

# Gender pay gap report 2025

Reporting year - April 2024 to March 2025



## Introduction

At National Highways, we're committed to creating a workplace where everyone can thrive. This year's Gender Pay Gap Report shows a decrease in both our mean and median pay gaps and supports our continued focus in this area.

While our gender pay gap has remained broadly consistent in recent years, this year's reduction marks our best performance yet. We've built strong foundations and this is reflected in the progress we're making through our ongoing commitment to fairness, transparency and inclusion.

For the 2024–25 reporting period, our results are:

- Mean gender pay gap: 4.5% \*
- Median gender pay gap: 3.7%
- Mean gender bonus pay gap: 5%
- Median gender bonus pay gap: 2.7%
- Proportion of employees receiving a bonus:  
93.7% of women, 91.6% of men

Our figures continue to compare favourably to national averages with a lower gap than the public sector median of 13.5%, the private sector median\*\* of 17.5%, and the UK all-sector average of 12.8%.

We're encouraged to see positive movement this year, but we know there's more to do. Through continued focus, transparency and collaboration, we'll keep working to reduce the gap further to achieve a more balanced and inclusive organisation for everyone.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. M. Billington." The signature is fluid and cursive.

### **Elaine Billington**

Chief People Officer  
National Highways

\* A full list definitions can be found on page 10

\*\* Source: Annual Survey of Hours and  
Earnings, Office for National Statistics

## What we are doing to address the pay gap

Over the past year, we have continued to take action to build an inclusive and supportive working environment for women across National Highways. These actions reflect our ongoing commitment to creating meaningful and lasting change.

We remain committed to encouraging more women into our early talent programmes and challenging the stereotypes often associated with careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). Through our partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company, we are developing information for schools across England that showcases female colleagues working in STEM roles and highlights the range of career opportunities available at National Highways. To mark International Women's Day, we delivered a range of activities focused on both attracting future female talent and supporting women already working at National Highways. This included outreach with schools and colleges, where female colleagues shared their career journeys and spoke at assemblies and workshops to challenge gender stereotypes in STEM, alongside internal sessions on the Gender Pension Gap, helping colleagues better understand the long-term financial impact on their pension of career breaks, caring responsibilities and part-time working.

In October 2024, we held a series of focus groups to gather feedback from 95 female and ethnic minority colleagues who are part of our talent community. The feedback showed strong demand for personalised development support, with 67% preferring bespoke learning and a further 19% expressing interest in diversity specific programmes. By listening to colleagues' lived experiences and understanding the barriers they face, we are using these insights to shape and strengthen future talent development initiatives and colleague success.

We have also continued to encourage colleagues to share their diversity data so we can build and maintain an accurate understanding of our workforce. High-quality data enables us to make evidence-based decisions about how we attract, develop and retain diverse talent.



Financial wellbeing remains a key focus, given its impact over the course of a career. To support colleagues, we have developed a financial education programme aimed at specific employee network groups. The programme focuses on improving understanding of the gender pension gap and empowering women with the knowledge and tools to make informed financial decisions. In addition, we have introduced the option for colleagues to convert performance-related pay awards into pension contributions, providing further opportunities to boost retirement savings.

Alongside this, we continue to strengthen the support available to women, carers and parents across the organisation. We introduced Care Concierge, a benefit available to all employees, which provides personalised advice, practical guidance and access to specialist support for those with caring responsibilities. As women make up a significant proportion of carers, this initiative is expected to have a positive impact in helping female colleagues balance caring responsibilities alongside their careers and reducing the risk that caring roles become a barrier to progression. In recognition of the support we have for carers in the workplace, we also achieved the Carer Confident Level 1 accreditation.

Our employee networks also play an important role in supporting inclusion and progression. We have a number of established and growing networks including Carers, Menopause and Women's. In fact, our Connected Women's Network celebrated its 10 year anniversary in September 2024. This year, we launched our Parents Network, which provides a forum for colleagues to share experiences, exchange knowledge and access peer support. The network is particularly valuable for working parents, including working mothers, as they navigate the challenges of balancing career and family responsibilities. Our Menopause Network also held a series of webinars with guest speakers about understanding the condition and continue to see their membership grow.

We also offer a wide range of benefits designed to support colleagues both in and outside of work. To increase awareness of this support, we launched the Miles More campaign, which brings our benefits together in one place. This has helped improve awareness of the support available to women returning to work after maternity or adoption leave, including flexible working options, parental leave policies, childcare assistance, manager guidance, and relevant employee networks.

To strengthen our approach to diversity and inclusion, we have created a Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee. This group includes Executive team representatives and plays a key role in embedding D&I principles across all areas of our business and driving inclusive outcomes for colleagues. It will enable us to monitor progress and focus on measurable outcomes which align to our business planning priorities.

## The difference we are making

We're seeing some encouraging trends that, over time, could have a positive influence on future reports.

Female representation across the organisation remains stable at 36%, with senior representation broadly in line at 33%. Women also make up 40% of our talent pool, reflecting a strong presence in our future leadership pipeline.

Results from the 2025 Employee Engagement Survey show that female respondents scored more highly than male respondents across all survey dimensions, except for "My manager", where scores were equal. The two areas with the largest differences were Reward and Recognition, where female colleagues scored nine percentage points higher, and Growth, where scores were six percentage points higher. This suggests that female colleagues feel recognised for their contribution and supported to develop their skills and careers with us.

As part of our recent pay awards, we introduced pay progression principles that enable colleagues to move through their pay range at three and five year service milestones. Early data shows this approach is having a positive impact, particularly for female colleagues.

During the reporting period, 11.8% of women progressed through the five year pay milestone, compared with 8.5% of men. This demonstrates that the principles are supporting greater equity and opportunity in pay progression. In addition, by aligning colleagues to the same point within their pay range, the principles help reduce disparities linked to salary negotiations and support progress in narrowing our gender pay gap.

Our bonus gap analysis also shows an increase in financial rewards through High5, our employee recognition scheme. Encouragingly, a greater proportion of women have benefited from this increase during the year.

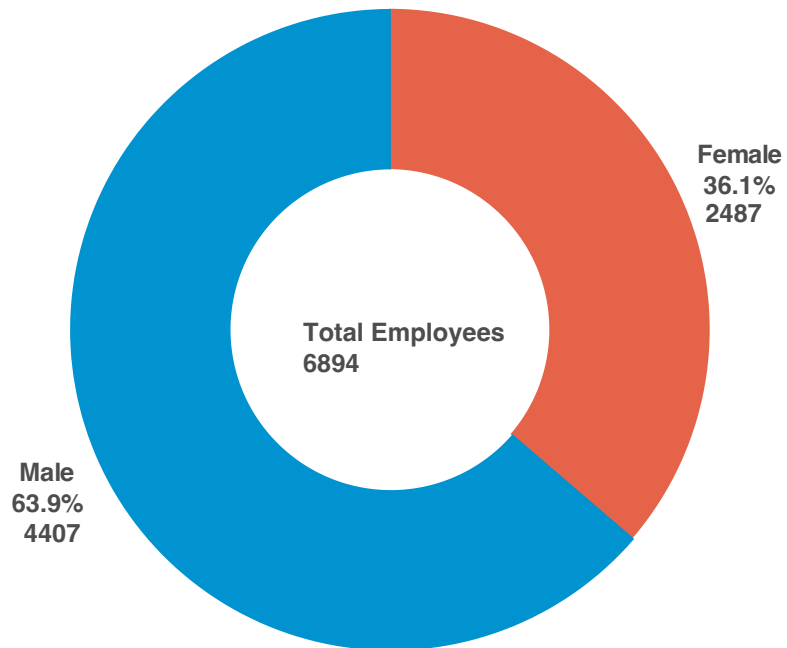
Our established Returners Programme continues to provide dedicated support for individuals returning to work after an extended career break. This six month programme offers structured development and a pathway into a permanent role. The majority of applicants are women, making it an important initiative for improving gender balance and supporting long-term career progression. 100% of the recruits we welcomed through our returners programme in 2024 were women.

Inclusive recruitment practices are now embedded into business as usual activity. This includes using a gender decoder at advert stage to ensure language is gender neutral, helping to broaden attraction without reducing male applicant numbers. We also partner with specialist job boards such as Find Your Flex, LGBT Jobs, BME Jobs and Disabilityjob.co.uk to reach underrepresented groups. These practices are well established and continue to support more diverse candidate pipelines.

## Our gender pay gap statistics

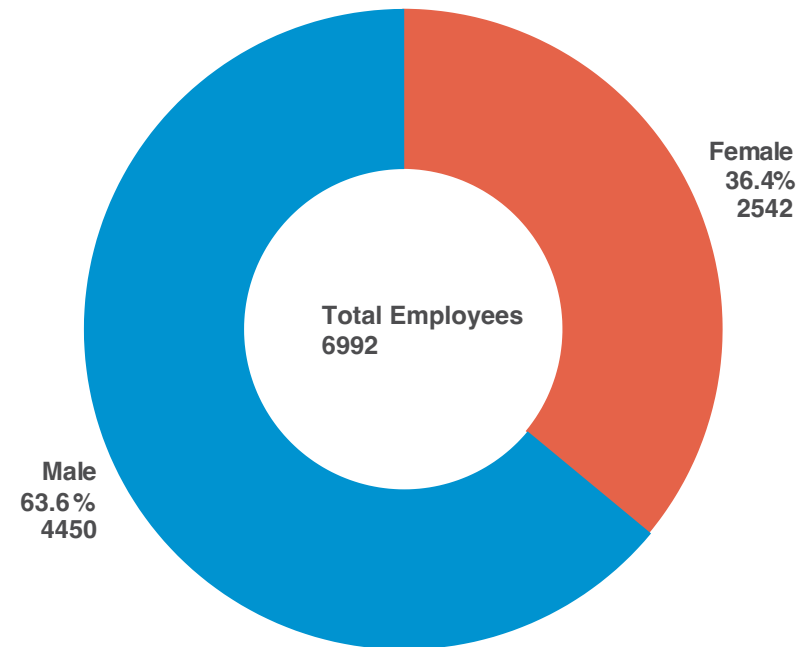
### Number of full pay relevant employees by gender

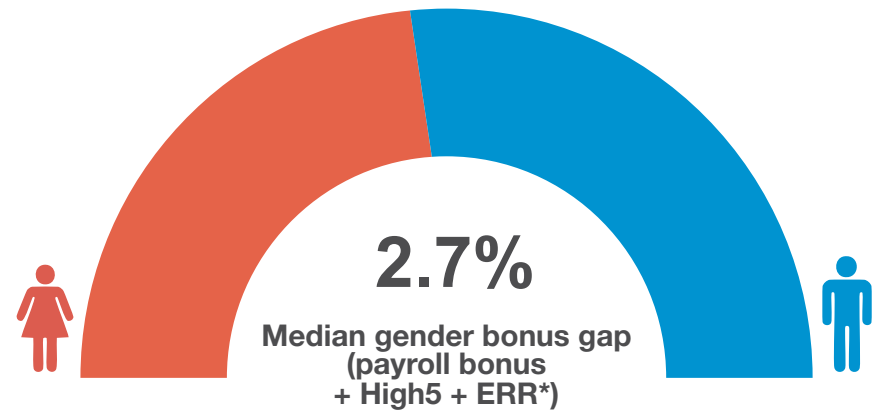
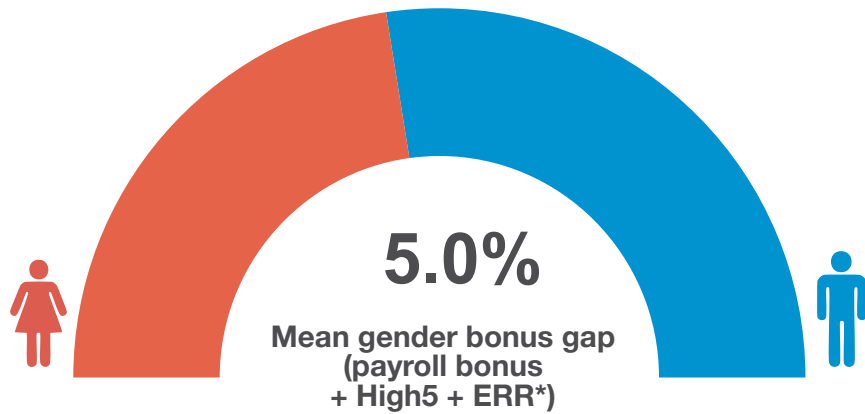
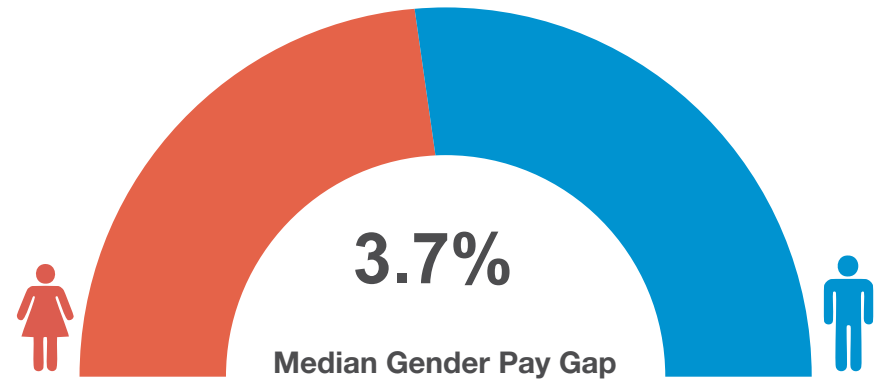
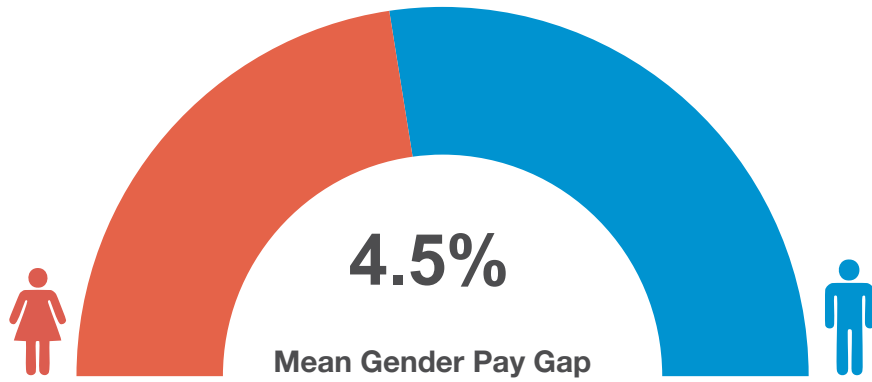
Full pay relevant are all employees who are paid their full rate of pay within the reporting period.



### Number of relevant employees by gender

Relevant employees are all employees with a contract of employment within the reporting period.





\*ERR = Employee Referral Rewards with High5 = Employee recognition platform

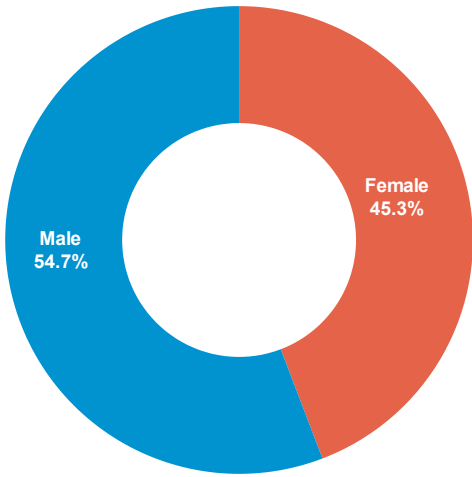
# Pay Quartiles

Lower Quartile

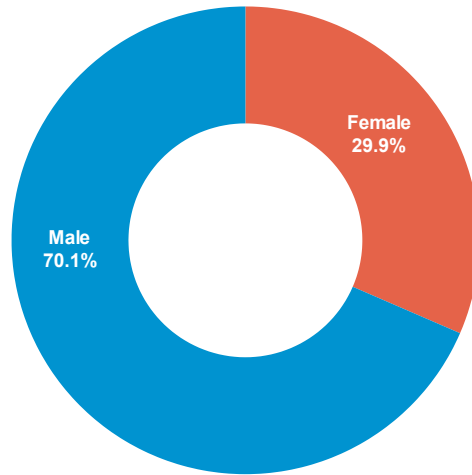
Lower Middle Quartile

Upper Middle Quartile

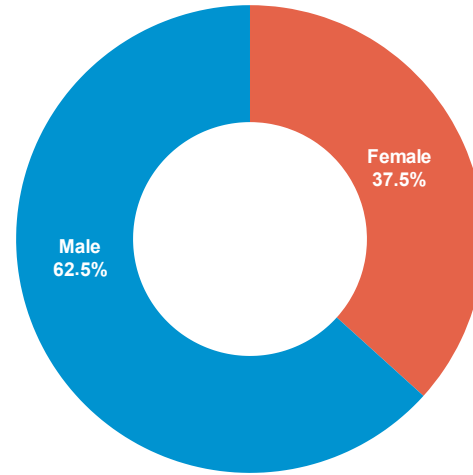
Upper Quartile



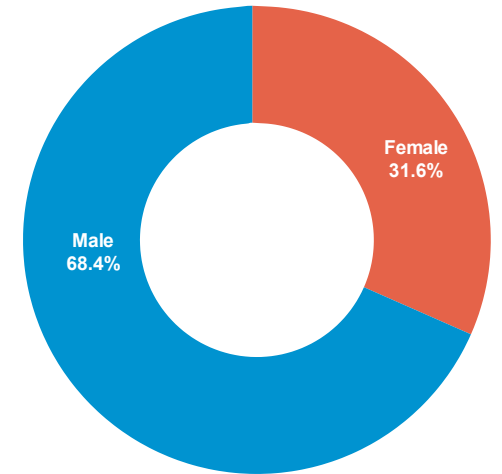
Female 45.3% Male 54.7%



Female 29.9% Male 70.1%



Female 37.5% Male 62.5%



Female 31.6% Male 68.4%

**Number of employees who received bonus\***      **Number of all relevant employees as at 31/03/2025**

<b>Female</b>	<b>2383</b>	<b>2542</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>4075</b>	<b>4450</b>
<b>Total employees</b>	<b>6458</b>	<b>6992</b>



\*The bonus for this report is made up of our payroll bonus, High 5 (employee recognition platform) and Employee Referral Rewards (ERR).



## An explanation of the terms used in this report

### Mean pay gap

The mean pay gap is the difference between National Highways total salary spend per female employee and total salary spend per male employee. The number is then calculated by taking the total wage bill for each and dividing it by the number of women and men employed by National Highways.

### Median pay gap

The median pay gap is the difference in salary between the middle ranking female employee and the middle ranking male employee. By placing all the women and men working at National Highways into two lines in order of salary, the median pay gap will be the difference in salary between the woman in the middle the line and the man in the middle of the respective one.

### Pay gap vs equal pay

The gender pay gap and equal pay are often referred to and confused as the same issue. Equal pay is the legal requirement that women and men and women are paid equally for doing the same job under the Equality Act 2010. The grade structure within National Highways ensures we pay our female employees equally to our male employees.

### Gender terminology

The gender pay gap reporting guidelines outline the requirement to differentiate pay between men and women. This means we are unable to include statistical data on other genders within National Highways. While we have used the gender terms 'female' and 'male' in a binary way within this report, we recognise that some individuals do not identify as a man or woman and in our diversity monitoring information we include an option for individuals to self-describe their gender identity.

In this report and the narrative around it we have used 'women' and 'female' interchangeably. As part of our approach to creating a respectful, inclusive and diverse culture we continue to promote our Gender Identity Policy and encourage our colleagues to share their pronouns in email signatures in support of our trans, intersex and non-binary colleagues

## Our future focus

Next year, we will deliver a series of targeted financial education webinars designed to support women and carers. These sessions will be promoted through the Connecting Women Network and Carers Network and will include topics such as, how to talk to children about money, wills and managing money matters in divorce and separation. Each session will focus on providing colleagues with practical guidance to help make informed financial decisions at key moments in their lives.

We will use the insights from our talent community feedback to establish inclusive talent development initiatives, including piloting a diversity specific upskill apprenticeship. This forms a key element of our ambition to develop a more balanced and inclusive talent system where every colleague has the opportunity to grow.

To help strengthen the support available to women and families, we will review our family friendly policies to ensure these continue to provide the best possible support for colleagues, with a particular focus on pregnancy loss and neonatal care leave.

We are developing career planning tools to help colleagues map out and progress their careers with us. These resources will provide clear guidance for those starting out, changing direction, or building core skills. This will play an important role in supporting women to access development opportunities and grow their careers.



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