

## **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2022 - BELL GROUP**

This report sets out our headline gender pay gap figures and goes on to discuss some of the challenges in our industry which contributes to our gender pay gap and the measures that we are taking to address that. Our report details our snapshot date of 5 April 2022.

### **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.

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 role at Bell Group.

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 led by our Board of Directors reinforces our commitment to ensuring equality.

Whilst every organisation including ours 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 number of men employed being significantly higher than the number of women given the nature of our industry and some of the more well paid operational roles generally being male dominated.

### **2. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

All companies in the UK with 250 or more employees as at the snapshot date of 5 April 2022, 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 2022.

The mean and median gender pay gap considers bonus pay received in the 12 months leading up to 5 April 2022.

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 summarise our findings. We are not obliged to report our gender pay gap information in relation to Bell Group UK Limited but have voluntarily chosen to do so.

<b>Mean Gender Pay Gap (%)</b>	Bell Group UK Limited	46.96%
	Bell Decorating Group Limited	19.23%
	Combined	5.82%
<b>Median Gender Pay Gap (%)</b>	Bell Group UK Limited	50.07%
	Bell Decorating Group Limited	20.75%
	Combined	15.27%
<b>Mean Gender Bonus Gap (%)</b>	Bell Group UK Limited	30.88%
	Bell Decorating Group Limited	38.11%
	Combined	21.42%
<b>Median Gender Bonus Gap (%)</b>	Bell Group UK Limited	42.65%
	Bell Decorating Group Limited	26.42%
	Combined	25.56%
<b>Proportion of Males Receiving a Bonus (%)</b>	Bell Group UK Limited	32%
	Bell Decorating Group Limited	70%
	Combined	71%
<b>Proportion of Females Receiving a Bonus (%)</b>	Bell Group UK Limited	11%
	Bell Decorating Group Limited	37%
	Combined	29%

<b>Proportion of Males and Females by Pay Quartile (%)</b>						
	Bell Group UK Limited Male	Bell Decorating Group Limited Male	<b>Total Combined Male</b>	Bell Group UK Limited Female	Bell Decorating Group Limited Female	<b>Total Combined Female</b>
Top Quartile	58%	96%	<b>91%</b>	42%	4%	<b>9%</b>
Upper Middle Quartile	15%	97%	<b>94%</b>	85%	3%	<b>6%</b>
Lower Middle Quartile	15%	93%	<b>92%</b>	85%	7%	<b>8%</b>
Lower Quartile	10%	83%	<b>80%</b>	90%	17%	<b>20%</b>

#### **4. GENDER PAY GAP**

The average hourly rate remains in favour of our male employees. However, we are delighted that this has reduced from 13.61% last year to 5.82% this year when taking into account our full business.

Whilst we are disappointed that we continue to have a gender pay gap, we are pleased with the significant progress that we have made in the last 12 months since the last reporting period.

We are delighted to have female representation on our Board of Directors with an additional female being promoted to our Board of Directors since our last report. We recognise the significant contribution that diversity at Board level brings as we continue to shape the future of our organisation.

In addition, we are in a very good position of having appointed a number of women into our senior management roles at a tier of staff that sits just below our Directors. 50% of our employees at this level are female and have a significant influence on proposing and implementing strategies that make us innovative and a leader in our industry.

We are proud of our progress in recruiting and retaining females in some of our most business critical roles.

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 took the opportunity during Women in Construction Week to promote this with a number of powerful materials produced by our inspirational female employees. This year, during the course of Women in Construction Week, our Community Engagement Co-ordinators visited colleges throughout the UK such as Leeds, Preston and New College Lanarkshire to showcase opportunities within our organisation but also raise awareness of the wide range of careers available in the construction industry irrespective of gender.

Our median gender pay gap has increased this year. This is due to the significant growth of our organisation. Our headcount at the last reporting period was 1,429. This has increased to 1,888 in the current reporting period. As the majority of our employees are male given the nature of our industry, our increased headcount in a short period somewhat skews this figure. The growth of our organisation has been in line with carefully developed strategies.

#### **5. GENDER BONUS GAP**

We have higher mean and median bonus gaps, however, we are pleased to note that our mean gender bonus gap has reduced significantly since we started reporting our findings. In the 12 month period, it reduced from 36.54% to 21.42%.

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 performance of our branches and our Company's performance. This scheme enables the opportunity for a bonus to be paid on an annual basis following the end of our financial year.

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 keeping our Operatives motivated

and engaged. We continue to be in a landscape where there is a skills shortage in our 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. Currently, 3% of our site based employees are female. This is a 0.5% increase in comparison to the last reporting period. We recognise that there is much more work to be done in line with our passion for continuing to attract more females into our site based teams. The steps that we are currently taking to support us with that are summarised in section 7 of this report.

The proportion of our males and females receiving a bonus has reduced. This can be explained due to our increased headcount which has impacted on this figure with less employees as a percentage receiving a bonus in comparison to the previous reporting period.

The lower proportion of females compared to men receiving a bonus is due to there being significantly 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.

A further factor is that more women than men continue to 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.

## **6. CHALLENGES IN OUR INDUSTRY**

We strive 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 Real Living Wage, having received the accreditation in 2016.

Despite progress being made, 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 continue to take positive steps to address that.

Attracting women to our industry remains one of our greatest challenges. 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 property services 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 and launching our very own SQA accredited Apprentice Training Centre in Scotland. We plan to launch an Apprentice Training Centre in England soon.

We are a proactive employer committed to addressing not only any challenges that we face as a business but also ensuring that our efforts benefit the construction industry collectively. Further information on our Bell Group Academies and our Apprentice Training Centre 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.

In the past year, we have further reviewed our practices around flexible working; reward and recognition; people development and recruitment in particular.

### RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

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. This is ingrained in our recruitment practices and our Apprentice Recruitment Strategy which promotes and actively supports the recruitment of women at all levels including our site based roles which are primarily occupied by men.

We work closely with colleges throughout the UK with a specific focus on 'Women into Construction' courses. In addition, we continue to work closely with organisations such as DWP, SAY Women Glasgow and Watford Women's Centre to specifically support females looking for a career. As proud members of the Employers Domestic Abuse Covenant, we are continuing to strengthen our partnerships with organisations such as Smart Works and Women's Aid to enable us to support with providing sustainable employment to women.

Our recruitment campaigns are designed to focus on encouraging under-represented groups into our 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 external organisations such as the Princes Trust, the National Refugee Council, the Armed Forces, HMP, Barnardo's, Enable Scotland, Turning Point and the Construction Youth Trust. These organisations help us to engage with people looking to pursue careers in the construction industry and provide support throughout the journey. Our engagement with key organisations such as this in turn provides us with access to some of the more disadvantaged adults in the communities within which we work. This allows us to provide a brighter future for underrepresented groups by presenting opportunities that they may not have had otherwise and in particular encouraging those with little or no prospects into the workplace.

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 which are 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 openly and honestly. We also encourage feedback so we can understand what we are doing well, what we could do better, and any additional efforts that we can make to be more attractive to females considering a career in our industry.

We recognise that there is still work to be done to establish a fairer balance in attracting females and as such are developing further strategies. This remains a work in progress albeit we have seen positive results to date.

## APPRENTICES

With a significantly 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 underrepresented 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 14% 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 well underway and we are confident that we can exceed our female intake compared with previous years. We have increased our intake of female apprentices year on year.

Our recruitment targets have been increased this year in line with our executive board directive to recruit 500 apprentices over the next 5 years and our ambition to diversify our programme and recruit more female apprentices remains a priority for us. Since the board directive was issued in 2021, we have already recruited 190 apprentices.

Our key achievements in this reporting period include being awarded The 5% Club's Gold Award for achieving over 10% of the workforce as apprentice positions, The 5% Club's Large Employer of the Year Breadth and Balance Award for reflecting diversity within our Apprenticeship Programme and recently being awarded the Skills Development Scotland's prestigious Large Employer of the Year Award in the Diversity Category. This is a further reflection of the work that we have successfully undertaken in creating opportunities for female candidates and other under represented groups.

We recognise that we must support our female apprentices fully to ensure that they thrive. We have dedicated workplace mentors to support all apprentices across the business with a particular focus on ensuring that female apprentices have access to the relevant pastoral and progression support. We deliver team building away days to all our new apprentices with regular off the job training. To further enhance this process, our Head of Learning and Organisational Development has undertaken a SVQL7 Mentoring programme specifically developed for the construction sector to support females into non-traditional roles and training has been delivered nationally to all apprentice mentors.

We encourage all our apprentices to challenge themselves and to enter sector specific competitions which provide an ideal opportunity for them to showcase their skills and to promote our industry to under represented groups that may not otherwise consider a career in construction. Our apprentices have competed in the Painting and Decorating Association's Apprentice Trophy Awards as well as Skills Build Regional Heats. We had a 4<sup>th</sup> year female apprentice represent our business in this year's Skill Build painting and decorating final at Edinburgh College.

We continue to be members of the Cross Industry Construction Apprenticeship Task Force and Gold Award members of the 5% Club allowing us to both share best practice and further understand ways in which we can further improve the diversity of our apprenticeship programme.

## BELL GROUP ACADEMIES

The development and continued growth of our Bell Group Academies provide a perfect host environment to develop future female talent. Our current strategies ensure that potential is identified and developed at all levels and across all business areas regardless of gender. We have

12 Bell Group Academies throughout the UK having developed a successful Academy model. Our ambition is to grow this network of Academies over the coming year, engaging with additional colleges and supporting additional trades.

We have a dedicated Skills Co-ordinator supporting our Academies to ensure that full time and part time students on construction related programmes have a real opportunity to engage with the business through our work experience programme and access our apprenticeship vacancies.

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 and subsequent successful completion of their apprenticeship.

## TRAINING CENTRE

In 2019, we were awarded an apprenticeship contract with Skills Development Scotland and approved by the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) to deliver apprenticeships in Painting and Decorating. We have developed a training facility based in Airdrie and we have trained a number of Assessors from our existing workforce to support us with our vision in relation to this.

Bell Apprenticeships are currently delivering an in house Modern Apprenticeship programme to 31 apprentices from across Scotland and since its inception, has achieved 'high confidence' across all areas of delivery in SQA external verification. 20% of our intake of learners are female apprentices.

## 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.

We remain 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 are encouraged to note the recent announcement by UCAS that apprenticeships will feature strongly in their careers offering in the future and the announcement that UCAS points for apprenticeships are planned by the end of this year. We believe that both of these positive steps will support our vision to attract and recruit from a wider pool of female candidates. In line with this aspiration, we have recently partnered with a number of colleges and universities and recruited young people onto the Quantity Surveying technical apprenticeship programme. We are hopeful that by offering degree level apprenticeship programmes, this will further increase the pool of future applicants.

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 links in with our desire to change the stereotypical perceptions of the construction industry generally and we are working hard in an attempt to continue to address those stereotypes.

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

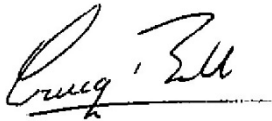
#### **EX-MILITARY ENGAGEMENT**

We have received the Gold Award for the Armed Forces Covenant where we support ex-military personnel into our industry. All of our general vacancies are advertised on the Careers Transition Partnership (CTP) website and our business is represented at 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 recently launched a pilot Work Placement Programme specifically aimed at supporting service leavers into employment. To date, on completion of the programme, 30% of those who undertook a placement with us remained with us on a permanent contract of employment.

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**  
**31 March 2023**