



# Pay Gap Report

2024



## Foreword

At Orbit, we believe everyone is entitled to a good quality home that they can afford, in a place that they are proud to live. We are socially driven and commercially minded, and strive to provide amongst the best customer experience of any housing association in the country by building and maintaining safe, quality homes that our customers love, both sustainably and at scale, supported by excellent customer service. All delivered by happy colleagues who jump out of bed each day to make a social difference.

To support us in delivering this ambition, we launched our 2030 Strategy in 2024 and its supporting delivery programme, Everyday Excellence, which firmly puts our customers at the heart of everything we do. It's for them that we build and maintain our homes and communities, provide services to help them manage their tenancies, with access to support to help them improve their opportunities and navigate any challenges they may face.

We are acutely aware that we cannot achieve any of this without passionate and committed colleagues, who believe in our vision and want to make a difference. This is why we are resolute in offering a great place to work where our colleagues can grow and succeed. We are unwavering about ensuring our colleagues have the skills and tools they need, a commitment which is reflected in our ongoing investment in our people and culture.

Being fair and equitable to all, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, caring responsibilities, religion/belief or sexual orientation is a non-negotiable for us. We want everyone to feel valued and heard, whether colleague or customer, so we are passionate about creating a diverse and inclusive workplace where individuals can unlock their full potential, and we in turn can deliver accessible services and equitable outcomes for the diverse communities we serve.

This year, as we report on our gender pay gap figures for 2024, we are pleased to see further positive closure across our pay quartiles, and in our overall mean gender pay gap. Our ethnicity pay gap is also moving in a positive direction. However, we still have more to do, particularly in closing our median gender pay gap.



Whilst 62.7% of our promotions during the year were for female colleagues, and the proportion of male and female colleagues working across both the upper and upper mid quartiles is nearly equal at 52% and 48% respectively, we have a greater proportion of women within our lower middle and lower quartiles, where roles typically include our customer service and support teams, and our overall median gender pay gap reflects this.

It is also important to view the figures for these quartiles from the perspective of our operating model, as we work closely with a number of external partner organisations to deliver some of our key services, such as repairs, maintenance and safety checks. These roles are not represented in our gender pay gap figures in contrast to some of our sector peers who operate in a different way.

The planned reduction of our temporary cost-of-living support allowance, which we introduced in 2023 for colleagues in lower salary bands, and fewer colleagues on maternity leave this year, have further impacted our median gender pay gap figure.

Over the past five years, we have seen our mean gender pay gap continue to close and we are confident that the initiatives we have in place and in plan will support closing this further. However, our median figures have continued to sit around the same level, this is predominantly influenced and will continue to be influenced by our operating model, whereby our external partner organisations deliver a host of key maintenance services.

We are committed to building on our effective positive practices already in place, and working to embed new initiatives that will support us in closing our pay gap further. These include increasing investment in training and development programmes to raise individual capability and provide more career opportunities to all, continuation of our scaled pay review, further embedding our Diversity and Inclusion Framework and empowering our colleagues through our wider Everyday Excellence 2030 Strategy delivery programme.

We are proud to have passionate, highly engaged colleagues who feel comfortable to tell us what they think, how they feel and what they want us to improve upon. We do not take this engagement for granted and are committed to using it to continue to champion more equitable opportunities for all groups within our organisation, and beyond, to help create a more inclusive society for all.

### **John Wriighthouse**

Chief People and Reputation Officer



## What is the Gender Pay Gap?

A gender pay gap is the difference between the average pay of all men and women in an organisation. It's very different to equal pay: equal pay means that men and women performing equal work should receive equal pay and this is a legal requirement.

The gender pay gap can exist, where the proportion of males and females differ at different pay scales, often a result of a greater proportion of males in more senior and technical roles.

**The UK national median gender pay gap in 2024 was 13.1%.**

(Source: [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk))

## Reporting requirements

The UK government requires all companies with more than 250 employees to report their data against six key metrics:

- **Mean hourly gender pay gap**
- **Median hourly gender pay gap**
- **Mean gender bonus gap**
- **Median gender bonus gap**
- **Proportion of male and female employees who received a bonus**
- **Proportion of male and female employees in quartile pay bands**

## Definitions

### Mean:

The mean calculation considers basic average pay/bonus across all of employees.

### Median:

The median calculation focuses on those employees in the middle of pay/bonus ranges, thereby reducing the impact of highest and lowest paid employees.

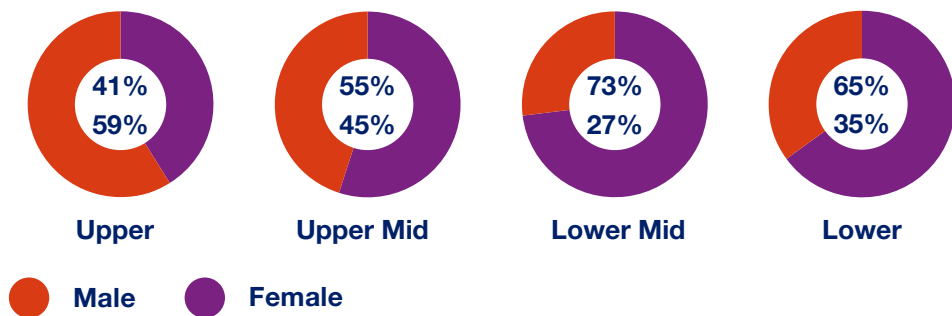
This year's data is calculated based on the hourly rates of pay as of 5 April 2024.



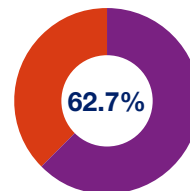
## Our 2024 gender pay figures

### Proportion of male and female colleagues in each pay quartile

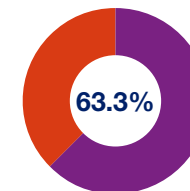
These charts show the gender makeup of the Orbit Group workforce in each of our salary 'quartiles'. Quartiles are calculated by ordering the hourly rates of pay for each colleague across the business from lowest to highest, splitting the list into four equal-sized groups (quartiles), then calculating the percentage of males and females in each quartile.



Our quartile figures show positive further closure of the gap in all quartiles, except the upper quartile which remains the same. However, our quartile figures for the lower middle and lower remain reflective of females continuing to make up a higher proportion of colleagues within these quartiles, which is the primary driver of the gender gap.



Promotions were for female colleagues



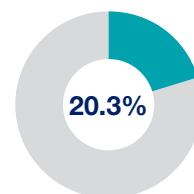
Number of female colleagues securing a new role within Orbit

### Overall mean and median gender pay gap

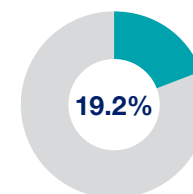
The charts below show Orbit's overall mean and median gender pay, based on hourly rates of pay.

Orbit Group includes Orbit Housing Association, Orbit Homes and Orbit Treasury.

#### Gender pay gap – Orbit Group

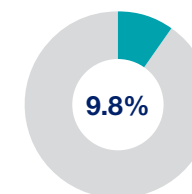


Mean

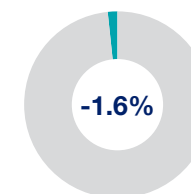


Median

#### Gender bonus gap



Mean



Median

## Understanding our figures

Across Orbit, we pay men and women equally for doing the same job. Our gender pay gap is influenced by the fact that we have a higher proportion of women working in roles that sit within our lower middle and lower pay quartiles, which typically include our customer service and support teams.

Our median figure has also been influenced by the planned reduction of our temporary cost-of-living support allowance introduced in 2023 for colleagues in lower salary bands, and fewer colleagues on maternity leave during the year.

Note: Under our business model we also work closely with a number of external partner organisations to deliver some of our key services, such as repairs, maintenance and safety checks. These roles are not represented in our gender pay gap figures in contrast to some of our sector peers who operate in a different way.

“ I am personally passionate about empowering people, particularly women, to take on more opportunities to grow, especially in sectors that have been historically more male-dominated, such as construction and technology. I know from experience the huge benefit that a diverse and inclusive workforce offers any organisation, and more importantly, the abundance of untapped talent that’s available amongst those still facing challenges in the workplace. There is a wealth of opportunity out there for all who have the passion and drive to succeed, and I am committed to leading by example and championing everyone to be their best in whatever career they choose. ”

**Liz Robson**

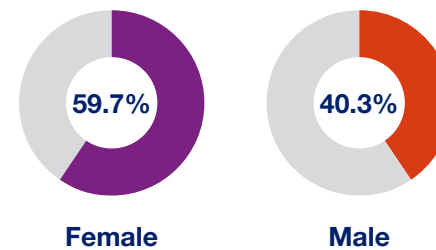
Chief Technology and Information Officer



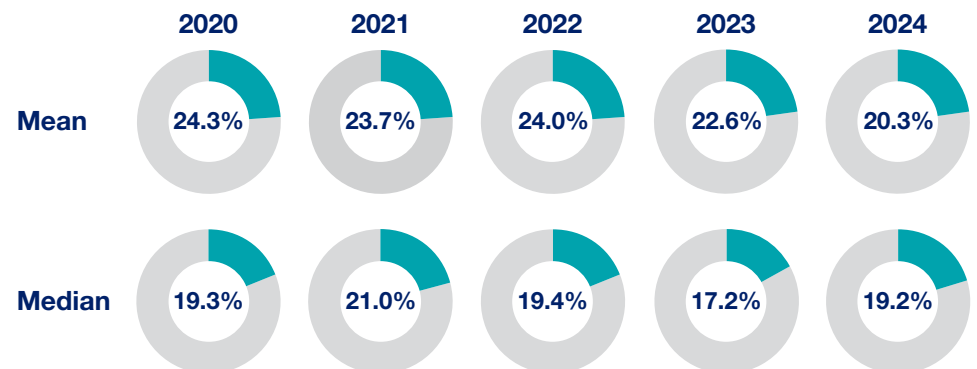
## Gender Bonus Gap

Our gender bonus gap is reflective of more female colleagues receiving an annual incentive bonus during the period, as well as sales commission payments issued to a small number of colleagues within Orbit Homes and our Stars in Orbit recognition scheme, which awards colleagues for exceptional work and demonstration of our corporate values.

### Orbit’s employee gender split



### Mean and median pay gap trend over the last five years:





## Building an inclusive business

Embracing a diverse and inclusive workplace, where colleagues feel motivated in their work, feel valued, respected and are united in achieving our purpose and mission sits at our core. It not only enables us to unlock our colleagues' full potential but allows us to deliver accessible services and equitable outcomes for the diverse communities we serve.

Our approach to employment policies is intended to support our customer-centric culture, to enable us to access development to build knowledge and skills for talent across our organisation, so we can deliver great outcomes for our customers. It focuses on:

- Creating safe spaces and a sense of inclusion and belonging
- Inclusive leadership that understands their part in creating a nurturing and collaborative environment for all colleagues to perform to their best
- Having a learner mindset that is equipped to accept when things don't go well and to learn from them
- Providing opportunities to grow, no matter your background
- Putting our customers' interests at the heart of everything we do

To support this, we have introduced a programme of initiatives for our colleagues to ensure everyone feels valued and heard, including:

- Quarterly Colleague Engagement survey
- Colleague Ambassador group
- Healthy Mind First Aider team
- Disability Passport scheme
- Neurodiversity listening sessions, guides and networking groups
- Racial and Inclusion listening session and networking groups
- Women's networking group
- LGBTQ+ networking group
- Updating our mandatory Diversity and Inclusion e-learning
- Courses designed from a range of different perspectives and experiences to address differing needs and ensure we all have access to learning opportunities that help build personal skills, confidence and impact

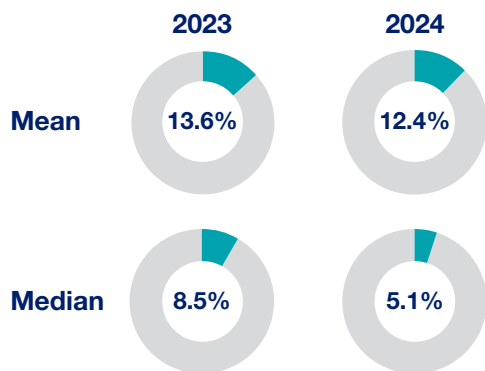
**We are proud to have been awarded LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge Pioneer Status.**



We recently launched our racial, diversity and inclusion programme in partnership with The Network of Networks. Our Mid-Career Talent Accelerator course is designed to support talented racial minority professionals in building skills and accelerating careers. We will also be shortly launching our Early Career Accelerator, which focuses on the experience of being a racial minority professional, with an emphasis on career planning, relationship building, communication skills and influencing strategies to help career growth.

### Ethnicity Pay Gap

As part of our drive towards equality, we would also like to include in this report our ethnicity pay gap. These figures are representative of 87% of our workforce, with 13% of colleagues undeclared. We are proud to of the positive progress we have made and remain committed to working to close this gap further.





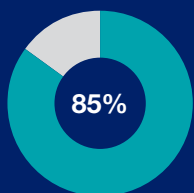
## Colleague Engagement

Our people are central to delivering the services and support our customers expect from us. We cannot deliver one without the other, which is why it's important that we offer a great place to work, and attract, retain and develop colleagues who share a passion for our purpose.

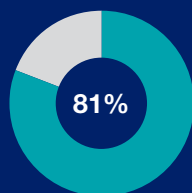
A culture where colleagues have the chance to tell us what they think, how they feel and what they want us to improve upon is central to this.

One of the ways in which we garner this understanding is through our in-depth colleague engagement survey, and we are proud to have an engaged workforce who are supportive of sharing their invaluable insights and experience to help us to continue to build a great place to work, together.

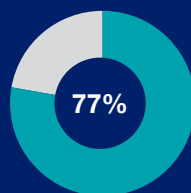
84% of our colleagues shared their thoughts with us during our annual colleague engagement survey, which showed that:



**agreed that we're committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace**



**feel proud to work at Orbit**



**would recommend Orbit as a great place to work**

We're committed to continuously improving our colleague experience through enhancing our development opportunities, involving colleagues in our future direction, and ensuring everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered.

### WorkBuzz Five Star Employer

**We are proud to be recognised as a WorkBuzz Five Star Employer, which is awarded to those leading the way in employee experience, exceeding industry benchmarks and demonstrating strong engagement scores, high response rates and regular survey frequency.**



## Moving forward

We remain committed to building an inclusive organisation that values the differences people bring and where opportunities for everyone to be the best that they can be, no matter their background, are advanced for all.

We have therefore set the following ambitions for Orbit:

- **To increase opportunities to grow through a range of programmes designed to help everyone access development that meets their unique needs**
- **To support pay progression in a planned and systematic way**
- **To offer an inclusive reward and benefits proposition that is designed to enable everyone to balance their professional and personal lives**

We have several initiatives in place, in progress and in plan to help us achieve these ambitions, with activity falling into three main areas: Attraction; Retention and Development.



## Attraction

- Mandatory accredited recruiter programme aiding hiring managers to create a culture of fair and transparent recruitment, and an environment for candidates to be at their best and bring their authentic self so that they are able to succeed
- We look beyond technical qualifications and experience, and use tools such as psychometric assessments and competency-based interviews to help us appoint candidates with a wider perspective on experience and potential
- Inclusion of employment terms to support work life balance, including flexible working and benefits aimed at improving health and wellbeing
- Increasing the number of reduced hours roles advertised to support those that require greater flexibility
- Orbit has been a voluntary Living Wage employer since 2019
- Clear job evaluation methodology and ongoing salary benchmarking
- Use of skill-based assessment tasks for roles where appropriate
- Increased advertising roles across the Forces Families Jobs and Employers Domestic Abuse Covenant





## Retention

- Implementing a scaled pay review which supports pay progression in a more planned and systematic way
- Continuation of our hybrid approach to work, which enables eligible colleagues to work from home, alongside attending the office for meetings or to collaborate amongst teams
- Investment in technology to support flexible and agile working
- Gaining a better understanding of our colleague experience with our in-depth employee engagement tracker
- Continuation of #This is Me, our award-winning wellbeing programme, providing colleagues with wellbeing support tools, colleague networks, listening sessions, podcasts, tools, and forums, which all encourage listening, sharing, and learning to ensure an inclusive workplace and customer-centric culture
- An enhanced Employee Assistance Programme offering counselling, access to healthcare, and wellbeing events
- A new, refreshed benefits platform that supports colleagues to easily interact with our benefits proposition, so they can make the most of the benefits that suit their lifestyle
- A clear Diversity and Inclusion strategy and action framework
- Awareness campaigns to challenge misperceptions, encourage open and honest conversation and support diversity and inclusion
- Colleague Ambassador 'super group' which helps us further build our thriving workplace community with a focus on EDI, wellbeing and engagement and offering a critical friend to ensure colleague feedback is heard and, more importantly used as a driver for positive change



## Retention continued

- Orbit's Women's Network with the purpose of creating a safe space where our female colleagues feel enabled and empowered to succeed in their professional and personal lives, and male colleagues are invited to join in the conversation, understand challenges, become allies to ultimately inspire inclusion across the organisation
- Neurodiversity networking group for colleagues to share their experiences and make suggestions as to how we can further improve, along with managers neurodiversity training and guidance documents for both managers and colleagues
- Launching our series of Racial & Diversity Listening Sessions and networking group
- Stars in Orbit recognition programme and annual awards to recognise high performing colleagues and behaviours which support our values
- Disability Confident Committed status provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. As part of this accreditation, we have committed to:
  - Ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible
  - Offer an interview to disabled people where they meet the essential criteria
  - Anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments as required
  - Support existing colleagues who acquire a disability or long-term health condition including via the Disability Passport scheme
- We are also signatories/supporters of the following:
  - Armed Forces Covenant and are a holder of their Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award
  - The HouseProud Pledge demonstrating our commitment to LGBTQ+ equality and support
  - LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge Pioneer Status
  - Business in the Community Race Charter
  - Employers Domestic Abuse Covenant





## Development

- Implementing our Leadership Development Framework
- Navigating the Transformation Together - a development programme to support colleagues through our Everyday Excellence transformational journey
- Leadership Development including Leader as Coach, and partnerships with the Springboard, Navigator, Wavelength Connect and Windsor Leadership programmes
- Mid-Career Talent Accelerator and Early Career Accelerator programmes designed to support talented racial minority professionals in building skills to accelerate their careers
- Targeted training in response to skills landscape research
- Coaching Culture Learning Platform
- Mentoring programme
- STRIVE Apprenticeship programme combining workplace training with part-time study at college or university
- Offering group-wide training for all colleagues, providing them with the opportunity to improve and develop their careers. During the 12-month period to April 2024:
  - Over 15,000 hours of face-to-face development was delivered to colleagues
  - Colleagues completed over 7,000 hours of online/e-learning courses
  - Support was offered to over 100 colleagues for professional qualifications
  - Paid professional subscription fees for over 100 colleagues

**29.7% of all our recruitment is fulfilled with colleagues progressing their career with Orbit.**



