

1 in 3 Women Experience Gender Discrimination In The Trades Industry

Submitted by: Propellernet Ltd

Monday, 28 February 2022

Ahead of International Women's Day on 8th March, Rated People reveals what it's like to work as a tradeswoman in the UK and takes a stand against the shockingly low representation of women in the trades industry.

- 39% of tradeswomen say they're not taken seriously because of their gender and almost one in 10 say customers have refused to let them do a job because they're a woman
- Just 1% of carpenters are women and less than 2% of electricians and plumbers are women
- Across 15 key trades in the industry, women earn just 72% of what men do – for floorers and tilers, this drops to 41%
- Change is on the horizon though – 32% of women would now consider working as a tradeswoman and women admissions to trade apprenticeships have increased by 27%
- Rated People has launched its new 'Rated People Empowering Tradeswomen Programme' to help change attitudes and make it easier for more women to get into and thrive in the industry

New research from the find-a-tradesperson platform, Rated People (<https://www.ratedpeople.com/blog/home-improvement-trends-report>) has revealed the biggest challenges faced by women who work in the trades industry, inclusive of all who identify as women, as well as the trades which have the lowest representation of women and the biggest gender pay gaps.

The study discovered well over a third of tradeswomen (39%) aren't taken seriously because of their gender. One in seven (15%) have had personal safety concerns when working, and almost one in 10 (9%) say they've had customers who won't let them work on a job when they see they're a woman.

It's 2022 and this needs to change

The findings are taken from the newly-launched 2022 edition of Rated People's Home Improvement Trends Report (<https://www.ratedpeople.com/blog/home-improvement-trends-report>), where researchers spoke to more than 600 tradespeople across the UK about working in the industry, and over 2,000 homeowners about their attitudes to hiring tradeswomen.

Positively, there's growing demand from UK homeowners - nearly half (46%) say they'd definitely hire a tradeswoman, 43% have no preference and only 11% of UK homeowners say they'd prefer a tradesman. Almost one in three (29%) women in the UK also say they would feel safer hiring a tradeswoman to do a home improvement or maintenance job in their home.

But the research highlights just how out of balance the industry is. Over half (11) of the 20 professions with the worst levels of representation of women in the UK are within the trades industry.

Women make up less than 1% (0.99%) of carpenters and joiners in the UK, and less than 4% of electricians, plumbers, floorers and tilers are women. Across the 10 trades with the lowest representation of women, none of them have more than 5% of women in the workforce.

The 10 trades with the lowest representation of women:

- 1 - Carpenters and joiners - 0.99% (of workforce are women)
- 2 - Electricians and electrical fitters - 1.73%
- 3 - Plumbers and heating and ventilating engineers - 1.93%
- 4 - Metal working production and maintenance fitters - 1.93%
- 5 - Elementary construction occupations - 3.03%
- 6 - Glaziers, window fabricators and fitters - 3.45%
- 7 - Floorers and wall tilers - 3.46%
- 8 - Electrical and electronics technicians - 3.61%
- 9 - Electrical and electronic trades - 3.91%
- 10 - Building trades - 4.01%

Please mind the gap

On average, women earn just 72% of what men do across 15 key trades in the industry. But for floorers and wall tilers, this drops to a staggeringly low 41%. The few women who are carpenters earn just shy of £17,000 a year on average, but men in the same trade earn over £31,000 – a difference of almost £15,000 a year, or put another way, an annual carpenter's salary for a woman is just 53% of a man's.

Women electricians earn 54% of what men do. Women in construction and building trades only earn the equivalent of 57% of a man's salary, and women plumbers would take home just 61% of what a man would in the same trade.

The 10 trades with biggest gender pay gaps:

- 1 - Floorers and wall tilers - 41% (average women's pay as a % of men's pay)
- 2 - Metal working production and maintenance fitters - 51%
- 3 - Electrical and electronic trades - 51%
- 4 - Glaziers, window fabricators and fitters - 52%
- 5 - Carpenters and joiners - 53%
- 6 - Electricians and electrical fitters - 54%
- 7 - Construction and building trades - 57%
- 8 - Painters and decorators - 57%
- 9 - Plumbers and heating and ventilating engineers - 61%
- 10 - Electrical and electronics technicians - 80%

Opportunities for tradeswomen in the UK

There are good indicators that change is starting to happen though – 32% of women in the UK now say they'd consider working in the trades industry. This could be a knock-on effect of the pandemic – people re-evaluating their jobs for example, or perhaps from increasing awareness of the opportunities that are available. According to Access Training (<https://www.accesstraininguk.co.uk/>), admissions of

women on trade courses increased by 27% in 2021.

Google data also shows many homeowners are actively trying to find tradeswomen across a variety of trades. People searched for women painters the most in 2021, pulling in 27,500 Google searches over 12 months, and women builders, gardeners, plumbers and electricians also saw between 5,000 – 10,000 Google searches in 2021.

When speaking to tradeswomen about the biggest benefits of working in the industry, flexibility is key, with the top three advantages all about having increased autonomy. Almost one in four (22%) said 'being their own boss' was one of the biggest benefits for them – 18% said it was the flexible working hours, and 15% said they loved being able to choose how much work they took on.

Helping women homeowners feel safe was also a plus-point, with almost one in 10 (8%) tradeswomen saying they valued getting to help women who don't feel comfortable or safe having a tradesman come into their home.

The Rated People Empowering Tradeswomen Programme

Following the research, Rated People has launched their new Rated People Empowering Tradeswomen Programme to help more women get into the trades industry and build successful careers. Whether they're considering a career change, or they'll soon be leaving school and considering their options, the programme is designed to help women at all stages of their trades careers.

The Rated People Empowering Tradeswomen Programme includes discounted skills training with Access Training, discounted business advice and coaching with Business Trades Coach, Alison Warner, and free exposure and discounted job leads on Rated People – for all the details, visit:

www.ratedpeople.com/blog/home-improvement-trends-report-2022-empowering-tradeswomen-programme
(<https://www.ratedpeople.com/blog/home-improvement-trends-report-2022-empowering-tradeswomen-programme>)

Adrienne Minster, CEO of Rated People commented:

"We've long valued individuality, diversity, and inclusion at Rated People. Empowering more women and people across the gender spectrum to build successful careers in trades services is a priority for us. There's still a lot to be done, but it's a challenge we're embracing.

With 14 of the 15 top trades recruiting significantly fewer women than men, getting more women into trades services can also play a huge role in helping to address the industry's workforce shortage.

At Rated People, we're making a pledge to feature more tradeswomen role models and we want to promote the incredible work being done by tradeswomen in the industry. We also want to make it easier for more women to get into the business, so we've launched a new programme that's packed with benefits, help, and advice.

No matter your background or career, we invite you to stand with us as we help strive towards a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce."

To see the full research and the newest edition of the Rated People Home Improvement Trends Report, visit: www.ratedpeople.com/blog/home-improvement-trends-report
(<https://www.ratedpeople.com/blog/home-improvement-trends-report>)

.ENDS.

Notes to editors:

References to 'women' throughout this research and press release are inclusive and refer to all who identify as women

Nationwide survey completed with Censuswide, to 2,015 UK residents aged 16 and above

Nationwide tradespeople survey to 626 UK tradespeople, aged 18 and above- research complete December 2021

Data on women representation and gender pay gap sourced from:

<https://careersmart.org.uk/occupations/equality/which-jobs-do-men-and-women-do-occupational-breakdown-gender>

The 'Rated People Empowering Tradeswomen Programme' is valid for tradeswomen customers who sign up as the main account holder and verify as such through our vetting & quality process between February 21st and May 21st 2022. Offers and Promotion Partners may differ. This offer runs in addition to all other offers available to all Rated People customers. Contact us for more information. Standard Terms & Conditions apply.

Job definitions:

- Carpenters and joiners: Carpenters and joiners construct, erect, install and repair wooden structures and fittings used in internal and external frameworks and cut, shape, fit and assemble wood to make templates, jigs, scale models and scenic equipment for theatres.
- Electricians and electrical fitters: Electricians and electrical fitters assemble parts in the manufacture of electrical and electronic equipment, and install, maintain, and repair electrical plant, machinery, appliances and wiring.
- Plumbers and heating and ventilating engineers: Jobholders in this unit group assemble, install, maintain and repair plumbing fixtures, heating and ventilating systems and pipes and pipeline systems in commercial, residential and industrial premises and public buildings.
- Metal working production and maintenance fitters: Metal working production and maintenance fitters

erect, install and repair electrical and mechanical plant and industrial machinery, fit and assemble parts and sub-assemblies in the manufacture of metal products and test and adjust new motor vehicles and engines.

- Elementary construction occupations: Job holders in this unit group perform a variety of general labouring and construction duties to assist building, civil engineering and related trades workers in the performance of their tasks.

- Glaziers, window fabricators and fitters: Job holders in this unit group install pre-glazed wooden, metal or PVC framework, and cut, fit and set glass in windows, doors, shop fronts, and other structural frames.

- Floorers and wall tilers: Floorers and wall tilers lay composition mixtures (other than mastic asphalt) to form flooring, plan, fit and secure carpet, underlay and linoleum and cover and decorate walls and floors with terrazzo and granolithic mixtures, tiles and mosaic panels.

- Electrical and electronics technicians: Electrical and electronics technicians perform a variety of miscellaneous technical support functions to assist with the design, development, installation, operation and maintenance of electrical and electronic systems.

- Electrical and electronic trades: Job holders in this group perform a variety of electrical and electronic occupations not elsewhere classified in MINOR GROUP 524: Electrical and Electronic Trades.

- Building trades: Those working in construction and building trades undertake a variety of tasks in the construction, alteration, maintenance and repair of buildings, steeples, industrial chimneys and other tall structures, and of underwater structures not elsewhere classified in MINOR GROUP 531: Construction and Building Trades.

Media contacts:

Hannah Adams – hannaha@propellernet.co.uk

Maddie Davies – maddie@propellernet.co.uk

Megan Salter – megan@propellernet.co.uk