

Gender Pay Gap Report 2020

Central England Co-operative is one of the largest independent co-operative retailers in the UK, employing over 7600 colleagues across a diverse range of businesses; including Retail, Distribution and Funeral.

As a co-operative, equity and equality are part of our founding principles; fairness is at the heart of what we do as an organisation. We believe in a fair approach to pay for all our colleagues. We are confident that men and women are paid equally for the same roles within our business.

We have achieved significant improvement in our gender equality this year, and as we move towards a fairer society we will extend our equality plan.

Our 2020 results

Difference between Men and Women

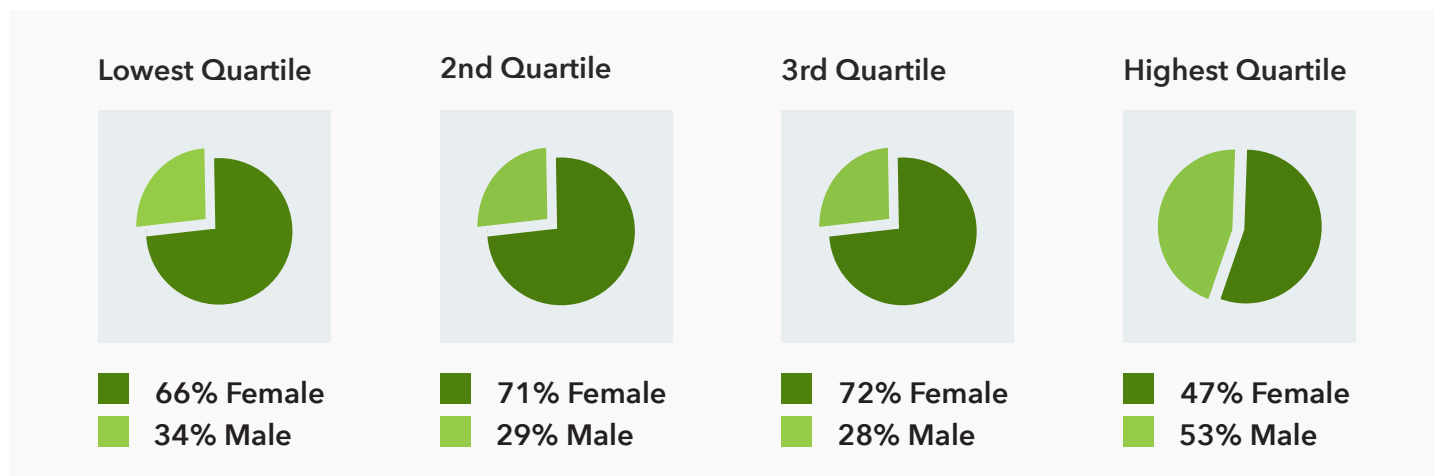
	Mean	Median
Average Pay	13.24%	0.90%
Average Bonus	78.23%	32.89%

The Society has produced its best set of results since reporting began, which reflects the great work and focus on improving gender equality within the Society over the last 3 years. We are pleased to report a 3.77% reduction in the mean average pay gap in comparison to our 2019 figures. The Society's median pay gap of 0.90% has seen a significant reduction of 7.36% and compares very favourably to the 2019 national figure of 17.3%. We know that despite this positive movement in the results there is more work to do in this area, and we are committed to taking action to close the gap even further.

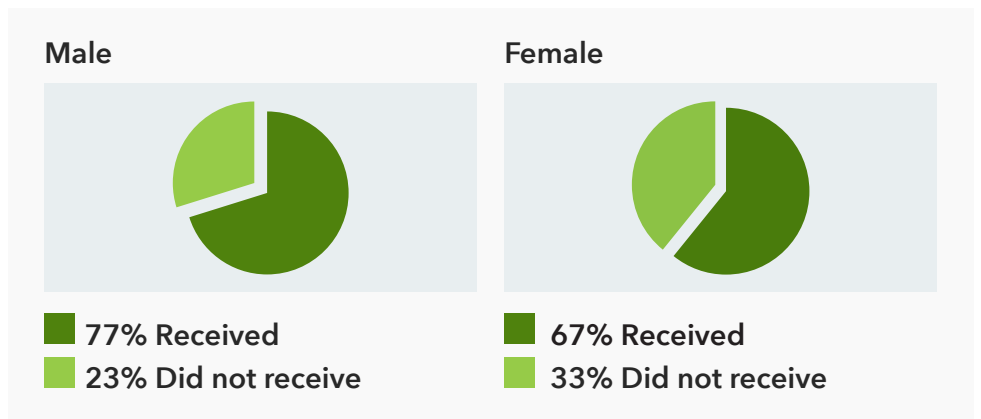
What is driving our results?

The gender pay calculations measure the difference in the average earnings between men and women, across the whole of an organisation, regardless of the type of work they do.

The continued investment in increasing pay for our lowest paid colleagues has positively impacted the mean and median pay gap. This improvement has been predominantly driven by the increase in pay across the Society's frontline customer service colleagues.



The Society operates a number of incentive schemes, which are all gender neutral by design, but the shape of our workforce drives our gender bonus gap in the same way that it does our gender pay gap. Of the incentive schemes in place, the likelihood of receiving a payment is high for both men and women.



Activity undertaken to date

Key areas of focus to address our gender pay gap over the last 12 months include:

Taking steps to encourage more equality in leadership roles:

- The continued focus on talent and succession planning has enabled the Society to increase the number of female appointments into leadership roles
- The Society has made a concerted effort to attract more females into the Store Manager and Operations Manager roles by offering flexible working arrangements

Enabling gender balanced progression across the organisation:

- The 'Leading the Way' Food Retail development programme is a key step into store management and this year the Society has increased the participation of female colleagues by reviewing the programme to offer flexibility in content to attract more part-time colleagues
- We have worked closely with our external providers to ensure that learning is delivered flexibly and often virtually to support colleagues who work on a part-time or shift basis. As a result, we have seen an increase in female participation across all levels of apprenticeship programme

Raising awareness and talking about gender equality in an open and transparent way:

- The creation of a new approach to Performance and Talent Management offers a more inclusive, consistent framework that enables performance and potential assessment to be free from bias and gender discrimination
- Following a review of the Society's Family Friendly policies, including Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental Leave, the Society has now announced enhancements to support colleagues through these significant life events.

Our commitments:

The gender pay results offer an important insight into our organisation, and help to inform the work that has taken place as part of the focus on increasing equality within the Society. We are delighted that we have seen significant and continued improvement in our overall results this year. Improving gender equality across the trading businesses and across job levels is a priority and something to which the Society is committed. Progress is being made, albeit it is recognised that improving gender quality requires sustained focus over the long term to embed initiatives.

We are building a diverse and inclusive culture that reflects the communities in which we serve; one that attracts and retains the best talent and enables our colleagues to thrive.

Elaine Dean President

Date: October 2020