

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 2022/23 is based on the snapshot date of 5 April 2022. At the time, we directly employed 439 people across the following business functions in our Cambridge and South Staffs regions.

- 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 77% male (2022: 76%) and 23% female (2022: 24%); 68% 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 8% (2022: 2%), while the median difference is 15% (2022: 6%).
- The **mean and median difference in bonus pay** (shown as male employees earning more than female employees) is 38% and 0%, 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 11% and 18%, 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 and sharing information about the opportunities we have available. We also offer work experience and apprenticeships.
- We **continued to encourage a flexible working approach**. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have created 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 is enabling us 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.

Engaging our people

We participated in a Group-wide engagement survey during the reporting year to measure levels of employee engagement across the business. Overall, the survey responses outlined the need to focus on the following three priorities.

- Communication.
- Career conversations.
- Organisational values.

We made some progress on each of these areas during the year. We will repeat the survey in the 2023/24 financial year to assess our progress and realign our priorities based on the feedback from our people. We will report on the outcomes from this survey in next year's annual report and financial statements.

Supporting our people

A key priority for us is the health and wellbeing of our people – this is something we take very seriously. From a health and safety perspective, we provide regular training and awareness-raising campaigns across all our sites. Our aim with these activities is always to minimise the risk of harm. Our accident rate

has continued to improve over the reporting year, with five minor accidents (2022: eight) and one reportable RIDDOR incident (2022: one). This incident involved a lost time injury of fewer than seven days following a fall at work.

We have continued to implement new health and safety initiatives across the business. For example, we introduced a new HSMS reporting system during the year called EcoOnline. This is an intuitive software platform that brings together reporting across several environmental, health and safety metrics, including in the areas of chemical safety and incident reporting. We will carry on raising awareness among our people and supply chain partners of the importance of health and safety within the workplace, and to remind them of the need to be mindful of the ways they can mitigate any risk associated with their roles.

We also provide a range of support and social activities throughout the year to ensure we keep our people engaged and contribute to their wellbeing. For example, we launched an awareness-raising campaign called 'A day in the life of...' to highlight the work of people across the business, with a particular focus on our field-based teams. This gave us the opportunity to spotlight different roles. We also used Wellbeing Week at the end of July to organise a range of different activities and events for our people. These included:

- free health checks at our Fulbourn Road and Green Lane offices, run by the British Heart Foundation;
- lunchtime walks;
- 'at your desk' massage sessions;
- bake sales, to bring people together and raise money for good causes; and
- 'free fruit Friday', with fresh fruit made available at all our sites.

We will continue to promote positive wellbeing and mental health support for all our people in the year ahead.

Another way we engage our people is through specific 'celebration' events held throughout the year. To commemorate the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June, for example, we joined with people from other Group companies for games, activities, and a fish and chip lunch. We also held a desk decorating competition, sharing the most creative entries through our internal communications channels. In addition, for Black History Month in October we celebrated with Caribbean food and showcased our black colleagues on some of our social media channels. And in March, we celebrated International Women's Day, highlighting the work of women across the business, the range of roles they occupy and how they contribute to making sure water always flows to customers' taps.