

# Stonewater Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report 2024



# Background

Since 2017, Government legislation requires companies with more than 250 employees to release data on their gender pay gap each year based on a snapshot of data from the previous April.

The gender/ethnicity pay gap is the difference between the average pay of men and women / non-ethnically diverse and ethnically diverse employees across a business; it's not a comparison of pay rates between men/women and white/ethnically diverse employees doing the same job.



# Foreword

## Welcome to Stonewater's Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap report based on the snapshot data from April 2024.

Stonewater is proud to be one of the UK's largest social housing providers and it has been a busy year which has seen us grow through the acquisition of Greenoak Housing Association and the addition of homes following Mount Green Housing Association joining the Group.

We recognise that it is our colleagues' dedication that drives our successes, and we have set out our ambition to become an exceptional place to work. Our aim is to create a culture where everyone can bring their whole self to work at Stonewater and we are committed to ensure that all of our colleagues feel proud to be themselves at work, and proud to say #iAMStonewater.

A huge amount of work has been going on to support the bridging of our pay gaps and to support our People Strategy and I am pleased to see that set against a time of growth we have started to see a reduction in our gender pay gap.

We know we can do more, and we are committed to building a sustainable long-term change to drive down our pay gaps. This will take time, and it remains a key priority in our wider People Strategy. During 2024 we have had a real focus on talking and engaging with our colleagues to enable us to build strong, tailored people policies. We were delighted to see Stonewater being recognised as having excellent engagement levels with a one-star "Best Companies" award in January 2024. In the national Ethnicity Awards, we also placed in the top 10 in the Network Group of the Year.

These awards and the feedback from our colleagues are incredibly important. We continue to listen, learn, implement and monitor our pay gap action plans alongside our People Strategy to drive continual positive change, and we look forward to reporting our progress over the next 12 months.

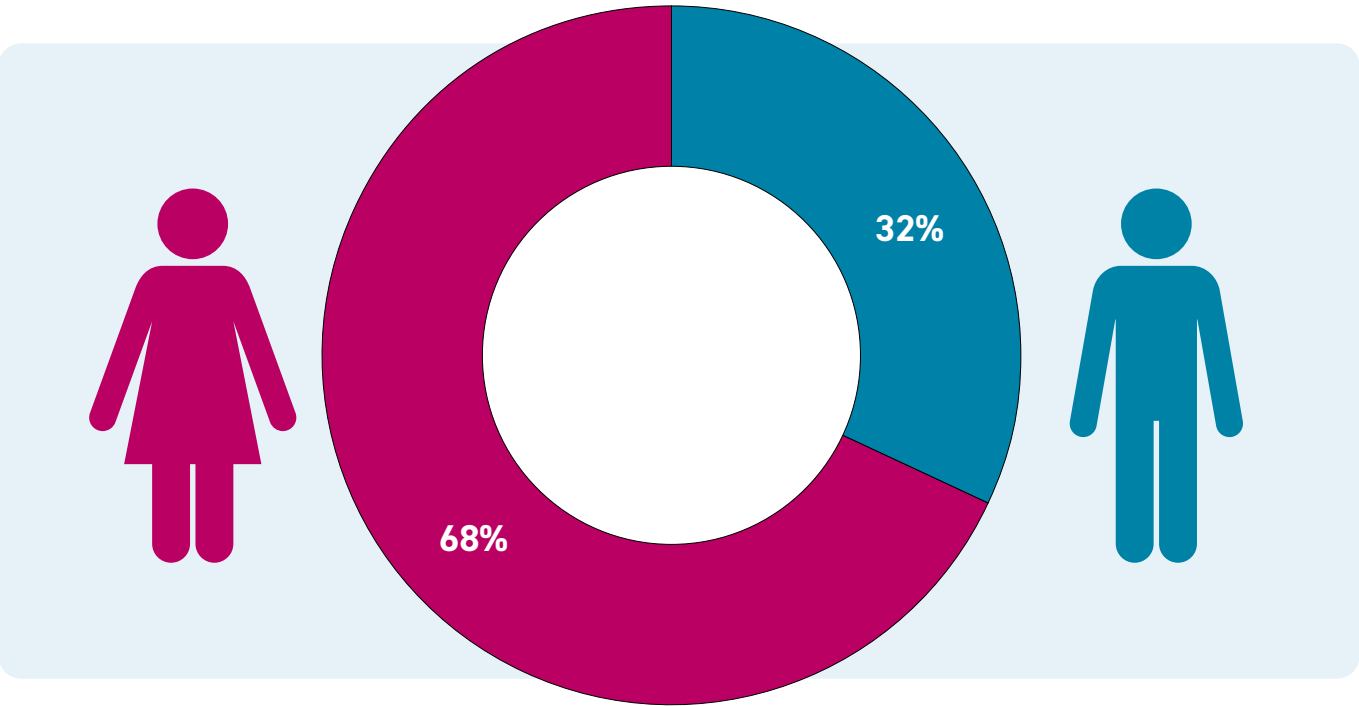
I, Nicholas Harris, Chief Executive, confirm that the information in this statement is accurate.

Signed:

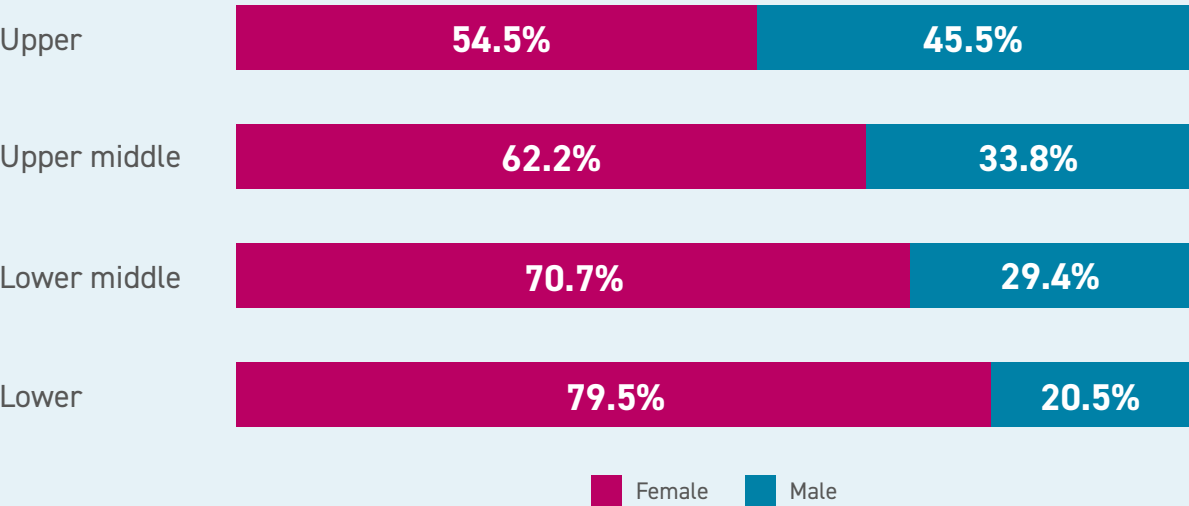


### Our workforce

As of April 2024, Stonewater employs more than 800 people and our overall female population for full pay relevant employees is 68% in contrast to 32% male.



### Our gender profile



We recognise our imbalance at the lower and upper quartile of our employee population, which is the key contributing factor to our gender pay gap.

Across the middle two quartiles, greater balance can be viewed and is more aligned to the overarching gender profile of Stonewater’s workforce.

Our gender pay gap

Mean pay gap		Median pay gap	
2023	2024	2023	2024
20.29%	19.56%	21.42%	20.49%
The mean pay gap is the average difference in hourly pay between men and women in an organisation.		The median gender pay gap is the difference between the middle hourly rate of pay for male and female employees.	

From 2023, we can see a reduction by 0.73% and 0.93% respectively for the mean and the median gender pay gap.

Our bonus gender pay gap

Proportion of employees receiving bonus payments

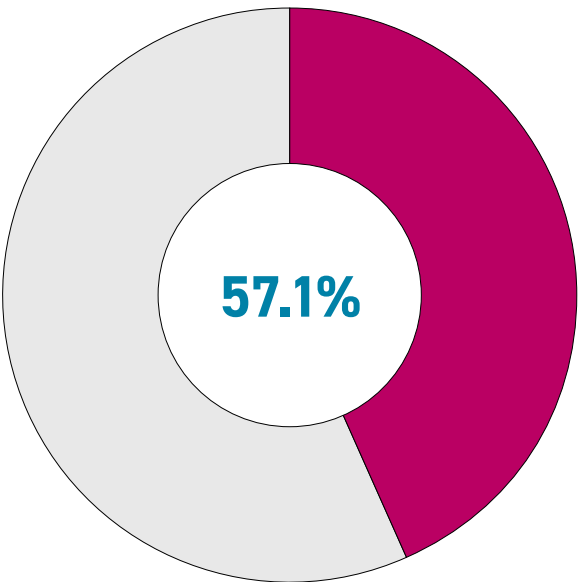


9.2%

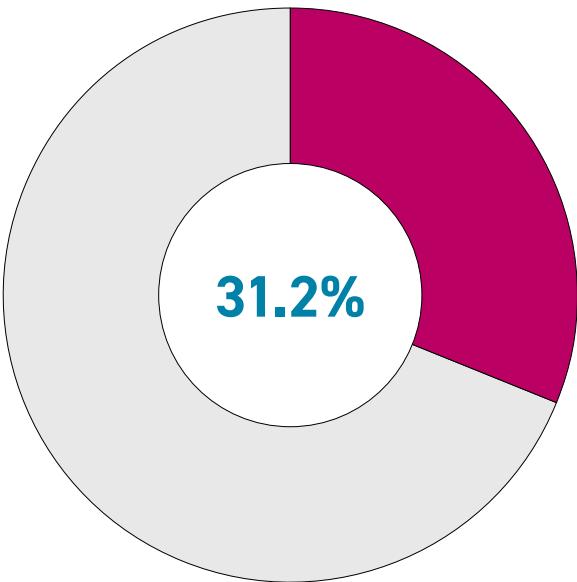


7.2%

Mean bonus gap: 57.1%

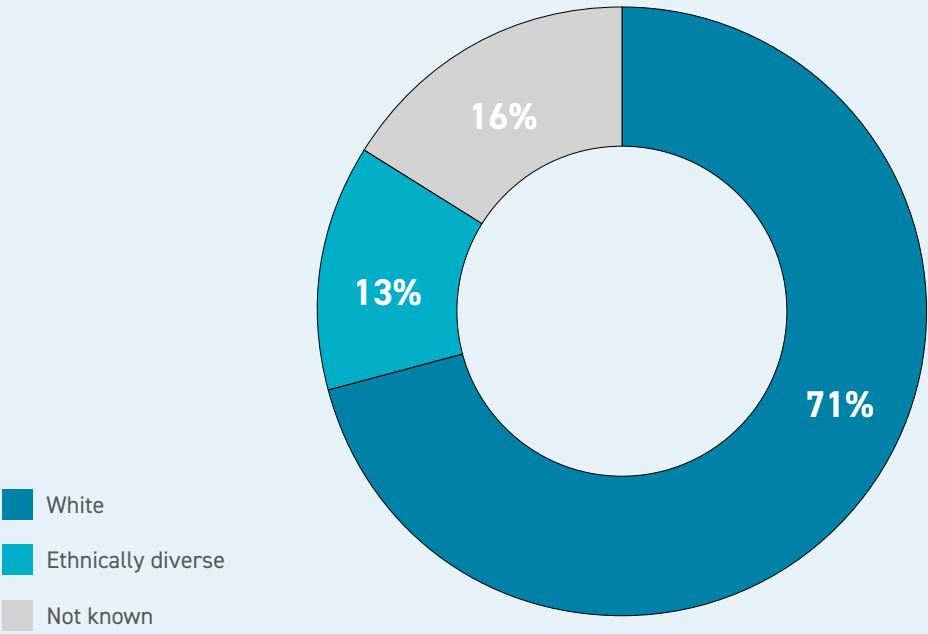


Median bonus gap: 31.2%

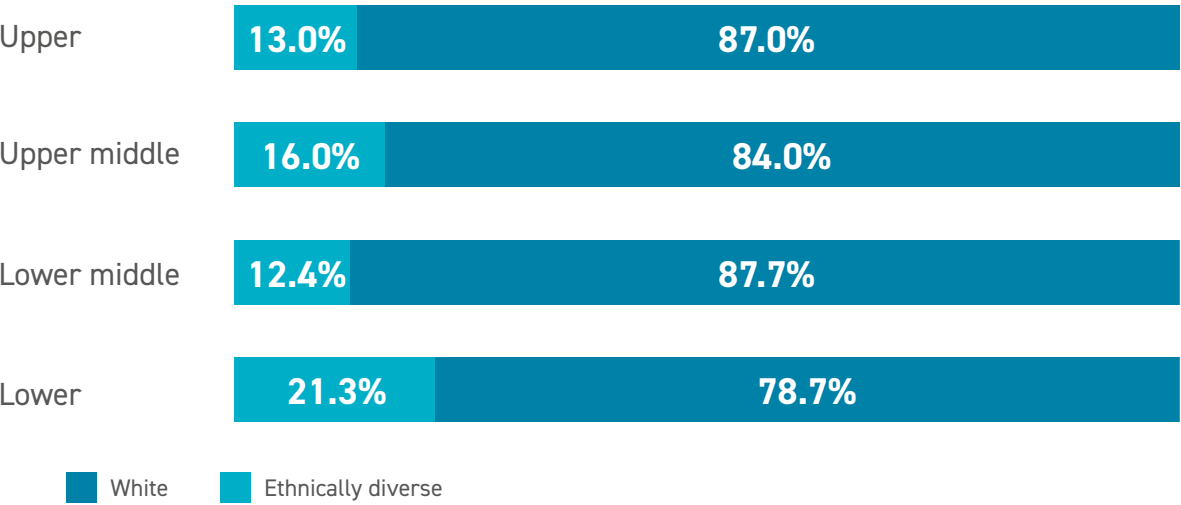


### Our ethnicity pay gap

As of April 2024, across our full pay relevant employees, 71% of the population are White, with 13% Ethnically diverse. 16% are either Not known or Prefer not to Say and we are working hard to engage with employees to reduce this percentage.



### Our ethnicity profile



We recognise our imbalance at the lower and upper quartile of our employee population, which is the key contributing factor to our ethnicity pay gap.

Our ethnicity pay gap

Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
2024	2024
7.07%	15.21%
The mean pay gap is the average difference in hourly pay between men and women in an organisation.	The median gender pay gap is the difference between the middle hourly rate of pay for male and female employees.

Our bonus ethnicity pay gap

Proportion of employees receiving bonus payments

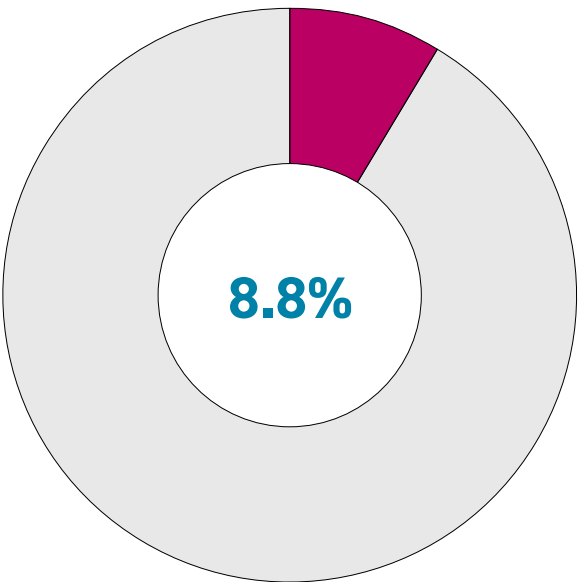


Ethnically diverse  
0.7%

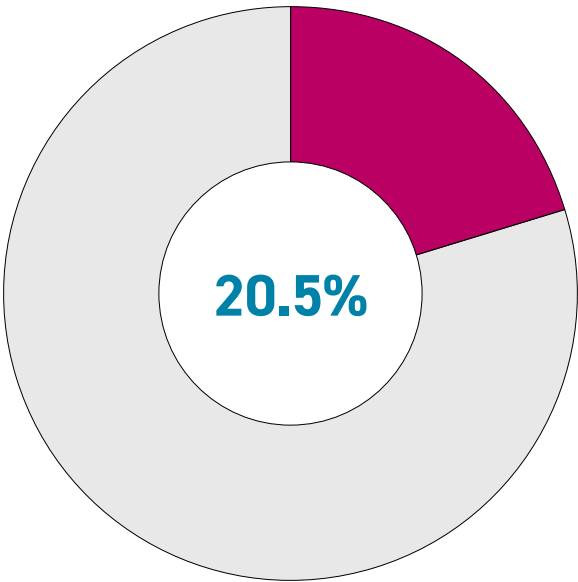


White  
10.8%

Mean bonus gap: 8.8%



Median bonus gap: 20.5%



## Our pay gaps explained

One of the key drivers for both gender and ethnicity is the under-representation of women and ethnically diverse employees at the upper quartile and an imbalance at the lower quartile. This varies across the individual directorates, with more traditionally higher-paying male dominated areas such as property, development and finance seeing greater pay gaps in contrast to our predominantly female front-line customer experience teams.

Following the equal pay review in 2023, we do not believe that the gender pay gap reported is attributable to paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work, and we continue to regularly monitor our practices to ensure this remains the case.

Our bonus pay gap data is based on a small proportion of the employee population receiving a bonus, the majority of whom are the CEO, chief officers and wider leadership team. If these were viewed as “outliers” and excluded, the bonus gap is eradicated, reducing to a negative pay gap when all the wider senior leadership team is taken out.

## Our commitment to bridging the gaps

Having a diverse and inclusive culture is critical to who we are and how we perform best as a business. Positioned at the intersection of our strategic framework, equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do.

The work we are doing includes:

### 1) Improving our recruitment practices

We work hard to ensure that all decisions relating to employment practices are objective, free from bias, and based solely on work criteria and individual merit. For example, we have applied the principles of the Rooney Rule into our ‘Opportunity Pledge’. We also avoid recruitment panels that are single gender and ideally diverse across a range of protected characteristics.

### 2) Listening and engaging

In areas where we have lower gender and ethnicity representation, we have built focus groups to seek views on our working practices to enable us to learn how we can build exceptional cultures in areas which are traditionally male dominated, or less diverse. Our four colleague networking groups make a significant contribution to our EDI agenda. These are 2GeTher – our Ethnicity

network, Spectrum – LGBTQ+ network, Inspire – Disability network, and Alliance – Gender Equality network. We also have a number of listening groups for topics that really matter to colleagues such as menopause, men’s health, carers and neurodiversity. These groups ensure that colleagues from under-represented parts of our workforce have an opportunity to use their voice to effect change, shape our policies and play a huge part in our organisation’s commitment to be a diverse and inclusive place to work.

### 3) Building sustainable and tailored action plans

We recognise that progress nationally is uneven, with the latest ONS findings highlighting an increase in pay gaps across professional occupations that include areas such as IT and finance, skilled trades and construction occupations, as well as managers, directors and senior officials which resonate with some of the challenges viewed within Stonewater and highlight the broader challenge for organisations the UK.

We recognise these challenges within our own business and therefore in 2024, each directorate has looked to develop bespoke five-year plans, with annual measures and goals to support our holistic approach to:

- Build opportunities for female and ethnically diverse employees to reach their full potential and to bring more balance to our upper quartile.
- Ensure we have a robust employment and recruitment practices that attracts, retains and supports an inclusive workforce at all levels.
- Ensure our rewards, benefits, support networks, and engagement processes enable employees to bring their whole selves to work.

These plans will be reviewed, monitored and reported on every six months to the Executive Board.

### 4) Strengthening career paths

Examples of this work are already seeing success, for instance through the development of our recruitment and career path support programmes such as Step up to Manager. This supports aspiring managers get the experience they need to feel confident in stepping up to the next level. Our Routes into Stonewater programme has also seen positive results in areas such as tech and IT sectors to support women into these areas. Routes into Stonewater is a reciprocal coaching programme with our partners Circl, where all Step up to Manager colleagues are offered an opportunity to coach a young person from an under-represented group to work towards a coaching qualification.



## As we look towards 2025

- We will **continue to ensure we build and promote “inclusivity” for all**, ensuring that there are no barriers to joining or developing, ensuring accessibility and breaking down perceived barriers. This will be done through:
  - Continued listening through our staff engagement initiatives and networks, holding ourselves accountable through staff surveys and monitoring ourselves against the Social Housing Equality Framework.
  - Continue to ensure our recruitment processes are free from bias.
  - Strengthening our career and management pathways.
  - Launching a Learning Organisation Coaching Programme.
  - Embedding our commitment to genuine flexible working arrangements through our “Concierge” concept using improved technology to keep people connected, well equipped, engaged and supported wherever they work.
- Continue to **increase engagement, awareness and personal responsibility** around our commitment to building a culture where everyone can bring their whole self to work at Stonewater. This will include being open and clear as to why this is important and delivered through our internal networking groups, manager training and building stronger links with external partners and training providers, such as Courageous Success, to support change.
- Through this engagement we will look **to improve data collection and data interrogation** to not only inform more effective decision making, but to help monitor our progress. We already look across gender and ethnicity, doing deeper dives into our directorates, but we are committed to going further and to understand our data across all stages of our employee life cycle, from application responses, interviews, promotions, ability to work flexibly at all levels, and exit interviews.
- **Greater accountability** in each of the directorates to build **tailored, specific goals and approaches** that meet individual market challenges, with performance monitored and evaluated formally by the chief officer group every six months.

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