

OUR 2024 GENDER PAY GAP REPORT

We are pleased to report that our median pay gap has reduced by 26.2% from 43% to 16.8% and the mean gender pay gap at the Firm has reduced by 6.9% from 27.6% (2023 report) to 20.7%. Our median bonus pay gap decreased from 2.4% to 0% and our mean bonus pay gap decreased from 21.4% to 15.1% (2023 report). The majority of our bonus pay consists of our annual profit share, where all our employees receive an equal profit share. However, our figures are also influenced by other bonus pay, such as participation in our recruitment and client referral scheme and our long-service awards.

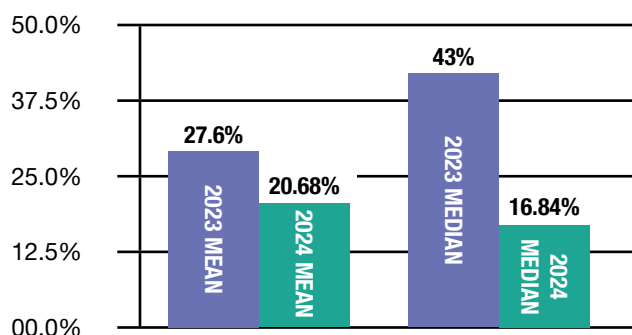
The number of women on our Board remains high at 40% – which is close to the female representation on the Boards of FTSE 350 companies which is at an average of 43.4% according to data published in the latest report by the government-backed [FTSE Women Leaders Review](#).

Our lawyers are just as likely to be women as men, but the people in our administrative roles are among our lower paid roles. While we are pleased that our gender pay gap is falling, this is the factor that continues to have the biggest impact on our overall pay gap figures.

Our data shows that we are paying men and women equally for doing similar jobs across all levels.

PAY

This table shows our median and mean pay gap based on hourly rates of pay in 2024 compared to 2023. Our gender pay gap figures are calculated in line with Government guidelines, based on hourly pay excluding overtime. This enables us to consider the gender pay gap across our workforce. Hourly pay is the sum of ordinary pay and any bonus pay (including any pro-rated bonus pay) that was paid in the pay period which ends on the snapshot date.



EQUAL PAY

Is being paid the same for the same / similar work

PAY GAP

Is the difference in average pay between two groups in a workforce.

MEAN

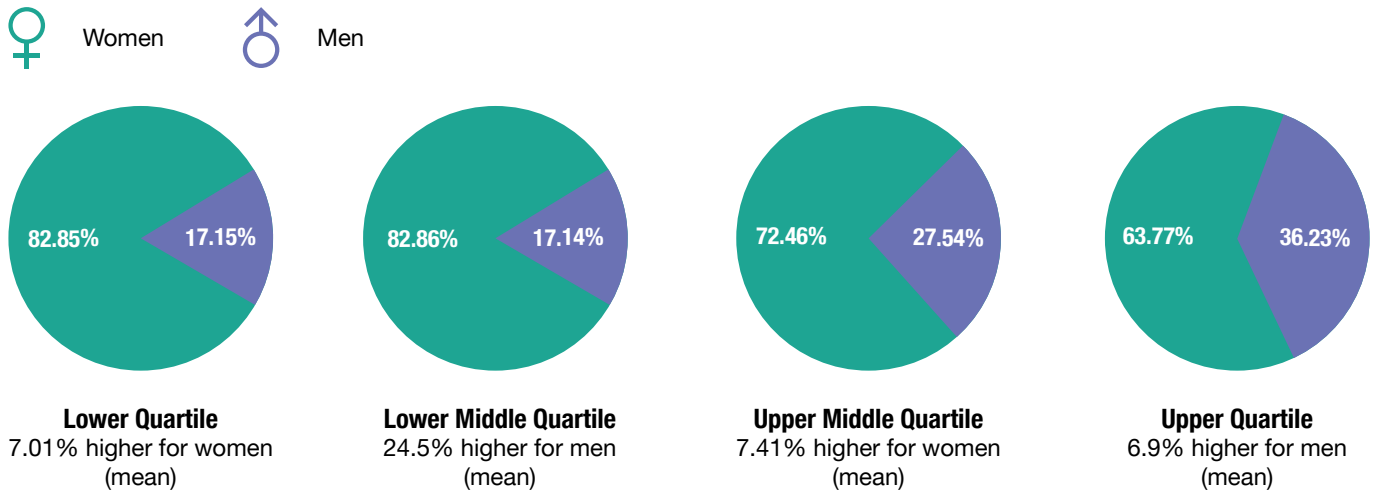
The average based on adding up all salaries and dividing it by the number of employees.

MEDIAN

The average based on the middle salary in the list.

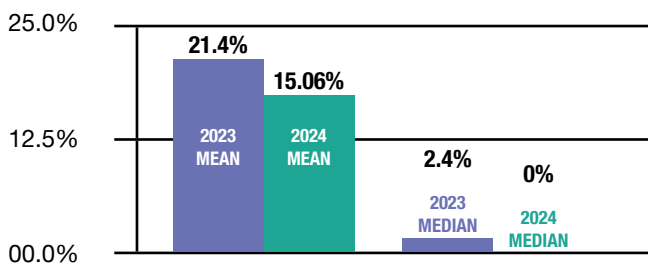
PAY QUARTILES

The charts below illustrate gender distribution across the Firm in four equally sized quartiles, and the mean gap between hourly pay for men and women at each quartile.

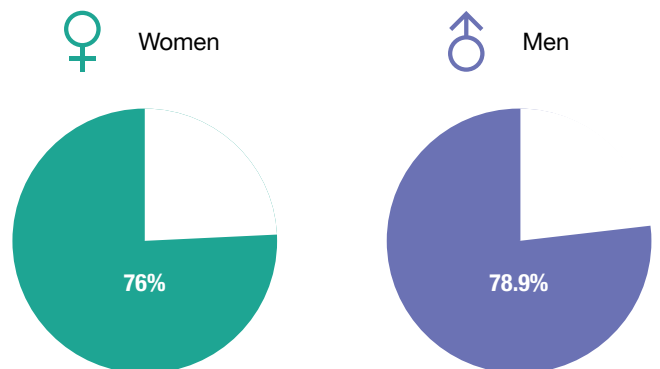


BONUS

The table shows the mean and median difference in the bonuses paid to men and women.



Proportion of men and women awarded a bonus



The above shows an equal number of men and women receiving a bonus in the Firm. The eligibility criteria for our profit share are the same both for men and women.

As an employee-owned business, 100% of eligible employees receive an equal profit share (pro rata for part time colleagues). Employees are eligible six months after completing their probation with the Firm.



WHAT DOES OUR DATA TELL US?

Our mean and median pay gap has further reduced this year.

We have slightly more women than men in our most senior – and highest paid – roles. However, in our other three pay quartiles we have many more women. We have many more junior lawyers who are women than men entering the legal profession through our trainee and apprenticeship programmes. When comparing figures in individual pay quartiles, mean hourly pay is higher for women in the lower and upper middle quartiles, the mean gender pay gap in the lower middle quartile is higher for men at 24.5% while the upper quartile mean gender pay gap is 6.9%. We are confident that men and women are paid equally for doing equivalent jobs across our business.

GENDER BALANCE AT STEPHENS SCOWN

At Stephens Scown we value the contribution that all our people make. We were the first large law Firm to introduce employee ownership in 2016. We ranked for seven years in the annual Top 100 Best Companies to Work For – one of the most respected independent measures of employee engagement. Last year, we made the Sunday Times Best Places to Work for 2024 list, powered by WorkL. We are one of the 92 businesses listed in the 'big business' category, one of only four law Firms listed in our category and one of only four in the South West. We achieved 83% engagement score against 71% score across the legal sector.

This emphasis on listening and responding to our people has influenced our approach to gender at the Firm. Over the last few years, we have introduced a number of changes to our employee package that has improved the experience of our female employees and those who become parents while working at Stephens Scown.

Ways we are tackling our gender pay gap include:

EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP

Stephens Scown was the first large law Firm to introduce employee ownership and the majority of our bonus comes from an equal profit share, on a pro rata basis for part-time colleagues, among employee owners. Our profit share is equal, regardless of job role. This means a senior solicitor will receive the same profit share as an apprentice.

Our mean bonus data shows a lower bonus for women, due to a greater percentage of women working part time in the Firm. Our people are eligible to join our employee ownership share scheme six months after successfully completing their probation with us.

Our profit share scheme is managed by a group of Trustees who are also employees of the Firm. To promote employee voice and continuous improvement, everyone in our Firm, regardless of status or background, is empowered to share concerns and ideas. We are listening to feedback and taking actions to enable positive improvement. We run parish sessions for each team with their assigned Trustee representative to collate feedback, which is used to influence strategic decisions regarding improvements to the working conditions and experience of our colleagues. Having seen the benefits of the work of our parish representatives, in 2024 we introduced two new roles of Trustee representatives who now sit on our Strategy Board to further promote employee voice at the heart of decision making.

B CORP™ CERTIFICATION

We are proud to be a B Corp™ Certified organisation and we are currently coming up to our three-year anniversary of becoming Certified.

To achieve the accreditation, during 2022 our Firm went through a rigorous assessment of all areas of our business and the impact we make on our colleagues, our community and the environment.

The Workers section assessed us on the financial security of our colleagues, equality, diversity and inclusion, health and safety, wellness, career development, engagement and satisfaction, and our participation in employee ownership. A year on from becoming B Corp, we reviewed and switched our pension provider to offer a better return on investment to our colleagues and enable our people to choose more ethical funds to invest in for their future and improve our pension offering's green credentials.

A refurbishment project of our Exeter office in 2024 delivered significant improvements to our green credentials and the working conditions and facilities for our colleagues, including wellbeing rooms and social spaces with further plans to mirror the improvements made in our Truro and Taunton offices.

FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES

Our flexible working is open to all and ensures that our colleagues who are caring for children or relatives who are elderly or unwell are able to balance their work and home lives. In the last year we have approved 100% of formal flexible working requests from our colleagues without any amendments.

We have fully embedded our hybrid working model into our culture which forms part of our vision for the future. Our 'the Best of Both Worlds' of remote and office working helps us to make the most of the advantages of working remotely and working in the office.

We have enhanced maternity and paternity packages, as well as providing additional support for female colleagues before, during and after their maternity leave. In 2024, we introduced further improvements to the maternity process including an upcoming pilot trial of additional support for maternity returners via external specialists. We also introduced better breastfeeding facilities and reviewed our maternity and paternity pay benefits in the Firm.



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

We support and develop our people, with training courses and mentoring for our future leaders. Our Associates Forum provides further development for our next generation of partners.

Training and development is offered to all lawyers and business support colleagues, and across all levels of the business equally. Our Mentoring Programme is available to both legal advisors and support staff, enabling our experienced colleagues to share their knowledge and experience with those looking to develop their personal and professional skills.

We are actively encouraging more women Associates and Partners to join the mentoring programme so they can be mentored and supported with their career progression aspirations.

We continue to make improvements to our appraisal process to ensure fairness and consistency in supporting the development of our legal advisors and colleagues working in our business support functions. Our line managers took part in our appraisal training for appraisers to further support the development of both our leaders and colleagues.

During 2024, we provided Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Unconscious Bias training to all our colleagues in the Firm, including the leadership team.

TRAINING CONTRACTS

Our trainee recruitment policy is inclusive, accepting applications from a range of different degrees and not exclusively law degrees. We do not set a minimum grade classification to apply and all applications are manually assessed before candidates are invited to an assessment day. Our assessment day is crafted to ensure that there are tasks tailored to suit a diverse range of personality types, in recognition of both diversity and inclusivity. We also provide a growing apprenticeship offering, ranging from Level 2 qualifications, up to Level 7 in our legal and support teams.

Our training team consists of Partners from a range of different backgrounds and legal teams who oversee the training journey. They meet on a monthly basis to ensure our programme is current, relevant and progressive. The training team conducts biannual appraisals with our trainee solicitors to ensure they are developing the skills they need for a bright future.

PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT

Several of our partners and managers work on a part-time basis and we work hard to ensure there are no barriers to promotion for part-time workers. Similarly, we are ensuring there are no barriers to women reaching full equity partner status in the Firm. In 2024, we had two women reaching Partner level, and five women reaching Associate or Senior Associate level in the Firm. Previously, all our Partners, Team Leaders and Directors took part in values and behaviours training, which included looking at ways of eliminating unconscious bias. Team Leaders undertook training on facilitating the transition to a flexible new, hybrid model of remote and office-based working. Our promotions criteria for Associate, Salaried Partner and Equity Partner provide transparency and clarity in setting expectations for legal advisors looking to advance their careers ensuring all lawyers in the Firm have equal opportunity to develop and progress. Our promotion policy is designed to ensure greater inclusivity around maternity provisions.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy is currently very high on the agenda. In 2022, we surveyed our colleagues to gauge their perception of this area in the Firm and we formed an action plan based on findings. In 2023, 58% of our colleagues engaged in our bi-annual diversity survey. Raising awareness of the diversity issues and making improvements to the ways we collate our data resulted in a much higher engagement rate this year than in previous years.

During 2024 we have improved our diversity data and its use to inform our Equality Diversity and Inclusion agenda going forward.

Our recruitment advertisements are inclusive, inviting candidates from all backgrounds and abilities to apply for our roles.

We provide a raft of physical and mental wellbeing support and are also working on greater support, awareness and education around menopause.

PAY REVIEWS AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS

We ensure there is no bias in pay reviews, and in setting pay for different roles we look at all factors, including external factors and market rates for each role.

In 2023, we had two pay increases in a 6 month-period, which included a cost-of-living payment to support colleagues with the cost-of-living crisis.

Previously we reviewed pay of our junior lawyers to ensure fairness and consistency in remuneration across all levels of experience in the Firm. In 2024, we carried an in-depth external benchmarking exercise to ensure that the remuneration remains competitive in the current market.

Stephens Scown is committed to the Living Wage Foundation principles. In addition to the above, the Firm offers a wide range of other financial benefits, including enhanced pension contributions, private medical insurance, life assurance, enhanced maternity and paternity pay, enhanced sick pay, cycle to work scheme, long service awards, reduced fees for legal services and a recruitment referral scheme. In 2024, we introduced significant increases to the amounts paid in respect of recruitment referrals made by our colleagues. We are constantly reviewing our benefits offering to ensure it meets the evolving needs of our employees and supports their overall wellbeing and professional growth.

SUPPORT

The Firm has a comprehensive range of initiatives to support our employees' mental, physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing, including our enhanced paid compassionate leave policy. We continually look to improve wellbeing in our workplace through a range of activities.

We continue to offer free counselling sessions and an Employee Assistance Programme for colleagues who need extra support.



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