

Lincolnshire



# Lincolnshire Co-operative Ltd

## Gender pay gap report

As at 5 April 2021

Published 2022

# Lincolnshire Co-op

## Gender Pay Report – as at 5 April 2021

At Lincolnshire Co-op, our purpose 'Bringing together ideas, energy and resources to make life better in our communities' has never been more relevant than during this year and the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Most of our business areas remained opened as essential retail and trading throughout this time, and we met the challenges caused by the pandemic by adapting our ways of working including redeploying colleagues to essential business areas, establishing remote working, implementing a rapid recruitment process, providing support to local businesses, tenants and foodbanks, as well as continuing to support our members and customers and, most importantly, each other through this difficult times.

We are so proud of the commitment of all colleagues, but particularly those in customer facing roles, for rising to the challenge of continuing to maintain essential and vital services throughout the pandemic to the communities we serve.

Celebrating the successes of our colleagues at our Annual Awards evening, is a highlight of our year. To recognise the outstanding achievements of our colleagues during this year, we moved celebrations online creating a virtual Colleagues Awards Week. Engaging daily via our colleague app, the week culminated in every one of our 2,890 strong team being named a Colleague of the Year in recognition of their amazing commitment and hard work during the preceding 12 months.

We were delighted to be awarded Investors in People Platinum accreditation in June 2020, which recognised the investment and resources we put in place for our colleagues to help them develop, create opportunities for their progression and to fulfill their potential.

Inevitably there have been some plans that have been overtaken by events during the reporting period. However, we have strived to make progress with our goals where possible, which has included working to reduce our Gender Pay Gap and continuing to promote gender equality across our business. We are committed to a culture of continuous improvement ensuring that all colleagues have an equal opportunity to grow, develop and succeed to reach their full potential here at Lincolnshire Co-op regardless of their gender or any other characteristic. We still have work to do but find out how we are progressing in the following report.

**Ursula Lidbetter**

Chief Executive Officer



**Ursula Lidbetter**  
Chief Executive Officer

## What is the gender pay gap?

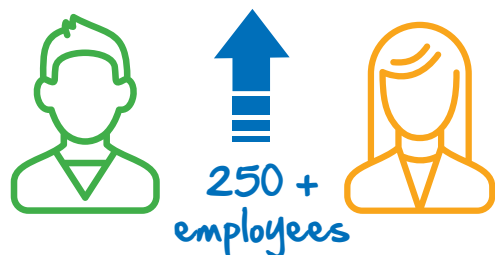
**The gender pay gap is the difference between the average pay of men and women across an entire organisation, regardless of the level or type of role they perform.**

Having a gender pay gap is not unlawful as there are many factors that can influence this, such as the demographics of employees in an organisation, or the types of roles undertaken by each gender, which the pay gap highlights.

It is different from equal pay, where the rate of pay of two, or more, people carrying out the same work, or work of equal value, is directly compared. Lincolnshire Co-op is an equal pay employer.

## What do we have to report on?

The regulations require businesses with 250 employees or more to report on the mean and median gender pay gap as well as the mean and median bonus gap, confirming the percentage of men and women who received a bonus. We are also required to show the gender balance of our work force based on quartiles.



## Mean pay gap

The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the average pay of men and women employed by a business.



## Median pay gap

The median is the midpoint of a population. The median pay gender gap is calculated by separating out the male and female rates and placing them from the lowest rate through to highest rate. The difference between the midpoints of each group provides the median pay gap.



The ONS (April 2021) reported that the gender pay gap is higher when comparing all employees than looking at full-time or part time employees separately. This is because women, nationally, fill more part-time jobs which in comparison with full-time jobs have a lower median pay.

## Our results

With **over 220 outlets** across our trading area, including food stores, funeral homes, florist and crematorium, travel, post offices, pharmacies and a craft bakery, we offer a range of opportunities for colleagues to work flexibly within their home communities.

At the snapshot date, 5 April 2021, Lincolnshire Co-op **employed 2,890 colleagues** in total. Of these 2,462 are relevant employees under the criteria of gender pay reporting.



**74%** of our colleagues are female, of which **65%** are part-time workers.



**26%** of colleagues are male **48%** of this group working full-time hours. This does impact on our results.

Nationally, the retail sector attracts a higher proportion of women than men. The flexibility and part-time hours available within retail, serve other social norms seen across society, such as caring and domestic responsibilities, which are predominantly undertaken by women.

## What impact has Covid-19 had on our results this year?

We offered job redeployment and in addition to these opportunities, a number of colleagues were furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. These were predominantly from our Travel branches, Community team and those required to shield.

The pay for those colleagues required to shield was topped up to 100%, therefore this group has been assessed for inclusion as relevant employees in this report.

A smaller number of colleagues took a period of unpaid absence during the reporting period. As they did not qualify for furlough their absence was recorded under our standard authorised absence procedures and so are not included in these calculations. Reasons for these absences generally related to fear or secondary shielding of a close relative.

Actual sickness absence levels fell slightly during the period, which may be attributed to shielding colleagues with underlying health issues already being out of the workplace but could also be related to the social distancing and enhanced hygiene guidance surrounding Covid-19, or other social reasons. It is unlikely that this absence has any significant impact on our results as figures are similar to previous years. The Easter holidays fell at the date of the snapshot when a significant number of colleagues took annual leave, which falls outside of the criteria of the report.

The rapid recruitment introduced at the start of this reporting period increased headcount to support essential trading. It also changed the demographics in customer facing roles with more males coming into the business after being furloughed from other jobs. This recruitment was essential to meet the demands in our convenience stores as lockdown resulted in people shopping locally and social distancing controls were put in place. A resourcing team was established to recruit across the business using virtual recruitment processes. With interviews taking place via telephone by a dedicated recruitment team, rather than face-to-face with branch managers, this has had the additional benefit of greater consistency in the recruitment process and removing unconscious bias from the interview process.

There is a gap in our gender pay and our long-term goal is to reduce this. However, we recognise that, due to our general high retention rates, and the flexibility that the majority of our job roles offer around other personal responsibilities, this is likely to take some time to achieve as it is influenced by deeper rooted social and economic issues. We will, however, continue to focus on the elements that influence our gender pay gap and will address these through all means available to us.

## Gender pay gap

Our **mean** hourly pay gap is

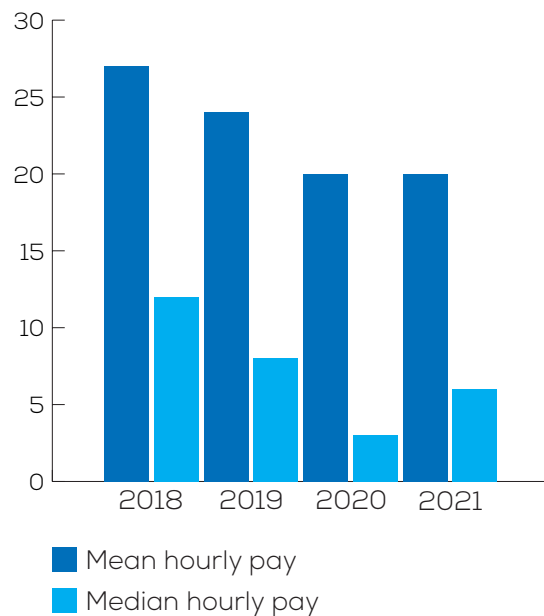
**20.2%**

(2020 : 19.9%)

Our **median** hourly pay gap is

**6.52%**

(2020 : 3.0%)



Both the **mean** and **median** measures show an increase on the previous year. However, over a longer period, this still reflects a downward trend.

## Gender bonus pay gap

Our **mean** bonus pay gap is

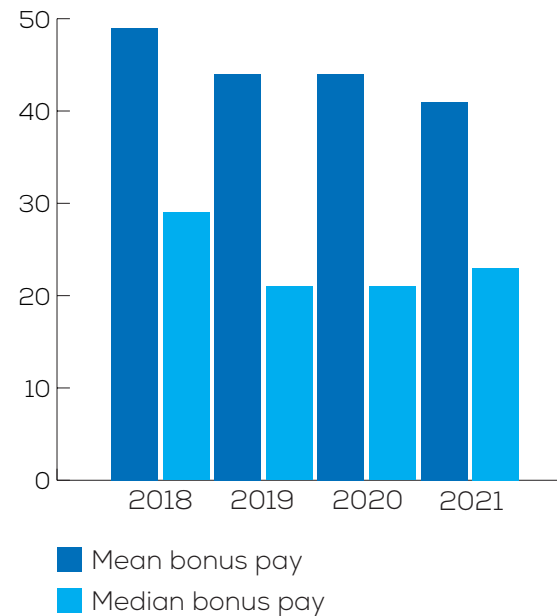
**41.51%**

(2020 : 44.4%)

Our **median** bonus pay gap is

**23.75%**

(2020 : 22.3%)



The increase in the median bonus pay gap can be explained by the larger number of males employed during the period and the larger contractual hours worked.

## Proportion of men and women receiving bonus payments



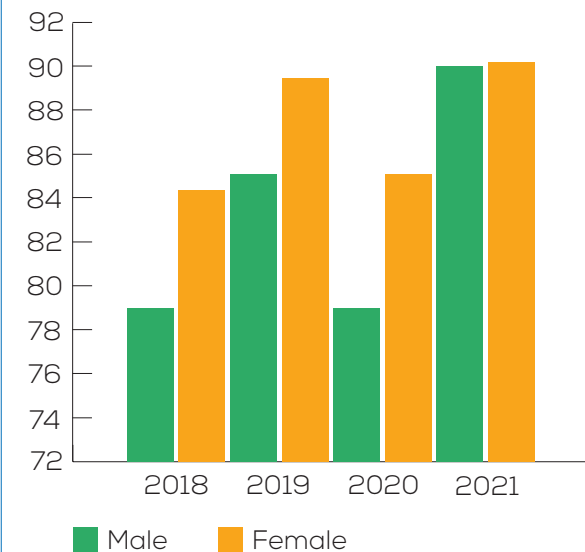
Male colleagues receiving bonus payments was

**90.01%** (2020 : 79%)



Female colleagues receiving bonus payments was

**90.28%** (2020 : 84.9%)



The gap in the proportion of colleagues receiving bonus payments has reduced for both males and females. The society has a twice yearly discretionary bonus scheme paid at a percentage of a weeks' wage based on our profits. Other discretionary bonuses are awarded based on results achieved as well as additional bonuses agreed as part of the society's reward and recognition plan set by our Senior Leadership Team annually.

## Colleagues by pay quartiles

Female colleagues are well represented across all four quartiles. There has been an increase in the number of females in the upper quartile, **rising from 58% in 2020 to 61% in 2021**. At the other end of the range there has been a decline in the number of males in this group falling from 27% in 2020 to 18% in 2021. This reflects the change caused by our rapid recruitment initiative at the start of the pandemic, which saw large numbers of furloughed and unemployed males taking up temporary contracts in retail as demand on our convenience stores grew.

Pay quartiles	Upper quartile		Upper middle quartile		Lower middle quartile		Lower quartile	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2018	50.8	49.2	21.8	78.2	20	80	18.5	81.5
2019	44	56	23	77	18	82	18	82
2020	42	58	25	75	20	80	27	73
2021	39	61	26	74	23	77	18	82

## Supporting and developing our people

We are a purpose led business, committed to developing our people and building strength for the long term. Enhancing the skills of our colleagues to enable them to carry out their roles effectively, develop lifelong skills and progress through the business is key to our commitment and provision of learning and development.

All training moved to our online iLearn platform. At the date of the snapshot, we had achieved **15,507 course completions on iLearn**, by 78% females and 22% males. This was an overall increase of 68% over the 12-month period.



We have written, produced and delivered a full range of online and virtual programmes from induction through to management development courses. We have continued to work with local colleges and universities offering a wide range of apprenticeship programmes from level 2 through to level 7, which are open to all colleagues to apply for. Of the 4.5% of our colleagues enrolled on a programme, 71% were females and 29% males.

Through a mix of online and virtual sessions, we have continued to provide and deliver our range of management development programmes, ensuring succession planning remains on target and in place. Mental Health First Aid provision also moved to a remote format allowing the continued growth across the business of this valued support.



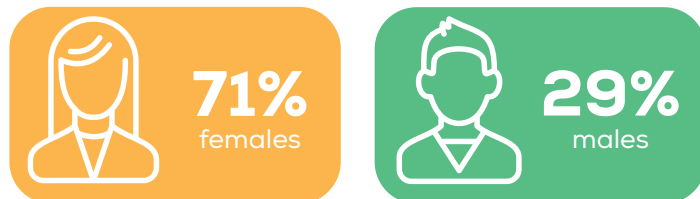
## Caring for our health and wellbeing

The wellbeing of our colleagues is always important to us and **'caring for our health and wellbeing'** is part of our purpose.

We are committed to supporting colleagues in all areas of their health, offering a range of benefits to support mental, physical, emotional and financial wellbeing. In April 2020 we set up an advice centre, largely staffed by people specialists and qualified mental health first aiders, to provide dedicated advice and support to colleagues as the country remained in lockdown. This was particularly important for those colleagues who were shielding, or furloughed, who felt isolated from their place of work. We introduced employer funded counselling and coaching services for all colleagues, to help address the mental health issues that manifested during this time. These were with local providers.

A total of 4% of all colleagues, from all levels and business areas have taken up this service:

### Counselling referrals



We also developed a full range of wellbeing resources on our colleague app providing information on mental, emotional and physical wellbeing, as well as access to our colleague Credit Union for financial support.

During the year we were recognised by **GroceryAid** for our engagement and support with the charity, which provides emotional, financial and practical help to retail colleagues. We were highly commended by the **British Safety Council** for our proactive and effective approach to improving employee wellbeing during 2020 and were also re-accredited with the **Lincolnshire Carers Quality Award** during this period.

## Providing and supporting valued services

As silver patrons of The Prince's Trust, we have continued to provide work placements and employability support during this period through our **'Get in Retail' programmes** in collaboration with **The Prince's Trust**.



This culminated in **35%** of those completing the training, accepting permanent positions with Lincolnshire Co-op.

### Get into retail permanent appointments



Over the past six years 51% of those who completed the training have become permanent colleagues.

The challenge during 2020/21 was to move the programme into virtual delivery, replacing the face-to-face delivery, whilst achieving full participation from the young people. In many respects this move has been very positive and enjoyed by the participants. Amongst those attending the final celebration days with the young people were members of the Senior Leadership Team, Board of Directors and participating managers.

Our 'Get into' programmes have been a great success, creating opportunities for young people who for whatever reason, have found it difficult to get a foot on the employment ladder. The diversity of backgrounds that these young people come from providing enrichment to our business. [www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)



## Future initiatives



Implement **new digital recruitment tools** to improve candidate experience, increase access to more diverse range of job boards and widen the pool of applicants. Work on our recruitment website has commenced which will make access easier.



Undertake a full **review of all our digital communications**, internal and external, to ensure sites are inclusive and barriers removed where feasibly possible.



Delivering our **successful apprenticeship programmes**, which currently offer opportunities from levels 2 to 7 to develop current colleagues and attract new talent.



Using our **eLearning platform** for development programmes to support numeracy, literacy and digital skills as well as business related development.



**Commitment to the continuation of our work as Prince's Trust Silver Patrons**, and our work with young people, as well as the development of similar programmes for older and more diverse groups in conjunction with DWP and Jobs22.



Commitment to **enhance our Wellbeing initiatives** across the business including growing our Mental Health First Aiders network, Thrive at Work and Disability Confident Leader accreditation.

## Examples of our wellbeing resources

### Menopause Support

The Society recognises the difficulties and anxieties of colleagues going through age related changes and the importance of creating an environment where everyone feels able to ask for help. Click here for information and resources on the menopause.

### Stress Management

Find resources to help support you if you're beginning to or are suffering from stress.

### LGBT+ Useful contacts and resources

**LGBT+ Useful Contacts & Resources**  
We want everyone whose part of the LGBT+ community to feel safe being themselves, so we've pulled together some resources and useful contacts to help those who may need support.

### carer resources

**Carer Resources**  
An unpaid carer is anyone of any age, who looks after a relative, partner or friend who due to ill health, physical or mental illness, disability, frailty or addiction cannot manage without support. Find out what the Society can offer you if you have caring responsibilities.

### Domestic abuse

**Domestic Abuse**  
The Society recognises domestic abuse is a difficult topic to think about or discuss, but we also recognise our colleagues and customers may need support. Click here for useful telephone numbers and literature...

### GroceryAid

From factory to store we're your charity

**GroceryAid: Your Industry Charity**  
National charity GroceryAid provides support to colleagues in the grocery industry and their family members. Find out more about their services here...