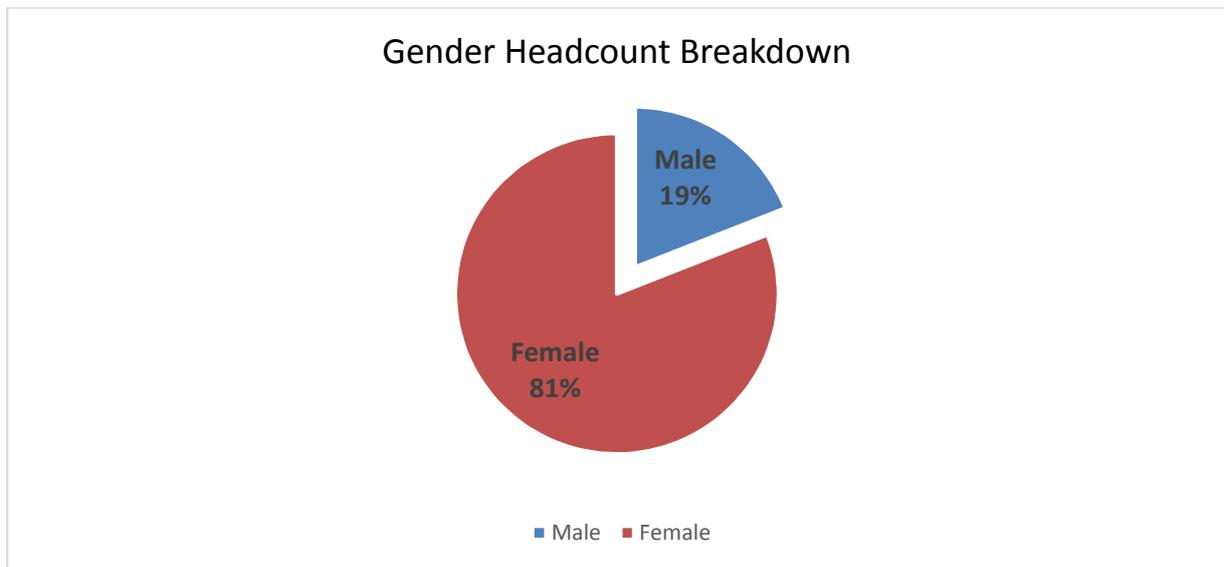


## Ashtons Legal Gender Pay Gap Reporting

All UK businesses with more than 250 employees are now required to complete a gender pay gap analysis and publish the results. The aim is to help ensure fairness and transparency around the amounts paid to men and women with similar roles. This approach is something Ashtons strongly supports in terms of seeking to become legal employer of choice in East Anglia.

The Ashtons figures that follow are based on a snapshot taken on 5 April 2017, at which point the firm had 300 relevant employees. Our total headcount is closer to 350 but for reporting purposes we needed to exclude the partners who own the business and various other smaller groups, such as those on maternity leave.



The first thing which is quickly apparent is that Ashtons employs a much higher proportion of women than men. This is not intentional but just linked to the roles that we need to fill and the gender of the people applying for those jobs.

### How are the figures calculated?

In order to produce the required gender pay gap figures we have to convert everyone's annual salary figure into the equivalent hourly rate and then produce lists of the hourly rates paid to men and to women.

We then report on the differences. The median gender pay gap is the difference between the middle figures in the two lists. The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the averages taken across the full lists.

The table below shows the firm's overall median and mean gender pay gap and bonus gap based on hourly rates of pay as at the snapshot date of 5 April 2017, and bonuses paid in the year to 5 April 2017. Our figures do show an overall pay gap in favour of men, but for perfectly logical reasons which are explained below the data tables.

	Median	Mean
Gender pay gap	41%	30%
Gender bonus pay gap	0%	55%
The proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment	 <b>Male</b> 93%	 <b>Female</b> 94%

### Proportion of males and females in each quartile band

Quartile	 Male	 Female
Upper	38%	62%
Upper Middle	16%	84%
Lower Middle	5%	95%
Lower	16%	84%

### Review of our data

Having collected and analysed our data, we wanted to understand the reasons for our gender pay gap. Broadly this comes down to the majority of our male employees being in professionally qualified senior roles.

As highlighted above, at the time of the analysis 81% of our workforce was female and only 19% male. We have many female employees at all salary levels in our business and we have more women than men in each salary quartile.

The firm had 57 employees in a Legal Assistant / Legal Secretary role, all of who were female. This is 19% of our workforce. Our statistics are very similar to others across the legal sector.

The data indicates that male and female employees have equal access to bonuses. As bonuses are largely based on a percentage of salary, it is unsurprising that there is a gender pay gap in terms of the mean bonus figure given the proportion of male employees in more senior positions.

When we review the quartiles, our results are very similar to other professional service firms. The good news is we have a greater number of females across all quartiles, including those in the higher pay bands.

## **What are we going to do about our gender pay gap?**

We will continually monitor our gender pay gap and, where possible, take steps to improve it. We have introduced pay bands to ensure that all decisions about pay are made fairly and in keeping with our commitment.

As a firm, we offer access to internal and external training courses to those who wish to progress, with no gender bias. We are also recruiting an increasing number of apprentices, some of whom are male, which may in time help to redress the balance.

## **Our culture and working environment**

As a firm, we strive to offer our employees the right culture and working environment. We have taken huge strides in offering flexible working to staff and at the latest count 52% of our employees did not work the standard 0900 – 1700 Monday to Friday working week.

We are committed to embedding a culture combining productivity with flexibility into the firm, and helping employees to achieve their desired work-life balance. The introduction of our Paid Time Off policy has gone a long way to achieving this for some employees, however we still have ongoing projects around agile working and are committed to developing this for all of our employees.

We also provide a generous and supportive package for mothers, fathers, partners and adopters which includes enhanced maternity pay. Our aim is to create a working environment where everyone can be confident, comfortable and supported to thrive, develop and succeed.