

## **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2023 - BELL GROUP LTD**

This report sets out our headline gender pay gap figures and goes on to discuss some of the challenges in our industry and the measures that we are taking to address that.

Our report details our snapshot date of 5 April 2023.

### **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 can confirm that men and women are paid equally for doing the same role at Bell.

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.

We acknowledge that we continue to have a significant part to play in tackling the gender pay gap. However, 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 2023, 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 2023.

The mean and median gender pay gap considers bonus pay received in the 12 months leading up to 5 April 2023.

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 Global Property Services (UK) Limited but have voluntarily chosen to do so for transparency.

<b>Mean Gender Pay Gap (%)</b>	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited	49.06%
	Bell Group Limited	8.13%
	Combined	-7.67%
<b>Median Gender Pay Gap (%)</b>	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited	58.25%
	Bell Group Limited	10.58%
	Combined	4.34%
<b>Mean Gender Bonus Gap (%)</b>	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited	33.25%
	Bell Group Limited	36.47%
	Combined	17.58%
<b>Median Gender Bonus Gap (%)</b>	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited	50.82%
	Bell Group Limited	37.20%
	Combined	0%
<b>Proportion of Males Receiving a Bonus (%)</b>	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited	47%
	Bell Group Limited	78%
	Combined	80%
<b>Proportion of Females Receiving a Bonus (%)</b>	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited	51%
	Bell Group Limited	57%
	Combined	56%

<b>Proportion of Males and Females by Pay Quartile (%)</b>						
	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited Male	Bell Group Limited Male	<b>Total Combined Male</b>	Bell Global Property Services (UK) Limited Female	Bell Group Limited Female	<b>Total Combined Female</b>
Top Quartile	63%	94%	<b>88%</b>	37%	6%	<b>12%</b>

Upper Middle Quartile	15%	95%	<b>92%</b>	85%	5%	<b>8%</b>
Lower Middle Quartile	15%	88%	<b>87%</b>	85%	12%	<b>13%</b>
Lower Quartile	5%	90%	<b>89%</b>	95%	10%	<b>11%</b>

#### 4. GENDER PAY GAP

Whilst the average hourly rate for Bell Group Ltd remains in favour of males, this has reduced significantly from 19.23% to 8.13% since our last reporting period 12 months ago which we are delighted with.

When considering our consolidated calculations, we are delighted to note that our average hourly rate is in favour of our female employees which is fantastic progress.

We are in a fantastic position of having appointed a number of women into our senior management roles at a tier of staff that sits just below our Directors. In addition to having female representation on our Board of Directors, 50% of our employees at our senior management 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 talented females in some of our most business critical roles.

The women in our senior management roles and at Director level are continuously passionate about addressing the stereotypical views that unfortunately continue to exist in our industry and promote the message that construction is just as much for women as it is for men.

We continue to challenge the stereotypical views and provide encouragement to our employees to help us break down those perceived barriers and demonstrate that this is an industry for everyone that offers stability, opportunities for progression and is rewarding. We took the opportunity during Women in Construction Week a short while ago to promote this with a number of powerful materials produced by our inspirational female employees.

Our Bell Group Ltd median gender pay gap has reduced considerably this year from 20.75% to 10.58% despite the continued growth of our organisation. Our total headcount at the last reporting period was 1,888. This has increased to 1,946 in the current reporting period. The growth of our organisation has been in line with carefully developed strategies including attracting and retaining females in some of our more senior, higher paid roles.

#### 5. GENDER BONUS GAP

In this reporting period, we are pleased to note that the percentage of employees who received a bonus has increased for our males and females. We tend to have higher mean and median bonus gaps, however, we are pleased to note that our mean gender bonus gap has reduced again this year from 38.11% to 36.47% when we consider our calculations for Bell Group Ltd.

As noted in our previous reports, 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 male given the nature of our industry 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. Having carefully considered the terms of this bonus scheme, we can see clear evidence that the structure of this bonus scheme is effective in achieving the desired outcomes.

We will continue with our efforts to recruit more females into site based roles. 3% of our site based employees are female which remains lower than we would like. We recognise that despite the progress made each year, there is still a lot of work to be done in line with our passion for continuing to attract more females into our site based teams in particular. The carefully planned steps that we are currently taking to assist with that are summarised in section 7 of this report.

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 as described above and where more females compared with men received a bonus in this reporting period.

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 encourage 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. We have noted an increase in our male employees in the past year making a flexible working request which is encouraging.

## **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 UK Living Wage accreditation in 2016.

Despite significant progress being made to date, 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 each year 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 Academies and launching our very own SQA accredited Apprentice Training Centre in Scotland. We plan to launch an Apprentice Training Centre in England next year.

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 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 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 to specifically support females hoping to develop 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 meaningful and 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 Prince's 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 successful female employees 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 recruitment campaigns. 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 tends to increase 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 13% which is comparable to our previous reporting period.

Our recruitment drive for this year is now well underway and we are confident that we will exceed our female intake compared with previous years.

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 recruited 296 apprentices.

Our key achievements in this reporting period include being awarded The 5% Club's Platinum Award, a prestigious level of membership awarded through the annual Employer Audit process which provides valuable benchmarking information for employers invested in apprenticeships and other 'earn to learn' programmes. We were one of only 31 members of The 5% Club awarded Platinum status in recognition of achieving over 10% of the workforce as apprentice positions over three consecutive years.

We are also delighted to be awarded The 5% Club's Large Employer of the Year Breadth and Balance Award for the second year in succession for reflecting diversity within our Apprenticeship Programme.

Furthermore, last year, we were 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 underrepresented 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 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 a valuable opportunity for them to showcase their skills and to promote our industry to underrepresented groups that may not otherwise consider a career in construction.

Last year, our apprentices were well represented in all industry competitions. We were delighted to see five female apprentices compete nationally in the Painting and Decorating Association Apprentice Trophy Awards, resulting in two of our 2<sup>nd</sup> year apprentices awarded overall 1<sup>st</sup> place in the UK final and runner up position.

We had females compete in the Regional and National Skill Build competition hosted by the Construction Industry Training Board and WorldSkills. Finally, a 2<sup>nd</sup> year apprentice took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the National Finals awarded by Crown Paints.

As we prepare for the 2024 competition heats, we again have good overall female representation for the year ahead.

Last year, our Head of Learning and Organisational Development was appointed a member of the Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network. The network champions apprenticeships and diversity to employers. It encourages more people from underrepresented groups including women to consider apprenticeships. The network reports to the Department for Education's apprenticeships directorate.

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

## **BELL ACADEMIES**

The development and continued growth of our Bell 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 14 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 are currently supporting this growth through regular discussion with key partners and stakeholders across the UK including in Northern Ireland where we are hoping to open our first Bell Academy this year to support underrepresented groups with the transition from education into employment within Bell.

We have a dedicated Skills Co-ordinator supporting our Academies to ensure that all 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 their 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 48 apprentices from across Scotland and since its inception, has achieved 'high confidence' across all areas of delivery in SQA external verification.

In February 2024, Bell Apprenticeships gained the approval to deliver the SCQFL4 Employability Award. This is a valuable tool for the Bell Training and Assessment team and supports our existing work by allowing meaningful interventions with those furthest from the employment ladder to enable the transition into apprenticeships and employment by means of supporting people with a Job Search, development of their CV, Mock Interviews and Job Applications processes.

## 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 considering 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.

In 2023, we signed a partnership with The School Outreach Company. The aim of this agreement is to work collaboratively to deliver meaningful careers interventions to students, initially across 55 schools in the South East, London and South West of England. On a longer term basis, this reach will increase to more schools across the UK. Our aim is to raise awareness of the range of careers available in construction and to promote opportunities within Bell, specifically apprenticeships at all levels.

This project has elevated our ability to engage with young people, particularly underrepresented groups including females. Over the course of the past 7 months, through interactive newsletters and effective links to reading material and video collateral, we have engaged with over 50,000 students as part of the project, with over 11,000 students clicking on our QR code to find out more about our work experience and apprenticeship programmes.

We are encouraged that apprenticeships now feature strongly in the UCAS careers offering and that young people are recognising the benefits of apprenticeships and those students who would have ordinarily chosen University as their primary route are now considering apprenticeships alongside their wider career options. We believe that these positive steps will support our vision to attract and recruit from a wider pool of female candidates.

We are pleased to be working with a range of colleges and Universities including the University of Estate Management to offer degree level apprenticeships and have made good progress in 2023/2024 with our recruitment onto the Construction Quantity Surveying L4 standard and degree level apprenticeship.

We are hopeful that by offering degree level apprenticeship programmes, this will further increase the pool of future applicants and following the announcement by UCAS that apprenticeships will



finally qualify for UCAS tariff points from the new academic year, this will further support our ambition.

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.

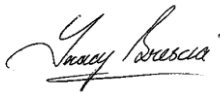
We are confident that our ongoing commitment to achieving a more balanced workforce will continue to lead to an increase in female employees in the years to come.

### **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 are pleased to have successfully recruited females through this structured process.

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



**Tracy Brescia**  
**Chief of Staff**  
**4 April 2024**