

GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2019 - BELL DECORATING GROUP LTD

This report sets out our headline gender pay gap figures. Our report details our snapshot date of 5 April 2019.

1. WHAT IS THE GENDER PAY GAP?

The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between the average earnings of men and women across an organisation. In Britain, there is an overall gender pay gap of 17.3%. The gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay. Equal pay relates to men and women being paid equally for equal work. We are confident that men and women are paid equally for doing the same job at Bell Decorating Group Limited.

We ensure that pay levels are fair and applied consistently, irrespective of gender. Our Board of Directors undertake an annual pay review exercise to ensure that pay levels are fair at every level of our organisation. We perceive equality in pay as being absolutely fundamental and our annual pay review reinforces our commitment to ensuring equality.

Whilst every organisation has a part to play in tackling the gender pay gap, the gap unfortunately tends to be higher in sectors such as ours, the construction sector. We recognise that there are a number of reasons for the gender pay gap such as the highest paid roles generally being male dominated; the effect of part time working and the effect of unconscious stereotyping such as assumptions that women do not want to accept promotion or not being in a position to do so due to caring responsibilities.

The reporting obligations have been thought provoking and our further research into the factors that have resulted in a gender pay gap at all have allowed us to further progress our own strategies on ensuring equality.

2. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

All UK companies with 250 or more employees as at the snapshot date of 5 April 2019, are required to publish specific gender pay gap information as follows:

- Mean gender pay gap which shows the difference between the mean hourly rates of pay that male and female full pay relevant employees receive;
- Median gender pay gap shows the difference between the median hourly rates of pay that male and female full pay relevant employees receive;
- Mean gender bonus gap shows the difference between the mean bonus pay that male and female relevant employees receive;
- Median gender bonus gap shows the difference between the median bonus pay that male and female relevant employees receive;
- Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus;
- Proportion of males and females by quartile pay band which is done by dividing the workforce into four equal parts.

The mean and median gender pay gap is based on hourly rates of pay as at 5 April 2019.

The mean and median gender pay gap considers bonus pay received in the 12 months leading up to 5 April 2019.

Pay quartiles look at the proportion of men and women in four pay bands when we divide our workforce into four equal parts.

3. SUMMARY OF DATA

We have complied with our obligations and below, we have summarised our findings.

Mean Gender Pay Gap (%)	Median Gender Pay Gap (%)	Mean Gender bonus Gap (%)	Median Gender Bonus Gap (%)	Proportion of Males Receiving a Bonus (%)	Proportion of Females Receiving a Bonus (%)
- 11.36	-0.29	19.39%	20.68%	57%	14%

Proportion of Males and Females by Pay Quartile (%)		
	Males (%)	Females (%)
Top Quartile	87%	13%
Upper Middle Quartile	91%	9%
Lower Middle Quartile	93%	7%
Lower Quartile	85%	15%

4. GENDER PAY GAP

We can confirm that this year again, our female members of staff have a higher average hourly rate of pay compared with our male employees with the typical woman receiving 11.36% an hour more than men. We are pleased with this given the challenges that we face in our industry as discussed in section 6 of this report.

We are delighted that 20% of our Directors are female. In addition, we are in the fortunate position of having attracted women into our senior management roles at a tier of staff that sits just below our Directors. At this senior level of our organisation, 67% of that is made up of women. This is a great representation of the hard work that we do to promote our industry to women.

The number of women in our senior management roles remains consistent which demonstrates our ability to retain our female employees in senior management positions. The women in our senior management roles and at Director level are passionate about addressing the stereotypical views that unfortunately continue to exist in our industry and keenly promote the message that construction is just as much for women as men. We perceive our females Directors and female senior managers as very much leading the way and being great examples internally and externally of the clear pathways that can lead to promotion to senior roles. We are confident that we can help break down barriers that females may face when progressing their careers.

Our senior female managers report directly to either our Chief Executive or Managing Director and work closely with them in assisting the organisation shape its various strategies including addressing any equality issues and ways of encouraging more women into the business. We hold regular Strategy and Development meetings which are chaired by our CEO and attended by our senior management team.

Our median gender pay gap figure shows that the typical woman received 0.29% more an hour than the typical male.

5. GENDER BONUS GAP

We have higher mean and median bonus gaps, however, we are delighted that the mean gender bonus gap has reduced significantly since we started reporting our findings. This is as a result of refreshing our bonus policies which further ensure fairness and consistency on how and when bonuses are paid. We will continue to close the gap and we intend to further review our various bonus structures.

We operate primarily two types of bonus schemes. Firstly, we incentivise our Operatives in such a way that they have the opportunity to earn a bonus every week if they achieve the targets set. Secondly, we incentivise our managers and senior management teams with a bonus scheme which is linked to the organisation's performance. Our profit share scheme enables the opportunity for a bonus to be paid on an annual basis following the end of our financial year end.

We recognise that our gender bonus gap is due to a significant majority of our Operatives being men and as such, benefiting from the potential to earn a bonus on a weekly basis. We deem this type of bonus scheme to be fundamental in incentivising and retaining our Operatives. We are in a landscape where there is a skills shortage in the construction industry and that is one reason that we are keen to ensure excellent levels of retention. We will continue with our efforts to recruit more females into site based roles. The steps that we are taking are summarised in section 7 of this report.

An explanation for the lower proportion of females compared to men receiving a bonus is due to there being far less females in our site based roles and instead dominating some of the more senior positions where the terms of the bonus scheme are different. The majority of our female employees have one opportunity per year to earn a bonus depending on the organisation's performance. This is balanced with our typical female earning on average 11.36% more than a typical male. Our female employees are remunerated fairly albeit have less of an opportunity to obtain a bonus given the more senior roles that they occupy.

A further factor is that more women than men work on a part time basis in our organisation. Where bonuses have been paid to our part time members of staff, they are pro-rated to reflect the hours of work. We are an employer that encourages flexible ways of working where possible that suit the requirements of our employees and ensure a healthy work life balance. This will have an impact on our gender bonus gap, however, we are keen to ensure that we continue being flexible with our employees where possible. It is important to us that our retention levels remain excellent and we are attractive to potential new candidates.

6. CHALLENGES IN OUR INDUSTRY

Despite operating in the construction industry which currently attracts fewer women, our average hourly pay for our female employees is higher than our male employees. We seek to make our industry attractive to females and part of that is ensuring that the roles that we offer are well paid

to ensure that a good quality of life is possible for all our employees. This is further demonstrated by our commitment to pay our employees at least the National Living Wage.

Our organisation continues to be under-represented by females and we continue to be faced with challenges in fulfilling our desire to achieve a fairer balance in relation to the number of men and women that we employ. This is an area that continues to be high on our agenda and we are taking positive steps to address that.

Attracting women to the industry is one of our greatest challenges. This will link in to our newly developed CSR Strategy, Believe, Be Better, Be Bell where a fresh strategy for the recruitment of more females will be agreed. We plan to further review our current strategies in detail this year and implement new strategies that we think will be useful in assisting us in achieving our goals.

A further significant challenge in our industry is a shortage of skills. This has an impact on both our business and the construction industry generally. As a leading painting and decorating contractor with an ethos for making positive changes, we have reviewed this issue and have attempted to address the skills shortage by introducing and developing Bell Group Academies. We are a proactive employer committed to addressing not only any challenges that we face as a business but also ensuring that our activities benefit the construction industry as a whole. Further information on our Bell Group Academies is provided in section 7 of our report.

We are committed to improving gender balance and have taken a number of steps to make our business more attractive to a wider range of candidates as summarised below.

7. TAKING ACTION

We have identified that the following key issues in our organisation continue to exist and we wish to continue addressing:

- We have a much higher proportion of men than women in our organisation; and
- Overall, we have fewer women than men in our operational roles.

We will maintain our efforts to attract more women at all levels of our organisation. This year, we intend to review our practices to consider pay, reward and recognition; recruitment and induction; equality; flexible working; talent management and people development with particular focus on establishing if the pipeline to senior roles is working as effectively as it could be for women.

RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

We have planned a full review of our recruitment practices will be taking place this year. We are keen to identify any areas that we can improve on in the recruitment process and that may include changing the way in which we receive applications for roles such as introducing name blind applications which may assist in minimising the potential for any bias due to gender. We will also review the wording of our job adverts to include gender neutral language which is more likely to appeal to women.

We have very recently issued training on Unconscious Bias to all our managers with a view to challenging our managers and allowing them to understand that unconscious bias does exist and what we need to do in order to eliminate it in the workplace. Following our full review of our recruitment processes, we intend to provide further appropriate training to our managers to ensure that the recruitment and promotion processes are followed in such a way that fairness and consistency can be demonstrated regardless of gender.

We encourage applicants from under-represented groups and visibly promote ourselves as not only an employer of choice but one that supports women into the business at every level. There is demonstrable evidence of this being ingrained in our recruitment practice and our Apprentice Recruitment Strategy which purposely promotes and actively supports the recruitment of women into painting and decorating roles which are primarily occupied by men.

To assist with this, we have developed specific recruitment literature which is used by our Community Engagement Co-ordinators to positively target females in the communities within which we deliver our services. We use examples of female employees who have been successful in our organisation to be used within adverts, case studies, videos, leaflets and at careers events across the UK. Our female employees are role models for future talent and we encourage them to share their experiences.

We recognise that there is still work to be done to establish a balance in attracting females and as such are developing further resources.

APPRENTICES

With a lower number of women in operational roles, we continue to place inclusivity firmly on our agenda with a particular focus on our Apprentice recruitment drives. We actively recruit apprentices annually throughout the UK.

As a result of our apprentice strategy and our focus on attracting minority groups, our female intake of apprentices has increased year on year and we set our targets higher each year in relation to the recruitment of female apprentices. Last year, our intake of female apprentices was 17% which we are very proud of as we continue to work hard to promote our apprenticeship scheme to females in what is traditionally associated with a male dominated industry and career.

Our recruitment drive for this year is now underway and we are hopeful that we can exceed our female intake compared with previous years. Our recruitment targets have been increased this year to reflect our ambition to recruit more female apprentices than ever before.

Our recruitment campaigns annually look to encourage under-represented groups into the industry and we are dedicated to recruiting the right people, supporting them through their training, and encouraging them to be the best they can be. To assist us with this commitment, we work closely with a range of organisations such as Barnardo's which in turn provide us with access to some of the more disadvantaged young adults in the communities within which we work with an opportunity to commence full time employment in a role that suits them with a view to them obtaining a qualification and continuing in permanent employment. This allows us to provide a brighter future for people by presenting opportunities that they may not have had otherwise and in particular encouraging women with little or no prospects into the workplace.

We have been awarded Apprentice Employer of the Year Award this year by Riverside College in recognition of our commitment to making a positive difference to lives and communities. Our success was achieved in competition with over 100 different industry sector employers from across the UK. This is an achievement that we are very proud of and demonstrates our commitment and passion for working with under-represented groups.

We recognise that once we have attracted female apprentices into our business, sustainability and retention can be a challenge. In order to address this, in 2018 we appointed workplace mentors to support all apprentices across the business with particular focus on ensuring that female apprentices have access to the relevant pastoral and progression support. We deliver teambuilding away days to all our new apprentices with regular off the job training. To further enhance this process our National Training and Development Manager has undertaken a SVQL7 Train the Mentor programme

specifically developed for the construction sector to support females into non-traditional roles. It is envisaged that this training will be rolled out to mentors across our organisation shortly.

We also encourage all our apprentices to challenge themselves and to enter sector specific competitions which provide a ideal opportunity for them to showcase their skills and to promote our industry to underrepresented groups that may otherwise not consider a career in construction.

BELL GROUP ACADEMIES

The development and growth of our Bell Group Academies provide a perfect host environment to incubate future female talent and our Management and Training Strategies will ensure potential is identified and developed at all levels and across all business areas regardless of gender. We now have 14 Bell Group Academies throughout the UK having developed a successful Academy model over the last few years.

Regular and positive contact by our Branch teams ensures that any females attached to our Academies are encouraged to take up work experience placements to support with practical skills and personal development prior to the annual apprentice recruitment process commencing. This enhances their opportunity of success and we have demonstrable evidence of where females have been supported through our 'hands on' process through to the offer of a trade apprenticeship.

BELL DECORATING HUBB

In line with our desire to ensure equality and provide opportunities for all individuals, we are delighted to have recently launched our very own Bell Decorating Hubb in the North East of England in partnership with The Link School. The Hubb creates a learning area where students can feel inspired to learn and challenge themselves to develop new skills. The Hubb allows learners an insight into the industry at an early age, allowing them to make informed decisions about their career path. Our new initiative allows us to engage with female learners and take the opportunity to demonstrate that there are good career opportunities in our industry.

SCHOOL LEAVERS

We continue to place a particular emphasis on taking opportunities to present to those in high school who are at the stage of thinking about which career path they may wish to take. We actively educate those pupils about our industry and the opportunities available at all levels of our organisation.

Identifying that we struggle to attract women into our industry, we proactively seek to make contact with female pupils to further discuss any opportunities that are available in an attempt to make our industry more appealing to them.

Quite often we are surprised to note that a lack of understanding about our industry is one of the main factors that discourages women from considering our industry as a career. We aim to break down those barriers and encourage women to view our industry positively with numerous opportunities for career progression.

We currently have around 20 members of staff that are Construction Ambassadors in addition to our Community Engagement team who actively promote career opportunities in schools. We work closely with a wide range of educational establishments to support positive outcomes against the Gatsby Benchmarks and enable young people to make informed decisions on their future education and career paths. All our educational engagement strategies aim to attract more females into our workforce at all levels. This commitment also ties in with our desire to change the stereotypical

perceptions of the construction industry as a whole and we are working hard in an attempt to address those stereotypes.

We are confident that our commitment to achieve a more balanced workforce will lead to an increase in female employees in the years to come.

EX-MILITARY ENGAGEMENT

We have signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant to support ex-military personnel into the industry. All general vacancies are advertised on the Careers Transition Partnership (CTP) website and the business represented at regional CTP careers events. This provides us with further opportunity to engage and encourage females leaving the armed services to consider a career in our organisation from trade positions right through to management roles and we have successfully recruited females through this structured process.

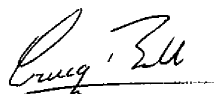
We are delighted to have received a Silver Award under the Employer Recognition Scheme for our support to the Armed Forces and our commitment to employing and supporting reservists, service leavers, veterans and their families. We are now working towards the Gold Award.

INVESTORS IN YOUNG PEOPLE AWARD

We have achieved the Investors in Young People accreditation which we are delighted with. This award recognises our commitment to assisting young people to gain employability skills and assist them with the transition into the world of work.

We were particularly recognised for the impact that our young people make on our strategy as we perceive them to be very much our future. We are committed to enabling a culture of continuous development which is reflected in our retention figures as well as progression opportunities.

I confirm that the gender pay data contained in this report is accurate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Bell", written over a horizontal line.

Craig Bell
Chief Executive
27 April 2020