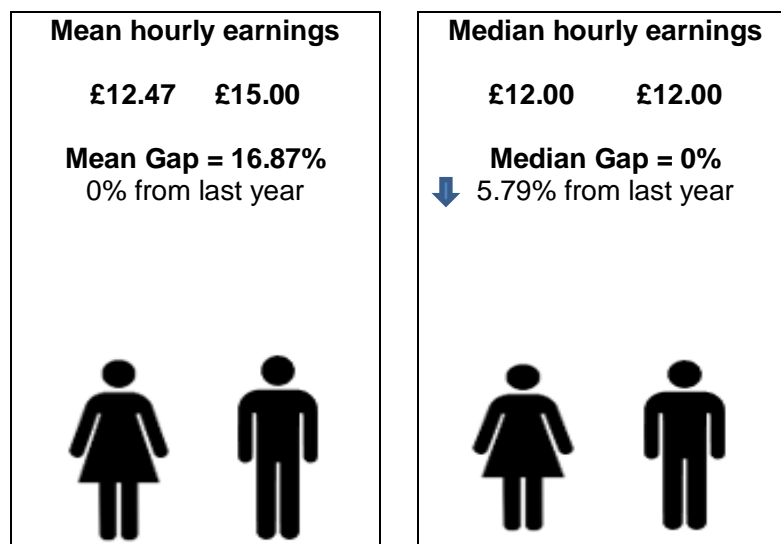


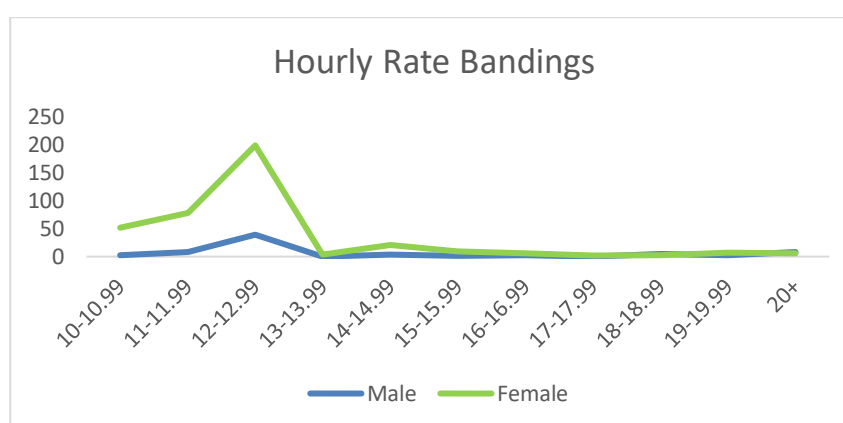
Libraries Unlimited Gender Pay Gap 2024

1. Executive Summary

On 5th April 2024 Libraries Unlimited had 439 relevant roles with 369 filled by women (84%) and 70 filled by men (16%). As Libraries Unlimited does not have a bonus scheme, the percentage difference between men and women's bonuses was zero.



As with previous years, the mean Gender Pay Gap for Libraries Unlimited is largely a result of our workforce continuing to be predominantly women (which we know from our colleagues is a trend across the library sector) but that being more pronounced in the lower quartiles. There are more women at all levels of the organisation, but significantly fewer men in the lower and lower middle quartiles (21% across both compared to 27% in the upper quartile alone). We have seen a slight decrease in the number of men employed this year overall, which effects all quartiles. The below chart shows that the number of men and women on £13 per hour or more are very similar, but there are a lot more women than men on the lower hourly rates. Even though the minimum hourly rate was increased to £12.00 in line with the RLW from 1st April, there were still some relief claims at £10.90/hour from the previous month counted in the earnings of the relevant period.



Libraries Unlimited's GPG is also affected by a high number of our roles being part time, with those who work part time nationally more likely to be paid a lower hourly median pay than full time workers¹. It is argued that this is because traditionally part-time roles are less senior and therefore are paid less, with a legacy perspective that lower paid roles can be performed part time more easily; and that women have been more likely to take part time

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapinthekuk/2020>

roles to fit around caring responsibilities. 70% of our workforce are part-time women, which has increased by 2% since 2023, but only 6.8% are part time men which has decreased by 3.2%.

Another factor which effects our GPG is the different teams. 15.48% of our roles are support/office roles, but men make up 37% of those support roles, with 81% falling in the Upper quartile, a decrease of 19% compared to 2023.

The GPG for our support teams has decreased since 2023. The median has decreased from 32.92% to 28.67%. The mean has decreased from 31% to 24.21%. Our library/service delivery teams median GPG is 0% (no change from 2023) and the mean GPG is 2.02% a decrease of 4.89%. Therefore, the GPG for support teams is considerably higher than our service delivery teams GPG, affecting our overall GPG. One contributing factor for this is that we have moved our Stock Services team from library/service delivery to support teams.

Our median GPG is 0% which has decreased by 5.79% since last year. This is less than the ONS 2023 national average of 14.3%. Compared to other Library Services' figures from 2023 (2024's has not been published yet), our GPG is better.

Whilst we have seen an improvement in our Median GPG and no change in the Mean GPG this year, we continue to be aware that some of the factors affecting our Gender Pay Gap as set out above are deeply ingrained and are wider societal issues. This is never intended as an excuse but is a recognition that it will take time to bring about change and that this will be challenging. Since 1997, there has been a steady decrease in the overall pay gap nationally, which is positive but unfortunately gradual². As an organisation, we remain committed to our ambition to ensure Gender Pay Gaps are eliminated and will play our role in that, focussing on doing what we can to push forward that change. We set out a number of actions we proposed to take in October 2021 when reporting on our April 2021 figures, and we continue to work to work towards those.

We will continue to work on encouraging more men into frontline roles, women into senior roles in all areas of the organisation especially traditionally male dominated sectors, and men to utilise flexible working and family friendly policies such as Shared Parental Leave. However, it is also important to recognise that these actions will be part of a large cultural shift that is required, both within the organisation and as a wider society, so we recognise that this is a direction of travel that we are very committed to, rather than actions that will automatically result in change immediately.

² House of Commons Briefing (January 2024) <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07068/>

2. Introduction

As an organisation with more than 250 employees, we are legally required to comply with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 and publish Gender Pay Gap reporting information on an annual basis. This requires us to report on two genders only, which we recognise does not reflect everyone's lived experience of gender but is the legal obligation. However, as part of our diversity data, we ask people to provide their gender identity, so we have looked at this in addition to our legal duty, but the numbers are very small and further analysis is not possible therefore without potentially revealing identities. We still hope to be able to develop this further in future years.

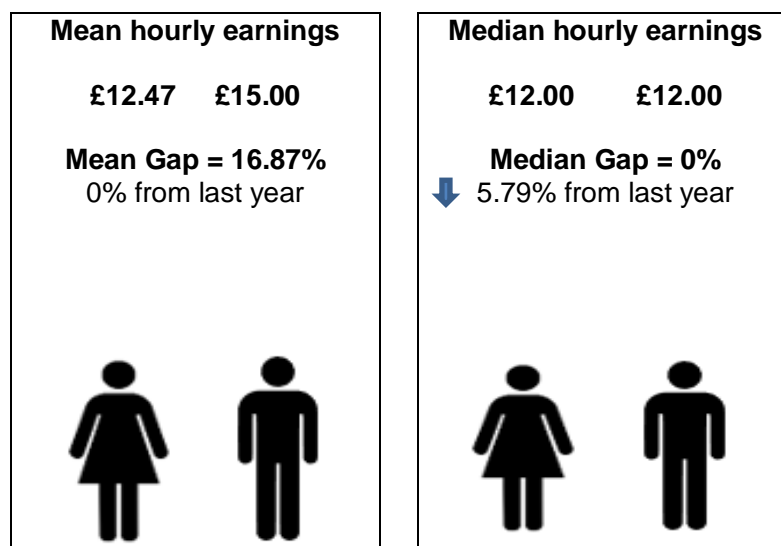
The Gender Pay Gap (GPG) is defined as the difference between the mean and median hourly rate of pay that men and women receive, regardless of their role. It is not just a measure of the difference in pay between men and women for doing the same job.

The mean pay gap is the difference between average hourly earnings of men and women.

The median pay gap is the difference between the mid points in the ranges of hourly earnings of men and women. It takes all salaries in the sample, lines them up in order from lowest to highest, and picks the middle-most salary. The median is usually the figure that is reported as an organisation's gender pay gap figure (e.g. in the media) and it is regarded a better measure of pay of the 'typical' employee than taking an average according to a House of Commons Briefing in January 2024³.

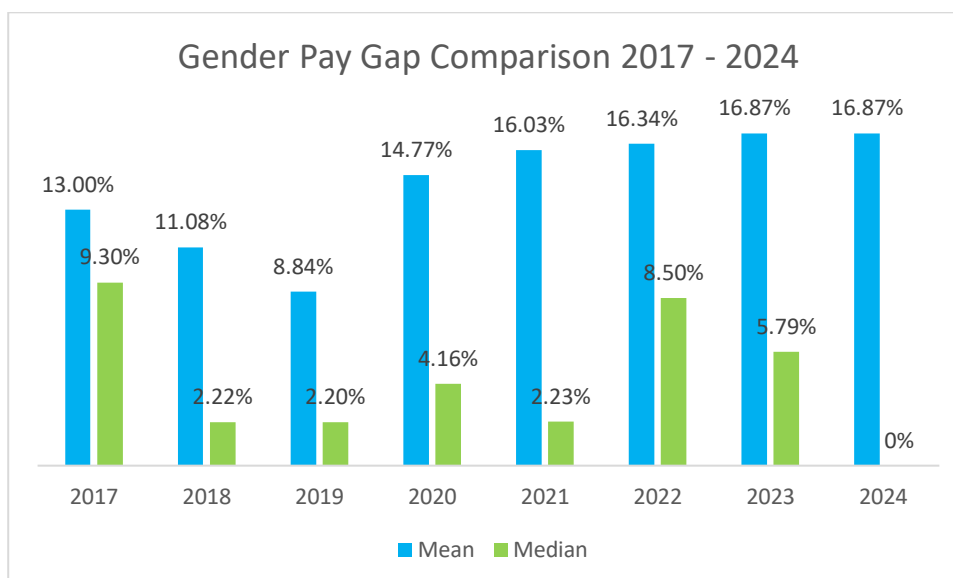
3. Our Gender Pay Gap results

On 5th April 2024 Libraries Unlimited had 476 roles. However, 37 roles have been excluded as per the government guidance as they received either 'no pay' in the relevant pay period (1st – 30th April) or were on reduced pay due to maternity or paternity leave, unpaid leave or unpaid sickness. Therefore, Libraries Unlimited had 439 relevant roles with 369 filled by women (84%) and 70 filled by men (16%). Some staff have multiple roles.



This means men were paid either the same (median) or 16.87% (mean) more than women.

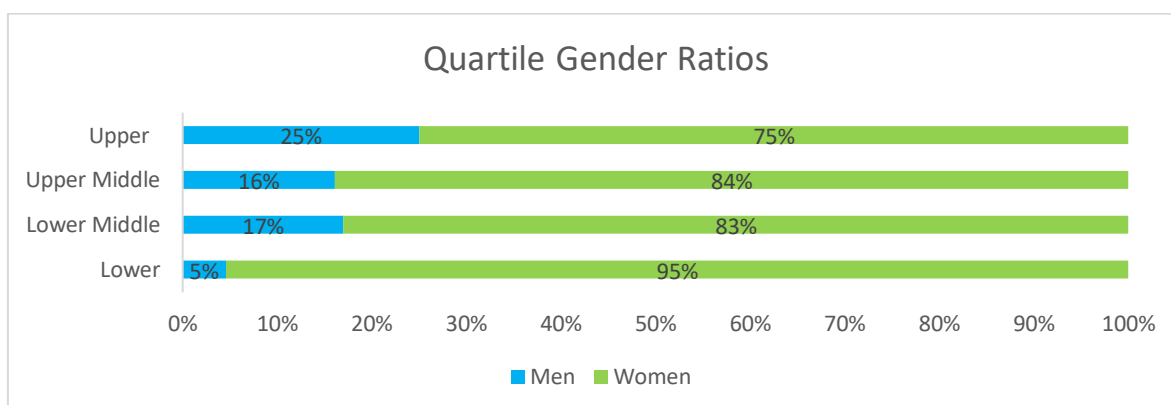
³ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07068/>



Libraries Unlimited does not pay bonuses to any staff; therefore, the further three statutory calculations of the mean bonus Gender Pay Gap, the median bonus Gender Pay Gap and the proportion of men and women receiving a bonus payment are not applicable.

4. Analysis

Libraries Unlimited's Gender Pay Gap continues to largely be a result of our workforce being predominantly women (which we know from our colleagues is a trend across the library sector) but that being more pronounced in the lower quartiles. There are more women at all levels of the organisation but are still significantly fewer men in the lower and lower middle quartiles (22% across both) and most in the upper quartile (41%). Overall, the percentage of roles filled by men has slightly decreased by 2% compared to 2023.

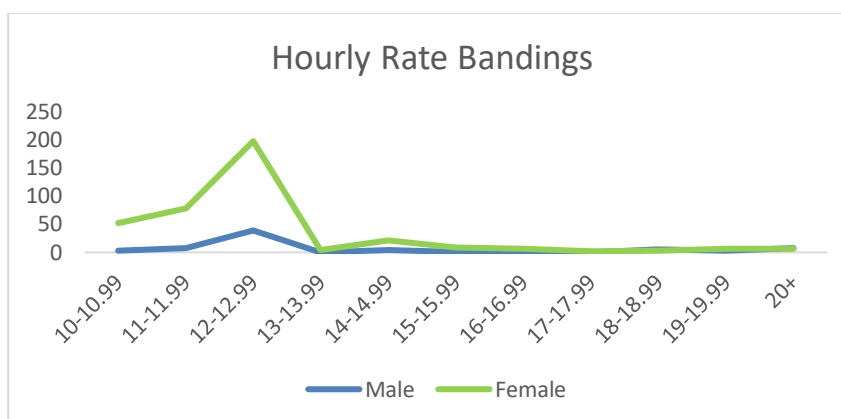


Even though the percentage of roles filled by men has decreased very slightly this has not necessarily impacted our pay gap as the decrease has affected all the quartiles and is not a very big change.

In addition to calculating the statistics that are legally required, Libraries Unlimited has done some further analysis to aid understanding of its Gender Pay Gap.

The following graph shows that Libraries Unlimited still has significantly more women than men on hourly rates between £10.00 - £13.99. The numbers of men and women from an hourly rate of £14.00 upwards is relatively even. In the upper quartile there are 14 roles with an hourly rate of £20+ and 57% of those are men, a decrease of 7% compared to last year. However, of the top 6 highest hourly rate roles of the organisation, 2 of them are female (1/3rd), which is a slight increase compared to Exec last year. This still indicates though that our GPG is primarily

caused by large proportions of women in lower hourly rate posts, rather than male dominance in senior roles.

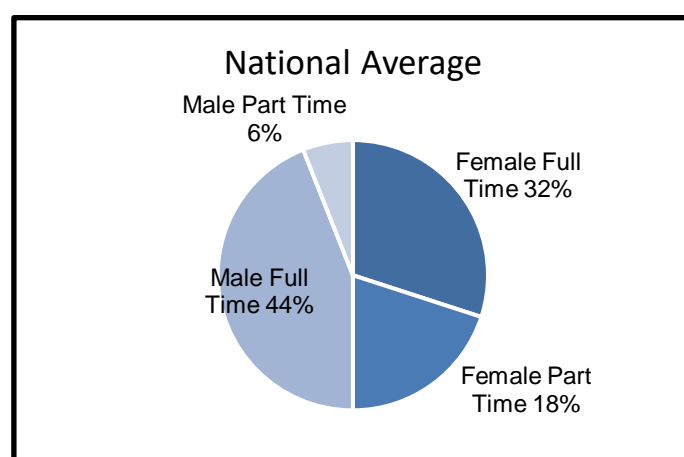
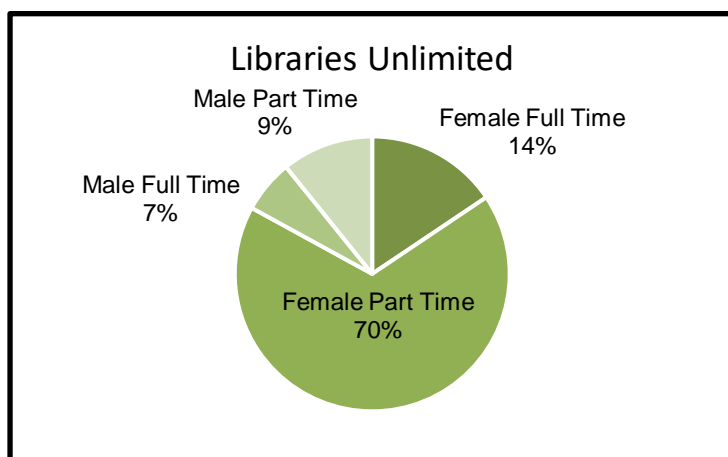


It is believed that the reasons for female dominance in the lower paid posts are consistent with what has been found by the ONS, specifically a higher proportion of lower paid roles are performed part-time, as many of our roles are, and in particular the specific flexibility of relief contracts, which is commonly attractive to women as it is compatible with their personal circumstances, such as caring responsibilities which women are still more likely to have than men.

As always, it is also interesting to remember that the majority of our roles are Customer Service Assistants/Library Assistants, Stock Services Assistants or Relief Customer Service Assistants (67% of all our roles), all of whom receive the same hourly rate. These roles therefore span the Lower and the Lower Middle quartiles as well as into the Upper Middle quartile, because of the number of roles that we have of this type compared to other roles. So the Upper Middle Quartile also includes these level roles.

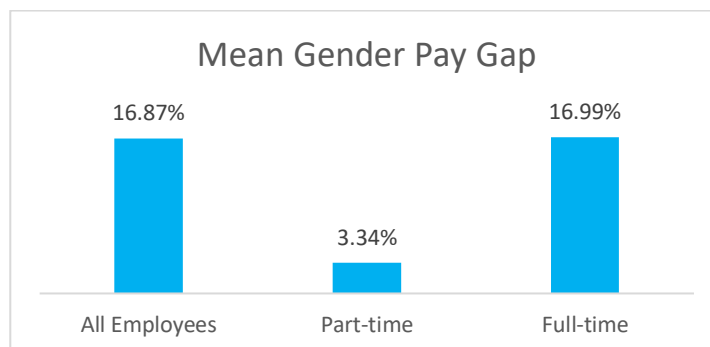
4(a). Part time working

ONS reports that around 6% of men work part time compared to around 18% of women⁴. National statistics also show that part time workers (male and female) are paid a lower hourly median pay than full time workers⁵. It is argued that this is because there is still a legacy perspective that lower paid roles can be performed part time more easily. Libraries Unlimited's GPG is therefore affected by the fact that 70% (2% increase compared to 2023) of the workforce are part-time women but only 9% (1% decrease from 2023) are part time men, and that of the men who work for us, 43% are full time compared to 17% of roles held by women within Libraries Unlimited are full time.



⁴Based on Office of National Statistics – full time, part time and temporary workers figures EMP01 Sep – Nov 2021.

⁵Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)



The mean gender pay gap for full time employees is 16.99% which is an increase of 2.02% from 2023 (14.97%). Including part time employees, our GPG decreases to 16.87%, confirming that part time working does very slightly influence our GPG. Whilst there is a much smaller gender pay gap for part time employees (3.34%), this has reduced by 1.28% compared to 2022 (4.62%). However, the average part time women's pay is much lower than that of their full-time male colleagues, by around £6.72 per hour.

Our part time women's pay gap which is a comparison of women's part time average hourly rate to men's full time average hourly rate is 36.13%. This means part time women within our organisation are paid 36.13% less than full time men. This has increased since 2023 (34.28%) by 1.85%, which has a negative effect on our mean GPG.

4(b). Age of staff

National Statistics⁶ show that the GPG increases by around 10% for people over 40 and whilst our GPG between the two age groups is not as wide, Libraries Unlimited has an increased GPG of around 2% for over 40's and a reduction of around 4% for under 40's compared to the organisation-wide figure, giving a difference of around 6% between the two age groups. In 2024 our mean GPG for under 40's was 12.97% which has decreased by 0.38% from 2023 (13.35%). Our mean GPG for over 40's has increased since 2023 (18.25%) by 0.8% to 19.05%. Our median GPG for under 40's is 1.23% and for over 40's it is 0%, so there is a difference of 1.23% between the age groups.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Libraries Unlimited's mean GPG for over 40's is 19.05% | Libraries Unlimited's mean GPG for under 40's is 12.97% | 78% of Libraries Unlimited's employees are 40+ |
|---|--|---|

In 2024 there has been an increase of 5 males in the under 40 category with the male roles falling in all four quartiles, but a majority (58%) in the upper middle and upper quartiles. Our GPG for under 40's is 1.23% (median) and 12.97% (mean). When you include employees who are over 40, it increased our overall mean GPG, suggesting that this year having an older workforce has affected our GPG.

⁶<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2021>

4(c). Relief contracts

Over a third (32.8%) of Libraries Unlimited's roles are relief roles, which has increased by 2.8% since 2023. Of the relief roles 91% are women (a 2% increase since 2023) and a majority (80%, which has decreased by 2% since 2022) are paid within the lower quartile.

If we were to look at Libraries Unlimited's relief roles only, our mean Gender Pay Gap would be 3.07% which is a reduction by 13.8% compared to all employees. This suggests that for our relief roles only the GPG is a lot less compared to all employees and also fixed hours employees.

If you were to look at Libraries Unlimited's fixed hours only roles, therefore exclude the relief roles, our mean Gender Pay Gap would be 17.15% which is an increase by 0.28% for all employees. Therefore, this implies that our GPG is very slightly affected by the amount of relief roles we have. As these roles are flexible, they can be more easily managed around caring responsibilities and therefore may be more attractive to women, as set out above.

4(d). GPG across different teams

Support/office teams make up 15% of our roles – this includes the following small teams, all with a manager; Finance, IT, HR & Volunteering, Marketing, Fundraising, Premises, Project, BIPC, Evolve, and Executive. Because they are such small teams, 85% of our support roles fall in the Upper Middle and Upper quartiles, compared to 44% for our Service Delivery (frontline) roles. Men make up 36.76% of the support roles, with 80% falling in the Upper quartile, a decrease of 13.33% compared to 2023 (93.33%)

The GPG for our support teams has decreased since 2023, partly as a result of re-evaluations of individual roles over the 12 months, resulting in some roles held by women having salary increases. The median has decreased from 32.91% to 28.67% (in 2022 the GPG was 23.11%). The mean has decreased from 31% to 24.21% (in 2022 the GPG was 16.40%) In 2023 58% of support roles were held by women, compared with 63% in 2024. Although they are in the upper middle and upper quartiles, their hourly rates are still considerably less than their male colleagues, which has had a negative effect on our support role only GPG. Our library/service delivery teams median GPG has remained the same in 2024 compared to 2023 and the mean GPG has decreased by 4.89%. So the GPG for support teams remains higher than the GPG for service delivery team.

This supports that Libraries Unlimited's GPG for all employees is affected by the higher GPG we have within our support teams.

One reason the GPG may be higher for the support roles is because they are largely specialisms which tend to be dominated by men, such as IT, Finance and Executive. As per ONS findings women hold only 20% of IT roles, 47% of Finance roles and 35% Chief Exec & Senior roles.⁷ This is the case to some extent within our organisation with women holding none of the IT roles, 100% of which are in the Upper Quartile, and 40% of Chief Exec & Executive roles (an increase of 7% from 2023; this is because the number of roles on Exec has increased from 4 to 5). However, women do hold 57% of Finance roles, 75% of which are in the Upper Quartile.

Our service delivery team have a lower GPG which indicates that there may be better progression for women through our service delivery roles, which we also have examples of anecdotally as well. With the support teams, there is less opportunity for progression because they are smaller teams with less routes for people to progress into and bigger jumps between roles which makes progression more difficult. Whilst it is positive to see that we have seen an increase in women in our Support Teams making this now a 63/37 split (for women), it is still important that we look at how we support women in senior roles within the top end of the upper quartile to gain skills and experience, and to progress alongside their male colleagues.

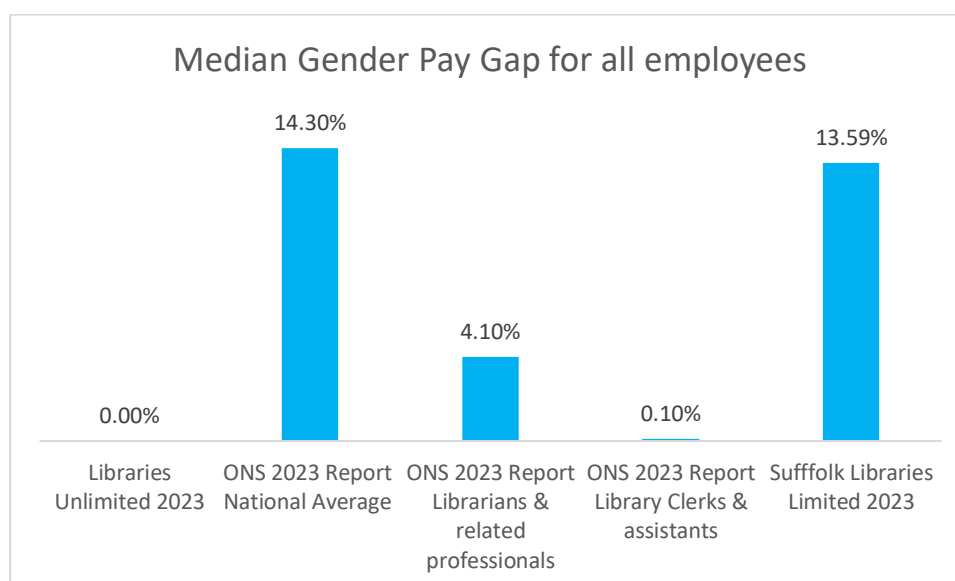
⁷<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2020>

5. External comparisons

As Gender Pay Gaps are affected by gender ratios of support staff, part time ratios and age demographics we need to be careful when making external comparisons. The deadline for reporting 2024 figures is also not until April 2025, so we only have 2023's figures publicly available.

However, looking at the 2023's figures, our median GPG is 0% which highlights a greater level of overall equality and is less than the ONS national average of 14.3%. Compared to other Library Services such as Suffolk's Libraries' 2023 figures, our median is 13.59% less⁸. It is less than "Library clerks and assistants" for 2023 (as reported in the ONS figures) which makes up most of our workforce. This suggests that within a similar sector our GPG is lower, even taking into account the support teams which do have an impact on our GPG and which isn't included in that ONS figure. Our 2024 figures compared to these figures are more favourable than 2023 however, it will be interesting to see where our 2024 figures sit alongside the 2024 figures from other organisations when these are available. Our 2023 median was 5.79%, so this was also more favourable than many of these figures as well.

According to a survey carried out by the Civil Society⁹ in April 2023, the average median gender pay gap (taken from a sample of almost 100 of the largest charities in the UK) has fallen to 6.8%, down from 7.2% the previous year.



6. Reducing the Gender Pay Gap

Whilst it is really positive to see that our Median Gender Pay Gap now sits at 0% and that that is much better than other organisations, including in our sector, it is disappointing to see that we continue to have a mean Gender Pay Gap, particularly as this is largely driven by the same factors that we have identified as issues in past years (as set out above).

We continue to work towards becoming a Real Living Wage employer, by putting all our employees onto the 2024 Real Living Wage rate of £12 per hour, a 10.1% increase for some of our lowest paid staff compared to their 2023-24 rates. There was also higher percentage increases this year for some roles where we had identified that the high percentage increases for the Real Living Wage over the last few years had closed some gaps, meaning that the differences between salaries were no longer reflecting the different levels of responsibility

⁸ [Gender Pay Gap \(GPG\) at Suffolk Libraries IPS Ltd | Suffolk Libraries](#)

⁹ [Gender pay gap narrows at largest UK charities, study reveals \(civilsociety.co.uk\)](#)

expected in some roles, and 88% of those affected by higher pay increases for Team Leaders/First Assistants and Supervisors were female.

Addressing our GPG is something that we remain committed to continually working on, as we also believe it is important to create greater diversity in our staff across the whole organisation to better represent the communities we work in. Whilst we are frustrated to not have made further progress yet on the Mean, we also recognise that some of the factors affecting our Gender Pay Gap are deeply ingrained and also wider societal issues. This is never intended as an excuse but is a recognition that it will take time to bring about change, and that it is not something we are therefore going to give up on if we find it takes a while to make that change. As an organisation, however, we are not giving up on our ambition to ensure Gender Pay Gaps are eliminated and we are committed to playing a role in that, focussing on doing what we can to push forward that change.

The reasons behind our Gender Pay Gap as set out in this report have not substantially changed since previous reports. In the report on the 2021 figures which was published in October 2021, we set out key actions that we planned to take to address the figures (see Appendix A).

What we have done this year:

1. Maintained all roles on the current Real Living Wage rate, meaning a 10.11% increase for some of our lowest paid staff compared to their 2023-24 rates compared to a baseline of 4% for other staff. There was also higher percentage increases this year for some roles where we had identified that the high percentage increases for the Real Living Wage over the last few years had closed some gaps, meaning that the differences between salaries were no longer reflecting the different levels of responsibility expected in some roles, and 88% of those affected by higher pay increases for Team Leaders/First Assistants and Supervisors were female.
2. Finalised our People Strategy, which helps to shape how we recruit, train and develop our staff over the next few years, and our priorities for delivering for our staff.
3. Looked at how we could better support working carers, hopefully helping more carers, who are still primarily women, to progress their careers if they want to by:
 - a. Introducing our first Carers' Policy to outline the support available to employees who are carers to help them balance their working and caring commitments and continue to be effective in their role;
 - b. Signed up to Devon Carers' Carer Friendly Employers scheme.
 - c. Included a question in the biannual Staff Survey asking whether staff feel supported as a working parent/carer and what could be improved to be better, which found that many people did feel supported but that others faced challenges such as not having enough holiday to take time off for caring responsibilities – partly in response to this, we increased the holiday entitlement for those with Libraries Unlimited terms and conditions by 1 day pro rata'd from April 2024.;
 - d. Implemented our first Flexitime Policy for those roles which can work flexibly (these are primarily in the Support Teams), to help people to have the best balance between their work and personal life, which may be particularly beneficial for those with caring responsibilities.
4. Implemented an updated induction programme for all staff to make people aware of our family-friendly policies from day 1 and support them to be most effective in their role.
5. Reviewed our Menopause at Work Policy which was introduced a few years ago to bring it up to date and promoted it more widely to staff through a Bulletin article. Many women suffering menopausal symptoms may be at a stage where they want to

progress their career so we want to consider how best to support someone who may find that menopausal symptoms are impacting on their ability to do this. We also introduced our first Domestic Abuse Policy to outline how we could support someone in this situation – women are still more likely to suffer domestic abuse, which may also be at stages where they want to progress so we want to support staff where we can so that they are able to develop if they want to, despite of any impact from this.

6. Reviewed our equality and diversity monitoring form for job applicants to ensure we are using the most appropriate language and terminology; Also, converted it to an online form which goes directly to HR and is clearly separate from the application, to make it easier for applicants to complete this data and add further reassurance that it is kept confidential and not seen by recruiting managers. This also enabled us to make questions compulsory so none are accidentally missed, although people still have the opportunity to answer “Prefer not to say” to any question.
7. We have continued with vacancy management processes, which has allowed us to review roles as they arise and look across teams where roles could be combined, or held until other vacancies arise to make combining roles possible.
8. From April 2024, we introduced enhanced Paternity Leave pay to sit alongside our enhanced Maternity and Shared Parental Leave pay, working to normalise family-friendly policies and ensure that men can also feel able to take on caring roles.
9. Libraries Unlimited has been part of the employer Trailblazer Group developing the Level 7 Library, Information and Knowledge Management Professional apprenticeship, which has now been finalised so we can consider how to implement this to support staff development and progression.

Our plans for 2024-25:

1. Publish our new Jobs website to include a “Why you should work for us” section to better sell working for the organisation and create a more realistic image of what libraries are rather than the stereotype some people may have, so hopefully attracting more applications and a more diverse range of applicants.
2. Introduce and embed new online training platform, iHasco, with updated courses and timescales for completion of those courses, including Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Also, introduce an additional guidance document specific to Libraries Unlimited to be read annually to sit alongside the broader training.
3. Create a new management training plan, which will cover areas such as recruitment, performance management and objective setting, to ensure that managers are best placed to be able to support their teams to progress.
4. Work towards being a Disability Confident employer, by exploring and implementing supported internships for young people with SEND and introducing guaranteed interview scheme for people with disabilities, which should help us to create a more diverse workforce.
5. Ensure that we are prepared for the implementation of the Right to Request Predictable Work Pattern legislation, which may be beneficial in providing more permanent roles for staff who are on relief contracts but routinely doing the same hours, who may be more likely to be women, which will then put them in the best place to progress.
6. Lead a targeted recruitment campaign to attract people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) to apply for one of our roles, to support bringing new people into roles and to give them the opportunity to progress.

7. Develop and introduce new policies and guidance on how we can support people with difficult menstrual symptoms or who have suffered miscarriages, to help women to be in the strongest position to pursue and progress in their careers in the way they want to.
8. Trial anonymising job applications (removing names) to consider what impact this has on shortlisting around different protected characteristics.

Appendix A

Our actions set out in the 2020 report were;

1. Reviewing our current recruitment practices to ensure that we are targeting less well represented groups such as men within the lower paid roles and within our Service Delivery teams, and women in the senior support roles. This will include:
 - Working to embed diversity, inclusion, and accessibility into all stages of our recruitment process.
 - Undertaking a review of job descriptions/adverts and the language within them to highlight and change any unintentional gendered language.
 - Recognising, and challenging unconscious bias throughout the selection process.
2. Continuing to build more substantial posts to be attractive to a wider range of people through things like combining roles as vacancies come up (including roles across various locations).
3. Promoting the flexibility of our relief roles to all members of the community who may be attracted by that flexibility, such as students, self-employed individuals with their own businesses or part time workers who want additional income and in particular men so that our relief roles are more representative of the communities we support.
4. Promoting workplace flexibility for both men and women in roles where possible, such as hybrid working (home and office based), job sharing or compressed hours. Also encouraging men to work flexibly so that it is not seen as only a female benefit.
5. Promoting our family friendly policies to ensure that women can progress if they have caring responsibilities and to encourage men to take on the primary carer role where they want to do that. Also embed a culture where our family friendly policies are not only offered but are normalised into smarter working practices. As an organisation we provide Maternity Pay that is more generous than the statutory minimum, like 63.5% of other organisations (36.5% do not offer enhanced maternity pay).¹⁰ We also provide enhanced Shared Parental Leave pay, which only a quarter of organisations offer.¹¹ Our Shared Parental Leave pay is enhanced at the same rate as our Maternity Pay which supports a government initiative identified to address GPG.¹²
6. Providing apprenticeships and training opportunities for career development and maintaining our level of internal progression, enabling employees to realise their

¹⁰ <https://www.xperthr.co.uk/survey-analysis/maternity-leave-and-pay-xperthr-survey-2021/165964/?keywords=maternity+pay+survey>

¹¹ <https://www.xperthr.co.uk/survey-analysis/paternity-and-shared-parental-leave-and-pay-xperthr-survey-2021/165965/>

¹² <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/actions-to-close-the-gap/promising-actions>

full potential. Also, more Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeships may result in more diversity in the lower paid roles as they may be more attractive to a wider range of people who will then get a good start in their career.

7. Ensuring all employees undertake the E-learning Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training, and consider how to embed this in their working practices so that everyone feels welcomed and supported when appointed so they are committed and likely to stay.
8. Continuing to record recruitment statistics to analyse gender ratios of applicants through recruitment stages, so that we can gain a better understanding of where ratio disparity occurs.
9. Ensure that our Gender Pay Gap reporting for each April is done by July that year to allow for the embedding of any actions well in advance of the next reporting period.
10. As part of our strategy, we will be working towards becoming a Real Living Wage employer – this will have an impact on those on the lower hourly rates, such as relief staff who were paid 59p per hour below the Real Living Wage in April 2021. However, we will still have to consider the impact of this on the differentiation between roles that is there to reflect the various levels of responsibility/technical knowledge that is expected but becoming a Real Living Wage employer therefore may have a positive impact on our GPG.

It is important to recognise that all of these actions will be part of a large cultural shift that is required, both within the organisation and as a wider society, so we recognise that this is a direction of travel that we are very committed to, rather than actions that will automatically result in change within the following year.