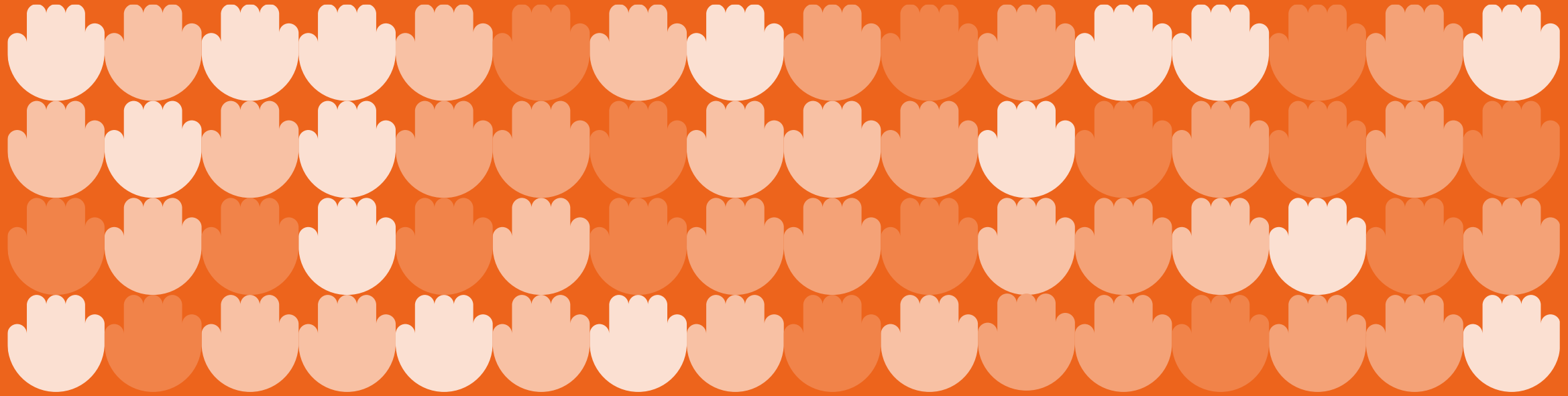
GREATER MANCHESTER

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR OUR WORKFORCE

GM Labour Market & Sector Insights Pack

Winter 2023

December 2023 – February 2024



Purpose of Pack

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

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

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 (19.5% 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 20%** (to approx. 89,000 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 1.36m out of approximately 2.87m. The remainder are under 16, unemployed, or economically inactive.

GM Workforce Overview

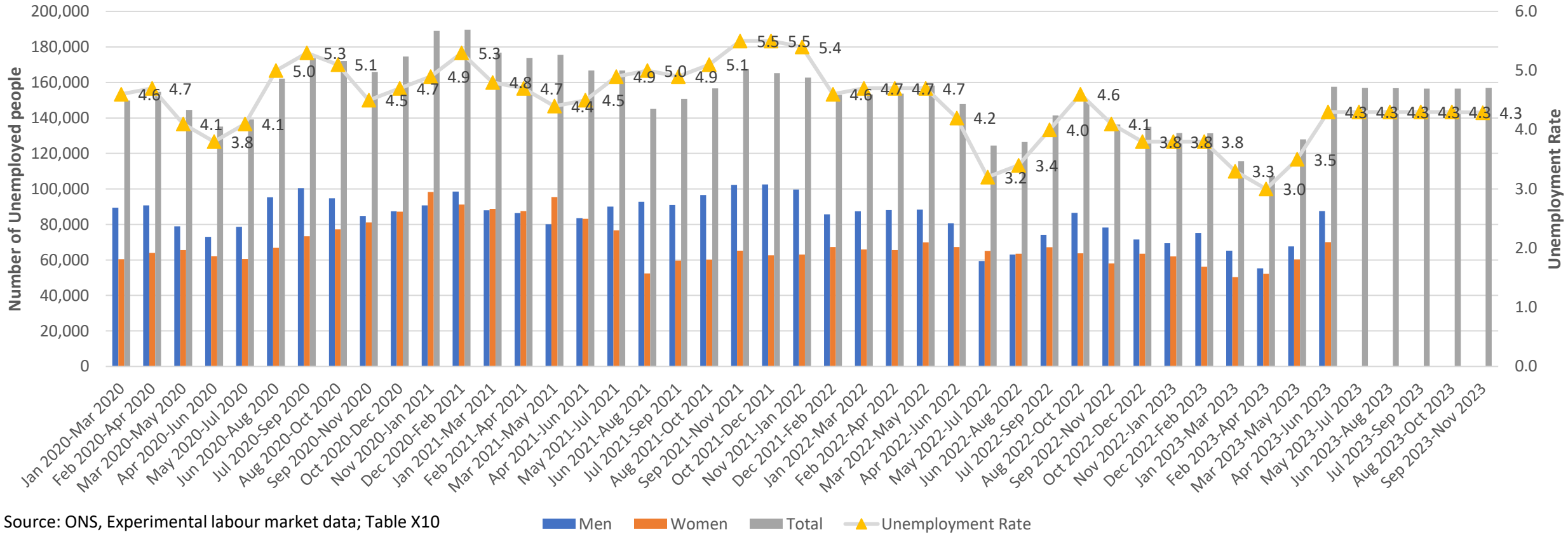
Industry (SIC)	Number of Jobs	Proportion (%) of jobs
A, Agriculture & fishing	3,400	0.3%
B,D,E Energy & water	12,900	0.9%
C Manufacturing	92,400	6.8%
F Construction	85,200	6.3%
G,I Wholesale, retail, hotels & restaurants	218,900	16.1%
H,J Transport, Digital & Communication	130,200	9.6%
K-N Banking, finance & insurance etc.	265,600	19.5%
O-Q Public admin, education & health	468,000	34.4%
R-U Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services	76,200	5.6%
Total	**1,361,900**	**100.0%**

Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS, September 2023

Unemployment

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Unemployment, number and rate (16+), North West (NW), Jan-Mar 2020 – Sep-Nov 2023*



Source: ONS, Experimental labour market data; Table X10

*The official unemployment rate uses data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This data source had been withdrawn temporarily due to concerns with accuracy, so this data has not changed for the recent November 2023 – January 2024 period. Normal data releases should resume in April.

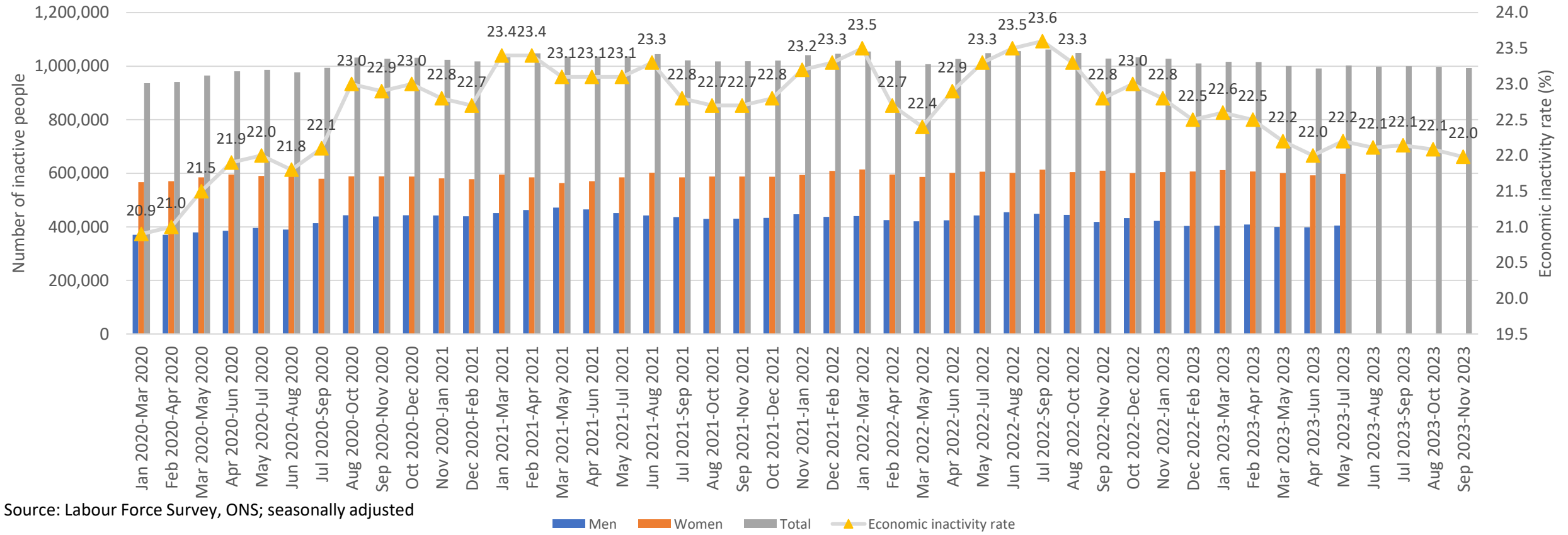
In the meantime, the Office for National Statistics has released 'experimental' data (up to the end of November 2023) on the labour market derived from tax records and benefits data. This is not as detailed as the LFS – gender breakdowns are not included.

For the latest period (between Sept – Nov 2023) the unemployment rate was steady at 4.3% in the North West of England (compared with 4.2% in the UK).

Economic Inactivity

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Economic inactivity number and rate (16-64), North West (NW), Jan-Mar 2020 – Sep-Nov 2023*



Source: Labour Force Survey, ONS; seasonally adjusted

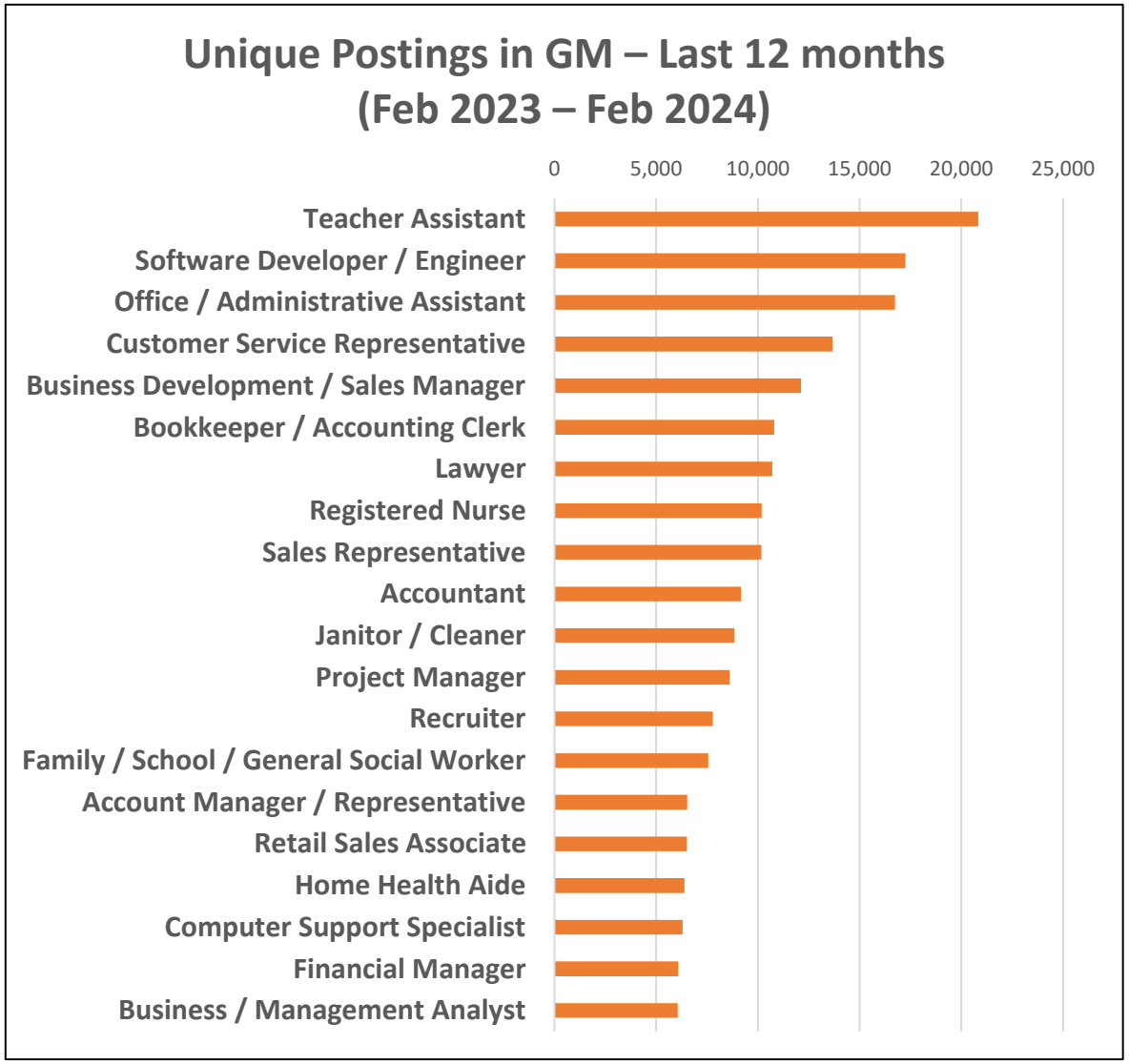
*The official inactivity rate uses data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This data source had been withdrawn temporarily due to concerns with accuracy, so this data has not changed for the recent November 2023 – January 2024 period. Normal data releases should resume in April.

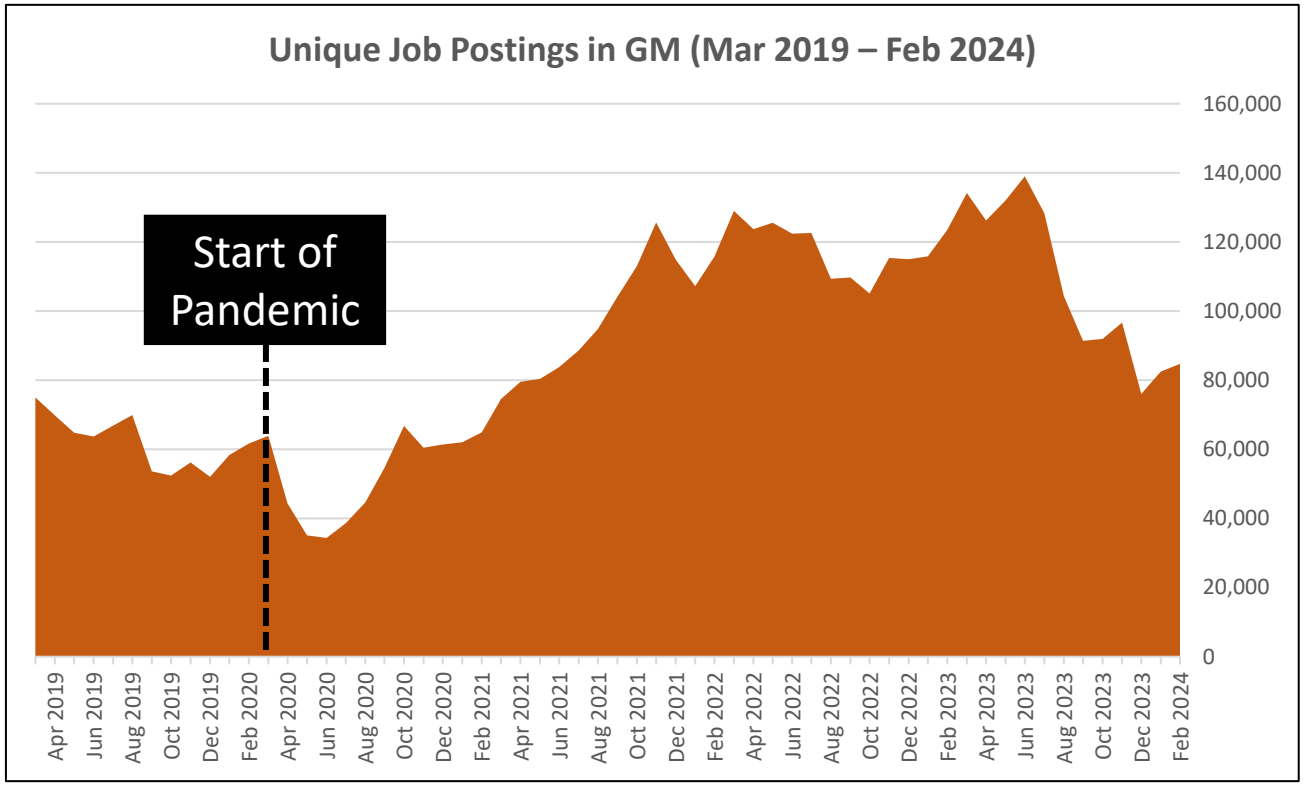
Economic inactivity refers to people who are not participating in the labour market: they are neither working nor seeking employment. The reasons for inactivity are varied, but the high levels are being driven by long-term ill-health among lower-paid workers and early retirement among higher-paid workers

There are around 70,000 more economically inactive people in the North West than before the pandemic.

GM Vacancy Market

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

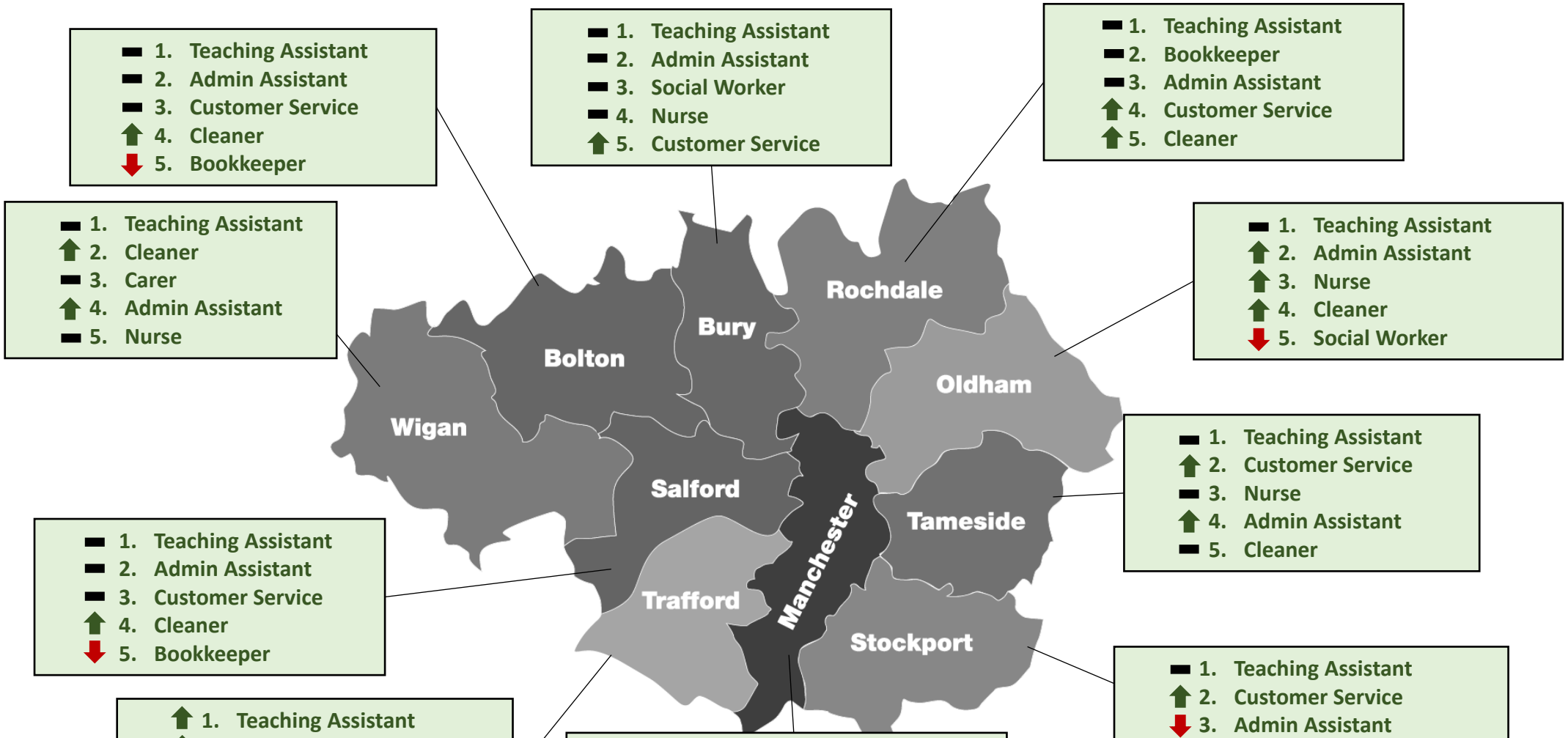




- Long-term decline in employer demand continued into early 2024 – hitting a low point in December at 76,000 vacancies advertised.
- Number of roles advertised approaching pre-pandemic levels, though bounced back in the first two months of 2024.
- Drops in digital demand have made Teaching Assistant the top advertised role over the 12 months to February 2024.

Source: Lightcast Data

GM in-demand occupations (Dec 2023 – Feb 2024)



Source: Lightcast Data

(Changes shown vs. previous 3 months)

GM in-demand common skills (Dec 2023 – Feb 2024)

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

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

Bury
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Teaching
4. Customer Service
5. Sales

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

Oldham
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Teaching
4. Customer Service
5. Sales

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

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

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

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

Stockport
1. Communication
2. Management
3. Customer Service
4. Teaching
5. Sales

Source: Lightcast Data

(Changes shown vs. previous 3 months)

GM in-demand specialist skills (Dec 2023 – Feb 2024)

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

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

- 1. Finance
- 2. Due Diligence
- 3. Invoicing
- 4. Auditing
- 5. Accounting

- 1. Auditing
- 2. Risk Management
- 3. Mental Health Awareness
- 4. Finance
- 5. Working with Children

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

- 1. Mental Health Awareness
- 2. Auditing
- 3. Nursing
- 4. Due Diligence
- 5. Effective Communication

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

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

- 1. Finance
- 2. Accounting
- 3. Due Diligence
- 4. Invoicing
- 5. Auditing

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

Source: Lightcast Data

(Changes shown vs. previous 3 months)

GM Occupation Clusters Vacancies (Dec 2023 – Feb 2024)

Source: Lightcast Data
(Changes shown within 3 months)

Education and Training ↑	11,702	10%	£29,760
Teaching Assistant	3,639	14%	£22,208
Childcare Teacher / Nursery Nurse	966	33%	£24,128
Primary School Teacher	841	34%	£35,712
Special Education Needs (SEN) Teacher	776	11%	£25,664
Tutor	632	-12%	£33,920
Supply Teacher	578	18%	£29,120
Secondary School Teacher (Other)	527	35%	£34,176
Headteacher	404	28%	£45,696
Science Teacher	389	-2%	£38,336
English / Language Arts Teacher	372	-11%	£38,272

Healthcare ↑	9,475	9%	£39,104
Registered General Nurse	1,613	-3%	£39,040
Home Care Assistant	1,114	-1%	£23,872
Nurse Practitioner	654	17%	£39,104
Doctor	610	16%	£110,016
Healthcare Administrator	525	28%	£40,128
Nursing Home / Health Administrator	454	6%	£39,104
Nursing Manager / Supervisor	315	-12%	£46,272
Occupational Therapist	303	4%	£39,040
Psychologist	268	-2%	£52,608
Mental Health Care Assistant	267	0%	£25,024

Finance ↑	9,302	18%	£32,960
Bookkeeper / Accounting Clerk	1,721	10%	£26,048
Accountant	1,508	16%	£39,040
Financial Manager	967	19%	£50,112
Credit Analyst / Authoriser	555	62%	£26,880
Treasurer / Controller	520	20%	£60,032
Financial Analyst	450	4%	£38,016
Payroll Specialist	394	20%	£27,968
Auditor	291	41%	£43,392
Risk Manager / Analyst	235	-5%	£42,624
Insurance Claims / Policy Clerk	224	-18%	£26,496

Sales ↓	9,301	20%	30,016
Business Development / Sales Manager	1,787	11%	£44,992
Sales Representative	1,533	17%	£27,968
Account Manager / Representative	1,025	16%	£32,384
Retail Sales Associate	949	24%	£24,640
Retail Store Manager / Supervisor	851	12%	£27,968
Account Executive	806	31%	£30,016
Sales Assistant	484	42%	£22,976
Merchandiser	467	41%	£25,792
Real Estate Agent / Broker	264	46%	£25,024
Stocking Clerk	213	25%	£27,072

Business Management and Ops ↓	8,806	19%	£32,448
Project Manager	1,257	24%	£50,112
Labourer / Warehouse Worker	847	42%	£23,872
Business / Management Analyst	785	8%	£35,712
Operations Manager / Supervisor	770	11%	£38,848
Contract Administrator	451	19%	£50,048
Procurement / Sourcing Manager	415	1%	£45,952
Property / Real Estate Manager	350	-7%	£31,104
Forklift / Pallet Jack Operator	344	76%	£24,960
Facilities Manager	341	4%	£31,360
General Manager	336	6%	£44,928

Information Technology ↓	7,660	11%	£44,992
Software Developer / Engineer	1,763	3%	£57,472
Computer Support Specialist	827	12%	£28,480
IT Manager / Director	473	16%	£50,048
IT and Computer Science	457	-16%	£38,784
Computer Systems Engineer / Architect	393	30%	£57,472
Web Developer	354	14%	£50,048
Cyber Security Engineer / Analyst	352	32%	£44,928
Technology Consultant	332	19%	£38,784
Network Engineer / Architect	272	18%	£47,488
Data / Data Mining Analyst	253	29%	£37,504

Hospitality, Food, and Tourism –	6,516	29%	£23,360
Janitor / Cleaner	1,578	26%	£22,720
Chef	616	9%	£26,688
Maid / Housekeeping Staff	440	-1%	£23,872
Restaurant / Food Service Manager	372	20%	£32,064
Fast Food / Counter Worker	325	95%	£22,336
Waiter / Waitress	314	96%	£21,696
Kitchen Staff	305	40%	£22,208
Bartender	282	113%	£20,864
Restaurant / Food Service Supervisor	234	24%	£24,384
Event Planner	219	28%	£26,688

Engineering –	5,883	-6%	£42,688
Mechanical Engineer	872	7%	£41,088
Electrical Engineer	629	-7%	£42,880
Land Surveyor	600	3%	£47,488
Civil Engineer	577	-16%	£47,552
Engineering Manager	433	22%	£52,416
Industrial Engineer	294	-21%	£42,624
Manufacturing Engineer	290	-27%	£42,624
Reservoir / Petroleum Engineer	285	-19%	£40,064
Chemical / Process Engineer	207	16%	£42,624
CAD Designer / Draughtsperson	184	-10%	£34,944

Clerical and Administrative –	4,674	31%	£25,024
Office / Administrative Assistant	2,593	35%	£24,512
Receptionist	640	39%	£22,848
Office Manager	425	43%	£26,048
Executive Assistant	174	2%	£31,488
Bill and Account Collector	150	-10%	£26,496
Administrative Manager	130	29%	£27,456
Billing Clerk / Specialist	111	18%	£25,472
Legal Secretary	105	-9%	£24,768
Postal Service / Mail Room Worker	66	32%	£23,936
Data Entry Clerk	58	158%	£20,992

Sector Insights – Construction

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Construction recruitment appears to be stabilising, with some employers being more cautious in recruiting, due to a slowing workload or the increased costs in the current economic climate. Many still need more workers to fulfil contracts or replace leavers and the lack of skilled workforce and difficulties in recruiting, is still a challenge.

Employers are reporting that the impact of theft on construction sites is a rising concern. Projects operate on tight deadlines and margins, so small incidents can have major impact. Costs of delays and tool replacements are impacting overall profitability.

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 an estimated 225,000 extra workers by 2027.

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 (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Estimator / Quantity Surveyor (935)
- Construction Manager (746)
- Surveyors (600)
- Electrician (588)
- Civil Engineer (237)

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

Maintenance of public transport infrastructure is a critical part of the growth of Greater Manchester. **The launch of the Bee Network in September 2023 (and expansion in March 2024) represented a new phase of public transport in the city region.**

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.

KeolisAmey Metrolink (KAM) was awarded a 3-year extension for the operation of the tram network in GM in January 2024. The network already serves 7 of the 10 GM Boroughs, with continuing exploration of new opportunities for new Metrolink connections, including testing the feasibility of tram-train on existing rail lines.

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 were up 9.5% year-on-year in January 2024. Around 28m people have used the airport in the past 12 months – 5m more than in 2022.

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 (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Automotive Service Technician (559)
- Heavy Equipment Mechanic (219)
- Diesel Mechanic (130)
- Van / Taxi / Shuttle Driver (126)
- Transportation Manager (118)

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

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.

2023 saw economic headwinds and a downturn in demand which has eased pressure on logistics recruitment across many roles. **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.

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.

Generation Logistics was launched in August 2022 in recognition of the fact that, despite the logistics sector's central importance to the UK economy, there was a broad lack of awareness of the scope and scale of the careers available within the industry. **Having recently secured an additional £300,000 from DfT following a successful first year, Generation Logistics** will now devote even greater attention towards raising the profile of logistics in schools, working closely with educators to drive a new generation of talented individuals to pursue rewarding career paths in the sector.

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 (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Warehouse Operative (847)
- Truck Driver (705)
- Forklift Operator (344)
- Delivery Driver (338)
- Operations Coordinator (326)

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

Greater Manchester has a proud history of creative industries, cultural developments, and sporting achievements. A small workforce of approximately 37,000 people make up the combined Creative, Culture, & Sport sector. **A large part of the GM economy is based around this sector. In addition to the income, it brings from tourists and visitors from home and overseas it offers employment opportunities for many people as part of an extensive supply chain**. In GM there are new venues like Co-op Live being built and further investments being made.

The central cluster 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 in these sectors like 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 (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Coach (318)
- Graphic Designer (200)
- Writer (154)
- Interpreter (145)
- Interior Designer (101)

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 Retail sector covers **all aspects of high-street and eCommerce shopping**. Workers in the sector ensure that shops, services, and online outlets run smoothly. **Nearly 1 in 6 workers in GM are employed in retail, wholesale, and hospitality** occupations – around 200,000 people.

More than **10,000 UK shops closed in 2023, with almost 120,000 retail jobs lost.** This has undoubtedly meant an exodus of skills from the sector and damage to the already poor perceptions around wages and stability.

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.

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 this year on top of the 530 that closed in 2023.

New immigration rules that will come into force in Spring 2024 will raise 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 new plans.** 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 (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Cleaner (1,578)
- Sales Representative (897)
- Retail Store Manager (851)
- Chef (616)
- Sales Assistant (447)

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 – Manufacturing

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Outlook across the wider Manufacturing sector remained fairly gloomy towards the end of 2023 and into early 2024. High supply chain and material costs, wage costs, and difficulties at the international level transporting goods in the Red Sea hit confidence.

Manufacturing 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.

Digitalisation, automation, and increasingly AI are disrupting some advanced manufacturing industries, as manufacturers look for ways to cut costs and raise efficiency.

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.

With Advanced Manufacturing identified in GM's Local Industrial Strategy as a key area of growth for the city region, technical skills development is critical. This includes the creation of an industrial cluster along the North East Growth Corridor – Atom Valley; and the foundation of Greater Manchester Graphene, Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Alliance (GAMMA).

Efforts continue to support the technical workforce in GM. 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. Rochdale's Advanced Machinery and Productivity Institute (AMPI) will include a strong skills element.

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.

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 (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Mechanical Engineer (872)
- Electrical Engineer (629)
- Machine Operator (575)
- Production Worker (468))
- Engineering Manager (419)

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 increasingly seen as a centre of finance and professional services, though remains well behind London in terms of workers and firms.

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 the last 12 months than the 12 months pre-pandemic – higher than all other sectors.

The emergence of FinTech in GM is accelerating, with inward investment from established firms in addition to local start-up organisations.

- 2023 saw dozens of new FBPS employers move to the city region, with Starling Bank, FinTech firm Rupee, and venture capital advisors KPMG Acceleris have all opened offices in GM the past year.

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 (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Lawyer (1,837)
- Bookkeeper (1,721)
- Accountant (1,508)
- Project Manager (1,254)
- Financial Manager (967)

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. **Vacancy numbers for digital occupations in GM peaked in April 2022 at 18,146 roles** advertised and has since dropped back, advertising just over 7,000 roles in January 2024. 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".

Between Jan 2020 and Dec 2023, the number of IT & Computer Science roles is -13% lower, compared with Transportation roles (+93% higher), Hospitality (+82% higher), Engineering (+62% higher).

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 over 2023 – increasing use of data analytic techniques, machine learning, and artificial intelligence will be more important for many businesses. 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.

Recognising the need for high-skilled workers and varied provision, the **National College for Digital Skills ADA opened a campus in GM in early 2024**, expanding their presence in the region for apprenticeship and FE delivery with the GM Institute of Technology.

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 (1,763)
- Computer Support Specialist (827)
- IT Manager (473)
- Mobile Applications Developer (457)
- Computer Systems Engineer (393)

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

Almost 200,000 people work in HSC positions across GM including for the NHS, in social care roles , and in Primary Care. Many volunteers also work in various roles across the sector. This is the largest the GM workforce has ever been.

There were **42,885 different GM job vacancies in HSC in 2023 (down from 46,879 in 2022)**. This means the sector accounted for around 8% of all job vacancies.

Pay, terms and conditions remain mixed and there is often a gravitational pull towards the NHS. Recent months have seen an increase in social care employers signing up for the Good Employment Charter in GM which should improve working conditions and pay in the sector, ensuring employers can attract staff.

Two key workforce documents for 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.**

To achieve the workforce needed, academic and technical pathways, as well as international recruitment and return-to-work initiatives are all important. There are many young people studying HSC qualifications at school and colleges and many of these do not go on to work in the sector. Many employers see it as too difficult to offer T Level or Apprenticeship placements and work experience due to staffing pressures, insurance, and patient confidentiality.

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. It is in top 5 most advertised positions for 8 out of 10 GM localities

Employers are increasingly deploying different recruitment strategies to attract staff – including open recruitment days, pre-employment programmes are being used in social care. There is a desire for positive role models across the system to help attract people from wider demographics.

In-demand Occupations

Health and Social Care is the largest single workforce in GM – employing around 13% of workers. There are over 350 different roles and MFT is our biggest employer with a workforce of around 30k. Manchester, Stockport, Bolton, and Salford see the biggest concentrations of demand, primarily around hospital and NHS trust sites.

Main roles in GM (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Registered Nurse (1,613)
- Residential Carer (1,114)
- Social Worker (1,039)
- Carer (793)
- Nurse Practitioner (654)

Skills Requirements

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

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 sector is a huge employer within Greater Manchester with around **120,000 people working directly in education**. GM has approximately 600 nurseries, 700 primary schools and 270 secondary schools. Of these 41 are independent schools. There are 10 Further Education colleges, 11 sixth form colleges, 5 universities, and over 50 work-based learning providers in the GMLPN.

In 2023, the education sector advertised the highest number of vacancies in the GM region – 53,085 jobs (around 10% of the total adverts), though the profile of demand remains fairly seasonal, linked closely to the academic year.

Attrition and staff turnover are 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.

Increased childcare entitlements kick in from April 2024, with 2-year-olds entitled to 15 free hours. This has already resulted in several impacts within GM:

- All localities reporting a **shortage of Level 3 qualified staff** with increased turnover in more experienced workforce which is impacting on quality of provision and ability to identify and meet additional need.
- **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.

Much of the Education workforce (especially within universities and secondary schools) are highly educated themselves. However, the childcare workforce is less qualified than both the teaching workforce and the general female workforce. Just over 25% of childcare workers held a degree as their highest qualification level. (vs. 92.8% of teaching workers).

GM's Universities have a rising ambition to play more of a "place-based" role – serving more local residents and businesses. They want to recruit more students from GM, partner with more businesses, and support more of the GM-level ecosystem like FE.

In-demand Occupations

Those able to teach STEM subjects and modern foreign languages are particularly in demand throughout schooling. 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,

Main roles in GM (Dec 23 – Feb 24)

- Teaching Assistant (3,639)
- Childcare Teacher (966)
- Primary School Teacher (841)
- SEN Teacher (776)
- Tutor/Teacher (632)

Skills Requirements

Education (including teaching) apprenticeships are an emerging pathway into the sector. 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
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Careers leads

Sector Insights – Emergency Services

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Sector Intelligence

Like many other sectors, technology is changing the way the emergency services and security professionals need to operate. 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 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. Additionally, the health complications of the pandemic are still playing out – 42% of GM residents who caught COVID still experience impacts.

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, technical routes and jobs tend to be competitive. Public support of the emergency services and confidence in their ability to respond can be volatile and affected by wider events which does have some impact on staff morale.

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 employ 13,184 members of staff. It has recruited over 1,100 new officers as part of its uplift target. 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.

Main roles in GM (Sept 23 – Nov 23):

- Security Officer (356)
- Police Officer (72)
- Correctional Officer (66)
- Safety Coordinator (63)
- Dispatcher (48)

Many positions are oversubscribed and can be extremely competitive

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

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.

2023 saw continued growth for GM's Green Economy, with government subsidies for a variety of green technologies. Many **green technologies are approaching mass-adoption stage**, including electric vehicles, low carbon heating technology, and renewable energy production. This will bring changes to the volume, make-up, and skill levels of hundreds of different occupations.

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.

Perceptions of careers in the Green Economy are outdated, with many still referring to environment-linked jobs as traditional "green" career pathways.

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 (Sept 23 – Nov 23):

- Sustainability Specialist (71)
- Environmental Planner (47)
- Safety Manager (36)
- Environmental Engineer (27)
- Recycling/Sanitation Worker (20)

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