



SHEPHERD+ WEDDERBURN

SHEPHERD AND WEDDERBURN

Gender pay gap report 2025

An introduction from our Chair

At Shepherd and Wedderburn providing a high-performance, supportive and inclusive working environment for all colleagues is a guiding strategic principle for our business.

Our People Strategy underpins our ambition to be regarded as an employer of choice. We focus on developing talent and providing career development opportunities for all colleagues and it has been my privilege once again this year to sponsor our People Strategy at Partnership Board.

In 2024, Shepherd and Wedderburn achieved some notable successes, recognising the work and projects that we have undertaken to implement our People Strategy:

- Attaining the highest level platinum accreditation from Investors in People (an accreditation we have held since 2021)
- Attaining the new platinum level accreditation from Investors in Young People
- Securing a silver award in the Employers' Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei) TIDE Index
- Winning enei's Supporting Neurodiverse Talent award and securing a high commendation in the Inclusive Recruitment category
- Winning Top Employer of the Year in the Medium Business category (250–1000 Employees) and Best Diversity and Inclusion Dynamic in the Workplace at The Herald Top Employer Awards

These awards and accreditations are an important external evaluation of the range of work we have undertaken to embed our People Strategy across all aspects of our business. This has been key to creating a more diverse and inclusive culture.

I am grateful to our colleagues and, in particular, to those actively involved in our “S+W Together” network groups for their support throughout the year in promoting our various events and campaigns and further details of our work can be found in the report below.

We remain committed to playing our part in addressing the various structural issues faced by underrepresented groups across the legal sector and in the wider business community.

Our statutory report is set out in Appendix A and further details of our People Strategy work and our campaigns and projects are set out below.



Gillian Carty
Partnership Chair
Shepherd and Wedderburn LLP

Contents

Emerging Leaders Programme and Promotions

S+W Together Groups

International Women's Day

Diversity and Inclusion Collaborations

Accreditations and Awards

Workforce Analysis

Statutory report

Emerging Leaders Programme and Promotions

Supporting senior colleagues in legal and business services roles to develop their skills to enable them to progress to leadership positions within our firm has been a key project delivered as part of our People Strategy since our Emerging Leaders Programme was first introduced in 2019. This programme, which provides a mix of group leadership training and bespoke one to one coaching for individuals, has been valued by all participants and has contributed to increased female representation within our senior leadership.

Once again in 2024, women accounted for more than 60% of internal promotions into senior leadership roles. Women now make up 29% of all partners (up from 26% in 2022) and the increased female representation of women within our partnership can best be illustrated by comparing the gender balance between those aged over and under 45. As at January 2025, women account for 24% of partners aged over 45 which increases to 43% for those aged under 45.

We expect that the representation of women in senior legal roles will continue to advance, resulting in more balanced representation at partner level and a continued narrowing of the gender pay gap.



60% of all internal promotions into senior leadership roles were women



29% of all partners are women



24% of partners over the age of 45 are women



43% of partners under the age of 45 are women



50% of all promotions to partner were women



71% of all promotions were women

S+W Together Groups



GENDER
FOCUS
GROUP



**RACE, FAITH+
BELIEF**
FOCUS GROUP



**SOCIAL
MOBILITY**
FOCUS GROUP



**YOUNG
PERSONS**
FOCUS GROUP



PRIDE
FOCUS
GROUP



WELLBEING
FOCUS
GROUP

Our Together Network Groups support belonging in the firm and raise awareness through celebrating notable events and campaigns including LGBT+ History Month, World Menopause Day, Mental Health Awareness Week, Race Equality Week and Neurodiversity Celebration Week. Our groups champion best practice, provide input to our policies and raise funds for charities supporting underrepresented groups.

International Women's Day

In March 2025 we hosted an online International Women's Day panel event for over 100 colleagues and clients. Our panellists discussed the theme of 'Accelerate Action' with Gillian Carty, our Partnership Chair, looking at challenges and routes to progression. Discussion covered formal and informal barriers and the value of role models and allies to support women at the early stages of their careers and beyond. Panellists also explored the value of data and how monitoring and analysis can drive positive action.



Diversity and Inclusion Collaborations

We collaborated with Black Professionals UK for the third year as part of our summer intern programme and provided placements for students in both legal and business services roles.



We are a member of Real Estate Balance, a body advocating for equity, diversity and inclusion in real estate and its associated sectors in the UK. In 2023 one of our female partners was appointed to their NextGen committee which represents the next generation of property professionals with a focus to deliver REB's objective to develop a diverse pipeline of talent in the industry.



We are proud to be a founding member of Disabling Barriers Scotland; the only community in Scotland for aspiring and practising solicitors with a disability.



We are a member of Neurodiversity in Business and work with internal Neurodiversity Champions to explore ways to become a more neuroinclusive workplace.



We are a founding member of PRIME; an alliance of law firms seeking to improve access to the profession for young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. In 2024 we provided five PRIME work experience weeks to school students in addition to our 30 summer placements and 30 work shadow days.



We are a keen supporter of the Lawscot Foundation helping academically talented students from less advantaged backgrounds through their legal education. This year we participated in the Foundation's Lawscot Challenge event where students completed a different challenge at a number of firms to showcase their legal and workplace skills.



Accreditations and Awards



**2024 Herald Top Employer Awards:
Employer of the Year – Medium Business and
Best Diversity and Inclusion Dynamic in the Workplace**



**enei Inclusivity Excellence Awards 2024:
Winner – Supporting Neurodiverse Talent**



Ranked 45th in the 2024 Social Mobility Employer Index



**Silver TIDE award from the Employer's Network for
Equality and Inclusion**



IIP and IIYP Platinum Awards

Workforce Analysis

Once again we have undertaken an analysis of our workforce gender pay data to help us better understand the factors that influence our pay gap.



62% of qualified solicitors are female

75% of colleagues in business services roles are female

Our qualified solicitors

Below partner level there is no gender pay gap among our qualified solicitors. The gender pay gap for our qualified solicitors is - 0.5% mean and -4.4% median. We have seen an improvement in the number of female solicitors in our highest pay quartile, increasing from 56% in 2022 to 61% in 2024.

Our partners

At partner level the difference in gross hourly earnings is 26.4% (mean) and 44.5% (median). As outlined above, this gap is attributable to the fact that while women account for 43% of partners aged under 45, our more experienced partner colleagues (who have been partners in our firm for more than ten years) are predominantly male (over 80%). As our partners currently aged under 45 continue to develop careers with us, the demographics of our partnership will continue to change and we expect that the partner gender pay gap will narrow. We recognise that in a partnership structure it will take a number of years before this is achieved.

Our business services roles

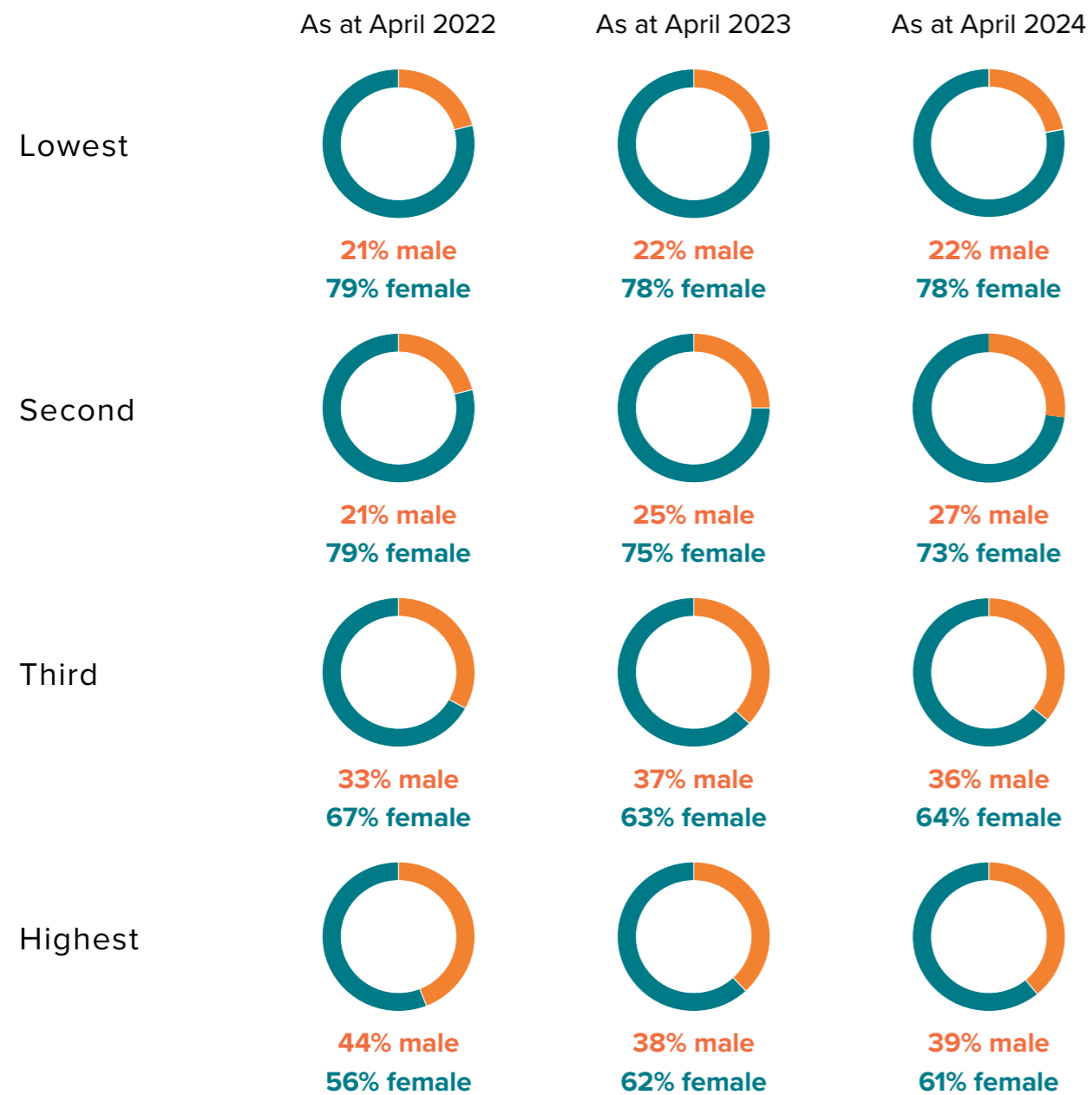
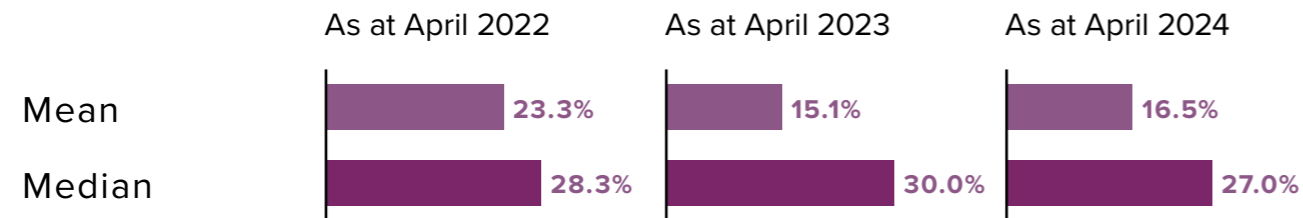
A high proportion of our secretarial, administrative and more of our junior Business Services roles are undertaken by women. The higher proportion of women in these roles contributes to our mean gender pay gap of 25.5% and median pay gap of 18%.

Bonus Payments

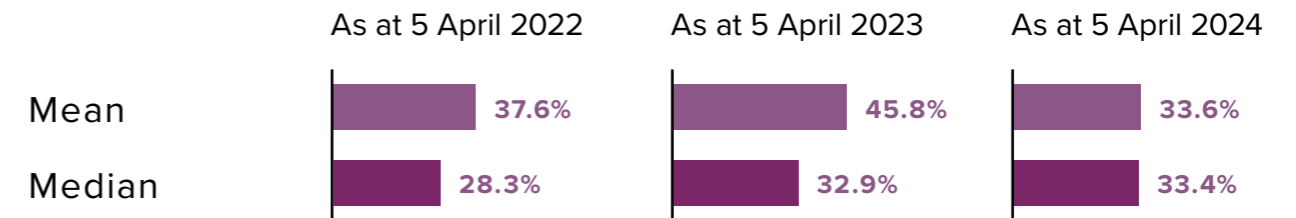
The percentage of women receiving an annual bonus has increased over the last three years from 77% in 2022 to 88% in 2024.

Statutory report

Hourly rate of pay

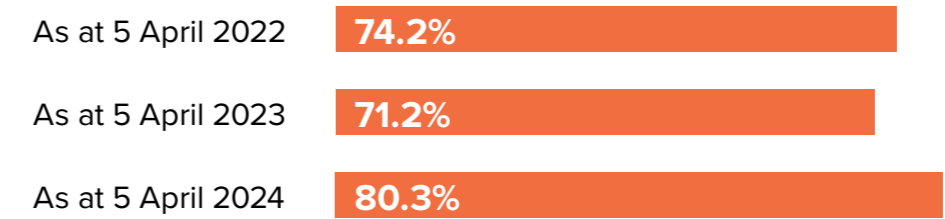


Bonus data

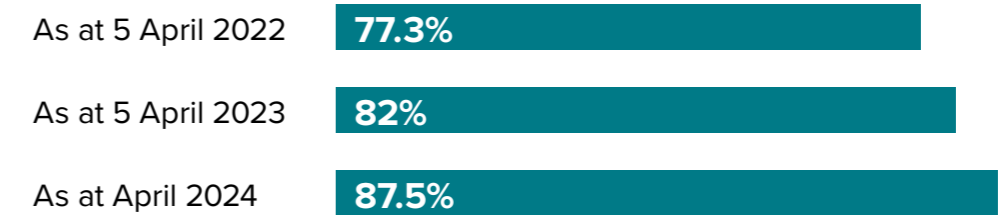


Proportion of staff receiving a bonus

Male receiving bonus



Female receiving bonus



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