

A photograph of a diverse group of office professionals in a meeting. A woman in the foreground is smiling and gesturing towards a laptop on a wooden table. Other colleagues are visible in the background, some looking at the laptop. The scene is lit with warm, indoor lighting, and there are coffee mugs and papers on the table.

Gender Pay Gap Report **2026**



An Introduction from our Chair

We believe in the power of our people to drive our success and our People Strategy underpins our ambition to be widely recognised as an employer of choice within the legal sector. We are committed to providing a high-performance, supportive and inclusive working environment and talent and career development opportunities for all colleagues so that we can deliver legal advice and services of the highest quality to our clients.

Our Gender Focus Group works to promote equity of opportunity in our firm through raising awareness of gender issues and assisting with the development of relevant policies. I am grateful to my colleagues in our Gender Focus Group, and those in our other five S+W Together network groups, for their continued support this year in undertaking a range of activities and campaigns to promote their work on inclusion and belonging. Through that work we foster a culture which empowers our colleagues to share their knowledge and broaden our understanding by discussing the different lived experiences of colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

We remain committed to working with our colleagues, our clients and the wider legal and business community to play our part in addressing the various challenges faced by underrepresented groups.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Carty'.

Gillian Carty

Partnership Chair, Shepherd and Wedderburn LLP

I confirm the data reported here is accurate.



We are pleased this year to report that through our work on our People Strategy we:

- Attained the Disability Confident Leader accreditation
- Secured a silver award for a second consecutive year in onvero's TIDE Index
- Were awarded "Top Employer of the Year" (medium to large business) and "Best Employee Recognition" programme at the Herald S1 Top Employer Awards
- Were shortlisted for awards recognising our work on social mobility (for our Forage work experience programme) and on talent retention, development and progression (for our Emerging Leaders' Programme)
- Reviewed and further enhanced our paid family leave policy
- Engaged with a broad range of clients and external organisations to raise awareness of our work on inclusion and belonging and to share new ideas and best practice
- Approved a new DEI strategy and plan to guide our work through to 2028

Understanding our gender pay gap data:

- The statutory pay gap report shows the difference in hourly rates of pay between male and female employed colleagues across our business.
- The mean pay gap shows the difference in average hourly rates of pay between these two groups.
- The median gender pay gap shows the difference between the midpoint of the ranges of hourly rates of pay between these two groups.
- Similar data is provided in the statutory report for bonuses paid to employed colleagues.
- Our partners are self employed and therefore fall outside the statutory reporting framework although we have voluntarily included additional data for transparency.
- Statutory pay gap reporting does not take into account the different roles, levels of experience or geographic location of employed colleagues and is different from equal pay reporting which compares the pay of male and female colleagues undertaking the same or similar work.



- We have no median gender pay gap among our solicitors (below partner level) and the higher proportion of women in our business services teams (which include secretarial and administrative roles) many of whom also work on a part time basis contributes to the mean gender pay gap of 17% and median gender pay gap of 18.6% among our employed colleagues.
- The mean and median statutory pay gap data will change from year to year as a result of promotions to partnership, retirements and other leavers and recruitment into new or existing roles. Although we review the factors impacting on annual changes, our primary objective is to make sustainable progress in reducing our gender pay gap over the longer term.

Our Progress

- Since statutory reporting was introduced in 2017:
 - our mean pay gap for all employees (whether employed by our former service company or by the LLP) has fallen from 24.8% in 2017 to 17% in 2025
 - our median pay gap for all employees has fallen from 35.4% in 2017 to 18.6% in 2025
 - our median pay gap for all colleagues (including partners) has fallen from 49.2% in 2017 to 30.4% in 2025
 - the proportion of female colleagues employed in roles within our highest pay quartile has increased from 51% in 2017 to 61% in 2025
- Since 2021/22 the proportion of women within our partnership has increased from 22% to 30% and women now make up 35% of our fixed share equity partners (up from 27% in 2021/22) and 24% of our full equity partners (up from 18% in 2021/22)
- Currently 43% of our partners aged under 45 are women
- Over the last three years
 - 50% of all partner promotions have been to female candidates
 - 69% of all promotions to legal director and partner have been to female candidates
 - the proportion of leadership roles (both legal and business services) held by female colleagues has increased to 40% (up from 32% in May 2022)

A blurred, blue-tinted photograph of a busy office hallway. Several people in business attire are walking away from the camera, their figures softened and out of focus. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down the length of the corridor.

How we are supporting a diverse workplace



Development and progression

Our Emerging Leaders Programme (ELP) was developed to nurture internal talent. Since its launch in 2019 59% of our delegates have been women. 82% of female delegates who have completed the programme have so far been promoted to senior positions in the firm.

Contextualised Recruitment System

We use the Rare CRS for graduates so that we can take account of an applicant's circumstances when they apply to work for us. We consider achievements in the context of socioeconomic background and school performance.

Virtual work experience

We are the first Scottish legal firm to offer a Forage online work experience programme ensuring students from all backgrounds and in more remote locations are able to access valuable insight to the profession. We encourage students who have completed the programme to apply for our summer placement programme which is generating greater diversity of candidates.

Menopause

We are signatories to the Menopause Workplace Pledge to demonstrate our commitment to supporting colleagues going through menopause. Our policy and information hub was developed with members of our Gender Focus Group. We run an annual menopause café to raise awareness and share understanding between colleagues.

Networks

We have six colleague Together groups which focus on Gender; LGBT+; Race Faith and Belief; Social Mobility; Wellbeing and Young Persons. Groups raise awareness of issues and notable dates, contribute to internal policies and processes and organise events to support belonging and inclusion.



Engagement survey

We carry out a biennial engagement survey to understand how our colleagues feel about working at the firm. In our latest survey 87% of respondents feel the firm has a positive culture. We analyse survey results by characteristics which has shown that men and women at the firm feel equally that they belong and that they have key role models in the business.

Disability and Neurodiversity champions

Our internal champions help us ensure that our workplace and practices are inclusive. With their input we have developed a 'Good to Know' guide to demystify office norms for new recruits and a Workplace Adjustment passport to support colleagues who need accommodations to their work environment or practices.

Role modelling

Our annual mentoring programme is open to all colleagues and our Gender Focus Group organises Meet the Leader sessions for those in the earlier stages of their careers to meet informally with senior colleagues in the business.

Partnerships

We work with Black Professionals UK and 10,000 Black Interns to help us increase the diversity of applicants for our summer placement programme.

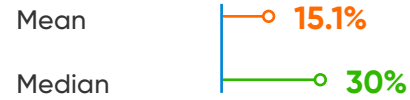
Inclusive Leadership Competency Framework

We introduced our framework for leaders to support inclusivity and maximise team performance. Expected behaviours are built into our progression and appraisal processes.

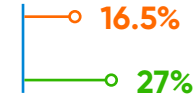
Statutory reporting

Statutory reporting

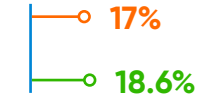
As at 5 April 2023



As at 5 April 2024



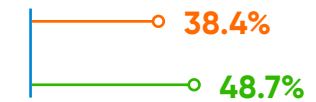
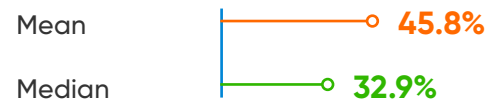
As at 5 April 2025



Pay quartiles



Bonus data



Proportion of staff receiving a bonus



