

Gender Pay Gap Report 2026

ECL is the wholly owned Local Authority Trading Company of Essex County Council (ECC), providing care and wellbeing services across Essex and beyond.

Our services include:

- Community Reablement services
- Day services for older people and adults with learning disabilities
- Inclusive employment services
- Sensory services

As a people-centred organisation, we are committed to making a positive difference to the lives of the people we support and those who work for us. Our vision, *“Transforming lives, empowering independence for all through care excellence for all”*, and our mission, *“Making a positive difference to people’s quality of life”*, remain at the heart of everything we do.

Rewarding our employees fairly and consistently continues to be a key priority within our People Strategy. We recognise the vital contribution our workforce makes every day and remain committed to ensuring our pay and reward practices are transparent, equitable and aligned to our organisational values. Through our Remuneration Policy and governance arrangements, we continue to oversee pay decisions carefully and uphold our commitment to fair pay principles.

Based on data taken at the snapshot date of 5 April 2025, ECL employed 1,240 colleagues, of whom 82.5% were female and 17.5% were male. This workforce profile is reflective of the wider adult social care sector, where female representation continues to be significantly higher than male representation.

I am pleased to report that ECL's mean gender pay gap has reduced from 3.33% in 2024 to 2.97% in 2025 and remains significantly below the national average. Our median gender pay gap remains in favour of women at -2.21%, meaning that the median hourly rate for female employees is slightly higher than that of their male counterparts. These findings demonstrate that pay differences between men and women across ECL remain small and that we continue to maintain a strong position in relation to gender pay equality.

Our analysis of pay quartiles further demonstrates that women are well represented across all levels of the organisation, including the highest-paid quartile. This reflects the predominately female nature of our workforce and provides reassurance that there is no evidence of systemic gender bias within our pay structures.

The bonus pay analysis presents a more varied picture. The mean bonus gap is 17.75% in favour of men, while the median bonus gap is 1.97% in favour of women. Performance-related bonuses apply to all eligible employees and may be influenced by individual circumstances, roles and working patterns. We will continue to monitor bonus outcomes closely to ensure fairness, consistency and transparency in how these payments are applied.

Whilst we are encouraged by the continued reduction in our mean gender pay gap and the stability of our median position, we recognise that maintaining equity requires ongoing focus. We will continue to strengthen our recruitment, pay and reward practices by monitoring starting salaries, supporting

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transparent pay decision-making, promoting flexible working, and encouraging a diverse range of candidates to consider careers within social care.

In support of this, we will continue to undertake pay benchmarking activity to ensure our pay arrangements remain fair, competitive and aligned to the wider market. We will also maintain our focus on employee wellbeing, recognising that an inclusive and supportive working environment is an important part of enabling all colleagues to thrive and progress. This includes our ongoing work to support colleagues experiencing menopause and perimenopause through our menopause support group, awareness-raising activity and practical guidance for managers, helping to remove barriers and promote equality of opportunity across our workforce.

Looking ahead, we also recognise the importance of broadening our understanding of equality within our workforce. Over time, we intend to enhance our reporting to include ethnicity, disability and age pay gap analysis. Achieving this will require continued improvements in the quality and completeness of workforce equality data captured through our new and improved HR systems.

ECL remains committed to fostering an inclusive workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and able to achieve their full potential. We will continue to take action to ensure our policies, processes and culture support equality of opportunity for all employees.

I confirm that the gender pay gap data contained in this report for ECL is accurate and has been produced in accordance with the guidance on managing gender pay developed by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).



Peter Fairley, Managing Director