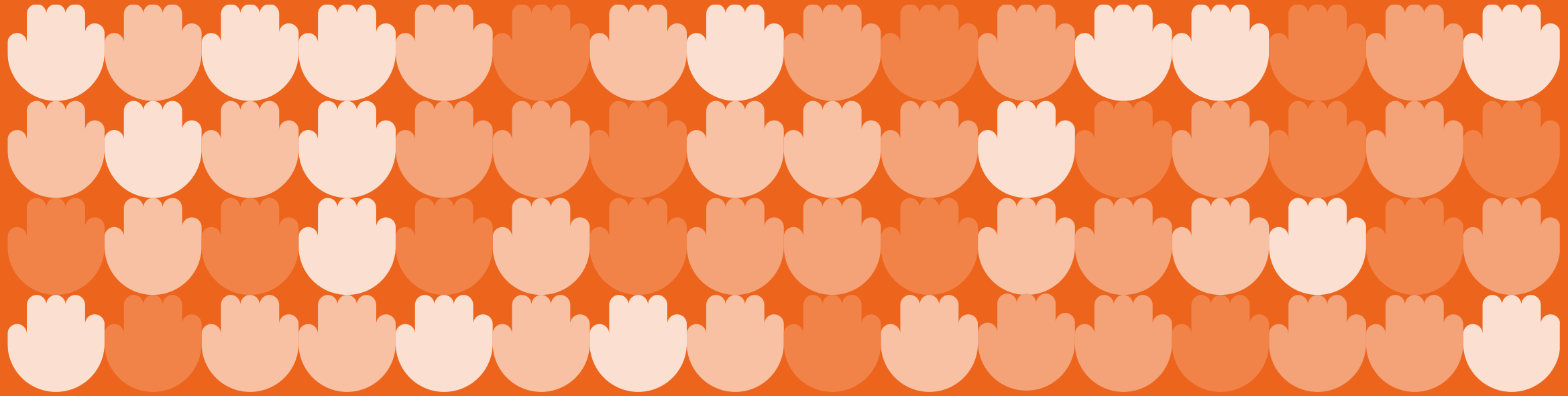
GREATER MANCHESTER

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR OUR WORKFORCE

GM Labour Market & Sector Insights Pack

Spring 2024

March 2024 – May 2024



Purpose of Pack

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This pack collates Labour Market Information and Sector Insights from various sources.

The purpose of the pack is:

- To provide an evidence base for ongoing policy and programme development
- To inform curriculum development, adaptation, and refinement
- To inform commissioned activity by GMCA

1. GM Labour Market & Skills Intelligence Pack
2. Purpose of Pack
3. Greater Manchester Workforce
4. North West Unemployment
5. North West Economic Inactivity
6. GM Vacancy Market
7. GM in-demand occupations
8. GM in-demand common skills
9. GM in-demand specialist skills
10. GM Occupation Clusters
11. Sector Insights – Construction
12. Sector Insights – Transport
13. Sector Insights – Logistics
14. Sector Insights – Creative, Culture, and Sport
15. Sector Insights – Retail and Hospitality
16. Sector Insights – Manufacturing
17. Sector Insights – Financial, Business, and Professional Services
18. Sector Insights – Digital/Tech
19. Sector Insights – Health and Social Care
20. Sector Insights – Education
21. Sector Insights – Emergency Services
22. Sector Insights – Green Economy

Greater Manchester Workforce

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Workforce Headlines

- Greater Manchester's **workforce is deep and broad**, and shares similarities with many other city regions.
- While many city regions have similar workforce profiles, **GM has a particularly high concentration of Financial & Professional Services** workers (19.7% vs. 16.5% in West Midlands, 16.6% in Liverpool).
- The Public Sector **employs just over 1 in 3 workers in GM**, across health, education, emergency services, and local government. This is slightly above average when compared with other regions.
- Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, the **number of the working age population claiming unemployment related benefits is up by around 38%** (to approx. 96,000 people).
- Around **1 in 5 workers in GM are employed on a part-time** basis – but this varies hugely by sector, locality, and gender.
- **Just under half of GM's population are employed or self-employed** – roughly 1.33m out of approximately 2.87m. This has dropped by around 30,000 since the last survey (September 2023) as the healthcare and hospitality workforces shrunk slightly.

GM Workforce Overview

Industry (SIC)	Number of Jobs	Proportion (%) of jobs
A, Agriculture & fishing	2,700	0.2%
B,D,E Energy & water	13,300	1.0%
C Manufacturing	91,300	6.9%
F Construction	84,400	6.3%
G,I Wholesale, retail, hotels & restaurants	207,200	15.6%
H,J Transport, Digital & Communication	128,800	9.7%
K-N Banking, finance & insurance etc.	262,500	19.7%
O-Q Public admin, education & health	449,300	33.8%
R-U Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services	84,700	6.4%
Total	**1,331,200**	**100.0%**

Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS, December 2023

Unemployment

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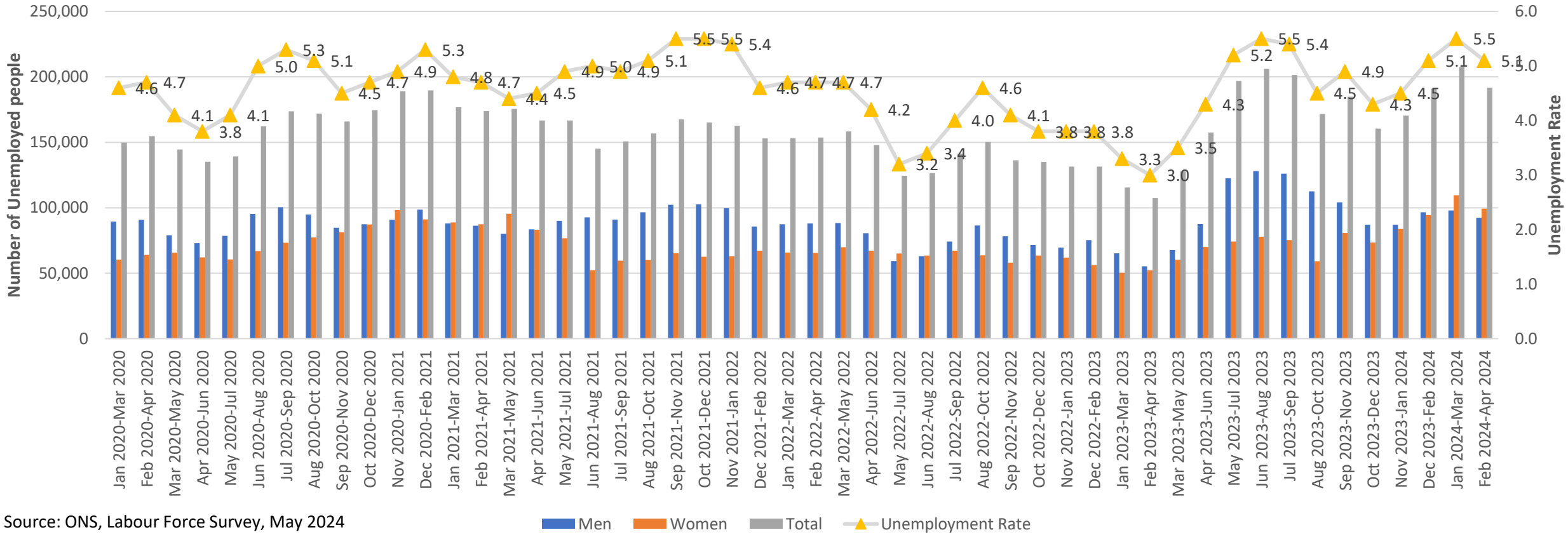
Unemployment, number and rate (16+), North West (NW), Jan-Mar 2020 – Feb-Apr 2024



Source: ONS, Labour Force Survey, May 2024

For the latest period (between February – April 2024) the unemployment rate fell on the previous period but remains at 5.1% in the North West of England (compared with 4.4% in the UK).

Revised data from the Labour Force Survey suggests that in the North West, unemployment for men has generally dropped since mid-2023 (from roughly 130,000 to around 90,000), while unemployment for women has risen – from around 80,000 to around 100,000.

Unemployment in the North West remains higher than pre-pandemic – by around 40,000 people.

Economic Inactivity

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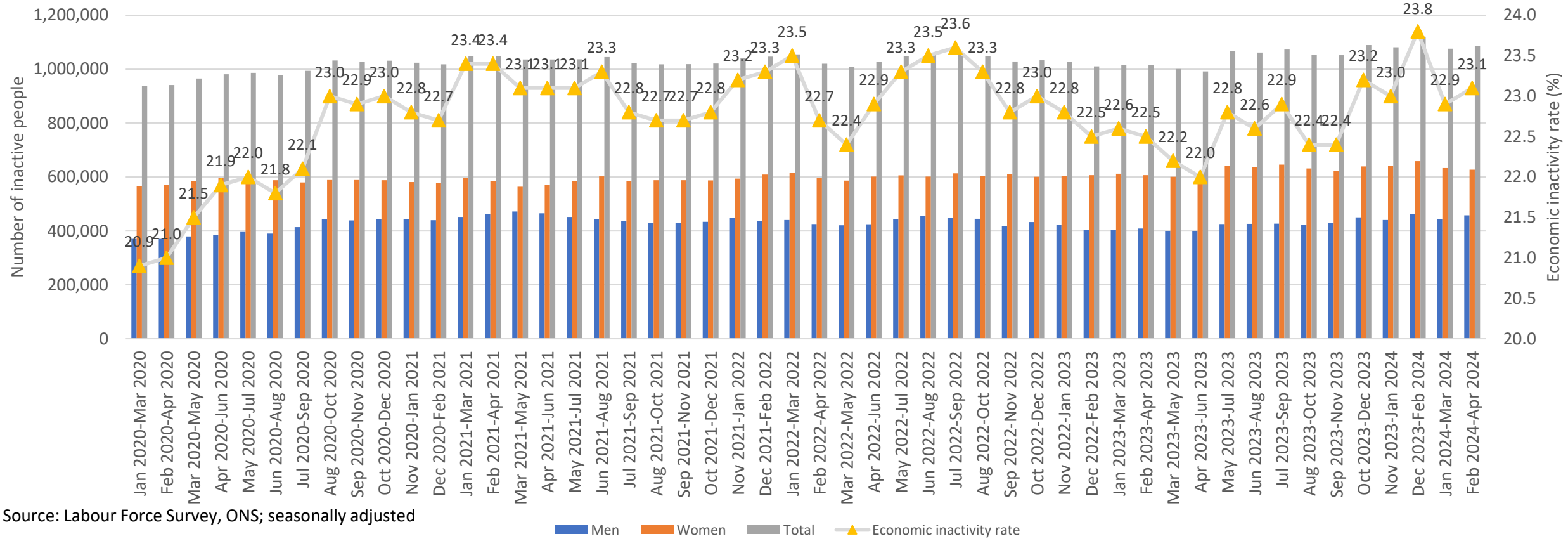
Economic inactivity number and rate (16-64), North West (NW), Jan-Mar 2020 – Feb-Apr 2024



Source: Labour Force Survey, ONS; seasonally adjusted

Economic inactivity refers to people who are not participating in the labour market: they are neither working nor seeking employment. The reasons for inactivity are varied, but the high levels are being driven by long-term ill-health among lower-paid workers and early retirement among higher-paid workers.

The revised Labour Force Survey Data suggested that Economic Inactivity in the North West had ticked back up in the latest period (February – April 2024) to 23.1% - representing 1.08m of the 4.63m Working Age Population.

There are around just under 150,000 more economically inactive people in the North West than before the pandemic – 80,000 of which are men.

GM Vacancy Market

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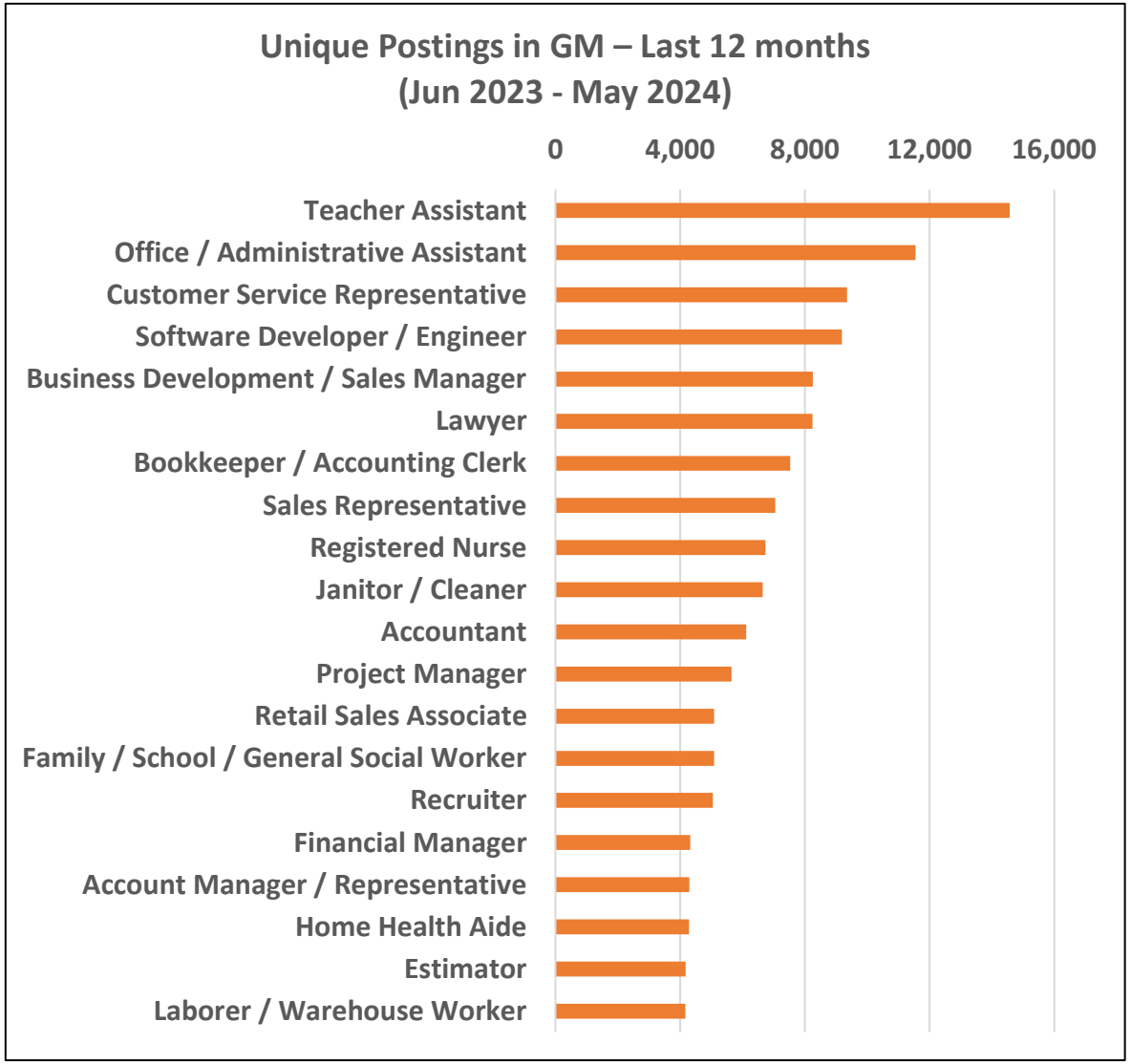

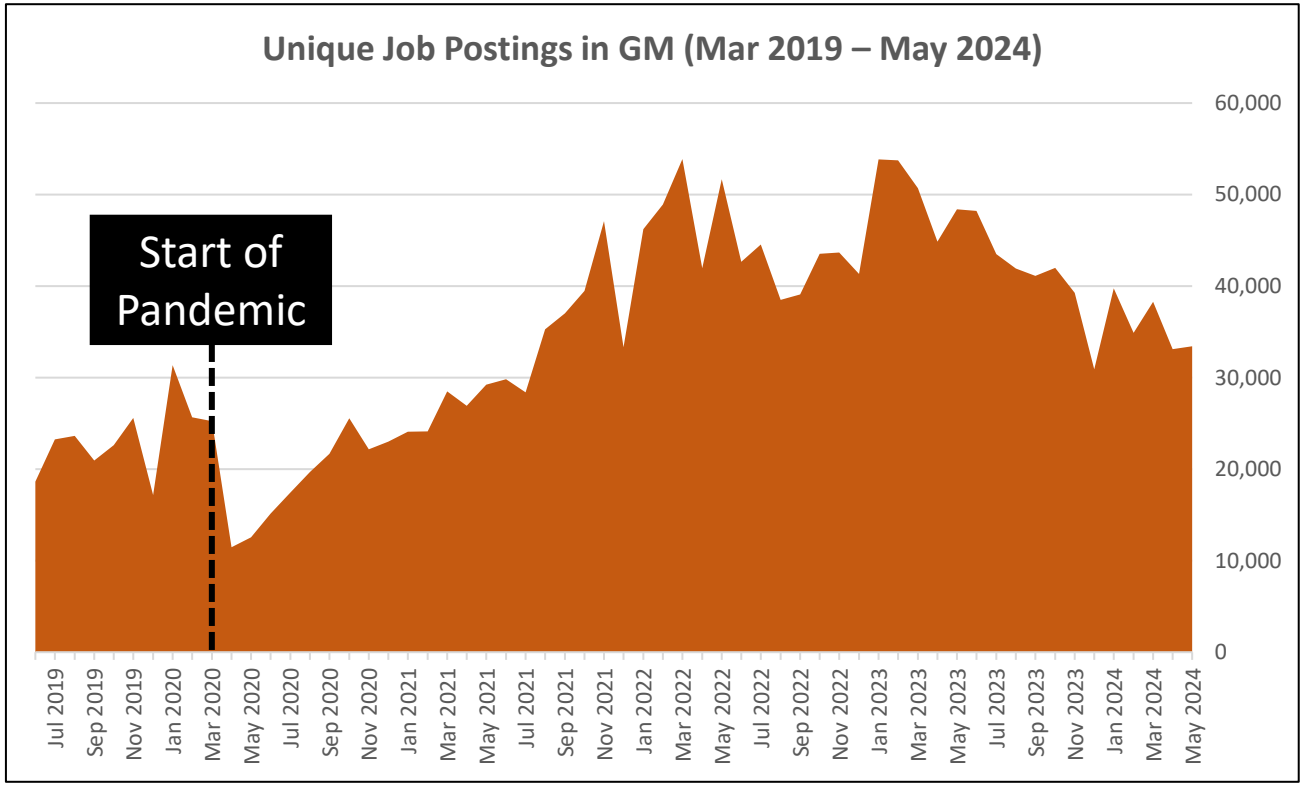

- Long-term decline in employer demand stabilised in the 3 months to May 2024 – remaining above pre-pandemic levels.
- Increases in entry level roles like office assistants and customer service made them 2nd / 3rd most in demand in the last 12 months.
- Drops in digital demand have made Teaching Assistant the top advertised role over the 12 months to May 2024.

Source: Lightcast Data

GM in-demand occupations (Mar 2024 – May 2024)

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Admin Assistant
- 3. Nurse
- 4. Childcare Teacher
- 5. Cleaner

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Admin Assistant
- 3. Nurse
- 4. Social Worker
- 5. Cleaner

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Admin Assistant
- 3. Bookkeeper
- 4. Cleaner
- 5. Customer Service

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Cleaner
- 3. Admin Assistant
- 4. Nurse
- 5. Customer Service

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Admin Assistant
- 3. Social Worker
- 4. Cleaner
- 5. Teacher

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Social Worker
- 3. Cleaner
- 4. Admin Assistant
- 5. Nurse

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Admin Assistant
- 3. Customer Service
- 4. Sales Representative
- 5. Cleaner

- 1. Interpreter / Translator
- 2. Teaching Assistant
- 3. Cleaner
- 4. Customer Service
- 5. Admin Assistant

- 1. Lawyer
- 2. Software Developer
- 3. Salesperson
- 4. Admin Assistant
- 5. Teaching assistant

- 1. Teaching Assistant
- 2. Admin Assistant
- 3. Nurse
- 4. Customer Service
- 5. Sales Representative

Source: Lightcast Data

(Changes shown vs. previous 3 months)

GM in-demand common skills (Mar 2024 – May 2024)

Bolton
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Customer Service
4. Attention to Detail ↑
5. Teaching ↓

Bury
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Teaching
4. Customer Service
5. Attention to Detail ↑

Rochdale
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Customer Service
4. Teaching
5. English Language ↑

Wigan
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Teaching
4. Customer Service
5. Planning ↑

Oldham
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Teaching
4. Customer Service
5. Attention to Detail ↑

Salford
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Teaching ↑
4. Customer Service ↓
5. Planning

Trafford
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Customer Service
4. Attention to Detail ↑
5. Teaching ↓

Manchester
1. Communication
2. Sales
3. Customer Service ↑
4. Management ↓
5. Attention to Detail

Tameside
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Customer Service
4. Sales ↑
5. Teaching ↓

Stockport
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Customer Service
4. Sales
5. Attention to Detail

Source: Lightcast Data

(Changes shown vs. previous 3 months)

GM in-demand specialist skills (Mar 2024 – May 2024)

- 1. Finance
- 2. Auditing
- 3. Mental Health Awareness
- 4. KPIs
- 5. Effective Communication

- 1. Mental Health Awareness
- 2. Auditing
- 3. Finance
- 4. Effective Communication
- 5. Childcare

- 1. Due Diligence
- 2. Invoicing
- 3. Warehousing
- 4. Mental Health Awareness
- 5. Finance

- 1. Auditing
- 2. Finance
- 3. Effective Communication
- 4. Mental Health Awareness
- 5. Risk Analysis

- 1. Mental Health Awareness
- 2. Auditing
- 3. Working with Children
- 4. Invoicing
- 5. KPIs

- 1. Auditing
- 2. Integrated Care
- 3. Mental Health Awareness
- 4. Nursing
- 5. Effective Communication

- 1. Finance
- 2. Invoicing
- 3. Auditing
- 4. Mental Health Awareness
- 5. KPI

- 1. Finance
- 2. Auditing
- 3. Mental Health Awareness
- 4. Accounting
- 5. Invoicing

- 1. Finance
- 2. Effective Communication
- 3. KPIs
- 4. Invoicing
- 5. Social Work

- 1. Project Management
- 2. Finance
- 3. Marketing
- 4. Auditing
- 5. KPIs

Source: Lightcast Data

(Changes shown vs. previous 3 months)

GM Occupational Job Postings (Mar 2023 – May 2024)

Source: Lightcast Data
(Changes over last 3 months)

Education and Training ➖	11,255	-10%	£30,016
Teacher Assistant	3,017	-23%	£22,336
Preschool / Childcare Teacher	981	5%	£25,408
Primary School Teacher	974	23%	£35,712
Special Education Needs (SEN) Teacher	916	-15%	£28,864
Tutor	777	54%	£44,992
Secondary School Teacher (Other)	573	-12%	£35,712
Science Teacher	438	0%	£38,272
Supply Teacher	425	-50%	£27,264
Primary and Secondary School Headteache	361	-35%	£37,504
Maths Teacher	344	-17%	£38,272

Business Management & Ops ⬆	8,774	-17%	£32,960
Project Manager	1,154	-20%	£47,552
Labourer / Warehouse Worker	899	-24%	£25,024
Operations Manager / Supervisor	770	-19%	£42,624
Business / Management Analyst	725	-29%	£36,992
Procurement / Sourcing Manager	441	-9%	£42,624
Contract Administrator	432	-30%	£48,576
Forklift / Pallet Jack Operator	385	12%	£25,984
Property / Real Estate / Community Manag	349	2%	£31,488
Buyer / Purchasing Agent	328	-43%	£32,384
Scheduler / Operations Coordinator	324	-33%	£26,048

Hospitality, Food, and Tourism ➖	7,078	-3%	£25,024
Janitor / Cleaner	1,538	-8%	£23,744
Chef	749	11%	£28,992
Waiter / Waitress	448	-2%	£23,296
Bartender	403	22%	£22,784
Restaurant / Food Service Manager	399	-6%	£32,064
Maid / Housekeeping Staff	390	3%	£24,896
Kitchen Staff	371	0%	£23,424
Fast Food / Counter Worker	347	20%	£23,872
Restaurant / Food Service Supervisor	246	-4%	£26,752
Event Planner	223	-43%	£27,456

Sales ⬆	9,830	-9%	£31,040
Business Development / Sales Manager	1,812	-8%	£44,992
Sales Representative	1,722	-24%	£28,992
Retail Sales Associate	1154	9%	£25,024
Account Manager / Representative	948	-26%	£34,944
Retail Store Manager / Supervisor	943	-7%	£27,968
Account Executive	718	-27%	£32,064
Sales Assistant	608	11%	£24,384
Merchandiser	468	10%	£26,944
Real Estate Agent / Broker	245	34%	£27,904
Stocking Clerk	202	23%	£26,944

Finance ⬇	8,400	-23%	£32,448
Bookkeeper / Accounting Clerk	1,451	-33%	£26,560
Accountant	1,168	-33%	£40,128
Financial Manager	908	-31%	£50,112
Credit Analyst / Authoriser	518	-42%	£27,968
Payroll Specialist	404	21%	£27,968
Treasurer / Controller	401	-37%	£62,656
Financial Analyst	336	-45%	£40,064
Auditor	252	-25%	£43,392
Compliance Officer / Analyst	243	-22%	£29,952
Risk Manager / Analyst	231	-24%	£40,128

Engineering ➖	5,280	-19%	£42,688
Mechanical Engineer	942	-16%	£42,624
Electrical Engineer	665	-34%	£42,880
Civil Engineer	532	-22%	£47,488
Land Surveyor	495	-25%	£46,464
Engineering Manager	431	-10%	£54,912
Industrial Engineer	284	-18%	£42,624
Manufacturing Engineer	262	-16%	£44,928
Chemical / Process Engineer	192	-4%	£42,880
Reservoir / Petroleum Engineer	164	-37%	£41,600
CAD Designer / Draughtsperson	161	-15%	£37,504

Healthcare ⬇	9,143	1%	£39,104
Registered General Nurse	1,480	25%	£39,040
Home Care Assistant	912	6%	£25,024
Physician	613	0%	£110,016
Nurse Practitioner	576	8%	£41,600
Healthcare Administrator	546	-3%	£42,688
Nursing Home / Health Administrator	503	-9%	£40,128
Psychologist	295	13%	£50,560
Nursing Manager / Supervisor	269	-28%	£42,624
Nursing / Healthcare Assistant	250	-3%	£24,320
Occupational Therapist	242	-7%	£39,040

Information Technology ➖	7,361	-17%	£45,760
Software Developer / Engineer	1,875	-15%	£54,912
Computer Support Specialist	705	-9%	£28,096
IT Manager / Director	497	3%	£49,280
Computer Systems Engineer / Architect	434	-44%	£57,472
Cyber / Information Security Engineer / An	413	-30%	£42,624
Web Developer	334	-28%	£52,608
Information Technology and Computer Sci	312	-11%	£42,112
Technology Consultant	271	8%	£34,944
Network Engineer / Architect	261	-16%	£47,488
Database Architect	229	-11%	£46,976

Clerical and Administrative ➖	4,502	-20%	£25,024
Office / Administrative Assistant	2,539	-25%	£25,024
Receptionist	581	4%	£23,744
Office Manager	339	-9%	£25,536
Executive Assistant	205	2%	£32,896
Administrative Manager	137	-6%	£26,368
Legal Secretary	126	-31%	£24,960
Bill and Account Collector	126	-42%	£26,880
Billing Clerk / Specialist	107	-36%	£29,952
Interviewer	60	-5%	£29,760
Postal Service / Mail Room Worker	59	-58%	£25,216

Sector Insights – Construction

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

A CITB report estimated that an additional 251,500 construction workers per year will be needed in the UK to meet output by 2028. 23,850 of these will be in the North West.

The GM Mayor's manifesto included various initiatives to support the sector. It committed to 10,000 affordable Net Zero homes being built over the next 4 years, with 1,000 of these being built in each borough of Greater Manchester.

A steady increase in future demand for jobs is expected. Estimates are for 11,000 new jobs in GM by 2027 - in 'traditional' skill sets and trades as well as new and emerging methods and technologies around low carbon construction and a significant uplift required around the retrofit of existing properties. Most employers are not yet planning any Net zero training - overall, only 11% expect they will start doing more.

Workers who gained skills cards through employer recommendation (grandfather rights) have until the end of 2024 to become formally qualified. Some employers report that removing accreditation from so many workers is a high-risk move when the industry already needs to recruit so many extra workers.

Apprenticeships well-respected as a path into the sector, but entry level routes have declined. 45% of employers are planning an apprentice for the next quarter. The availability or locality of training providers are the main barriers for employers, as well as more employers finding there isn't a standard suitable for their needs. There also continues to be delays and poor communication on End Point Assessments.

Transport infrastructure expansion and development has been another area bolstering the construction sector. Infrastructure's profile will remain high with the fallout from HS2 and RAAC. More and more public and private verticals will fall under scrutiny including prisons. This is a challenge but also a great sector opportunity for structural engineers with the technical expertise to navigate and innovate new materials and solutions.

In-demand Occupations

Manchester City Centre, Bolton, Stockport and Salford have the highest number of Construction vacancies. Construction ongoing and planned within a mile of the city centre is significant.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Estimator / Quantity Surveyor (953)
- Electrician (544)
- Surveyor (495)
- Construction Site Manager (424)
- Construction Helper / Worker (402)

Skills Requirements

Entry level roles have low requirements (usually H&S cert or CSCS card) but roles are generally poorly paid, with fewer development routes. Progression is often **linked to ongoing CPD to learn new trades or equipment**, additional "cards" and certifications, including plant machinery licences, installer safety certifications and additional site H&S certs.

In-demand skills include:

- Electrical engineering
- Structural fabrication and steel erection
- Construction process/project management
- Site engineering, quantity surveying, retrofitting.
- Digitalisation

Sector Insights – Transport

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

A key milestone in the rollout of the Bee Network was **the opening of Stockport's Transport interchange in March 2024**, part of the £1bn regeneration of the town centre.

Skills and labour shortages pose a significant challenge for the rail industry. The National Skills Academy for Rail expects that an additional 153,000 people will be needed in the industry between 2023 and 2030. The next Network Rail "Contract Period" starts in April 2024, which will bring some new contractors into the sector to work on infrastructure.

The average age of workers in transport is around 45 years old. Attrition and replacement demand are significant factors in all areas of the sector. Some estimates state that 5,000 apprentices per annum will be needed to close the skills gap, effectively doubling the current average level.

Rail businesses face challenges with apprenticeships, especially concerns about not having enough work to employ apprentices for their whole programme. Flexi Job apprenticeship agencies can address these industry concerns by recruiting and employing apprentices on behalf of the employer.

The Mayor's manifesto upon re-election included commitments to **developing plans for extending the Metrolink network, operated by KeolisAmey, to Stockport, Middleton, Heywood and Atom Valley in the North East of GM.**

Continued expansion of the Bus and Tram Bee Network will undoubtedly create new jobs and provide multiple upskilling opportunities for GM residents but may place further strain on a sector of ageing workforce.

Manchester Airport continues to recover from the pandemic – passenger numbers reached nearly 2.8m in May 2024 – 300,000 more than in 2023. The number of flights was up 11% from a year earlier, largely driven by more demand for international travel.

In-demand Occupations

Roles are concentrated in Manchester city centre, with employers in other areas like Stockport, Bolton, and Oldham advertising a relatively high number of vacancies.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Automotive Service Technician / Mechanic (557)
- Heavy Equipment Mechanic (180)
- Van / Taxi / Shuttle Driver (153)
- Transportation Supervisor (133)
- Transportation Manager (108)

Skills Requirements

There are clear and key areas where consistent workforce deficits exist – which include Signalling & Telecoms, Systems Engineering and Electrification & Plant. UK-wide these gaps typically range between 1,000 and 2,000 people per annum.

These deficits are creating premiums for skills – for Electrification 12% and for Signalling 10%, evidenced through increased salary demands.

In-demand skills include:

- Groundworking
- Steel-fixing and metal-workers
- Driving and operation
- Project Management
- Electrical engineering
- Communication Network specialists

Sector Insights – Logistics

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Early 2024 saw continued economic headwinds and a downturn in demand for goods which has slowed logistics slightly. **Vacancies have largely returned to pre-pandemic levels but do remain above those of the rest of the economy**. Shortages have persisted in the sector for several roles – particularly maintenance and technical roles.

GM continues to see inward investment and development of logistics sites, particularly around the airport and motorway connections in the North East and West of the region. DB Schenker are developing an £11m 2.3-acre site near the airport, and a joint venture of Chancerygate and Hines are developing a £39m 7.5-acre site in Oldham. Both will bring new jobs and opportunities to the area.

Logistics unlocks many career opportunities, with **roles ranging from drivers and mechanics to robotics and technology developers.** Entry level roles remain accessible for those without a university degree, but still offer highly competitive salaries and some of the best opportunities for progression.

The transition to net zero is well underway across the logistics sector, with operators focussed on developing plans and embracing new technologies to reduce their emissions today and in the long-term. This is demonstrated by the uptake of battery electric vans and trials of zero tailpipe emission HGVs, the adoption of low carbon fuels across all modes of logistics transport and industry support of innovative technology development to achieve net zero transport emissions. However, logistics operators are already struggling to find suitably qualified engineers and mechanics who can maintain and fix new vehicles, whether battery electric or alternatively fuelled.

Innovation and emerging technologies are shaping the future of logistics through changing customer requirements, rapid digital transformation, and automation. Automated systems can also help to improve safety and accuracy in the handling of goods and reduce the cost of logistics, improving competitive edge.

In-demand Occupations

Businesses also report a high demand for Mechanics, Transport Planners, Logistics Administrators, Transport Managers and Transport Co-ordinators. The data shows that there is consistent high demand and skills shortages in the infrastructure around driving & transport operation roles themselves.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Labourer / Warehouse Worker (899)
- Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver (752)
- Forklift / Pallet Jack Operator (385)
- Sales Delivery Driver (General) (325)
- Scheduler / Operations Coordinator (324)

Skills Requirements

- Entry Level recruitment requires very few qualifications, but numerical and problem-solving skills are often essential.
- Future Skills in Logistics covering automation and drone operation.
- Back Office, digitisation and automation in warehousing, sales, customer service – internal and external.
- Leadership and Management – Team management/ motivating staff.

In-demand skills include:

- Digital Warehousing / Reverse Logistics.
- Transport planning / Fleet Management.
- Warehousing & Supply Chain management
- Software Skills
- Forklift truck operation
- Mechanics – Technicians that can operate on electric and alternatively fuelled vehicles.

Sector Insights – Creative, Culture, and Sport

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Coop Live launched in May 2024, becoming the largest indoor arena in Europe, with a capacity of 23,500. The £400m venue featured Elbow as the opening act, who have been followed by comedian Peter Kay, The Killers, and Nicki Minaj.

In March, Bolton was named GM's Town of Culture for 2024, bringing a £50,000 programme of taster activities for residents, a grants programme to support freelancers, and a Bolton Gala to be held in March 2025 celebrating the cultural impact of the town.

The Central Cluster "Growth Location" which is located in Manchester and Salford is planned to create 90,000 new jobs in digital/creative/media and professional services with strong links to universities. There are overlaps with the digital sector where GM has large employers with diverse opportunities like the BBC and those that work at MediaCity.

The workforce in Culture, Creative, and Sport workplaces is younger than most, with many staff university-educated. Workers are more likely to be self-employed than the UK average. A third of employers report skills gaps amongst staff and challenges recruiting the skills they need from existing talent pool.

Poor perceptions of the sector create challenges in attracting candidates; the sector is known for unsociable hours, low pay, and demanding workloads. Due to the nature of the work, arts and culture generates a substantial number of freelance opportunities across a range of artistic, creative, and technical roles.

Sports & Physical Activities occupations have a higher proportion of small employers and self-employed workers (23% vs 9% workforce-wide) consistent with the importance of freelancers to the sector.

Job flexibility a common characteristic which is an attractive feature of the sector, with many roles being part-time. While part-time work arrangements can be particularly attractive to those seeking flexibility, such as students, the associated lower earnings may make it more difficult to keep these workers over time.

In-demand Occupations

Most creative and cultural roles are found in the city centre, but sport roles are widespread across clubs, leisure centres, and sports facilities across GM

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Interpreter / Translator (584)
- Graphic Designer (265)
- Coach (214)
- Writer (135)
- Interior Designer (102)

Skills Requirements

Soft skills are in high demand – including Marketing, Social media, Project management, Sales, Teamwork, Creativity.

- Many sectors see a growing need for workers with digital art and design tool skills.
- Games development is a growing area in Greater Manchester with studios moving to the region.

Two different T-Level routes focusing on Digital Business and Digital Production. Degrees offered by many universities include Marketing, Design and Creative Media Production

Physical fitness is often a key skill required for most sporting roles. Additionally, employers in the sector look for mental resilience, Teamwork and communication, Strategic thinking and enthusiasm.

Sector Insights – Retail and Hospitality

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

The hospitality sector still faces spiralling wage costs and business rates increases, especially for larger or food-led pubs. Pressures on the sector remain acute - it is likely that 500-600 UK pubs are likely to close in 2024 on top of the 530 that closed in 2023.

The retail sector covers **all aspects of high-street and eCommerce shopping**. While increasing online shopping and declining attendance at venues like cinemas have hurt the sector, it remains a major employer. **Nearly 1 in 6 workers in GM are employed in retail, wholesale, and hospitality** occupations – around 200,000 people.

Early 2024 saw work continue on the £250m Therme wellbeing facility in Trafford Park – the hotel and waterpark facility has been delayed by nearly 2 years due to the pandemic, but it aims to open in 2025, creating 1,200 jobs.

UK hospitality is now said to be short of around 188,000 workers, with the **shortage of front-of-house staff and chefs being the worst**. Many jobs within the sector are seen as low-paid and entry level. **Staff turnover within the sector is generally high**, particularly over holiday periods and when student workers move.

The spring budget brought news that alcohol duties will remain frozen until February 2025. This benefits 38,000 pubs across the UK. This is in addition to the £13,000 saving a typical pub will get from the 75% business rates discount announced in the autumn. The extension to beer duty being frozen will save the industry £171m.

New immigration rules came into force in Spring 2024, raising the threshold for a skilled worker visa by nearly 50% from £26,200 to £38,700. **Over 95% of the 8,500 hospitality visas issued in 2023 would no longer be valid under these rules.** This could further increase the challenges of recruitment for the Hospitality sector where they will become unable to compete for candidates in the same way as other sectors.

In-demand Occupations

Roles are heavily concentrated in Manchester City Centre and regional town centres, with other hubs like the Trafford Centre and Retail Parks seeing many opportunities.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Janitor / Cleaner (1,483)
- Chef (602)
- Sales Assistant (General) (541)
- Sales Representative (General) (471)
- Waiter / Waitress (448)

Skills Requirements

- Entry level roles are often open to many, with on-the-job training provided as part of induction.
- Roles within the sector are often difficult, with unsociable shift patterns and long-hours, but there are many opportunities for those who stay.
- Management and team leader roles are common after workers have enough experience.

In-demand skills include:

- Customer service
- Sales
- Communication
- Food safety and sanitation
- Teamwork and adaptability
- Food preparation
- Food safety

Sector Insights – Engineering & Manufacturing

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Confidence across the sector improved slightly in the Spring of 2024 – the UK Purchasing Managers Index (PMI), a confidence measure, rose to 51.2 in May, reaching a 27-month high. 63% of Manufacturers forecast that their output would be higher in 12 months' time.

Plans continue for the creation of an industrial cluster along the North East Growth Corridor – Atom Valley – which will include the Advanced Machinery and Productivity Institute (AMPI), the Sustainable Materials and Manufacturing Centre (SMMC), both supporting the growth of the sector in GM.

Manufacturing & Engineering is an important sector for the Greater Manchester economy. The sector employs around 115,000 people, **making up around 8-9% of the GM workforce**. With a focus on food and drink, component manufacturing, electronics, manufacturing in GM sees a wide range of employers and diverse skills needs.

GM's LSIP identified **Green Skills, Lean Manufacturing, Robotics and Electronic Engineering as urgent/high priority areas** for skills provision development. The sector will be a priority in upcoming public investment. **Digitalisation, automation, and increasingly AI are disrupting some advanced manufacturing industries**, as manufacturers look for ways to cut costs and raise efficiency.

Efforts continue to support the technical workforce. The Made Smarter programme operates throughout the North West, helping manufacturing and engineering companies adopt Industry 4.0 technology, and delivering skills development as part of the programme.

As an innovative sector, **commercialisation is one of the skills lacking in many early-stage manufacturing businesses**. Understanding potential, writing growth cases, and knowing where and how to access financing is critical. The existing innovation ecosystem run out of the Higher Education institutions – including Royce Institute, NERIC, the GEIC, PrintCity, and ID Manchester – all support businesses to innovate to improve production and develop new products.

In-demand Occupations

While there is a sizeable concentration of other businesses in the city centre, manufacturing firms are spread across GM. Wigan, Rochdale, Stockport, and Tameside all have large numbers of manufacturing firms.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Manufacturing Machine Operator (485)
- Electrical Engineer (479)
- Mechanical Engineer (412)
- Production Worker (336)
- Facilities Engineer (250)

Skills Requirements

Entry level production roles have low requirements, but roles are generally unskilled and poorly paid.

- Clear lines of progression into Production Management roles.
- Some staff are supported on engineering training programmes if they want to develop – cross-skilling of mechanicall and electrical engineers is desirable.
- Series of qualifications for Continuous Improvement Engineers

In-demand skills include:

- Industrial electrical trades
- Green energy, lean manufacturing, sustainability
- Robotics and automation
- Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) software, digitalisation, electronics engineering technicians

Sector Insights – Financial, Business, and Professional Services

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

While many city regions have similar workforce profiles, **GM has a particularly high concentration of Financial & Professional Services workers** (20.4% vs. 16.5% in West Midlands, 16.6% in Liverpool). GM is seen as a centre of finance and professional services, though remains behind London in terms of workers and firms. Large concentrations of insurance, corporate finance, legal, and banking all drive the sector in GM.

ESG remained at the top of the agenda for many firms in Financial, Business, and Professional Services, with customers, clients, and supply chain partners increasingly using ESG criteria to make investment and strategic decisions.

Disruptors such as AI/ML will continue to revolutionise the industry. **Automation and digitalisation have become an everyday topic** within the talent and people agenda, as the share of roles that are becoming automatable increases. In the fringe areas of FinTech, this is shifting the required skillset in many areas of the sector. **The Financial Services Skills Commission estimates that 1 in 8 roles in the sector is now tech-related**.

The trends which started during the pandemic have persisted through 2023. **Many employers reacted quickly to working from home and have remained hybrid**. 77% of financial services firms reported a higher proportion of staff working from home in 2023 than the 12 months pre-pandemic – higher than all other sectors.

Almost a **third of employers across the FBPS sector are struggling to recruit** due to widespread skills shortages and fewer workers choosing the sector. There is a perception in the sector that it is "losing out" to digital employers who can offer higher wages for talented workers.

Apprenticeships are **increasingly welcomed as an entry route into the sector**. In more recent times this is being seen within the legal sector, a hugely positive shift. Degree apprenticeships as a route for upskilling are increasingly common, enabling employers to spend any accrued apprenticeship levy.

In-demand Occupations

Most roles in financial services like insurance, wealth management and private equity are advertised in the sector are in Manchester city centre, but each area of GM has some accountancy and legal firms.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Barrister / Solicitor (2,299)
- Bookkeeper / Accounting Clerk (1,451)
- Accountant (1,168)
- Project Manager (1,154)
- Financial Manager (908)

Skills Requirements

Progression within the sector is heavily linked to further accredited qualifications:

- Accountancy: ACCA, ACA, CIMA, CIPFA, CTA
- Financial Services: IOC, IMC, CII, CFA
- Law: LLB, LPC, CILEX

There is increasing emphasis on soft skills as well as technical skills required to work in the sector, in particular:

- Communication (strong oral and written)
- Teamwork
- Attention to detail
- Curiosity & commercial awareness
- Problem solving
- Analytical skills

Sector Insights – Digital/Tech

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

After a surge in demand over the course of the pandemic, demand in the sector is dropping. **Job adverts in digital roles peaked in May 2022 at just under 8,000 and have since dropped back in May 2024 to just over 2,000**. The GMLSIP update recognised this was not just GM – "this decline in the sector's vacancies is not unique to GM alone, but the same applies across the entire country". Despite this, Software Development roles remain the 4th most advertised job in the last 3 months.

Between May 2019 and May 2024, the number of IT & Computer Science roles advertised is 3% higher. Some of the largest growth in job adverts have been in Mobile Developers (up 554%), Multimedia Designers (up 433%), and Data Architects (up 300%).

GM Colleges have begun rolling out investment in Digital Skills provision off the back of the Local Skills Improvement Fund – including dozens of Cisco learning facilities, 100 new laptops, 90 Raspberry Pis, and CAVEs – virtual learning environment.

The need for digital experts to implement digital solutions in the public sector is rising – increasing digitisation of health service, emergency services, etc. all driving need for basic digital skills. Leadership & Management is a consistent gap amongst employers, linked to the speed of digital transformation in traditionally "non-digital" sectors.

Demand for some specific advanced digital skills increased into early 2024 – particularly "co-piloting" of AI development tools is seen as a key future skill for workers in the sector.

The Digital Youth Index outlines young people's aspirations in the digital sphere. **73% of young people see Digital Skills as essential for their future job/or career**, as well as 61% stating they would want to pursue a career that uses advanced digital skills.

Employers report **high levels of applicants for entry level positions** but can struggle to progress these workers further up. After 2-3 years of experience, staff often leave for higher paid positions elsewhere.

In-demand Occupations

Digital specialists needed in wider sectors include data analysis, digital marketing, digital finance, cyber and information security. Most roles are in Manchester and Salford, but many firms now need in-house digital experts.

Main roles in GM (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Software Developer / Engineer (1,874)
- Computer Support Specialist (705)
- IT Manager / Director (497)
- Computer Systems Engineer (434)
- Cyber / Information Security Engineer / Analyst (413)

Skills Requirements

Progression within the sector is often linked to improved technical skills, project management, and leadership opportunities. **Mid-senior digital specialists are hard to recruit**– experienced workers can access a huge range of well-paid opportunities.

Software Development roles usually require programming languages (SQL, Javascript, Python, C++) or familiarity with large suites of digital cloud infrastructure (Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services)

In-demand skills include:

- Communication
- Agile Methodology
- Problem-solving
- Automation
- Web Development

Sector Insights – Health and Social Care

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Health and Social Care remains the largest sector in GM by workforce and must continue to grow to keep up with increasing demand on services. **The sector directly employs over 200,000 people, nearly 1 in 6 in GM. Hundreds of thousands more residents take up roles as unpaid carers and volunteers.**

There are over 350 different job roles across HSC sector although it's felt that awareness of many of these is low. There have been well over 60,000 job vacancies posted in the sector over the last 12 months, with nursing, social workers, and carers featuring as the top advertised professions across most areas of GM.

The national NHS Workforce strategy, and the GM Integrated Care Partnership People and Culture Strategy both highlight the need to attract more staff and from a variety of routes, and there is ongoing **collaborative work between stakeholders to best strengthen technical routes and career pathways.**

The sector continues to face **huge challenges**. Services are often under relentless pressure. There are funding and staffing concerns across HSC, with many staff reporting feeling over worked. In addition to this, the NHS in GM was placed in Special Measures in April 2024, because of a £180m annual shortfall in funding.

In Primary Care, **community chemists are closing at an alarming rate** due to funding models which make it difficult for businesses to be sustainable. These have also reported finding it hard to recruit pharmacy technicians.

Current **GM Vacancy rate (unfilled positions in the workforce) is 7%** in healthcare. Nursing remains the most in-demand occupation with high turnover also evident.

There has been a worrying **decline in students applying for nursing courses** and Royal College of Nursing (RCN) analysis shows the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan is set be 10,000 new nurses behind target by 2025.

In-demand Occupations

Health and Social Care is the largest single workforce in GM – employing around 14-15% of workers. However, many settings have an ageing workforce with concerns about how some of this knowledge will be replaced. Social care worry about losing staff to other sectors or even the NHS where pay, terms and conditions are superior.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Registered General Nurse (1,480)
- Family / School / General Social Worker (1,019)
- Home Care Assistant (912)
- Residential Carer (751)
- Doctor (613)

Skills Requirements

Personal values are often more highly prized than skillset by employers – compassion / empathy / good communication skills / personal resilience. Values based recruitment is becoming popular for some roles

Public Health skills and preventative advice is needed in all roles – not just specialist ones – to reduce strain on the service.

990 different skills were requested in HSC job adverts in GM during 2023. Mental Health Awareness is important – it featured on 13% of all H&SC postings.

In-demand skills include:

- Mental Health awareness including dementia
- Basic clinical skills
- Personal care

Sector Insights – Education

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

The Education sector is a huge employer within Greater Manchester with around **120,000 people working directly in education**. It impacts on all our lives, and by equipping people with the skills to succeed, has a huge impact on the growth of our region.

In the past 12 months, 1 in 10 job roles advertised in GM were somewhere within the Education sector a total of 47,125 job adverts.

Over the past 5 years, **some areas of the sector are seeing much higher levels of demand than others**. Since June 2019, the number of job adverts for Drama Teachers is 18 times higher, the number of Music Teachers is 5 times higher, and PE Teachers is 3 times higher.

Teaching Assistant remains the most advertised role in GM in 8 out of our 10 localities. Its thought that turnover for this position is higher in secondary (rather than primary) education. Some of this has been suggested as an issue with training not always best preparing candidates for the workplace.

Attrition and staff turnover is also a concern within Early Years workplaces – a recent survey has suggested that 57% of nursery staff and 38% of childminders are considering leaving the sector in the next 12 months.

A recruitment and retention campaign is set to start in Summer 2024 which aims to change the perception of the sector. It is felt that there is a perception that many roles are just supervisory and not enough credit given to the positive start the workforce can make to somebody's life.

With early years, all localities are reporting a **shortage of Level 3 qualified staff,** with increased turnover in more experienced workforce . Thi is impacting on quality of provision and ability to identify and meet additional need. There is a **general lack of inclusive childcare provision** with settings increasingly refusing places to children with SEND and capping numbers (not operating at capacity) because of the level of child need.

In-demand Occupations

Within FE, those with industry knowledge – dual professionals – are hard to recruit and it can affect which subjects are being offered to students. Career leads have also proved difficult to recruit. Those able to teach STEM subjects and modern foreign languages are particularly in demand throughout schooling.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Teacher Assistant (3,017)
- Preschool / Childcare Teacher / Nursery Nurse (981)
- Primary School Teacher (974)
- Special Education Needs (SEN) Teacher (916)
- Tutor/Teacher (777)

Skills Requirements

Staff with industry skills and experience to be able to teach higher level qualifications are in very high demand in most education settings.

FE teaching roles do not require the same formal teaching qualifications as schoolteachers but sometimes do not have the same parity of pay either. Early Years Educators similarly see lower wages than schoolteachers.

Soft skills and a desire to help people are key in this sector.

In-demand skills include:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) awareness
- Mathematics
- Learner Support - particularly around mental health
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Careers leads

Sector Insights – Emergency Services

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Almost 20,000 people work for the GM emergency services. There is good awareness amongst young people about police officer, paramedic and firefighter roles and these score highly as popular career choices. There are clear pathways, well established technical routes and high numbers of applicants. A desire remains to make each service more representative of the communities they serve. **There is less awareness about other roles within the services.**

The emergency services still see difficulties due to **large increases in demand and an ageing population, a lack of funding, and widespread workforce shortages**. The services experiences higher levels of sickness absence than many sectors and staff are more likely to be physically assaulted or experience verbal abuse when working.

AI, data analytics, and the increased quality of video surveillance are all growing trends in the sector. With it, this brings an increased need for cybersecurity to work hand-in-hand with physical security. The National Police Chiefs' Council has published the National Policing Cyber Security Strategy setting out proposals to transform policing's resilience to cyber attack.

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service has 41 fire stations and the service employs thousands of personnel, of which 1,200 are frontline firefighters, and 403 non-uniformed support staff. Their role covers traffic accidents, fires, and rescue incidents like drowning. Traffic accidents tends to be the biggest area of incidents – at around 2,000 a year.

North West Ambulance Service serve more than seven million people across approximately 5,400 square miles. They receive approximately 1.3 million 999 calls and respond to over a million emergency incidents each year. They employ around 6,900 staff in over 300 different roles.

Greater Manchester Police is one of 43 forces in the country. Its PEEL report 2023-25 showed considerable improvement, despite lower levels of public trust, and increasing complexity of crime.

In-demand Occupations

Roles are concentrated around police stations, ambulance depts, and fire stations – Manchester, Salford, Stockport, and Bolton see higher demand than other areas. Private Security roles are largely concentrated in the city centre around venues.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Security Officer (335)
- Safety Manager (319)
- Safety Specialist / Coordinator (255)
- Dispatcher (55)
- Police Officer (54)

Skills Requirements

Primary front-line roles need exceptional people skills – empathy and compassion are critical for most of the duties performed on the front-line.

Digital skills both in using new equipment and in combatting different emergencies – as crime moves online, the need for cybercrime specialists is growing in most police forces across the UK.

In-demand skills include:

- Preventative measures
- Leadership skills
- Resilience
- Community engagement including BSL and other language skills;
- Health and wellbeing (including mental health expertise)
- Physical fitness

Sector Insights – Green Economy

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

The next Greater Manchester 5 Year Environment Plan is due to be released towards the end of 2024 – setting out more activity and strategy for reaching Net Zero goals. Among a wide range of activity, It will cover an expansion of renewable energy generation, additional retrofitting of residential and public buildings, and the implementation of the GM Integrated Water Management Plan.

GM is not on currently 2038 target to hit its "fair share" carbon emissions budget, but good progress is being made in most areas. **Since 2019, over 24,000 properties have improved their energy efficiency rating** from an EPC D to C+, and over 230 public buildings have been retrofitted with low carbon technology.

Employers are advertising more "green jobs" related to sustainability, environment, and low carbon transport / buildings. The number of green jobs advertised rose 3 times faster than the overall labour market.

Perceptions of careers in the Green Economy are generally outdated, with many still referring to environment-linked jobs as traditional "green" career pathways rather than the technical roles that will contribute most to the transition.

Across the Green Economy there are 5 key areas which will see a lot of change:

- **Buildings** – as gas is replaced with electricity, all buildings will need retrofitting to install insulation, power generation, and low-carbon heat.
- **Transport** – both public and private transport are becoming increasingly electrified, with the shift to electric cars and electrification of rail.
- **Energy** – with increased electrification, the power network will need additional upgrades and linkage with new renewables generation.
- **Waste and Recycling** – disposal, recycling, and reuse of materials and waste in an efficient and environmental way.
- **Natural Environment** – management of nature for net zero and biodiversity objectives will be increasingly important.

In-demand Occupations

Roles in the Green Economy are fairly well spread across GM – transport roles concentrate in the city centre but roles relating to buildings and energy are broadly distributed.

Main roles in GM (Mar – May 24):

- Sustainability Specialist (73)
- Environmental Planner (59)
- Safety Manager (43)
- Safety Specialist / Coordinator (27)
- Recycling/Sanitation Worker (19)

Skills Requirements

Skills needed for the Green Economy are broad. The size of sector will grow greatly as GM and wider UK moves towards Net Zero targets. Adoption of technology like low carbon heating and electric vehicles are already growing rapidly.

Innovation, digital skills, and creativity will drive adoption and optimisation of new technology. Various senior roles in many occupations and subsectors go unfilled, some skillsets are in very high demand.

In-demand skills include:

- Management
- Sales
- Project Management
- Carbon Literacy
- Construction trade skills are critical in several areas
- Natural environment – waste and water management