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Landscape Workforce Research

Phase One: Landscape Economy Size and Composition Analysis

April 2026

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Introduction

From late 2024 to October 2025, the Landscape Institute (LI) commissioned Metro Dynamics (MD) to provide research and strategic support to understand the landscape sector, its workforce and skills demand. This research was carried out across two broad strands of research:

- **Phase One:** Delivered an updated analysis of the Landscape Sector, using the methodology developed by Metro Dynamics for the LI's 'State of the Sector' work in 2022, reported in *Skills for Greener Places*. This included updating all the secondary data from the 2022 work, demonstrating the size, scale and workforce composition of the landscape sector, and understanding the value of the broader built and natural environment.

- **Phase Two:** Delivered targeted research on higher education provision for Landscape Architects, to aid the LI in the design and development of policy and support for the skills development of the profession. This included the collection and analysis of data on the pool of students and graduates studying landscape architecture, as well as other courses that produce similar graduates. This work was followed by an assessment of job adverts to help early-career landscape architects understand the skills required by employers.

This document is the primary output of Phase One. It is split into two sections:

- The first section updates the secondary analysis from the 2022 study, *Skills for Greener Places,* utilising the same approach, definition and methodology as used previously to understand the broad landscape sector.

- The second section presents a further analysis of skills demand across the landscape sector, adopting the same definition to understand correlating job adverts for landscape occupations and the extent of skill gaps for vacancies.

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Key findings

How has the landscape sector, its size, composition and skills demand changed since the 2022 *Skills for Greener Places* report?

The landscape sector is growing: Headline figures show increases across the board, with employment, businesses, GVA and earnings all rising since the 2022 data. Value figures such as GVA and median annual earnings show the strongest increases. Whilst growth is happening across all sub-sectors, the rates of growth vary across different activities in the sector.

The 'professions' sub-sectors perform differently from the 'build' sub-sector: Whilst the build sub-sector is strong in volume, it is relatively weaker in productivity compared to the 'professions'. The latter have a different workforce composition in terms of age and qualifications and are experiencing greater issues in recruitment, particularly related to skills shortages.

High relative concentrations in Scotland and the wider South East: Mapping shows significant geographical variations in employment in the landscape sector. In absolute terms, employment is higher in urban areas, following a similar trend to total employment. However, when exploring relative concentrations of landscape employment, more rural areas in Scotland and the South of England show areas in which landscape employment accounts for a large share of total employment.

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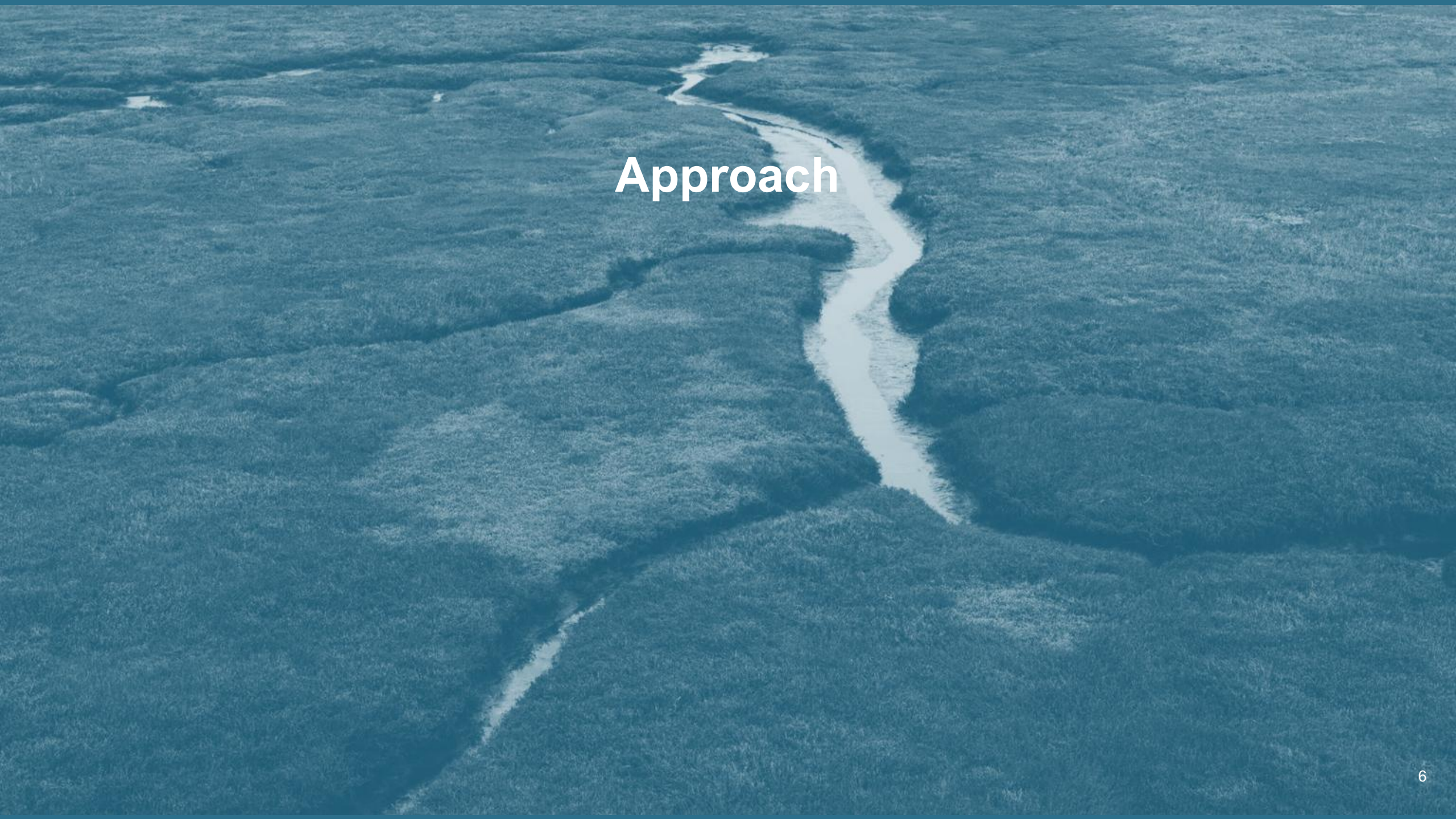
Key findings (cont.)

How has the landscape sector, its size, composition and skills demand changed since the 2022 *Skills for Greener Places* report?

Significant sub-sector variations in value and composition: Sub-sectors are not equal in size, with design and build topping metrics like employment, business numbers and GVA. In terms of value per worker, Build and Management and Maintenance occupations are less productive. This is reflected in lower median earnings than other landscape sub-sectors such as Research, education and training. Workforce compositions also vary, with Build and Management occupations often held by those aged 55 and over. This contrasts with Planning, Conservation and Research where a substantial share of workers are under 35. Workers in the latter occupations are also significantly more likely to have achieved a degree-level qualification than workers in Build or Management landscape sub-sectors.

High job vacancies, with hard-to-fill roles driven by skills shortages: Job adverts in the landscape sector have declined in recent years following a post-COVID boost; in particular, Design and Management and Maintenance have seen a sustained drop in job postings. As a share of total employment, there are higher vacancy figures in the landscape sector than across all sectors, especially in Conservation.

A lot of vacancies are reported as hard-to-fill, with skills shortages being the main driver. This is particularly significant in Conservation, Design, Planning and Management occupations. Overall, 4 in 5 hard to fill landscape vacancies are due to skills shortages.



Approach

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The landscape sector

This report updates the secondary analysis undertaken as part of the 2022 *Skills for Greener Places* report. It adopts the same defined areas for the landscape sector: Planning, Design, Build, Management and Conservation of spaces. These activities are critically linked to investment and Research, education and policy.

The approach to understanding the landscape sector follows the method used in the 2022 study. The first step was to work with partners to develop a framework for segmenting the different types of occupational activity (above) that are typically considered as part of the landscape sector. Through discussion, this long-list was distilled to a set of core activities which were aligned to the definitions available in the Standard Occupation Classifications (SOCs).

Using these definitions secondary data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) was collated and analysed to estimate the economic size of the sector, including jobs, businesses, GVA and earnings. This provided a means of maintaining a regular set of data on the size and scope of the sector in Great Britain.

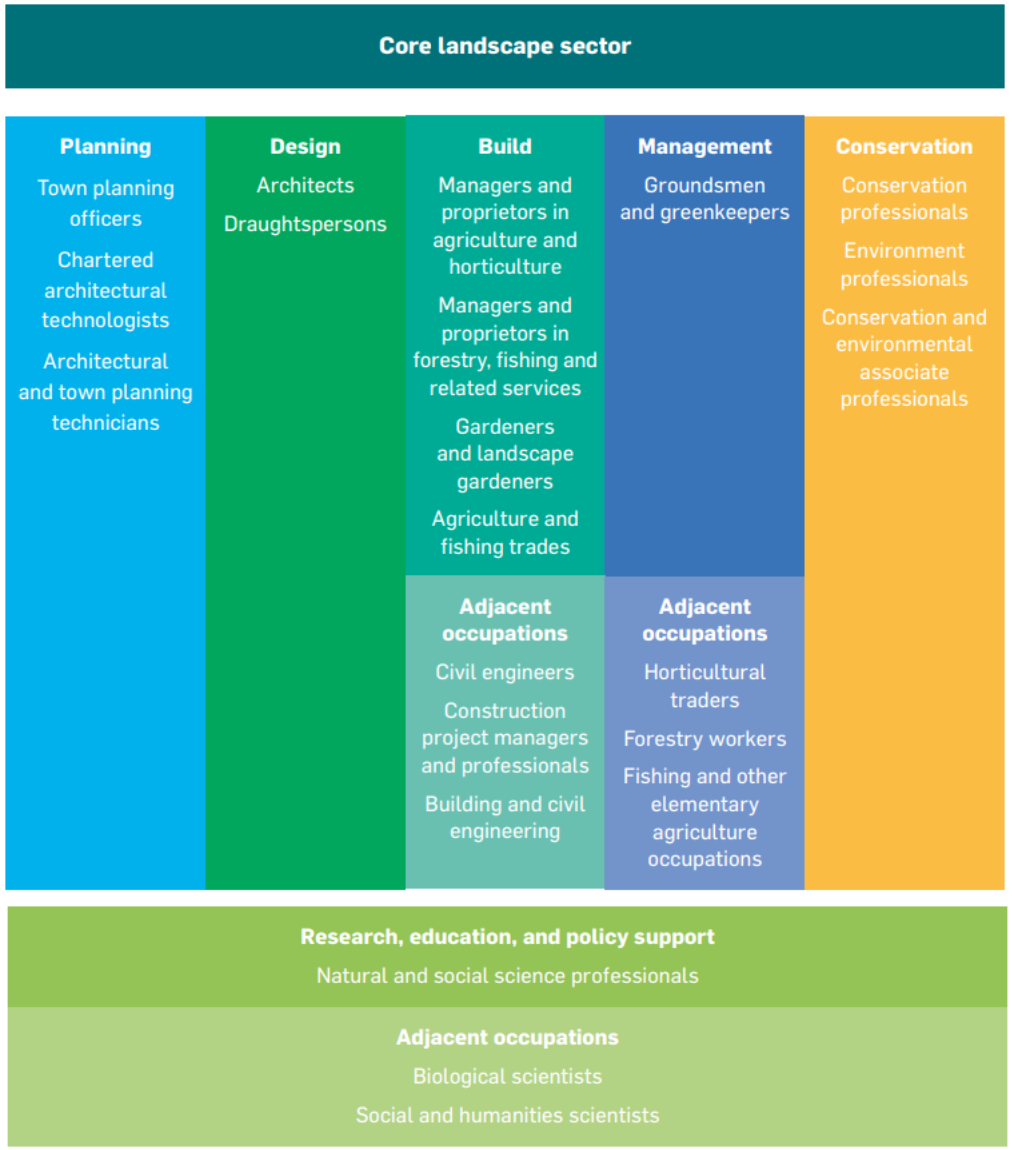

Table from the 2022 Skills for Greener Places Report

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Sector and Sub-Sector Definitions used in 2022

The approach to measuring the Landscape sector relies on using Standard Occupation Classifications (SOC) alongside Standard Industry Classifications (SIC). By breaking down the relationships between core industries and roles, the most accurate picture of the sector can be created. The ONS updated the SOC/SIC codes between the original 2022 and the later 2024 study. To ensure the most accurate, consistent and comparable analysis, there was engagement with the ONS to obtain a consistent SOC/SIC matrix that reflects the occupational classification changes. The 2020 SOC codes feature on the next page.

SOC 2010 codes	Conditionality
1211 Managers and proprietors in agriculture and horticulture	Include only 8130: Landscape service activities
1213 Managers and proprietors in forestry, fishing, and related services	Include only 8130: Landscape service activities
2119 Natural and social science professionals n.e.c.	Include 9412: Activities of professional membership organisations, 8411: General public administration activities and 7219: Other research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering.
2141 Conservation professionals	Include all.
2142 Environment professionals	Include all.
2431 Architects	Include all.
2432 Town planning officers	Include all.
2435 Chartered architectural technologists	Include all.
3121 Architectural and town planning technicians	Include all.
3122 Draughtspersons	Include all.
3550 Conservation and environmental associate professionals	Include all.
5113 Gardeners and landscape gardeners	Include all.
5114 Groundsmen and greenkeepers	Include all.
5119 Agricultural and fishing trades n.e.c.	Exclude 0220: Logging, 0311: Marine Fishing and 9319: Other sports activities

Sub-sector	SOC 2010 codes
Build	1211 Managers and proprietors in agriculture and horticulture
	1213 Managers and proprietors in forestry, fishing and related services
	5113 Gardeners and landscape gardeners
	5119 Agricultural and fishing trades n.e.c.
Conservation	2141 Conservation professionals
	2142 Environment professionals
	3550 Conservation and environmental associate professionals
Design	2431 Architects
	3122 Draughtspersons
Management	5114 Groundsmen and greenkeepers
Planning	2432 Town planning officers
	2435 Chartered architectural technologists
	3121 Architectural and town planning technicians
Research, education and training	2119 Natural and social science professionals n.e.c.

New sector and sub-sector definitions (SOC2020)

The updated SOC list is shown below, with an addition marked in yellow (a broader, unspecified sub-code within the Research, education and training sub-sector). Conversely, the Planning and Conservation sub-sectors have been condensed into fewer codes. As with any survey-based data, there is natural variation from year to year based on respondent behaviour. However, variations caused by categorisation have been minimised by using a consistent matrix of SIC (Industry) and SOC (Occupation) codes across all years in the study. This enables comparisons to be drawn with the 2022 study results, providing a methodology that continues to recognise the spread of Landscape skills across the economy. Figures previously used have been revised with the newest categorisations to reflect meaningful change across the period, as opposed to change influenced by data revisions.

SOC 2020 codes	Conditionality
1211 Managers and proprietors in agriculture and horticulture	Include only 8130: Landscape service activities
1212 Managers and proprietors in forestry, fishing and related se	Include only 8130: Landscape service activities
2119 Natural and social science professionals n.e.c.	Include 9412: Activities of professional membership organisations, 8411: General public administration activities, and 7219: Other research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering.
2151 Conservation professionals	Include all
2152 Environment professionals	Include all
2162 Other researchers, unspecified discipline	Include 9412: Activities of professional membership organisations, 8411: General public administration activities, and 7219: Other research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering.
2451 Architects	Include all
2452 Chartered architectural technologists, planning officers and consultants	Include all
3120 CAD, drawing and architectural technicians	Include all
5113 Gardeners and landscape gardeners	Include all
5114 Groundsmen and greenkeepers	Include all
5119 Agricultural and fishing trades n.e.c.	Exclude 0220: Logging, 0311: Marine Fishing and 9319: Other sports activities

Sub-sector	SOC2020 codes
Build	1211 Managers and proprietors in agriculture and horticulture
	1212 Managers and proprietors in forestry, fishing and related se
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	5119 Agricultural and fishing trades n.e.c.
Conservation	2151 Conservation professionals
	2152 Environment professionals
Design	2451 Architects
	3120 CAD, drawing and architectural technicians
Management and Maintenance	5114 Groundsmen and greenkeepers
Planning	2452 Chartered architectural technologists, planning officers and consultants
Research, education and training	2119 Natural and social science professionals n.e.c.
	2162 Other researchers, unspecified discipline

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Summary of data approach

This report updates the secondary analysis from the 2022 *Skills for Greener Places* report. The analysis uses a variety of publicly available sources to understand the size and shape of the landscape sector. The 2022 study also included an online survey of people working across the sector, which wasn't repeated in the updated study.

Secondary economic analysis – updated 2025

- GVA (£bn)
- Employment
- Total businesses
- Average earnings
- The above, by sub-sector
- Regional and sub-regional variation
- Business size band by sub-sector
- Workforce distribution by sub-sector and age
- Qualification attainment of the workforce
- Annual salary by sub-sector

2022 Landscape Skills and Workforce Survey

- Working across sub-sectors (no. of cross-cutting sub-sectors and specific combinations)
- Primary source of income for all landscape businesses (client types)
- Businesses by sub-sector and turnover
- Key business challenges (inc. by rural and urban locations)
- Workforce distribution by sub-sector and ethnicity
- % of businesses with hard-to-fill vacancy
- Training intentions by job role
- Current and future apprenticeship hiring intentions across the sector and by employment size
- Landscape gender wage gap
- Drivers of change

Updating the 2022 workforce study

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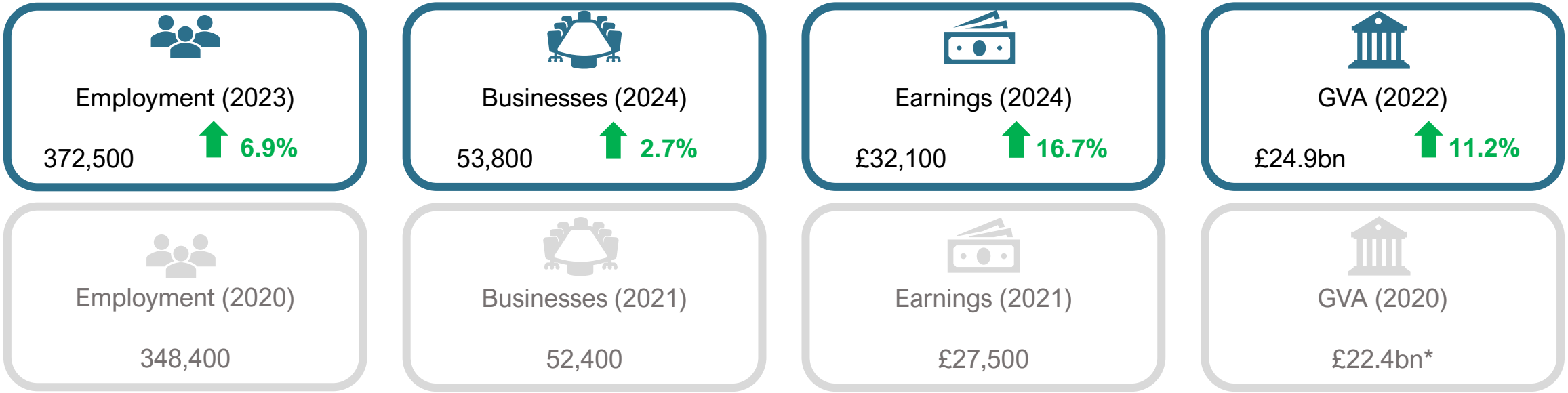
Headline figures

The updated figures show an encouraging trend of growth across core metrics. Employment is increasing, driven by a growing number of businesses, with earnings also rising, but notably from a low base.

Based on the methodological changes outlined, the figures calculated in the 2022 report have been revised to track actual change, rather than change influenced by data revisions. The figures below show the total employment, business numbers, GVA, and median earnings for the most recent year for which data was available at the time of collection, compared to the revised figures from the previous report. Collection dates range from 2022 to 2024, dependent on the most recent year published for each indicator. The headline findings show a positive trend in the landscape sector, with growth across all metrics. In particular, the value of the sector has shown strong growth with GVA contributions increasing by 11.2%. This is similarly reflected in an increase in earnings of 16.7% over three years. Employment has increased by 6.9%, and business numbers by 2.7%.



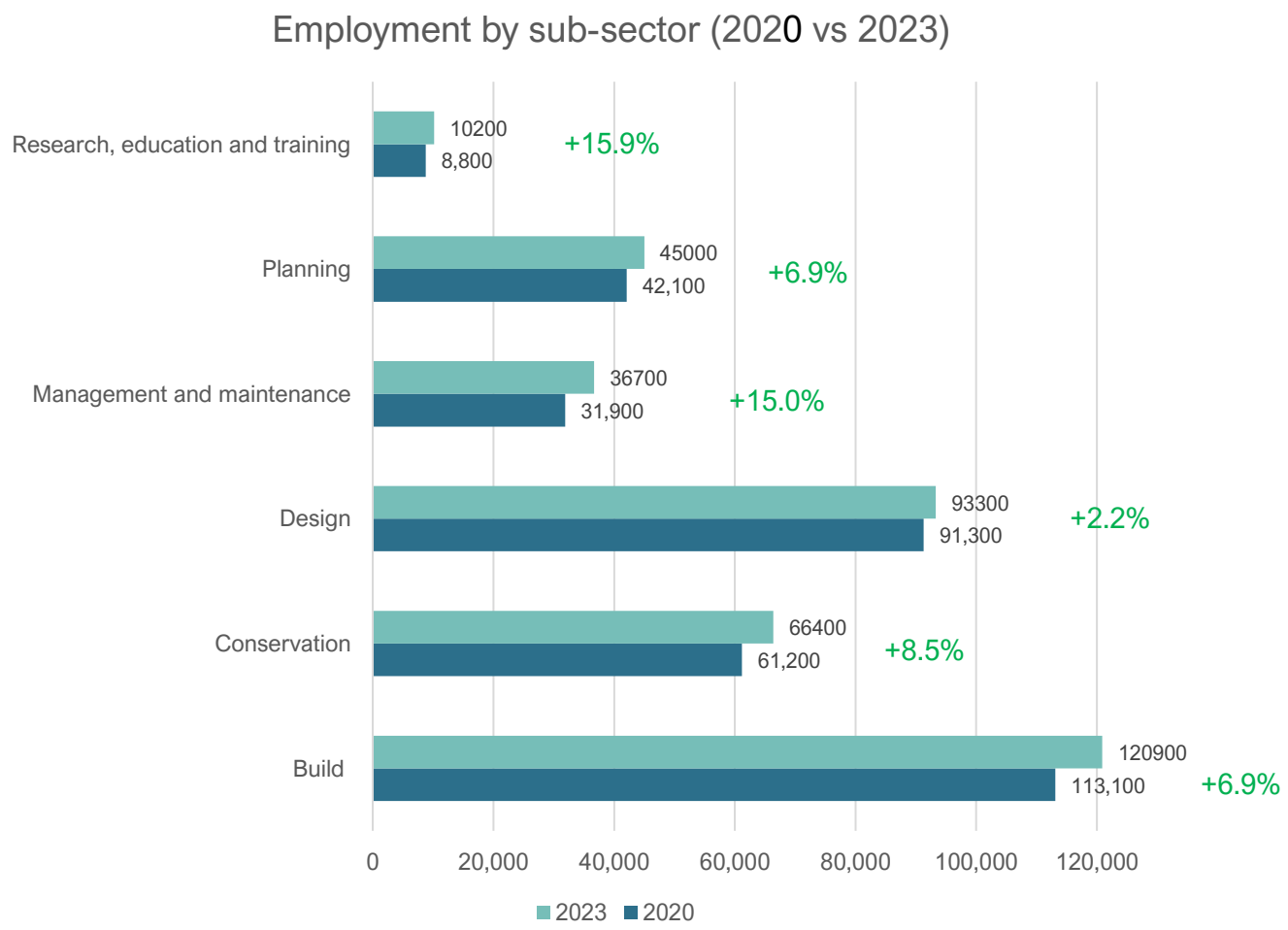
Employment by sub-sector

Employment growth can be seen in each landscape sub-sector, with significant percentage increases in Research and Management and Maintenance.

This chart compares employment in each landscape sub-sector between 2020 and 2023.

Although each landscape sub-sector grew, the rate varied significantly. Build remains the largest employment sector, with an increase of 7,800 (6.9%) over the three years. Conservation saw the second highest increase in employment numbers: 5,200, a rise of 8.5%.

The sub-sectors with the strongest relative growth were Management and Research (15% and 16% respectively), though the latter was from a smaller base. Design saw a more modest growth of 2.2% across the period.



Source: ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2023.

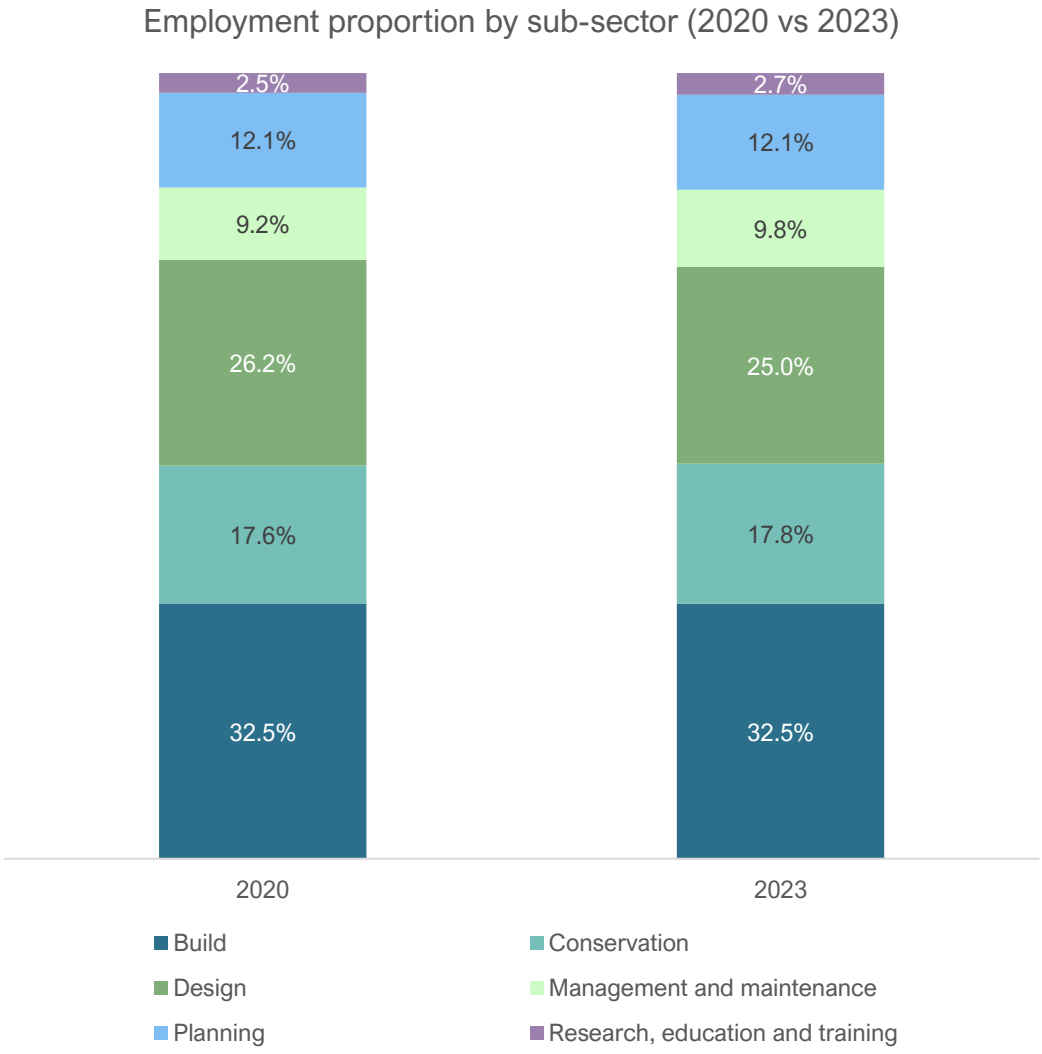
Minimal change to sub-sector composition

Sector composition remains largely unchanged, with design experiencing slight declines in its overall share of landscape employment.

This chart compares the proportional distribution of employment across the sub-sectors in 2020 and 2023.

Overall, the employment composition remained broadly stable across the period. Build remains the largest sub-sector, accounting for 32.5% of total employment.

Amongst smaller sub-sectors, percentage-wise, much of the positive shift occurred in Management. Conservation and Research also saw modest increases in their employment shares. Design differed, registering a notable 1.2% decline in employment proportions, down from 26.2% to 25.0%.



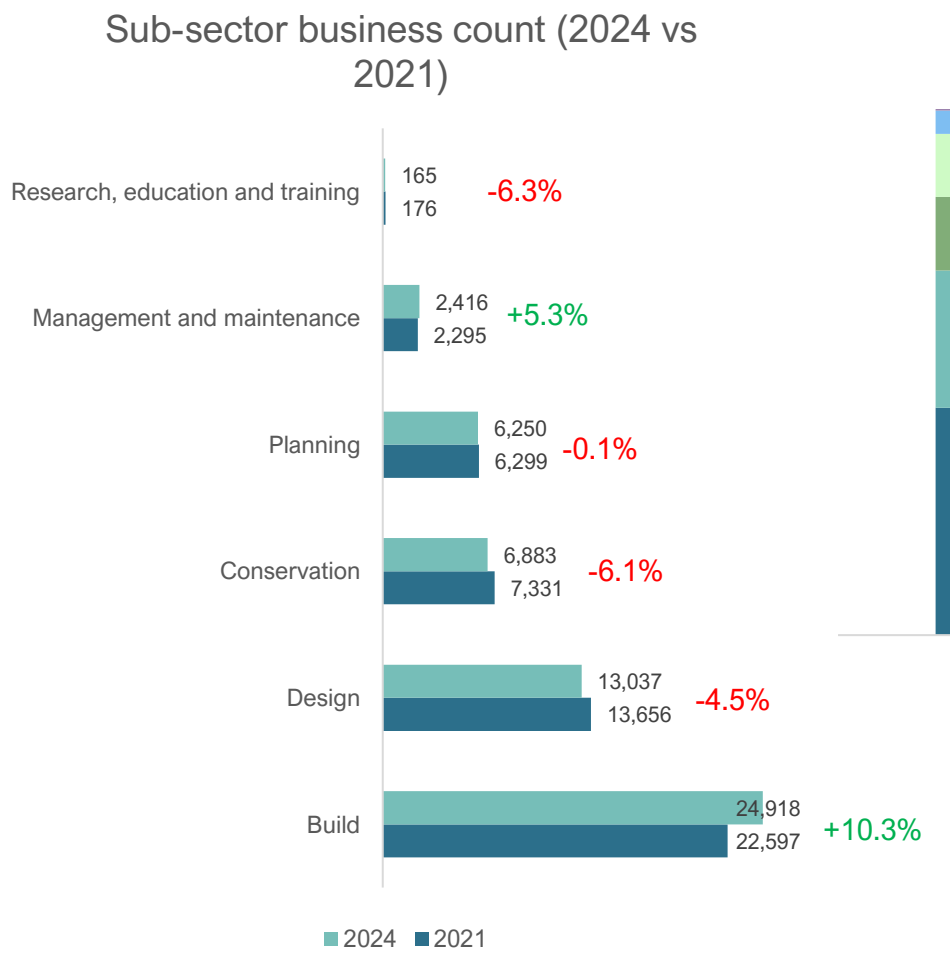
Source: ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2023.

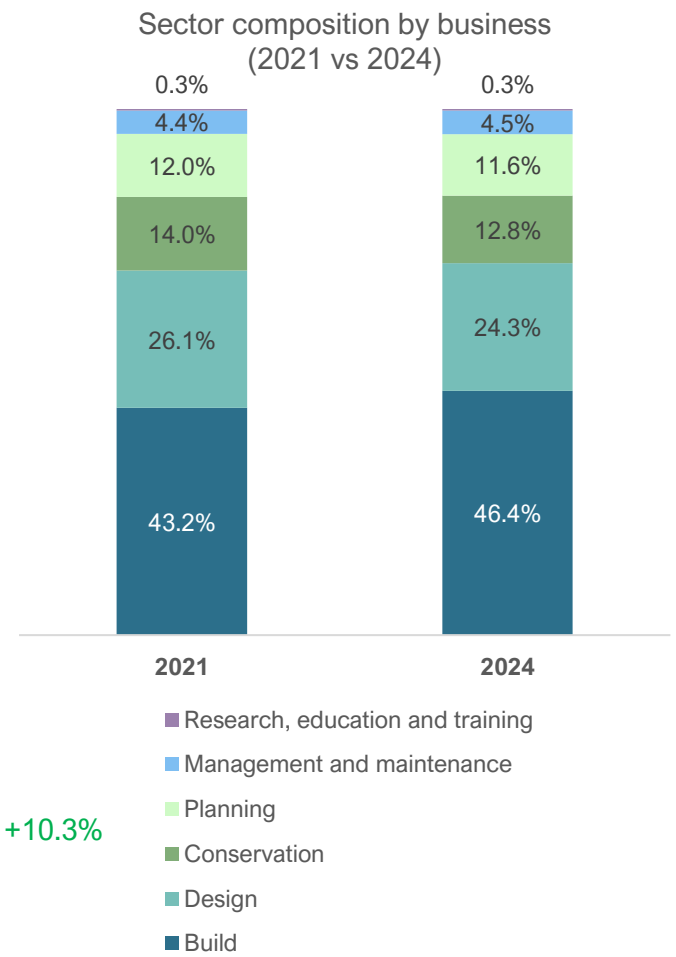
The Build sub-sector is driving business growth

Business numbers increased by 2.7% overall, driven in particular by Build. Most other sub-sectors saw business counts fall.

The first chart on the right displays the number of businesses in each sub-sector and changes between 2021 and 2024. The second chart illustrates the change in business percentages by sector over the two years.

The overall composition of businesses remains broadly unchanged in the period. Composition has changed more than employment, with growth rates varying significantly between sub-sectors. The largest sub-sector, Build, also saw the largest growth (more than 10% i.e. over 2,300 new businesses). The only other sector to grow was Management, with a 5% increase. The largest declines were in Research and Conservation. The second chart reflects these changes, showing an increase in the total share of Build businesses, and declines elsewhere.





Source: ONS, UK Business Counts, 2024.

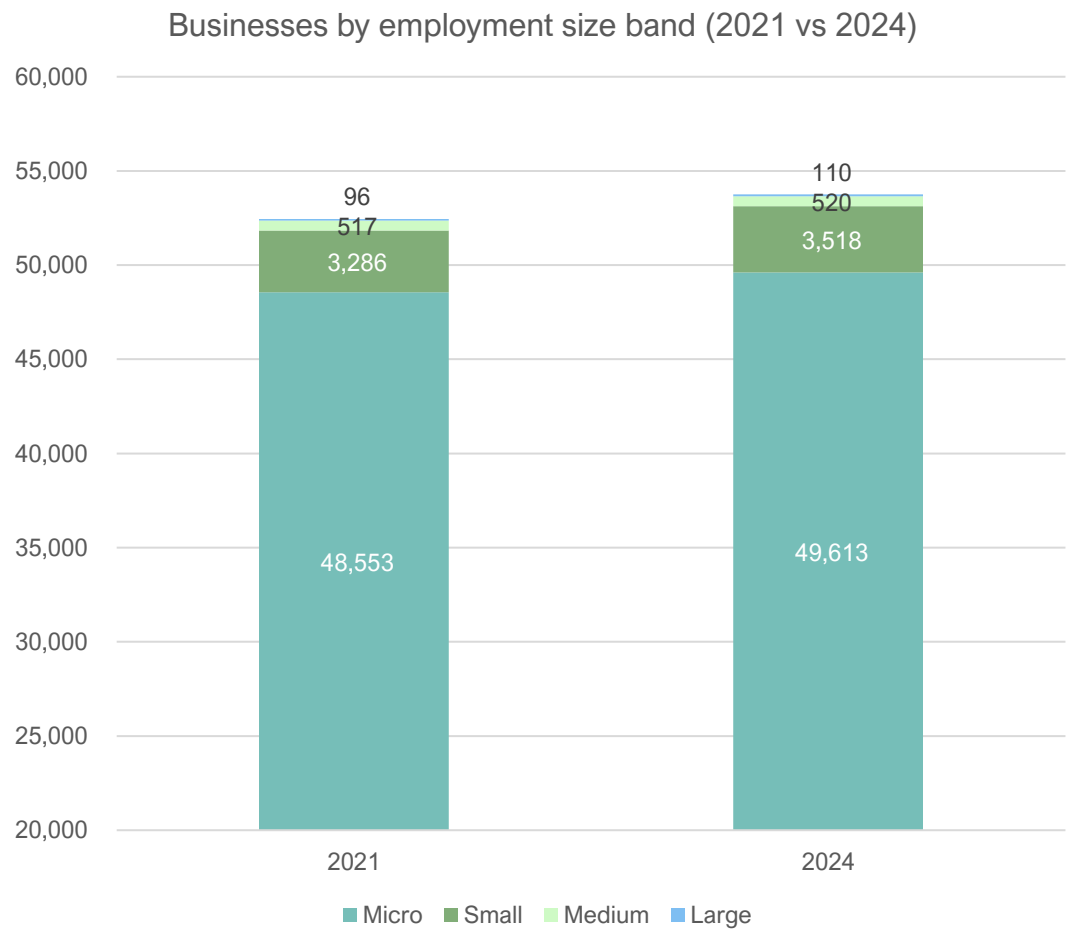
No significant change to breakdown of business size

The composition of businesses by size has broadly remained the same across the period, with higher percentage increases in the number of small and large businesses, compared with micro and medium-sized ones.

This chart shows the number of landscape businesses in each size band. Micro businesses have fewer than 10 employees; small businesses have10-49 employees, medium businesses employ 50 to 249 staff, and large businesses employ over 250 people.

Over 92% of businesses in the Landscape sector are micro businesses. This is marginally above the UK average (~90%) and is a factor that must be considered by the industry when shaping entry routes and professional development. In contrast, only 1.2% of businesses in the sector are classified as medium or large.

Increases in business numbers since 2021 have been in line with the previous split of employment band sizes – i.e. a modest increase in large and medium enterprises and a greater increase (in absolute terms) in micro and small businesses entering the sector. In particular, the number of small businesses grew by 7.1% between over the period.



Source: ONS, UK Business Counts, 2024.

Design has the largest GVA output

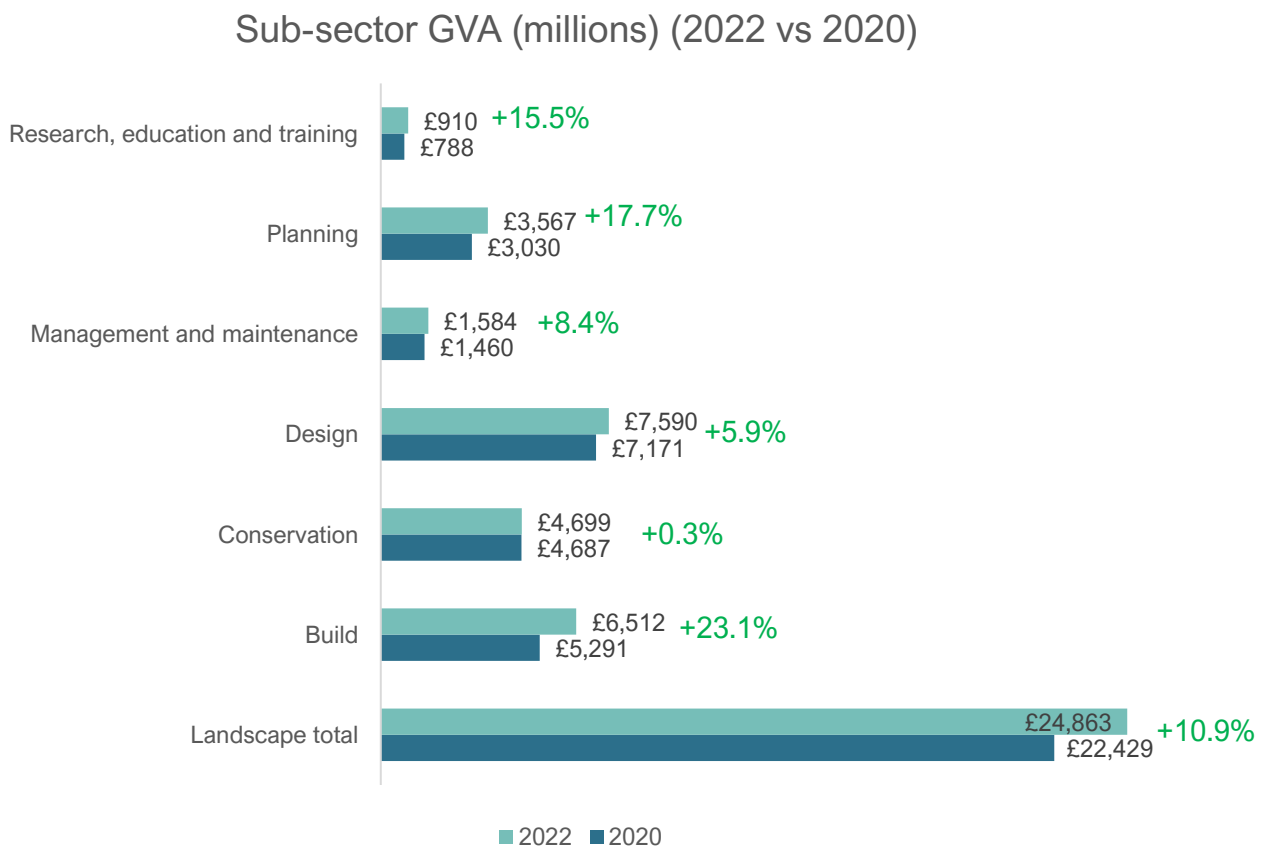
Design continues to have the highest overall GVA of any sub-sector; Build also has high GVA contributions and is growing the fastest of any sub-sector.

This chart shows the total GVA of the landscape sector and its sub-sectors between 2020 and 2022.

The GVA contribution of the sector increased by £2.4 billion, with all sub-sectors experiencing a GVA increase, albeit at varying rates.

As per employment statistics, Build saw the largest overall GVA increase, with a growth of £1.2 billion for the UK economy. Build also had the highest percentage growth among all sub-sectors (23%). However, unlike employment and business numbers, overall Build GVA is smaller than Design, demonstrating a lower productivity rate per worker.

Other sub-sectors with strong GVA growth rates, though from a smaller base, were Planning (17.7%) and Research (15.5%). In contrast, the Conservation GVA increase was just 0.3%, which is significantly lower than its employment growth. This suggests a decline in productivity.



Source: ONS, Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: all ITL regions, 2024; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 14, 2024.

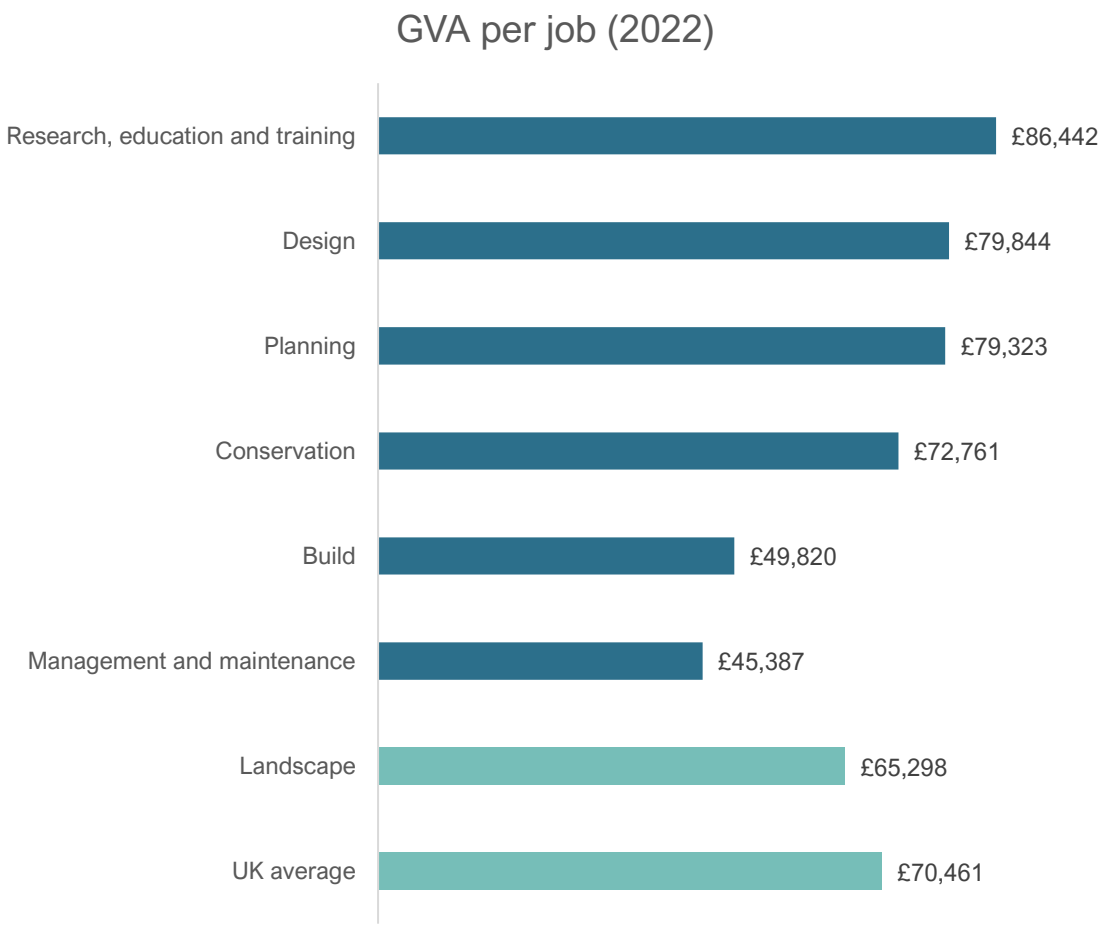
‘Profession’ sub-sectors are highly productive

‘Profession’ sub-sectors have high productivity rates though, overall, the average landscape GVA per job is lower than the UK average.

Productivity can be determined by the GVA per job. The chart shows the productivity of each sub-sector, benchmarked against the sector total and UK average productivity.

Overall, landscape GVA contribution per worker is over £5,000 lower than the average UK worker. This is due to the significantly lower GVA of Build and Management (both under £50,000). It is especially influenced by the large proportion of Build landscape workers.

Research, Design, Planning and Conservation occupations are all large GVA generators, with Research contributing nearly double the GVA of a Management worker.



Source: ONS, Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: all ITL regions, 2024; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 14, 2024.

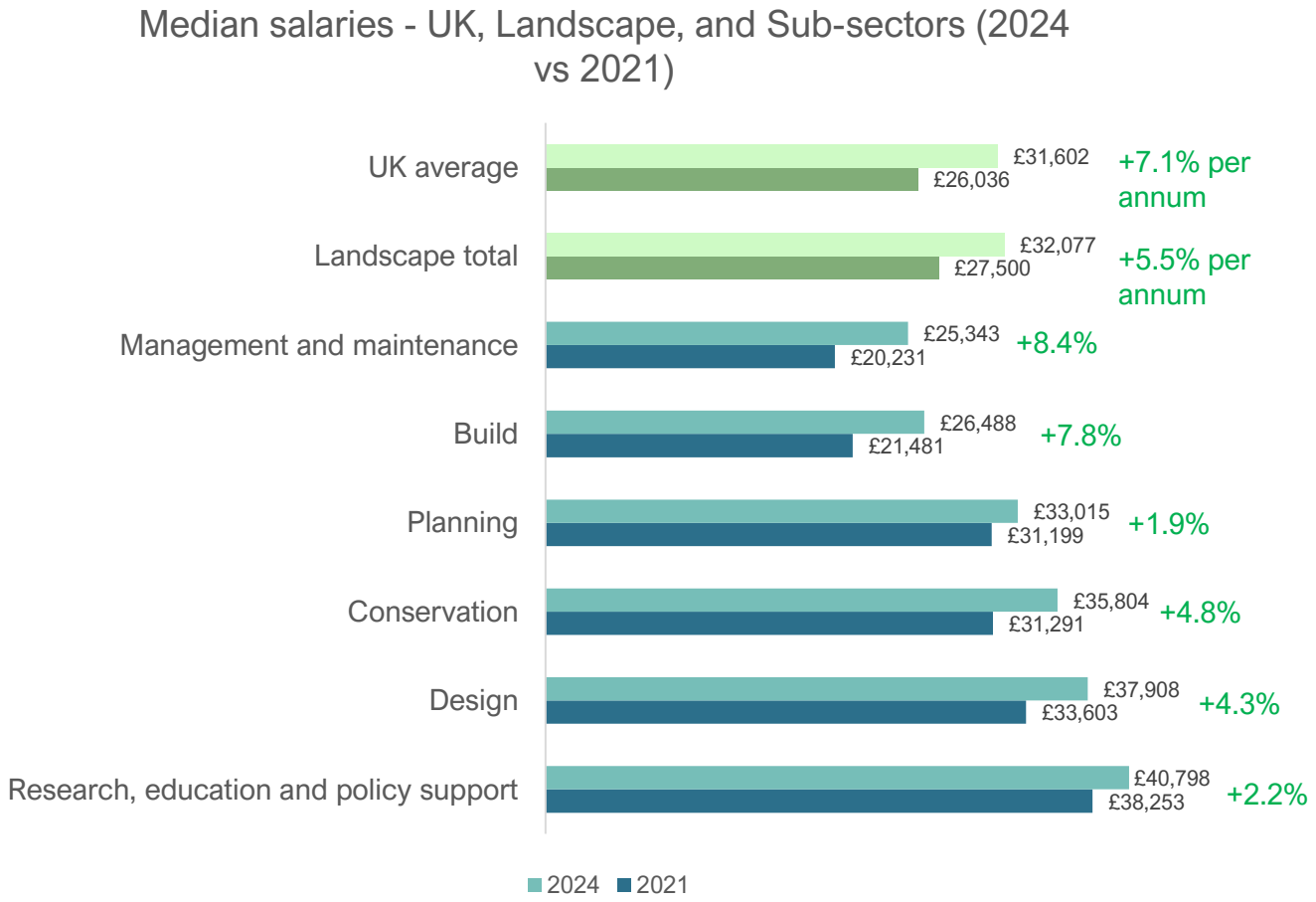
Landscape workers earn slightly more than UK average

Median annual earnings in landscape are slightly higher than UK averages, but have seen slower growth in recent years. High earning sub-sectors align with the most productive areas.

This chart shows the median salaries earned in 2021 and 2024 by each sub-sector, benchmarked against the landscape total and UK average. It also shows the per annum percentage growth in earnings over the period.

The most productive sectors in terms of GVA (such as Design or Research) also attract the highest median salaries. The ranking of sub-sector earnings and productivity correlate, with the exception of Conservation which increased its median earnings relative to Planning.

However, landscape median earnings as a whole grew at a slower rate (5.5% pa) than nationally (7.1% pa), over the period. Management and Build saw the largest annual growth at 8.4% and 7.8% respectively (though from a lower absolute base), whilst the highest paid sub-sector, Research, saw the lowest annual increase at 2.2% (from a higher absolute base).



Source: ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 14, 2024.

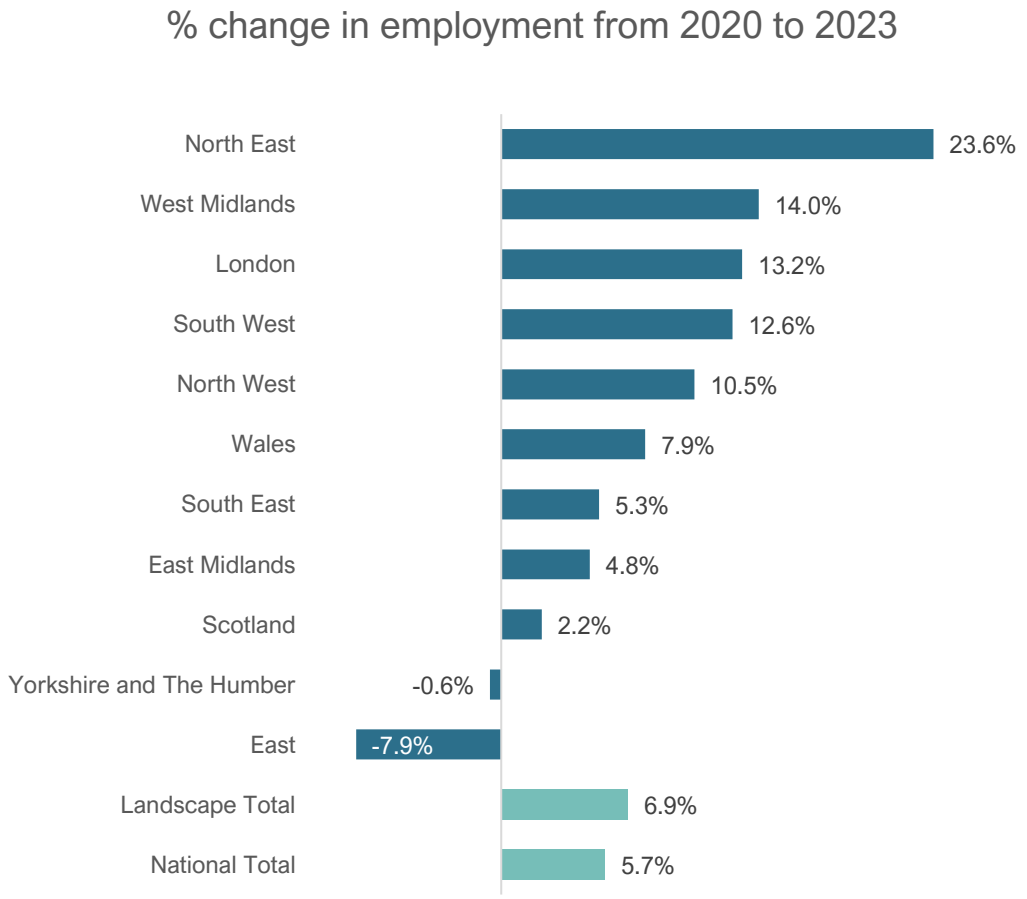
Strongest relative employment growth in the North East

Most regions have experienced strong growth rates in employment with the North East leading the way. In contrast, the East of England saw a relatively large decline.

Given that employment numbers in the sector rose by nearly 7% over the period since 2020, and the weighting of roles in the South and South East, these changes in regional employment are not out of proportion.

The changes in the North East (+2,335 individuals) and the West Midlands (+5,250), as the top two percentage increases in Great Britain, are notable, though both are from a smaller employment base than London and the South East.

In contrast, the East of England had the largest decline, decreasing by nearly 3,000 workers or 8% over the period. Yorkshire and the Humber was the only other sector to see a decrease, but this was marginal, at 0.6% (144 fewer workers).



Source: ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2023.

Sub-regional employment varies

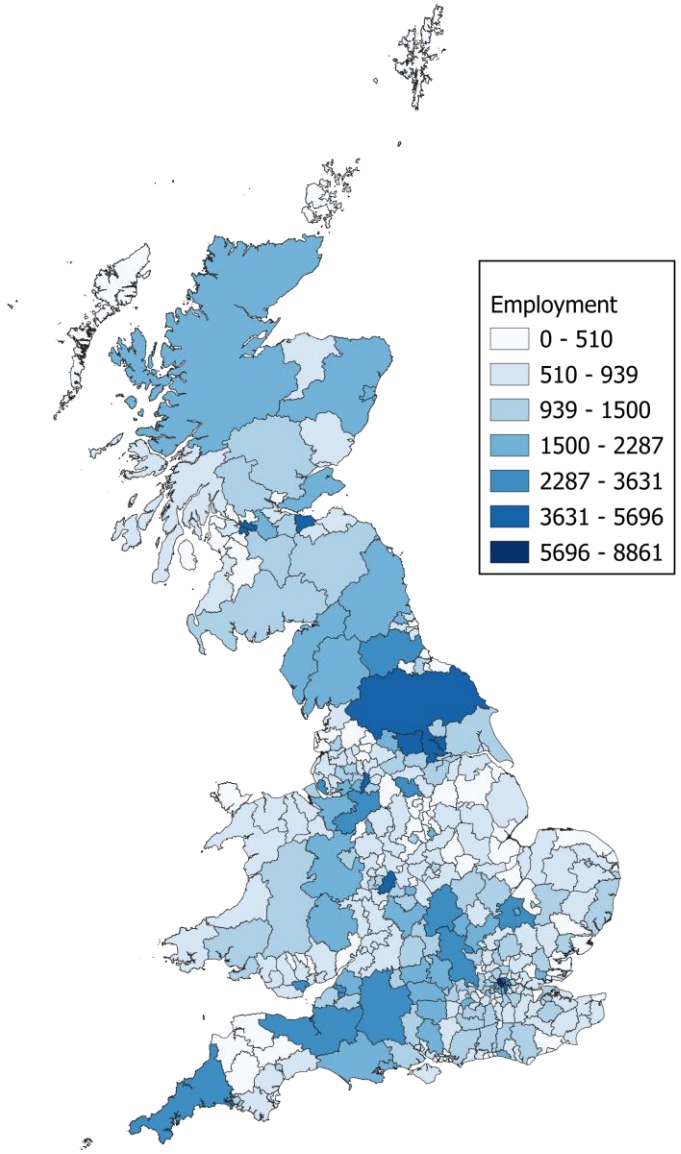
Regional variations tend to follow population trends, though areas of high employment exist in cities and rural parts of North and South West England.

This map shows the total employment in the sector in each local authority district across Great Britain.

Similar to the overall employment trends, employment in landscape occupations are higher in city regions - inner London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

However, some rural local authorities in the North and South West of England also stand out, such as North Yorkshire, Cornwall, Somerset and Wiltshire. Areas close to cities also see higher employment levels of landscape workers. These include Buckinghamshire, outside London, South Cambridgeshire and Cheshire East, south of Manchester.

In contrast, parts of the Midlands, Wales, and the East coast have lower levels of landscape employment. In certain cases, this may reflect the lower population levels in those regions. The next page shows the relative concentration of landscape employment in each district using location quotient (LQ) analysis.



Source: ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2023.

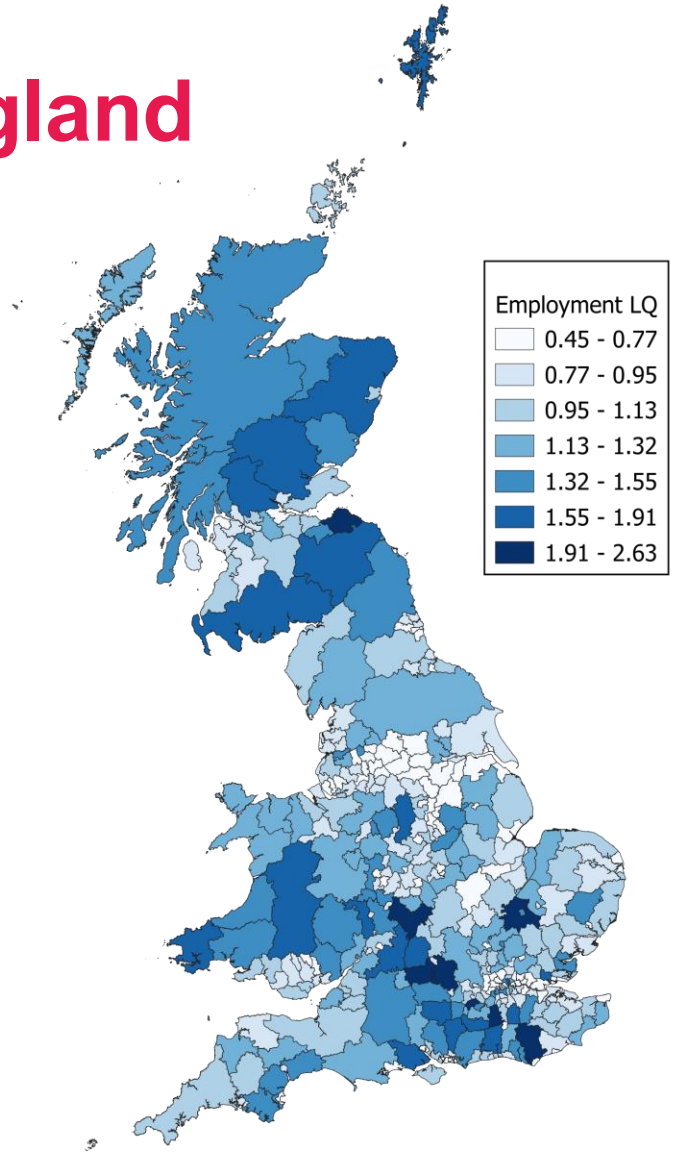
Concentrations in the South of England

In addition to significant employment, the South of England also has higher concentrations of landscape employment. Other areas of significant concentration include Scotland and Wales.

This map shows the employment location quotients (LQs) in each local authority district. LQs show the relative concentration of employment in the landscape sector compared to the national average. A score of 1 indicates that the share of landscape employment in that district matches the GB average; a score of 1.25 or more suggests specialisation in the sector, with a 25% higher concentration of landscape workers than the average.

The map shows that the South East (such as parts of Surrey) not only accounts for the largest share of employment in the sector, but also exhibits a strong concentration around Greater London. Other regions with significant landscape activity include Scotland (especially East Lothian), some parts of Wales, South Cambridgeshire and Stratford-Upon-Avon. All of these show a concentration of landscape employment around double that of the national average.

In contrast, urban districts such as London, Liverpool and West Yorkshire tend to have lower concentrations of landscape enrolment.



Source: ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2023.

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Top industries employing landscape occupations

A broad range of industries employ landscape workers, the most common sectors being Landscape service and architectural activities.

This table lists the top ten industries and businesses that employ landscape workers. However, many more industries also employ significant numbers from in the sector.

Landscape service activities employ the most landscape workers in Great Britain: 71,000, accounting for 19% of total landscape workers[1] or 83% of employees in that industry sector. In other words, 17% of workers in that sector are in non-landscape jobs, such as administrative roles.

The second largest sector, architectural activities, accounts for 12% of the total landscape workforce - with nearly half of employees being in landscape jobs. This is mostly driven by design roles.

Other large employers of landscape workers include areas of engineering activities, public administration, research and membership organisations.

1 total landscape workers = 372,500 (Headline Figures, slide 12)

Sector	Landscape employment	Share of landscape occupations employed in sector	Share of sector employed by landscape occupations
Landscape service activities	70,802	19%	83%
Architectural activities	45,585	12%	48%
Engineering activities and related technical consultancy	30,102	8%	7%
General public administration activities	18,952	5%	3%
Other research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering	16,817	4%	12%
Activities of other membership organisations	16,347	4%	14%
Operation of sports facilities	11,748	3%	7%
Temporary employment agency activities	10,403	3%	1%
Activities of sport clubs	9,783	3%	6%
Construction of residential and non-residential buildings	9,228	2%	2%

Source: ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2023.

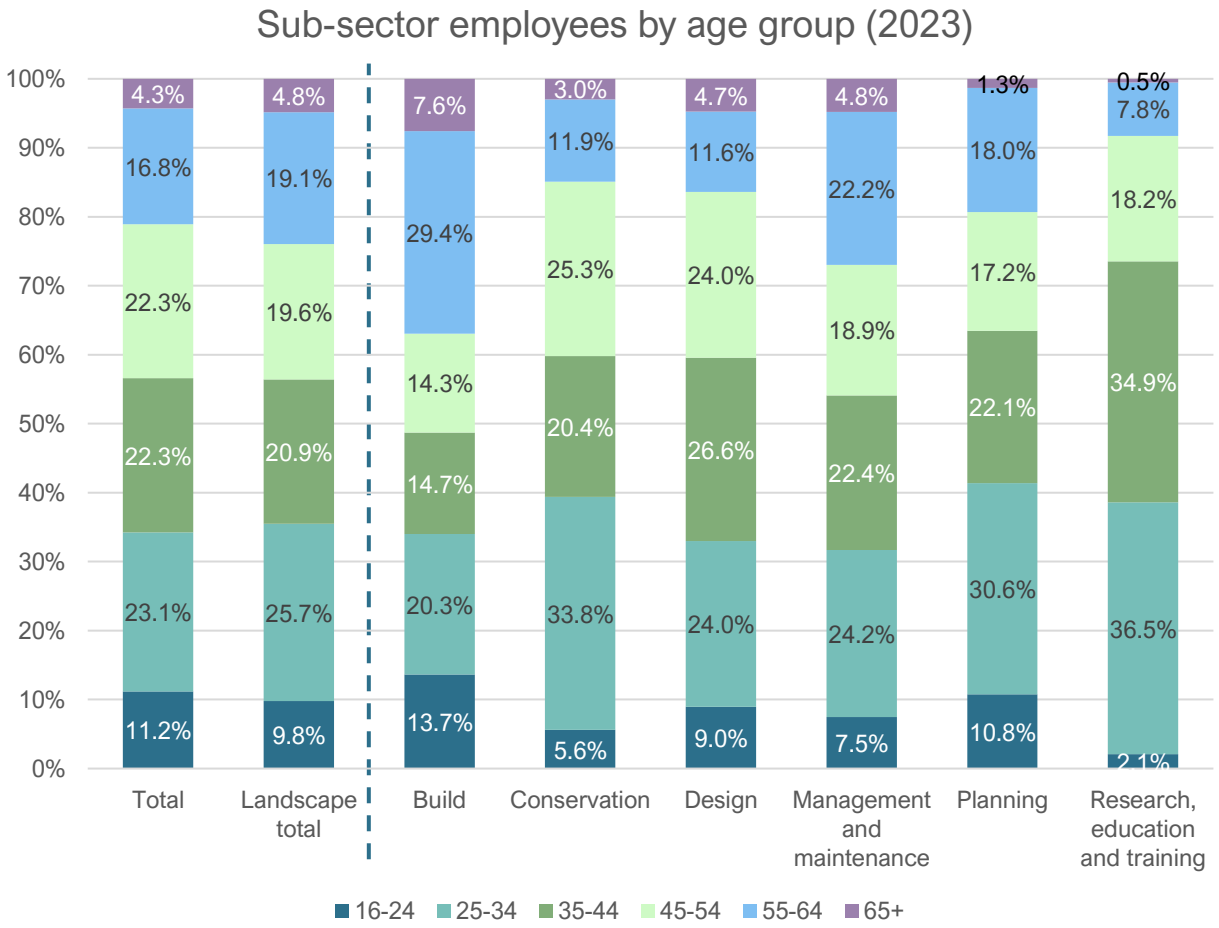
The highest share of landscape workers are aged 25-34

Splitting the workforce by sub-sector reveals a significant proportion of older workers in Build and a lack of young entrants to conservation

This chart illustrates the breakdown of 10-year age bands across landscape and its sub-sectors.

Overall, the age composition of landscape workers does not vary significantly from the national average, with slightly higher workforce shares aged 55 and over, and also in the young adults (25-34) category. A smaller proportion of 16-24 year olds are employed, which may reflect the need for higher / professional qualifications in many sub-sectors. This is clearly demonstrated in the Research figures.

Age composition varies by sub-sector. The largest sub-sector, Build, has 37% of employees aged 55 or over, which could lead to a concerning recruitment / retainment issue. Build also has the highest share of workers in the youngest age group, reflecting lower entry qualification requirements. Areas requiring professional qualifications (Conservation, Design, Planning and Research) have higher shares of workers in the 25-54 age ranges.



Source: ONS, Annual population survey, bespoke request, 2023.

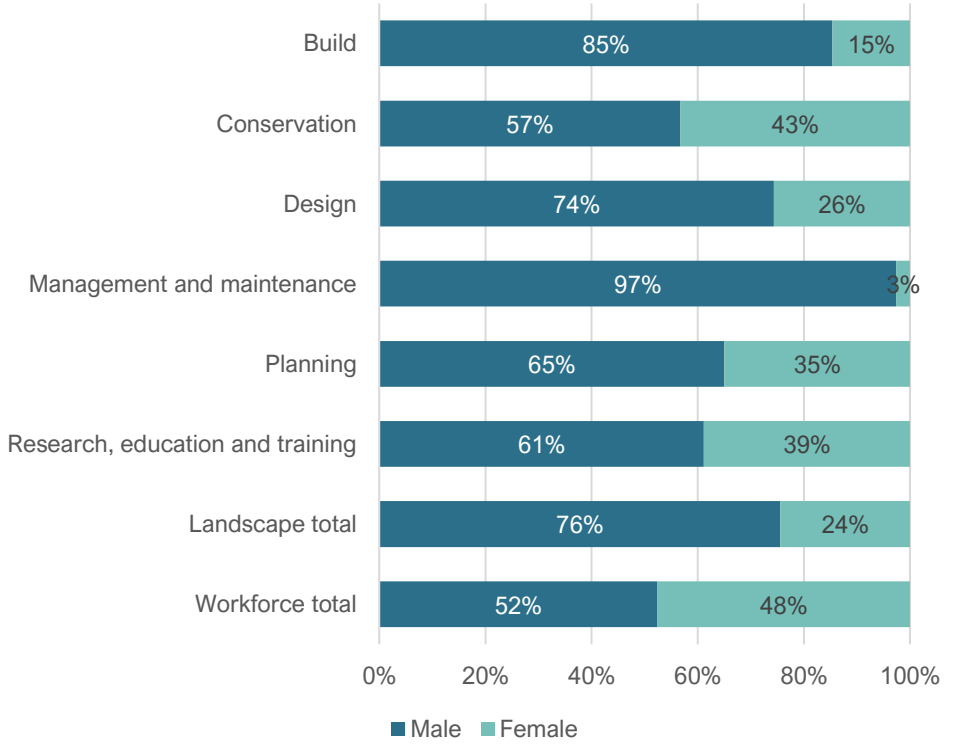
Most Landscape workers are male and white

The sector is significantly less diverse than national averages.

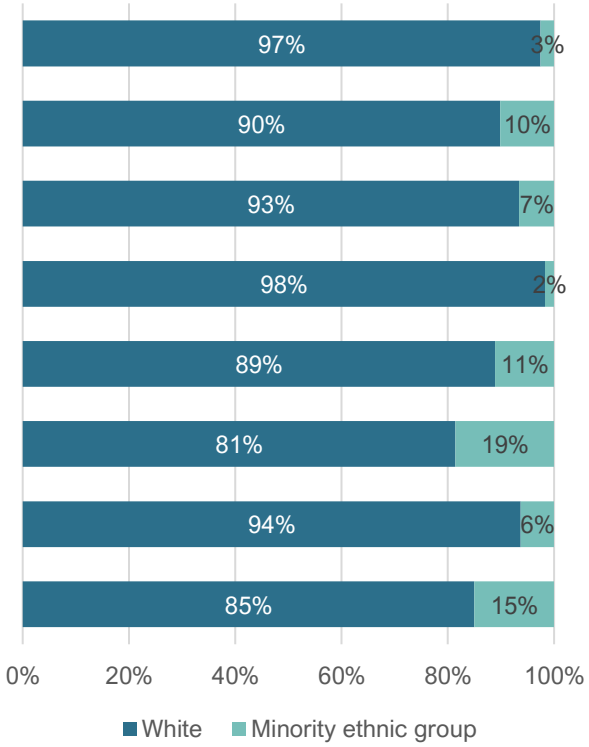
The charts show that the sector generally employs a higher share of male and white workers than occupation averages across Great Britain. This is in all sub-sectors, not just the more prominent Management and Build ones.

The same Management and Build sectors are less diverse than the others. Research is the only sub-sector with a higher share of workers from minority ethnic groups than the GB workforce average.

Share of employment in each sub-sector by gender



Employment share by broad ethnic groups



Source: ONS, Annual population survey, bespoke request, 2023.

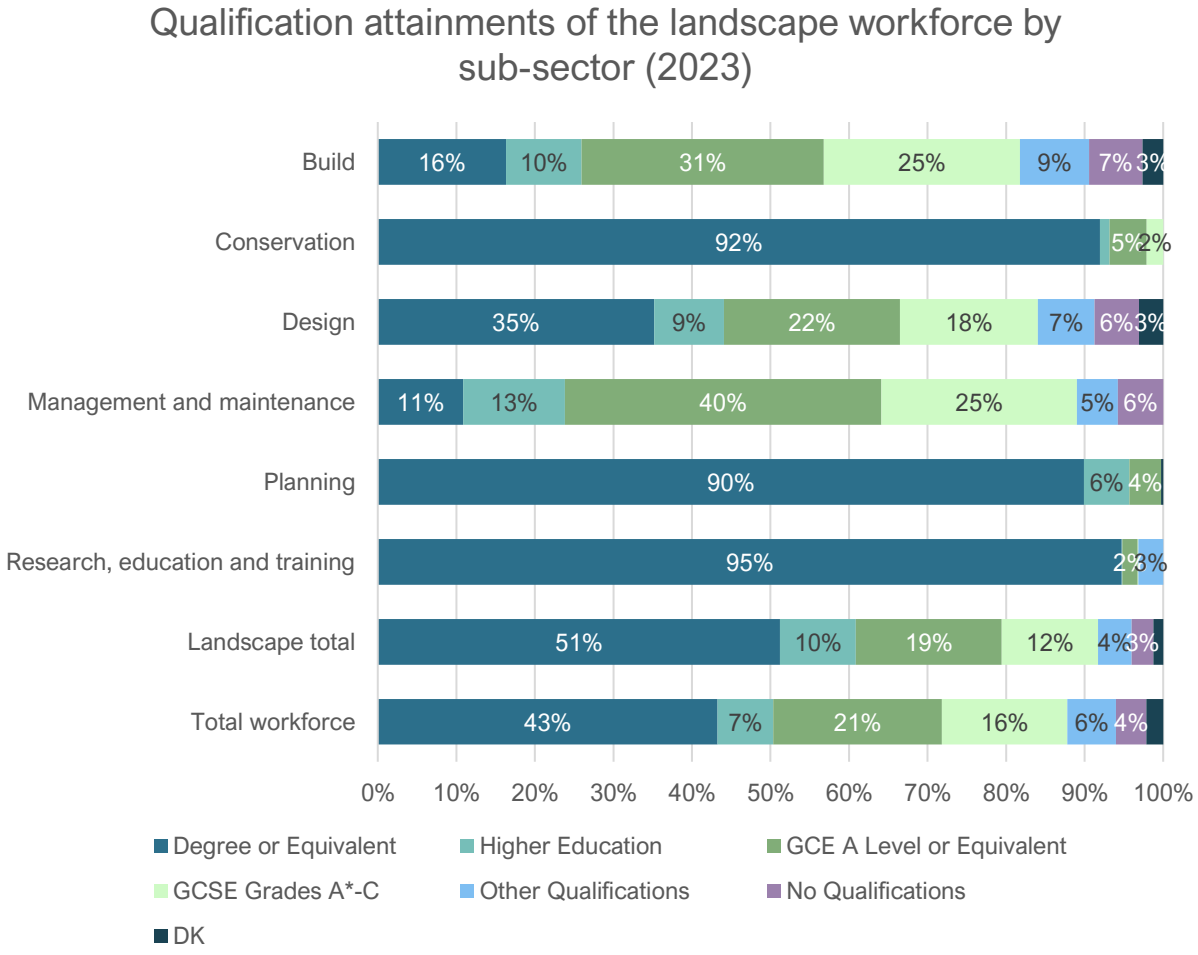
Qualification attainment varies across sub-sectors

More than half the landscape workforce is qualified to degree level or equivalent, 8 percentage points higher than the national average. However, there is significant variation between sub-sectors.

In 2023, approximately 51% (ie 190,000) of the 372,500 people in the landscape sector held a degree or equivalent qualification.

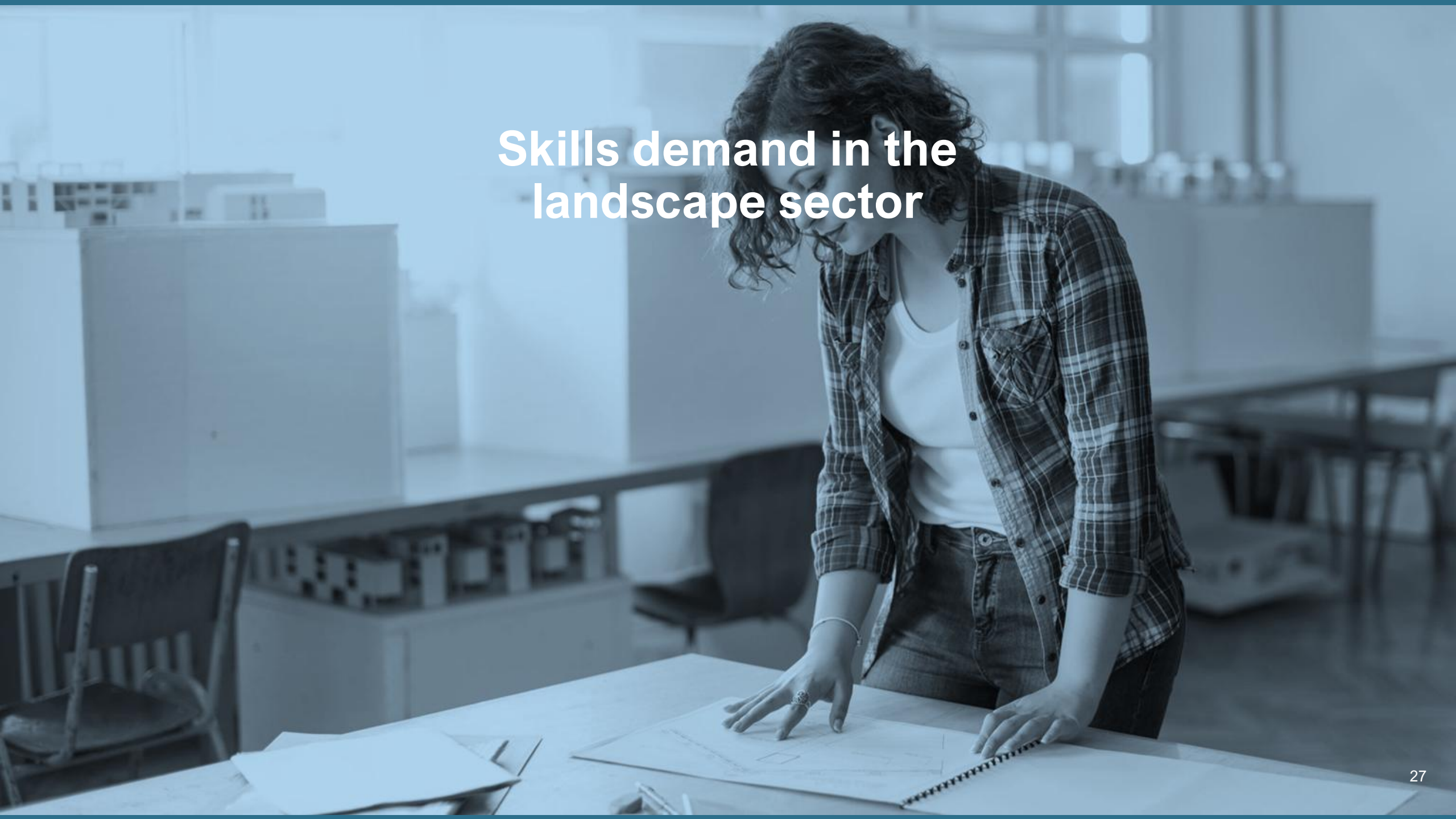
The highest percentage of workers qualified to degree level or equivalent occurs in Research (95%), Conservation (92%) and Planning (90%).

In contrast, Design (35%), Build (16%) and Management (11%) sub-sectors have much lower levels of degree qualified staff – with a higher proportion of workers at GCSE or A-Level standard. This significant variance in degree-level attainment, especially given the high numbers of Build workers, reduces the overall Landscape degree qualification figures substantially.



Source: ONS, Annual population survey, bespoke request, 2023.

Skills demand in the landscape sector



Planning vacancies are especially difficult to fill

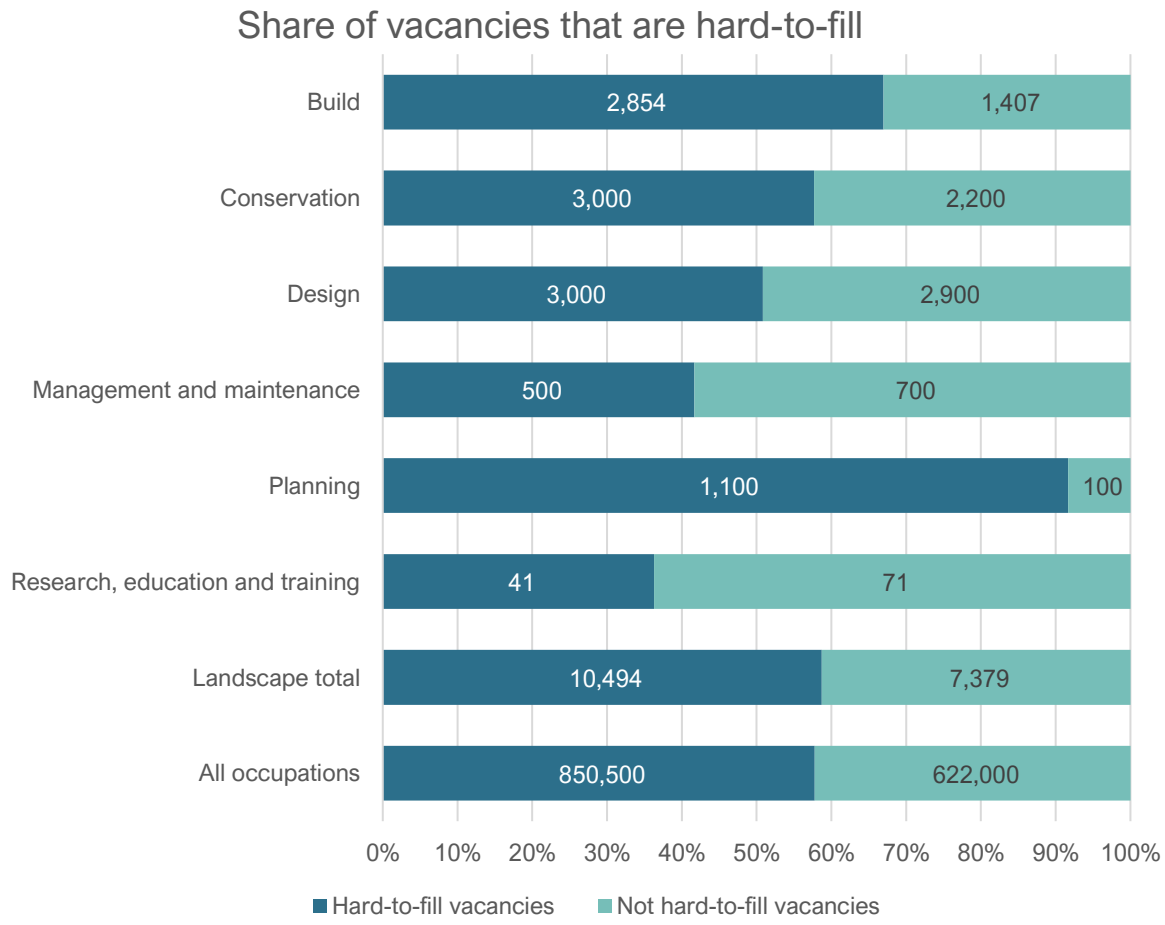
The share of hard-to-fill landscape vacancies is at a marginally higher rate than the average across all occupations. However, this masks significant sub-sector differences. It's noticeably difficult to fill Planning vacancies.

This chart provides greater granularity on job vacancies and explores the proportion that are considered hard-to-fill across the various sub-sectors.

Of the 18,000 landscape job vacancies, 59% were identified as hard to fill by respondents, 1 percentage point above the overall GB average (58%).

Planning stands out with 92% of vacancies designated as hard-to-fill. Build (67%) likewise has a significantly higher share of such job vacancies than the national average.

Research (37%) has the lowest share of hard to fill vacancies, though the low numbers involved may distort accuracy.



Source: ONS, Employer skills survey, 2022.

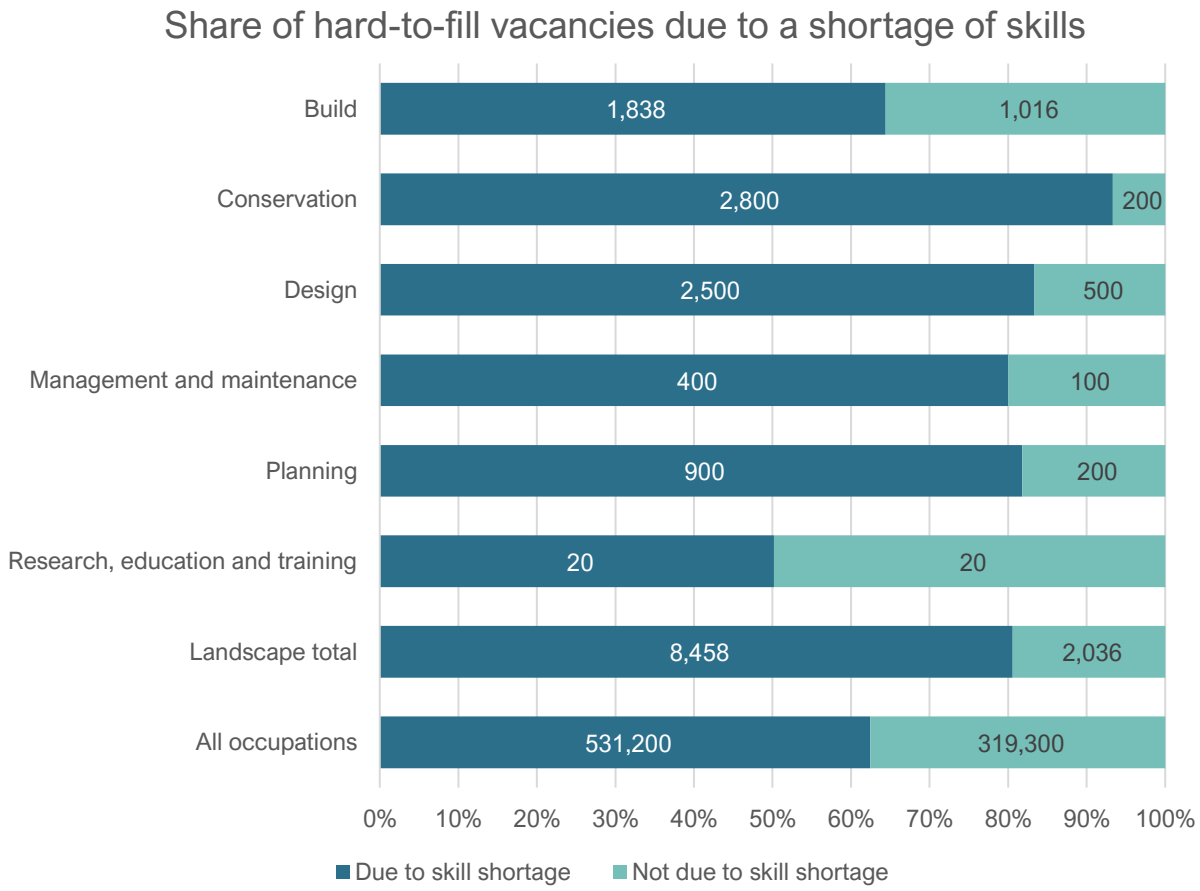
Skills shortages are driving job vacancies

Of landscape job vacancies that are difficult to fill, a significantly larger proportion can be attributed to skills shortage than the national average.

The chart highlights skills shortages as the overriding factor in landscape hard-to-fill job vacancy data.

In total, around 10,500 landscape job vacancies were reported as hard-to-fill. 81% of that figure (8,458) were attributed to a shortage of applicants with the right technical skills – as opposed to such factors as poor working conditions, pay, or geographical barriers. This is a significantly higher ratio than all occupations (62%). A lack of available technical skills affects the landscape sector more than other industries and implies a resultant loss of potential GVA.

Skills shortages impact all landscape sub-sectors at higher rates than the national average, except Research. Conservation (93% skills shortage) is particularly hard hit, though Design, Management and Planning are all at 80% or more. Data on the Research sector may be affected by the small sample size.



Source: ONS, Employer skills survey, 2022.

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New job adverts fell in 2024

By the final quarter of 2024, job postings in landscape sub-sectors had fallen back to levels last seen in the 2020 lockdown. This reflected a broader slowdown in recruitment across the economy.

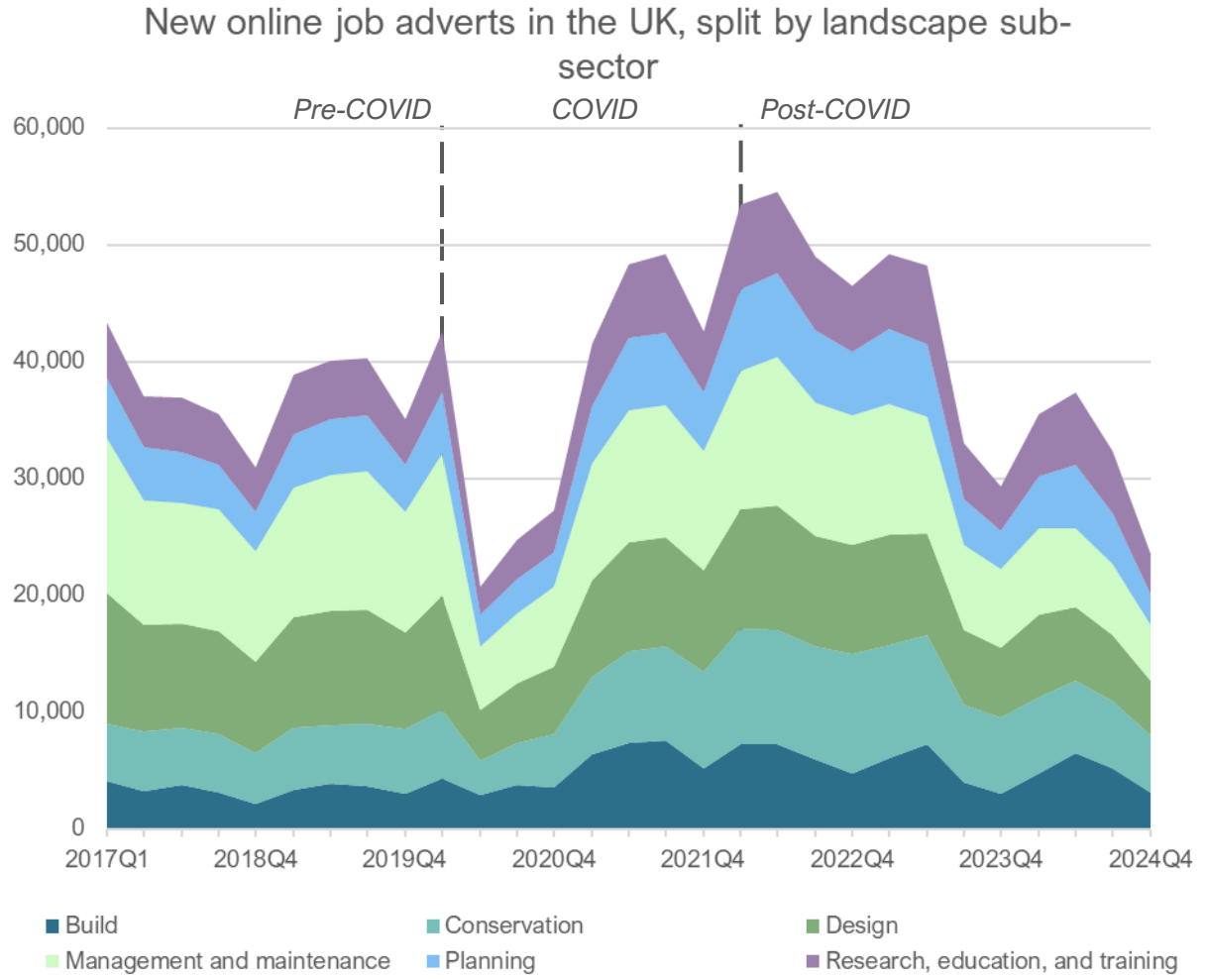
The chart shows the change in the number of job adverts in the landscape sector and its sub-sectors from Q1 2017 to Q4 2024.

In 2022, sector job adverts reached 152,499, the highest level in the series and up more than 50% on 2018 levels. This significant increase in job postings followed the COVID-19 related decline which fell to its lowest in 2020.

By 2024, the total had dropped to 95,466, down over a third from the 2022 peak and only slightly above the 2020 lockdown figure.

Landscape figures mirror trends across the UK labour market, where total postings fell from 13.7 million in 2022 to 8.3 million in 2024, underscoring a broader slowdown in recruitment activity.

In Q4 2024, Conservation, Design and Management sub-sectors had the highest actual number of new job adverts posted. However, whilst Conservation showed a 33% growth since 2017, Design (-39%) and Management (-46%) figures reveal significant declines. Build, the largest single sub-sector posted a 37% increase over the period.



Sub-sector	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Build	14,277	12,232	13,880	14,540	26,637	25,191	20,193	19,489
Conservation	17,560	19,453	21,229	16,967	30,612	39,590	32,179	23,402
Design	38,935	34,601	37,279	25,008	35,549	39,672	30,535	23,707
Management	46,571	40,863	44,930	30,397	42,881	47,149	35,280	24,967
Planning	17,678	16,105	18,020	13,894	22,391	25,746	19,853	16,804
Research, education, and training	17,542	17,074	18,940	14,510	23,510	25,987	21,668	20,329
Landscape sectors total	104,945	99,766	109,142	87,224	137,925	152,499	119,620	95,466
UK total	10,143,363	9,427,662	10,359,037	8,227,454	11,753,431	13,707,018	9,944,558	8,263,617

Source: ONS, Labour demand volumes by Standard Occupation Classification, 2024.

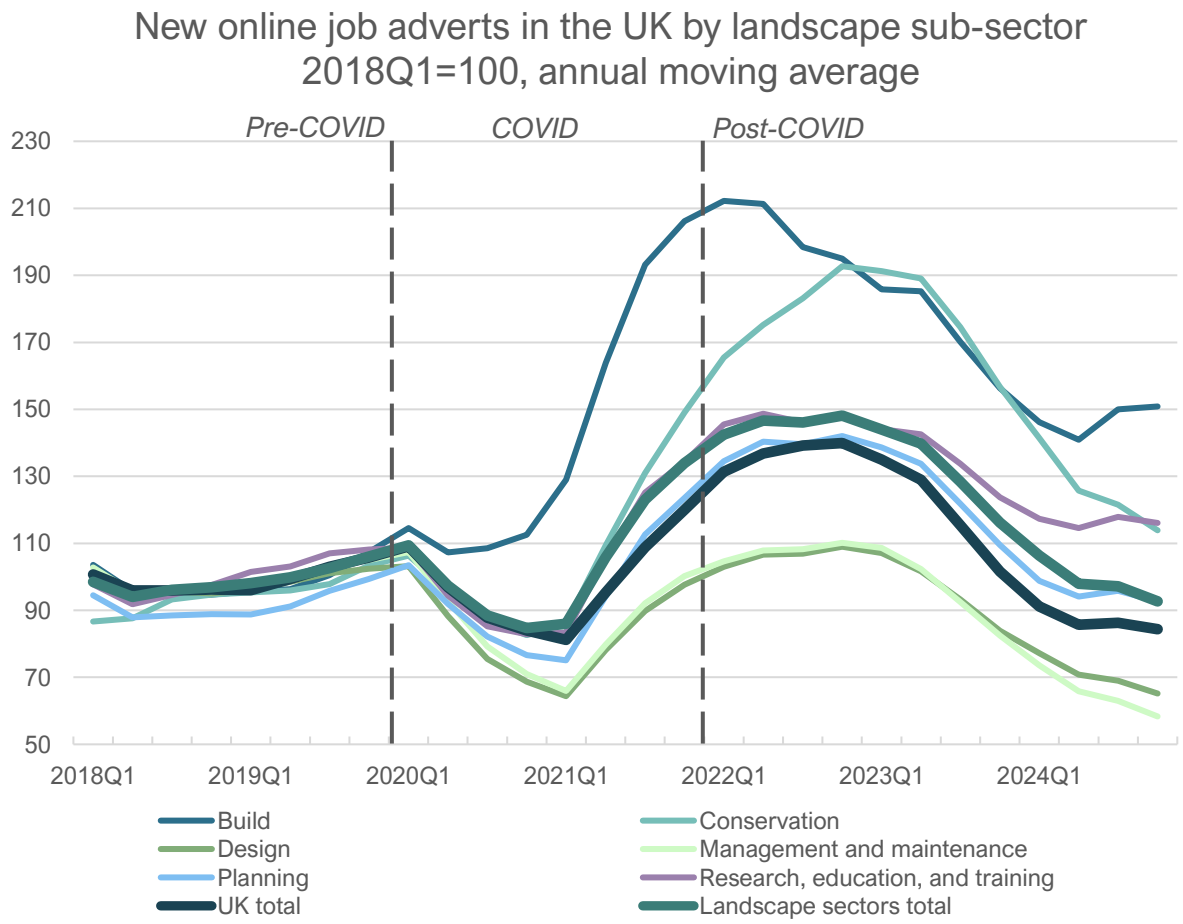
Job advert postings follow national trends

Job adverts in the landscape sector have broadly tracked UK-wide recruitment trends, following a similar pattern of pandemic disruption, post-pandemic recovery, and subsequent recruitment cooling.

This chart shows the number of new job adverts in the landscape sector, indexed to Q1 2018 levels, for comparison purposes. Figures use the 4-quarter moving average.

The number of new landscape job adverts is slightly lower in 2024 than in 2018, though slightly higher than the total across all occupations. Whilst some sub-sectors have returned to pre-pandemic levels, others remain well below.

Build has seen the most consistent growth since 2018, rising from 12,232 to 19,489 in 2024. Conservation and Research also performed well over the same period, increasing from 19,453 to 23,402 and from 17,074 to 20,329 respectively. As per the previous slide, Management and Design have faced more sustained challenges, with job advert volumes falling significantly from 40,863 to 24,967 (39% fall) and from 34,601 to 23,707 (31% fall) respectively. Planning showed a post-Covid boost, which has now dipped back to a level (16,804) just marginally above 2018 figures (16,105) (4% rise).



Source: ONS, Labour demand volumes by Standard Occupation Classification, 2024.

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Changes to job postings vary by area

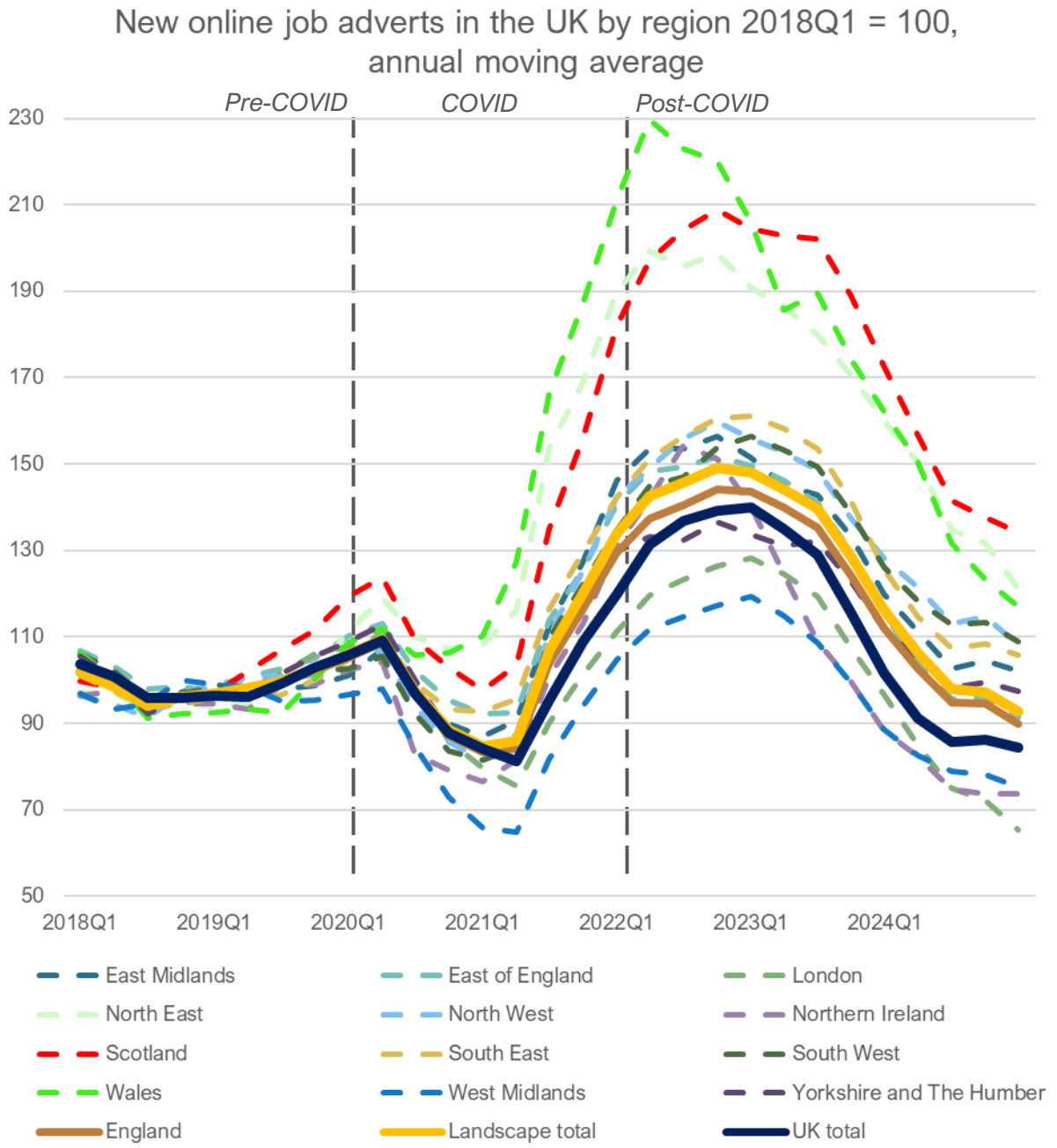
Most UK nations and regions have seen landscape sector demand grow, with 2024 job advert volumes above 2018 levels in 8 out of 12 areas. Overall, the sector saw a 4% drop in postings, though this compares favourably with a 12% drop across all occupation sectors in that period.

The chart shows the number of new landscape job adverts, indexed to Q1 2018 levels for each area, and benchmarked against the total. Figures use the 4-quarter moving average.

Posting levels since 2018 have varied considerably. London (-32%), West Midlands (-24%), and Northern Ireland (-22%) recorded the largest declines. Given the volumes involved, London and West Midlands particularly influenced the decrease in total landscape sector job postings.

All other areas (except East of England (-6%)), saw higher landscape job advert volumes in 2024 than in 2018 – with Scotland (+38%), the North East (+29%), and Wales (+27 %) performing particularly well.

The 2024 overall landscape volumes are down 37% compared to the 2022 peak. However, nationally, new job postings performed even worse, dropping 40% across all industry sectors.



Source: ONS, Labour demand volumes by Standard Occupation Classification, 2024.

Significant job advert numbers in urban areas

In terms of overall numbers, the highest volumes of landscape sector job adverts in 2024 were recorded in the urban centres of London (16,280), Manchester (3,100), Birmingham (2,503), and Bristol (2,304).

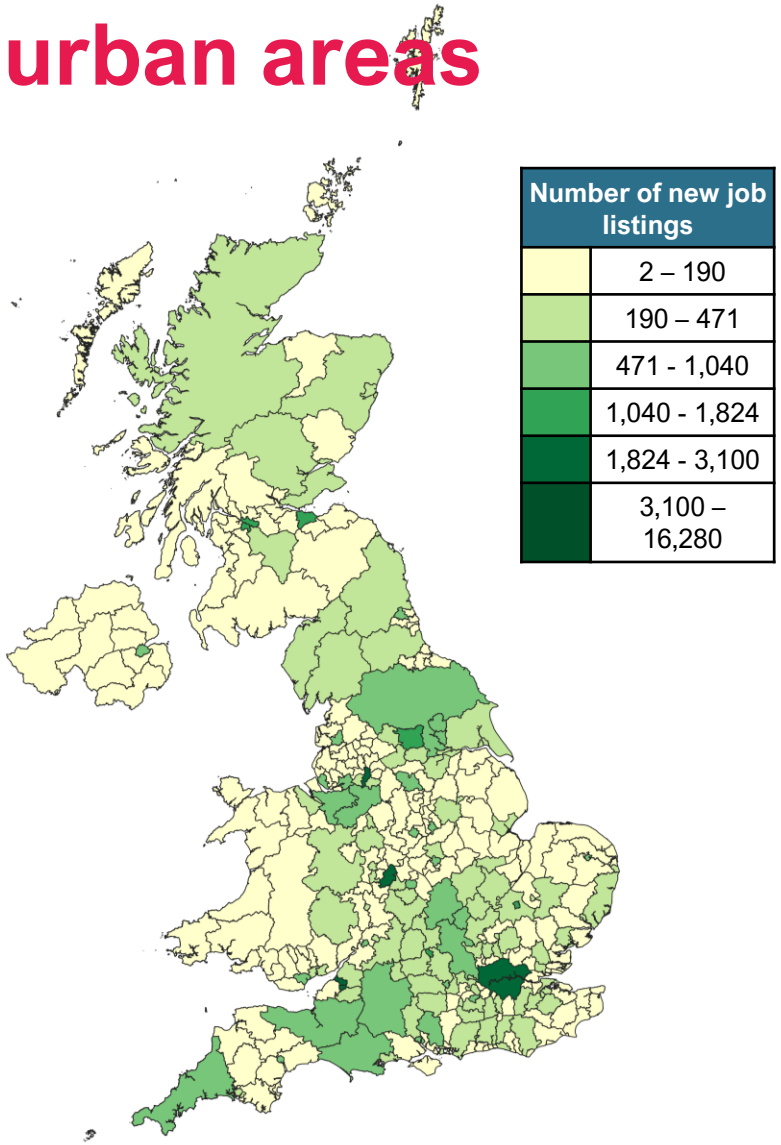
This map shows the number of landscape job adverts posted in each local authority across the UK.

The number of job postings varies at sub-regional levels, with notably high numbers of adverts in urban areas.

There are also more adverts across the South East, particularly in the Home Counties (e.g. Oxford with 1,799, Cambridge with 1,371, and Reading with 910), and extending into parts of the South-West.

In contrast, there were comparatively low levels of postings across Wales, Northern Ireland, and much of eastern England, including Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and Kent, where many areas recorded fewer than 100 listings in 2024.

The number of job adverts by local authority follows a similar spatial trend to total employment. The following slide shows relative strengths in landscape job postings.



Source: ONS, Labour demand volumes by Standard Occupation Classification, 2024.

Higher share of adverts in rural areas

University cities and historic county towns (such as Oxford, Cambridge, Winchester, and Edinburgh) have the highest relative concentrations of landscape job postings.

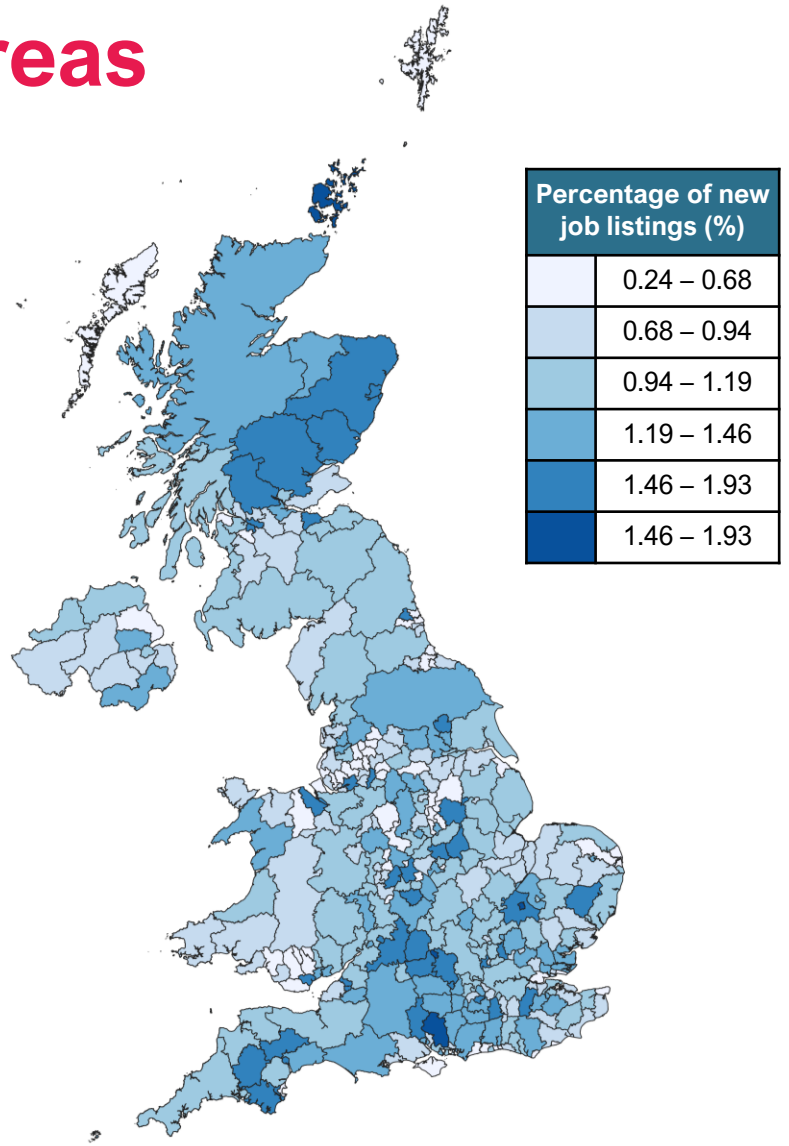
The chart shows the percentage of all landscape sector job listings per local authority across the UK.

Some rural areas have a high share of new listings, especially those relating to corridors around Eastern Scotland, Devon and Oxfordshire.

Some urban areas also have a higher share (notably Oxford and Cambridge), but there are strong rates in Bristol, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Manchester too. Rural districts (e.g. Orkney, Cotswold, South Hampshire) also feature prominently, reflecting work on protected landscapes, tourism, and land management.

While in large urban areas, landscape jobs are numerous in absolute terms, pro-rata numbers are diluted by the wider labour market.

Former industrial centres and several deprived coastal areas (such as Inverclyde, the South Wales Valleys, parts of Lancashire and Thanet) show the lowest share of adverts.



Source: ONS, Labour demand volumes by Standard Occupation Classification, 2024.

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