to provide people with disabilities with equal opportunities for employment, training and promotion, making reasonable adjustments where appropriate. And we have designed our training programmes to support equal opportunities – taking steps to eliminate stereotyping, prejudice or any other form of discrimination from all our internal training courses.

Supporting our people

We take the health and wellbeing of our people seriously and are committed always to minimise the risk of harm. Our accident rate improved slightly during the reporting year, with eight minor accidents (2021: ten) and one RIDDOR reportable incident (2021: one) where one of our people sustained a serious injury while carrying out their operational duties. We shared the learnings from this incident with our people across the business to raise awareness and minimise the risk of such events happening again in the future.

Over the past year, we also started reporting to the Board on high potential (HiPo) incidents. These are any events with the potential to result in a life threatening or a life altering injury. This could be an accident or a near miss. We recorded three such incidents during the reporting year, the most serious of which resulted in a localised fire on grassland near to an area where one of our contractors was carrying out some work.

We will continue to raise awareness among our people and supply chain partners of the importance of health and safety within the work place, and remind them of the need to be mindful of the ways they can mitigate any risk associated with their roles.

We also launched a programme of site visits for the Executive team and senior leaders during the year, with 72 management visits taking place. The aims of these visits are to:

- increase the visibility of our senior leaders across the business;
- give senior leaders more opportunity to engage with our operational teams; and
- help demonstrate the commitment of the whole business to the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees.

We will continue to report on our progress in this area as we strive to deliver our ambition of being a zero accident work place.

If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it is the importance of protecting the mental health and wellbeing of our people, both within and outside the work place. We continued to support our people during the reporting year with our mental health first aiders, through initiatives such as our 'Wellbeing Wednesdays' and by raising awareness of mental health issues through our support for things like as Mental Health Awareness Week, which takes place in May each year. We also used our internal communication channels to share tips and ideas about improving individual wellbeing – from taking regular breaks while working to discussing the benefits of exercise and nutrition.

But there are other ways in which we demonstrate our support and commitment to the wellbeing of our people. For example, we have lone worker devices, supported by Solo Protect, for our operational and field-based people. This enables our people to activate a 'red alert' or 'man down' alarm in the event of an accident or injury. Operators in the Solo Protect control room pick up these alerts and locate the user, enabling help to be sent quickly. In addition, we have implemented a 'director on call' rota to help us manage any incidents more effectively. The director on call is the strategic level representative for the incident controller to liaise with during an incident.

We also launched a 'proud to be...' employee engagement campaign during

the reporting year as a way of celebrating our successes and highlighting the wide variety of roles across the business. The aim is to create a sense of pride in the work we do and the communities we serve. And we

repurposed the staff canteen at our Green Lane head office as a friendly and inviting collaboration hub, which is available for anyone from the South Staffordshire Plc Group to use and enjoy. The hub is multi-

functional, giving our people a bright and modern space to meet colleagues, work – individually or in groups – and relax. It has proved very popular since it opened in October.



“Our people are at the heart of our business, and we take their health and wellbeing seriously. We’ve run a number of initiatives during the year to promote good mental health. We’ve also run a ‘Proud to be...’ campaign, giving our people an opportunity to share why they think South Staffordshire Water is a great place to work”

Marcella Nash, HR Director