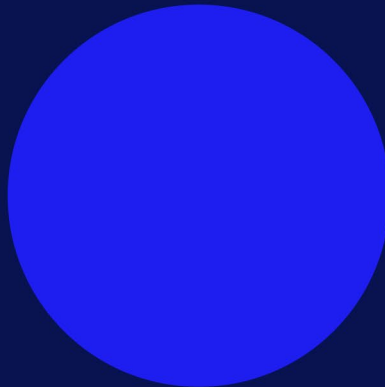
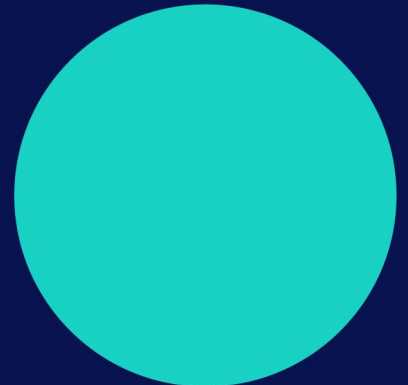
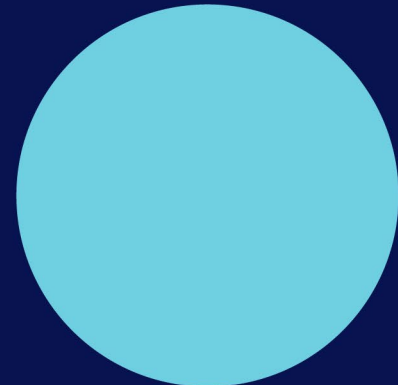
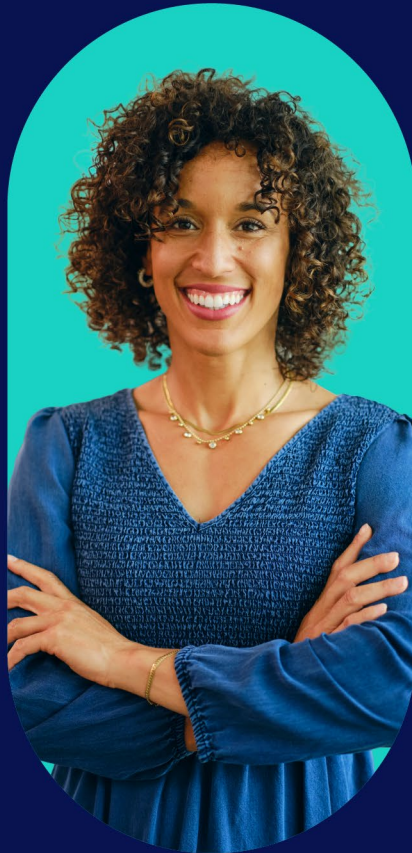


Reed



Salary guide 2026

Procurement, supply chain
& industrial

Navigating the new jobs landscape



James Reed CBE
Chairman and CEO, Reed

Welcome to our 2026 salary guides. As we look ahead, it is clear that the UK labour market is navigating one of the most profound transformations in living memory. In my four decades in recruitment, I have never witnessed a period of such rapid and fundamental change.

Our economic landscape has defied traditional expectations. Historically, periods of economic growth have aligned with rising job vacancies, but that relationship is no longer guaranteed. Recent trends suggest a structural shift in the labour market, where vacancy levels can decline even as the economy expands. This disconnect signals deeper changes in how businesses approach hiring and workforce planning. For employers and jobseekers alike, understanding these dynamics is critical - because the old assumption that growth equals more jobs is increasingly outdated.

The AI revolution: A white-collar recession

One of the primary drivers behind this permanent change to the jobs market, alongside policy, regulation, changing worker expectations, globalisation and supply chain pressures, I believe is artificial intelligence. The advancement and adoption of AI technologies have been breathtakingly fast, and its appetite for consuming tasks, particularly in white-collar professions, is the biggest story of our time.

AI is incredibly effective at reducing costs for employers, and it achieves this primarily by reducing the number of employees required. This is not a distant, future threat; it is happening right now. A recent survey we conducted of 500 companies revealed that 15%

were already reducing their hiring plans specifically because of the arrival of AI. Combined with other pressures, such as National Insurance increases and general hiring freezes, the overall impact on job creation has been noticeable.

We are witnessing what I term a 'white-collar recession,' which mirrors the blue-collar recession of the 1980s when automation hollowed out many industrial and manufacturing jobs. Today, it is entry-level and process-driven roles in sectors like administration, finance, and even law that are being consumed. These are the traditional gateways for many professionals starting their careers, and their rapid decline poses a significant threat to social mobility and future workforce development. The very nature of what constitutes a 'good job' is being redefined before our eyes. Roles that once seemed secure and promised a stable career path are now vulnerable to automation. This forces us, as employers and as a society, to rethink our approach to education, skills, and career progression.



The advancement and adoption of AI technologies have been breathtakingly fast, and its appetite for consuming tasks, particularly in white-collar professions, is the biggest story of our time.



The graduate dilemma: A shrinking horizon

Nowhere is this shift more acutely felt than among our young people and recent graduates. The data is deeply concerning. Our own figures at Reed show that the number of graduate jobs advertised on Reed.co.uk has plummeted from around 180,000 just a few years ago to a mere 50,000 at the end of 2025. This represents a staggering two-thirds reduction in opportunities for those leaving higher education. Other job sites are reporting similar, sobering figures. This is not just a dip; it is a collapse in the entry-level market.

This 'graduate crunch' is creating a generation of highly educated individuals who are struggling to find a foothold in the professional world. Nearly half of all jobs lost since mid-2024 have been among those under 25, and youth unemployment has soared to its highest level in a decade, excluding the pandemic period standing at 15.3%. The UK's top 100 employers reduced their graduate hiring by 14.6% in 2024, the steepest fall since the 2009 recession.

For those who do manage to secure a role, the rewards are often diminished. We are seeing entry-level graduate jobs offering salaries that are perilously close to the minimum wage, especially when factoring in the long hours often expected of new recruits. This situation challenges the long-held assumption that a university degree is a guaranteed ticket to a prosperous career. We must encourage aspiring families and young people to broaden their horizons. While a degree remains valuable, it is no longer the only path.

The jobs that are proving most resilient to the AI wave are those that require a human touch, creativity, and manual dexterity. Roles in skilled trades, hospitality, and healthcare, for example, involve a level of nuanced interaction and physical skill that AI is far from replicating. We must guide the next generation towards developing practical, hands-on skills. Learning to do things with your hands, whether in a highly educated field like osteopathy or a skilled trade, is becoming an increasingly wise career strategy.

Thriving through purpose: The PhilCo advantage

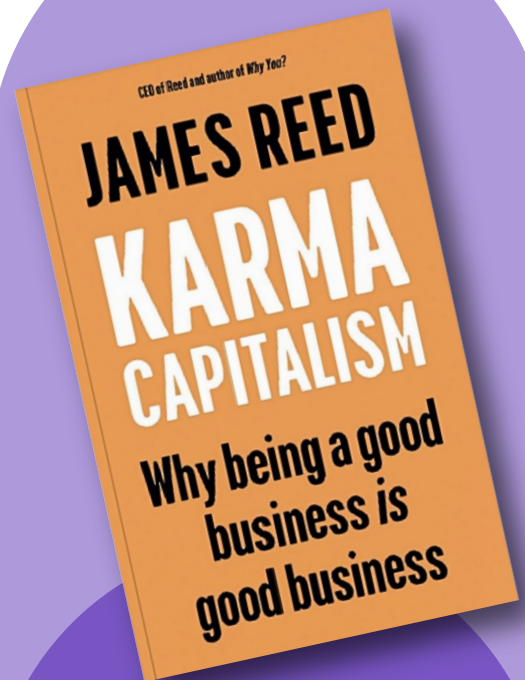
In this challenging environment, how can businesses not only survive but thrive? How can you attract and retain the talent you need when the market is so volatile? The answer, I believe, lies in purpose. Today's employees, especially the younger generation, are not just looking for a salary; they are seeking meaning and a sense of contribution from their work. This is where the concept of a philanthropic company, or PhilCo, becomes a powerful competitive advantage.

A **PhilCo** is a business that has committed a significant portion of its ownership - typically 10% or more - to a charitable foundation. At Reed, we are proud to be a PhilCo, with 18% of our company owned by the Reed Foundation. This is not just a footnote in our corporate structure; it is a

fundamental part of our identity. It means that a portion of our success is directly channelled back into the community. Our dividends help fund a wide array of good causes, many through our partnership with the Big Give, which has raised hundreds of millions for thousands of charities.

Being a PhilCo has a tangible and profound impact on our business. It is a cornerstone of our employee engagement strategy. Our team members - known as co-members - know that their hard work contributes to something larger than the bottom line. This shared purpose fosters a culture of responsibility, collaboration, and pride. It creates a powerful reason for people to join us and, just as importantly, to stay with us.

As hyper-capitalism has created vast inequalities - with the top one per cent in the UK holding more wealth than the bottom 70% - models like the PhilCo movement offer a way to transform business for good. It aligns profit with people and the planet, ensuring that corporate success contributes to societal wellbeing. This is not just corporate social responsibility; it is a sustainable and highly impactful business model for the 21st century.



Find out more about being a PhilCo in James' book 'Karma Capitalism, Why being a good business is good business'

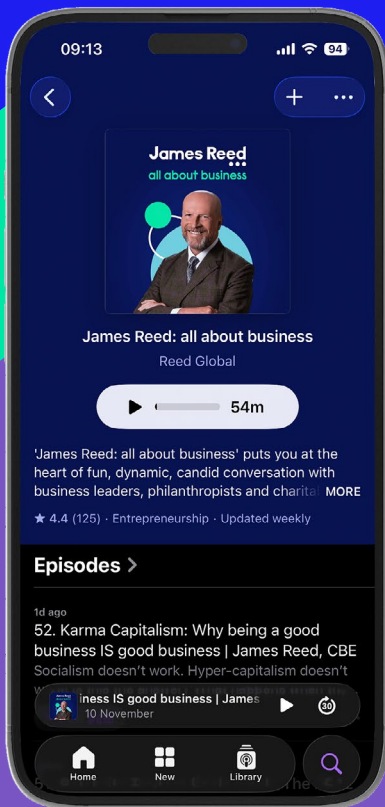
A look to the future

The road ahead is undoubtedly challenging. The forces of AI, economic uncertainty, and shifting market dynamics require us all to be more agile, more innovative, and more people centric than ever before. For employers, this means rethinking recruitment strategies. You must look beyond traditional qualifications and focus on skills, adaptability, resilience and potential. It means investing in upskilling and reskilling your existing workforce to meet the demands of the new economy. And it means building a strong employer brand rooted in a genuine purpose that will attract the best people.

For individuals, the message is clear: continuous learning is no longer optional. Developing a diverse skill set, particularly one that blends technical knowledge with people-centric abilities like communication, empathy, and critical thinking, will be crucial. We must all become lifelong learners to stay relevant and valuable in this evolving landscape.

These salary guides are designed to provide you with the data and insights you need to navigate this complex environment. They offer a benchmark for compensation in a time of great flux, helping you make informed decisions to attract and retain the talent that will drive your organisation forward. While the headlines may be daunting, there is always opportunity in disruption. By understanding these trends and adapting proactively, we can build a more resilient, skilled, and purposeful workforce for the future.

James Reed CBE
Chairman and CEO, Reed



Listen to James Reed's podcast 'all about business'.

Hosted by **James Reed CBE**, the Chairman and CEO of Reed Group, you'll hear the highs and lows of what it means to be a true business leader to empower you to implement smarter, more meaningful strategy in your business or career.

[Listen here](#)

Why use Reed's procurement, supply chain & industrial salary guide?

For both jobseekers and employers alike, Reed's salary guide stands as an invaluable resource, offering unparalleled insights to keep you well-informed and ahead of the curve in 2026.



Extensive view

This guide covers a wide range of jobs at all seniorities across the procurement, supply chain & industrial sector. Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting out, you'll find valuable insights to help you succeed.



Superior insight

Our procurement, supply chain & industrial sector expert provides key insight into the sector, with Reed's practice specialists discussing the job landscape at a deeper level. This means you'll get a unique perspective on the job market that is not available elsewhere.



Stay well informed

The data in this guide is based on salaries expected today, so you can use the information to steer your decisions and make informed choices on the salaries you offer your employees or accept yourself. You'll be able to stay up to date on the latest trends and developments in the sector.

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Procurement and supply chain in 2026: Adapting to a new era of challenges

Adam Norris

Procurement, Supply Chain and Industrial Expert, Reed



The procurement and supply chain sectors are at a pivotal moment. After years of disruption, businesses are now navigating a landscape defined by economic caution, technological advancement, and shifting workforce dynamics. As we progress further into 2026, companies will have to rethink their strategies to build resilience, control costs, and attract the right talent. Success will depend on a nuanced understanding of these evolving trends, from the skills in demand to the growing importance of sustainability.

A cautious market creates new hiring dynamics

During 2025, a sense of caution settled over the hiring market for procurement and supply chain. We observed a bottleneck effect, where changes at the strategic level were causing a slowdown across the board. When senior leaders depart and aren't immediately replaced, it creates a ripple effect, stalling movement at the semi-senior and transactional levels. This led to a slower marketplace compared to previous years, particularly within corporate purchasing functions.

In this climate, many organisations are looking to consolidate roles to manage costs. It's becoming more common for businesses, especially manager-owned SMEs, to seek a single professional who can oversee both procurement and supply chain functions. Instead of having separate supply chain and procurement managers, they are hiring one person to manage both worlds, creating a more integrated but demanding role.

This trend has consequences for mid-level professionals. While there is still demand for transactional 'doers' like buyers and senior buyers, those at the middle-management level are finding fewer opportunities as we enter 2026. Companies appear to be flattening their structures, with more junior staff reporting directly to higher-grade leaders, effectively squeezing out the middle layer.

The skills defining the future of procurement

As technology, particularly AI, becomes more integrated into business operations, the skills that employers value are evolving. While digital literacy is undoubtedly crucial, the human element remains irreplaceable, especially in procurement. AI can draft emails and analyse data, but it cannot replicate the nuance of human interaction required for effective negotiation and relationship management. As such, we have seen a marked increase in demand for professionals with strong negotiation skills. Companies need individuals who can go onsite, challenge suppliers on quality, and secure better terms. This physical presence and ability to build rapport are skills that technology cannot replace.

Bringing operations in-house

Another significant trend is the move to bring specialised functions, such as freight forwarding and customs, in-house. Many manufacturing and retail businesses that previously outsourced these activities are now building internal teams to manage them. The primary driver is cost control. While transit costs for shipping remain, bringing the management of these processes in-house eliminates the fees paid to external forwarders.

This has created a surge in demand for professionals with experience in import, export, and customs compliance. Roles within freight forwarding and logistics remain high on

the agenda, as businesses recognise the value of controlling these critical supply chain elements themselves. I predict this trend will continue throughout 2026, with more companies investing in internal expertise to streamline their operations and reduce expenses.

The growing influence of ESG

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations have shifted from being a peripheral concern to a core element of modern procurement and supply chain strategy. Today, ethical sourcing and sustainability are not optional - they are fundamental to decision-making, driven by rising consumer expectations and the need to mitigate business risk.

For business leaders, sourcing sustainable products is no longer a competitive advantage; it's a matter of survival. Companies that fail to adapt risk severe disruption - supply chains can stall if goods cannot move or sell due to non-compliance with environmental standards. From a talent perspective, sustainability is equally critical. Professionals increasingly consider an employer's long-term commitment to ESG before accepting a role, avoiding organisations that lack credible sustainable practices.

Ethical sourcing has also taken centre stage. Reports of unethical practices can trigger reputational damage and legal consequences. As a result, risk management now dominates procurement conversations, with ESG considerations close behind. A company's ethical footprint has become a defining part of its brand identity, and professionals skilled in ESG reporting and ethical sourcing are in high demand.

This focus on risk extends to supplier diversity. Businesses are learning that dependence on a single overseas supplier creates significant vulnerability. Building a broader, more resilient supplier base is no longer optional - it's essential for mitigating risk and ensuring continuity.

Salary expectations vs. market realities

In today's cost-conscious environment, salary negotiations have become a significant challenge. Many employers are offering salaries that encourage a sideways move rather than providing a financial incentive for people to switch roles. A job advertised at £40,000 to £45,000 may struggle to attract the best people for the job, as those individuals are likely already earning at the top of that bracket.

This creates a standoff. Most professionals are unwilling to change jobs for the same salary unless there are other compelling benefits. For employers, this means they need to ask themselves: "Why would someone join our company for the same pay?" If salaries are kept at the market level, the overall proposition must be attractive.

Beyond the payslip

When salary increases are off the table, other benefits become crucial. Flexibility is a key differentiator. While hybrid working is less common in procurement and supply chain due to the hands-on nature of the roles, offering even one day

a week from home can be a powerful incentive. It saves the employee money on commuting and offers a better work-life balance.

Addressing critical skills shortages

Acute skills shortages persist in specific areas, most notably in freight forwarding, customs, and import/export. This shortage is largely due to an ageing demographic and a lack of investment in new talent.

Many businesses in this sector are so busy that they cannot find the time to train apprentices or junior staff. When an experienced employee leaves, they take skills and experience out the door. Companies feel they don't have the luxury of training someone new who doesn't understand the complexities of air versus ocean freight, or the intricacies of customs documentation.

This failure to nurture talent at the entry-level means the workforce is getting progressively older. Employers need to shift their mindset from demanding 10 years of experience to recognising the potential in applicants who are two or three years behind and can grow into a role. This approach not only addresses the skills gap but also fosters loyalty and longevity.



The human factor in an automated world

While automation and Industry 4.0 are transforming large-scale operations, their impact on smaller businesses is less pronounced. For a small wholesaler with a modest warehouse, the cost of implementing sophisticated robotics like those seen in Amazon's fulfilment centres is simply not viable.

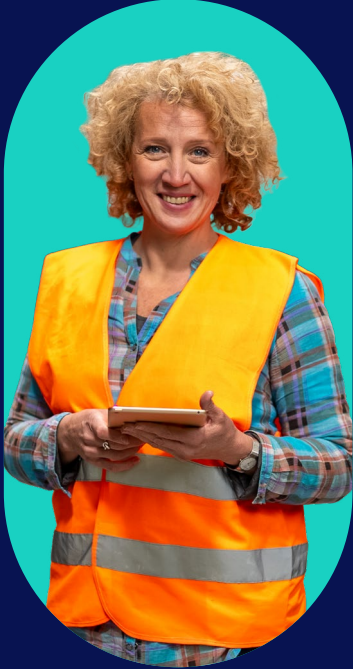
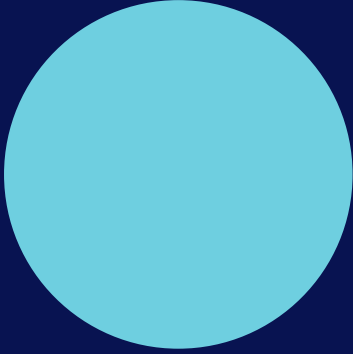
As a result, the demand for human workers in these environments remains strong. Many business owners still prefer the reliability and experience of a skilled forklift driver over a programmed machine, especially when considering insurance and operational risks. For the foreseeable future, automation will likely remain the domain of large-scale enterprises, while small and medium-sized businesses will continue to rely on a human workforce. This ensures that jobs in these areas are not at immediate risk from technological displacement.

A look to the future

To succeed in 2026, businesses in the procurement, supply chain, and industrial sectors must adopt a more flexible and forward-thinking approach to talent.

Organisations need to be more open-minded. This means being realistic about salary expectations, offering flexibility where possible, and being willing to invest in potential. Rather than seeking a like-for-like replacement for a departing employee, consider hiring someone with the capacity to grow. By providing opportunities and training, you not only fill a vacancy but also build a more engaged and loyal workforce. In a market defined by caution at the end of 2025, an investment in people remains the most secure path to long-term success in 2026 and beyond.





Our survey says...

At the end of 2025, Reed conducted its annual snap survey of 5,000 professionals. The research asked UK workers about their current and preferred salary and benefits, their organisation's performance and priorities, how they rated their job satisfaction and career prospects, as well as the key recruitment and skills trends they're witnessing.

Here are the top trends that the survey revealed:

1. Financial strain is widespread

The overwhelming reason for salary dissatisfaction (52% of unhappy respondents) is that pay hasn't kept pace with the cost of living. This far outweighs other factors, such as workload or industry pay.

- **Declining affordability:** Only a quarter of the population (25%) feels they're earning more in terms of what they can afford compared to four years ago, before the cost-of-living crisis.

- **Limited disposable income:** A concerning 26% of respondents have **£100 or less leftover** each month after essential bills, with seven per cent stating their entire salary goes to essentials. This highlights a struggle for many to save or enjoy non-essential spending.

2. The growing 'comfort gap'

There is a stark **£11,110.38 gap** between what people are currently earning and what they say is their comfortable living wage.

- **Desired vs. current earnings:** Our research found the average current annual salary is **£40,638.35**. However, the average income people believe they need to live comfortably is **£51,748.73**.

3. Salary remains the dominant job motivator

To switch jobs, individuals expect a substantial average pay increase of **£12,139.55**. This is significantly higher than the average **£3,923.62** pay rise that would satisfy them at their current employer, indicating a clear financial incentive is needed to overcome the inertia of changing roles.

- **Increased importance:** A vast majority (73%) report that salary is more important now when considering new job opportunities than it was before the cost-of-living crisis - 40% even say it's "significantly more important".
- **Higher progression expectations:** Nearly half of the 5,000 people surveyed (44%) have increased their expectations for salary progression within their current role over the last four years.

4. Benefits are secondary to cash

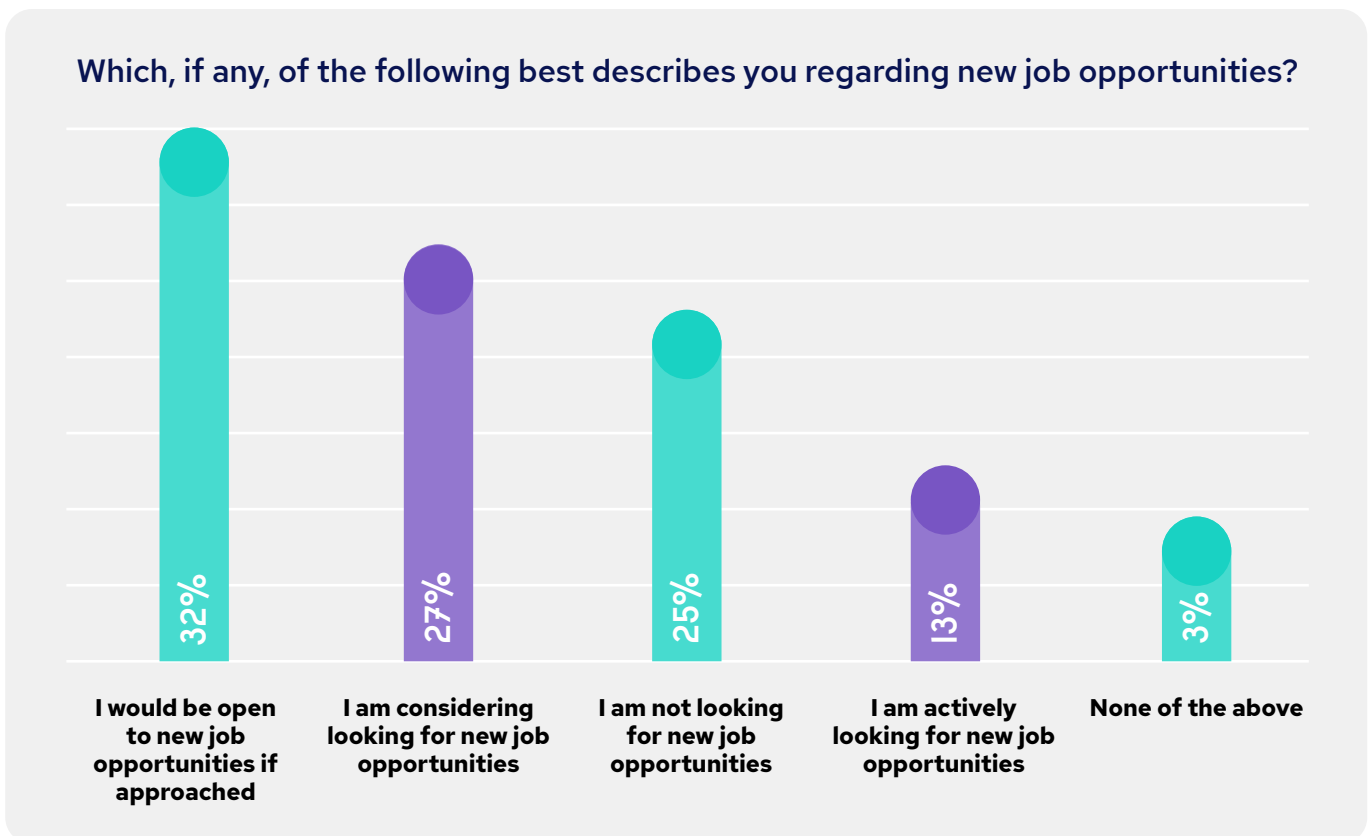
Many employees are willing to sacrifice 'soft' benefits like free refreshments (11%), cycle-to-work schemes (11%), onsite parking (eight per cent), and wellness programmes (seven per cent) for higher pay. Even some 'harder' benefits like health insurance are on the table for six per cent of those who took part.

- **Underutilised benefits:** Some commonly offered benefits, such as cycle-to-work schemes (11% unused) and the ability to purchase additional annual leave (seven per cent unused), are not being fully utilised by employees. This suggests that while benefits are appreciated, their perceived value can be lower than direct cash compensation, especially in the current financial climate.
- **Prevalence of benefits:** Common benefits include onsite parking (27%), hybrid working (23%), and Christmas shutdown (21%). However, 15% of respondents receive no benefits at all.

5. A highly mobile workforce

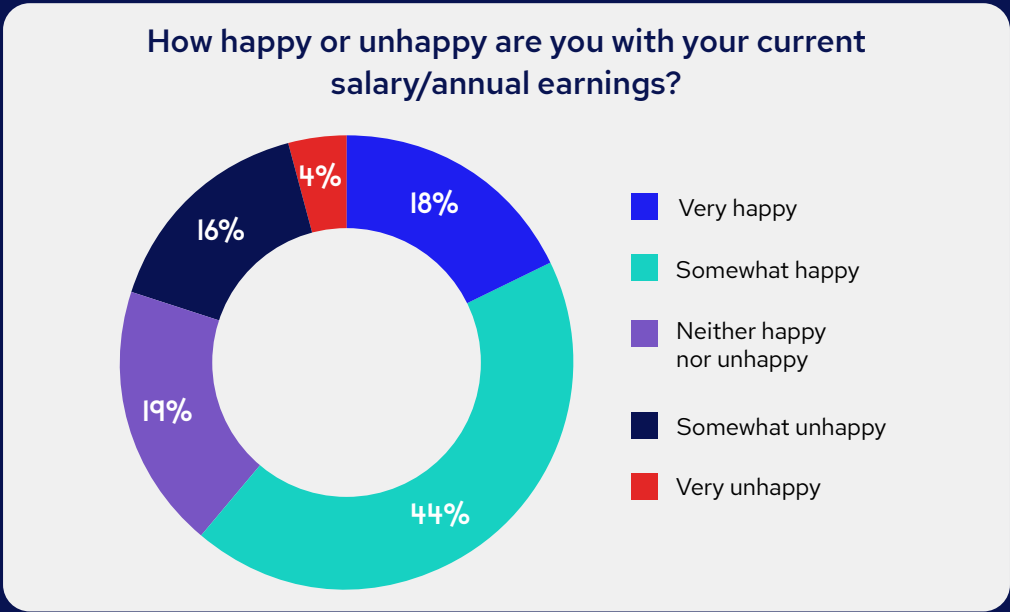
While the **average tenure is 8.54 years**, the high openness to new roles suggests that even long-serving employees are not immune to the pull of better compensation.

- **Open to new opportunities:** A significant majority (72%) of the workforce is considering a new role. A third (32%) are open to new job opportunities if approached, 27% are considering looking and 13% are actively looking. Only a quarter of employees (25%) are not looking for a new job opportunity at all.



Money, money, money

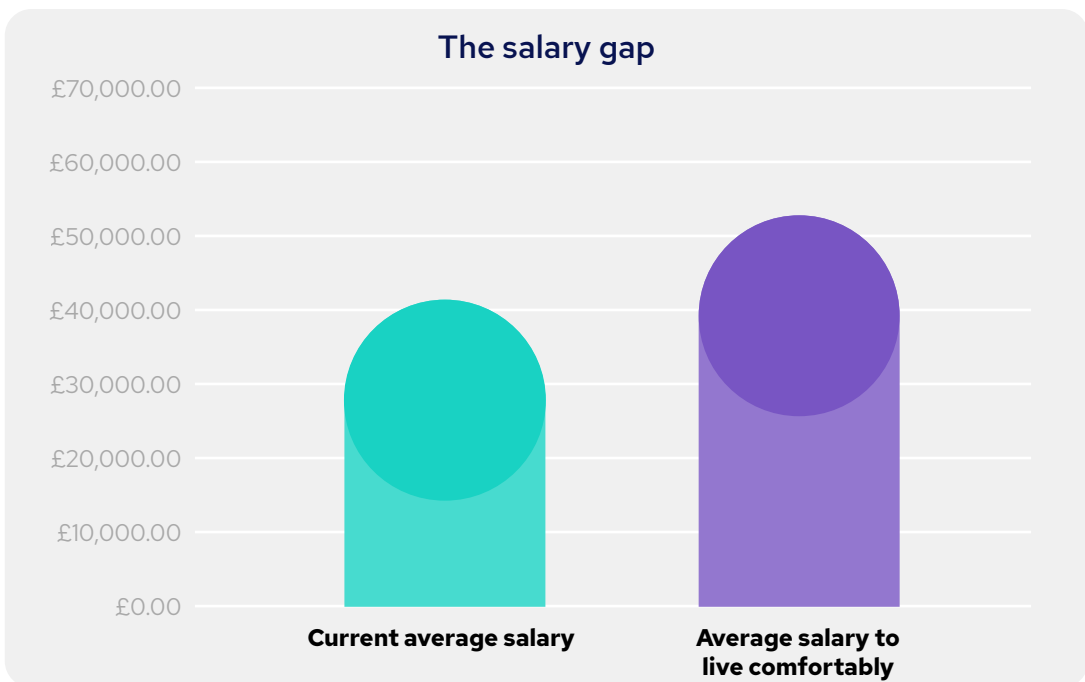
With ongoing cost-of-living challenges, salaries continue to be a huge area of discussion in the employment market, for both professionals and businesses. The data reveals the UK workforce is under significant financial pressure, with a clear and growing emphasis on salary as a primary driver of job satisfaction and career decisions.



Currently, over half (61%) of workers are happy with the pay they receive. However, that leaves a significant 20% of professionals feeling unhappy with their current salary, and another 19% feeling ambivalent (“neither happy nor unhappy”).

Of those who are unhappy, the overwhelming reason, cited by over half (52%), is that their pay hasn’t risen with the cost of living. Other key reasons include feeling they “do so much more than my job role” (39%), being “unable to save enough to meet my financial goals” (37%), and their salary “not being enough to live the lifestyle I want” (35%).

The disparity between the average current wage and the salary people would be comfortable with remains substantial. This year, the average current salary for survey respondents stands at **£40,638.35**. However, the average income people believe they need to live comfortably is **£51,748.73**, representing an average **£11,110.38 gap**. This ‘comfort gap’ indicates a widespread desire for higher earnings.



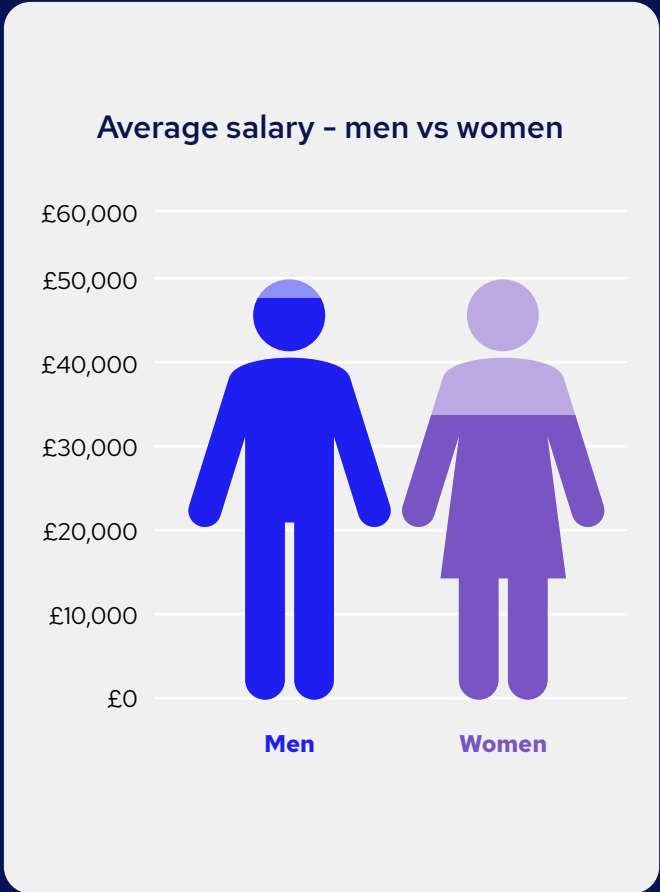
The financial strain is evident in monthly disposable income. A concerning **seven per cent of respondents have £0 leftover** each month after essential bills, with their entire salary going towards necessities. Overall, **26% have £100 or less remaining** for non-essential spending, savings, or leisure.



As a direct consequence of the financial climate as we enter 2026, 73% of professionals state that salary is more important now than it was before the cost-of-living crisis began in 2021, with 40% saying it is "significantly more important." Expectations for salary progression within the same role have also increased for 44% of workers. **To switch jobs, individuals expect a substantial average pay increase of £12,139.55.**

A deeper dive...

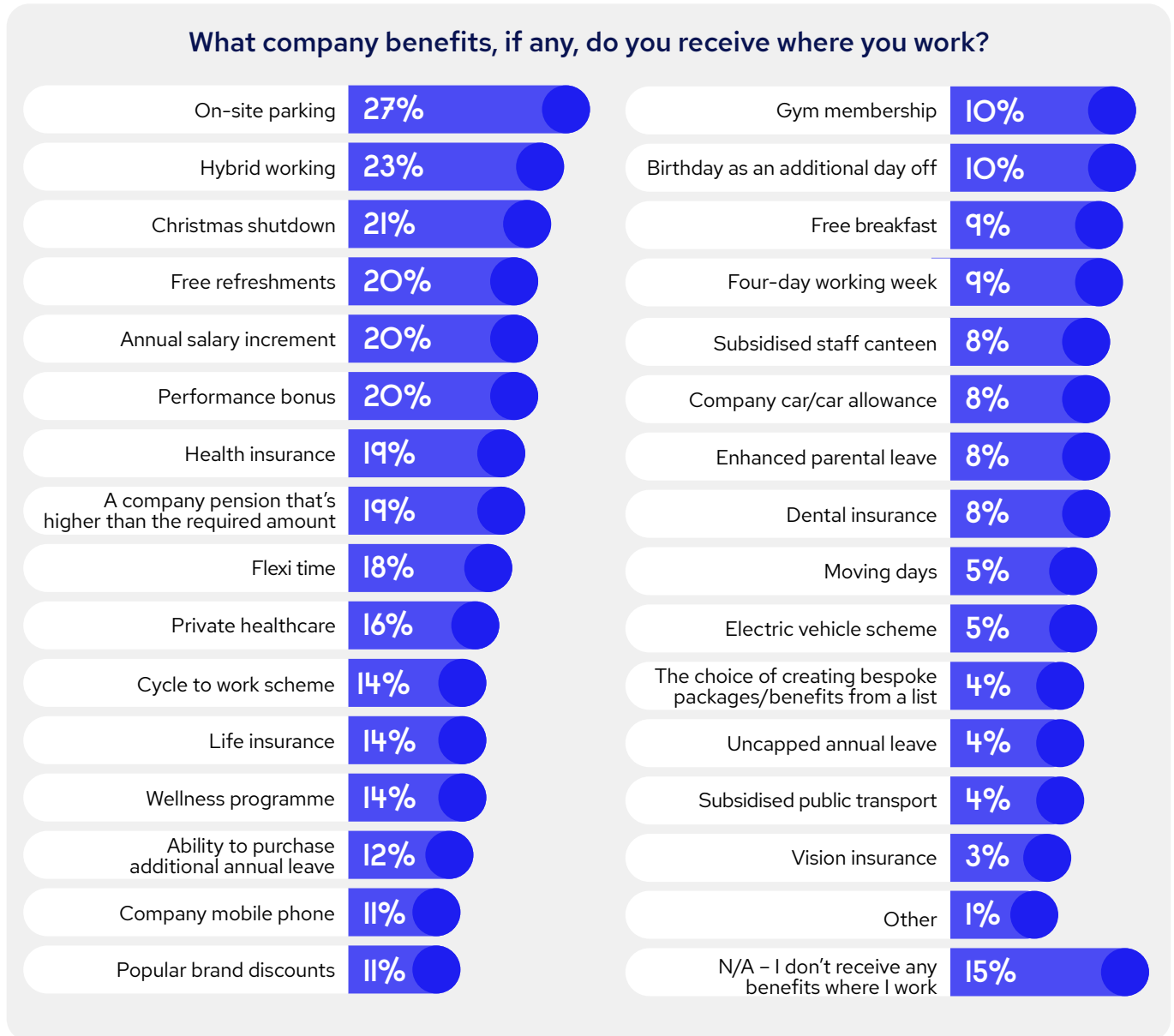
- Gender pay gap:** There remains a significant gender pay gap. The survey found that on average, men earn £48,367.15, while women earn £33,852.12, **a difference of over £14,500**. This disparity extends to satisfaction: 66% of men are happy with their salary compared to 57% of women, and women are more unhappy (24%) than men (16%). Men also perceive a higher comfortable salary (£59,688.07) than women (£44,707.25).
- Disposable income gap:** Women have significantly less disposable income, with an average of £626.61 left over monthly compared to £983.38 for men. Women are also twice as likely to have £0 leftover.
- Age and earnings:** Current salaries peak in the 25-34 age group (£49,853.43), while the desired comfortable income peaks in the 25-34 age group (£65,341.10). Salary satisfaction is highest for younger workers (18-34) and lowest for the 45-54 age group, where only 51% are happy with their pay. This 45-54 age group also reports the highest percentage (nine per cent) with £0 leftover monthly.
- Job mobility:** Younger workers (18-34) are most willing to change jobs for salary increases, while older workers (55+) are significantly less likely to change jobs for more money, indicating that other factors become more important with age.



All about the benefits

While offering a higher salary remains the most direct way to attract and retain employees, the benefits package also plays a role, especially for businesses unable to match top-tier salaries. **However, 15% of respondents currently say they receive no workplace benefits at all.**

Commonly offered benefits include onsite parking (27%), hybrid working (23%), and Christmas shutdown (21%). However, there's a noticeable disconnect between offered and desired benefits, and also a willingness to sacrifice many perks for higher pay.



A deeper dive...

- **Sacrificing perks for pay:** Many employees are willing to sacrifice 'soft' benefits for higher pay. Free refreshments (11%) and cycle to work schemes (11%) are the benefits most employees would be willing to give up.
- **Age and benefits:** Younger workers (25-34) are most willing to sacrifice benefits for higher pay, while older workers (55+) are significantly less willing to do so, suggesting they value their existing benefits more.
- **Gender benefit gap:** Women are more likely to receive no benefits (17% vs. 12% for men) and, on average, men report receiving more benefits overall.

Key takeaways for businesses:

Over two-thirds of professionals (72%) are currently looking or open to looking for a new job – highlighting a critical need for businesses to audit what they are offering their current and future talent. The primary drivers for this job market engagement are financial, with the cost-of-living crisis acting as a significant catalyst.



Address the 'comfort gap': The £11,110.38 gap between current and desired comfortable income is a major source of dissatisfaction and a driver of job mobility. Competitive salaries are no longer just about attracting talent but retaining it.



Targeted retention: Mid-career professionals (25-44) are a high-risk group, demanding the largest pay increases to switch jobs and showing the highest increase in salary progression expectations. Retention strategies must be robust for this segment.



Acknowledge gender disparities: The significant gender pay gap, lower salary satisfaction, and reduced financial flexibility for women are critical issues. Businesses must address these disparities to foster equity and retain female talent.

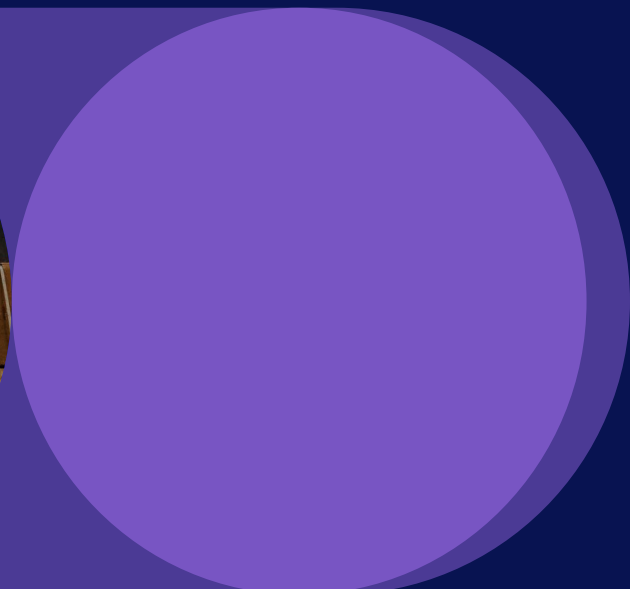


Strategic benefits offerings: While salary is king, benefits can still make a difference. However, businesses should evaluate the relevance and perceived value of their benefits packages. Many employees are willing to sacrifice less-valued benefits for higher pay, suggesting that resources might be better allocated to more impactful perks or direct compensation.



Prioritise financial wellbeing: The struggle to meet financial obligations and save for goals is widespread. Benefits that directly support financial wellbeing (e.g., better pensions, performance bonuses) are likely to be highly valued, especially when employees are willing to trade other perks for them.

The current economic climate has made salary a paramount concern for the majority of the UK workforce. Businesses that fail to recognise and adapt to these heightened financial expectations and disparities risk losing valuable talent in a highly mobile job market.





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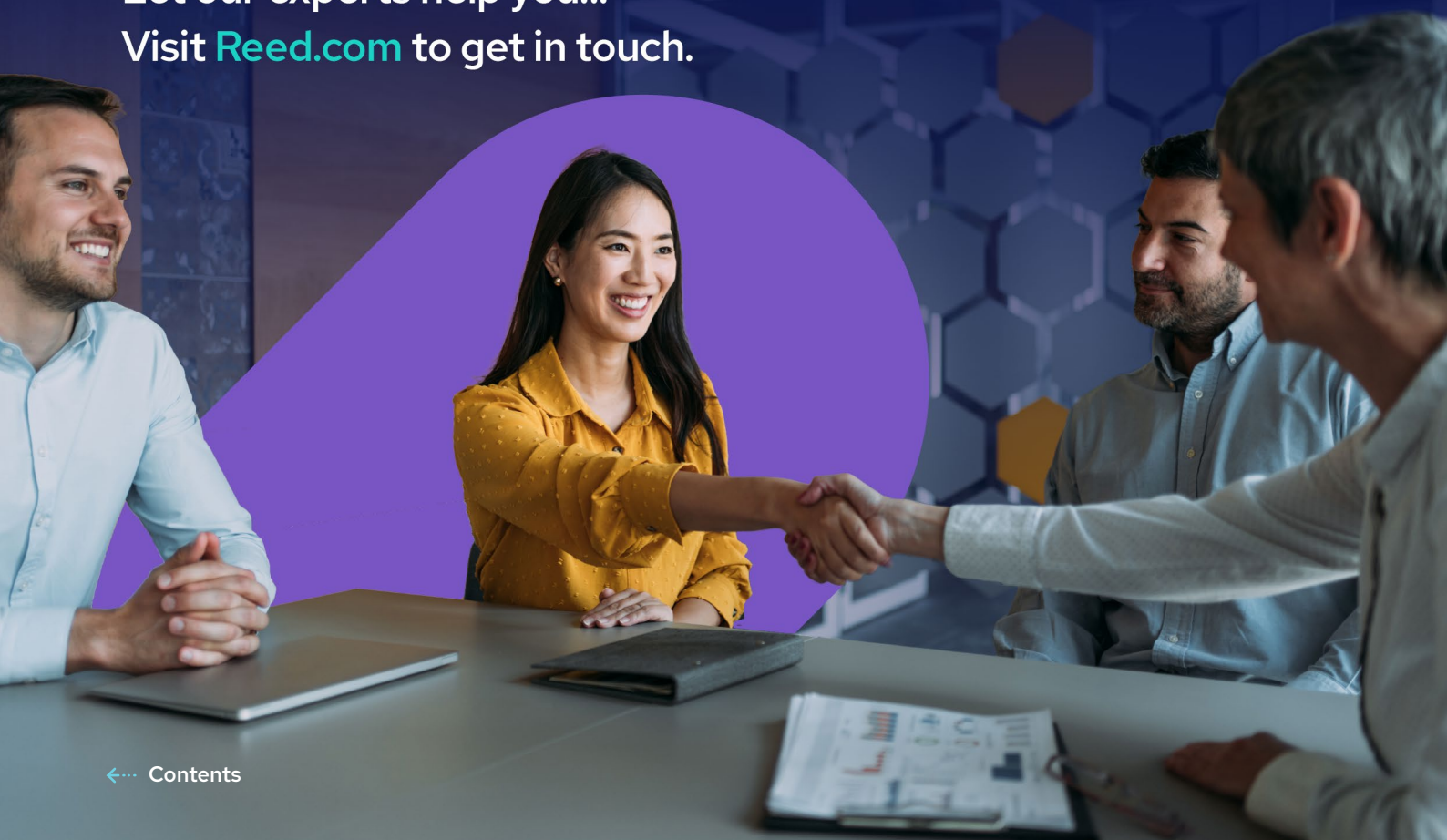


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Leadership



Chief Procurement Officer

Company turnover	Private sector				Public sector		
	£0-£10M	£10M-£50M	£50M-£100M	£100M+	Min	Average	Max
London	£159,700	£196,000	£216,400	£231,400	£117,900	£152,500	£240,100
Midlands and East	£124,200	£153,200	£169,200	£180,000	£92,000	£119,000	£187,200
North	£122,200	£151,000	£167,100	£177,800	£90,800	£116,800	£185,000
Scotland	£121,000	£148,900	£165,000	£175,700	£88,700	£115,800	£182,800
South	£130,700	£160,700	£177,800	£189,600	£96,300	£124,400	£196,800
Wales	£118,900	£146,800	£162,800	£173,500	£87,700	£113,600	£180,700
Northern Ireland	£117,800	£144,600	£160,700	£171,400	£86,500	£112,500	£177,400

Procurement Director

Company turnover	Private sector				Public sector		
	£0-£10M	£10M-£50M	£50M-£100M	£100M+	Min	Average	Max
London	£130,700	£141,400	£173,600	£214,200	£96,300	£107,100	£115,800
Midlands and East	£101,800	£110,300	£136,100	£167,100	£74,700	£83,300	£90,800
North	£100,700	£109,300	£133,900	£165,000	£74,700	£82,200	£89,800
Scotland	£98,600	£107,100	£131,700	£161,800	£73,500	£81,200	£87,700
South	£107,100	£115,700	£142,400	£175,700	£79,000	£87,700	£95,200
Wales	£97,400	£106,100	£130,700	£160,700	£72,500	£80,000	£86,500
Northern Ireland	£96,400	£105,000	£128,500	£158,500	£71,400	£79,000	£85,500

Head of Procurement

Company turnover	Private sector				Public sector		
	£0-£10M	£10M-£50M	£50M-£100M	£100M+	Min	Average	Max
London	£86,700	£99,600	£124,200	£141,400	£82,200	£86,500	£97,300
Midlands and East	£67,500	£77,100	£96,400	£110,300	£63,900	£67,100	£75,700
North	£66,400	£77,100	£95,400	£109,300	£62,700	£67,100	£74,700
Scotland	£66,400	£76,000	£94,200	£107,100	£61,700	£66,000	£73,500
South	£70,700	£81,400	£101,800	£115,700	£67,100	£71,400	£80,000
Wales	£65,300	£75,000	£93,200	£106,000	£61,700	£64,900	£73,500
Northern Ireland	£64,300	£74,000	£92,100	£105,000	£60,600	£63,900	£72,500

Leadership insight

Hugh Meatyard

Leadership Recruitment Expert, Reed



// As we enter 2026, the leadership landscape in procurement and supply chain is being reshaped by economic pressures and new operational demands. As organisations navigate tight budgets, the value of strategic procurement leadership has never been more apparent. While some businesses are consolidating roles by merging procurement and finance functions to save on senior salaries, many recognise that skilled leaders are essential for driving efficiency and cost savings.

In the public sector, hiring for senior roles like head of procurement continues, though salary constraints present a significant challenge. This is particularly true for specialised areas such as IT procurement, leading to companies having to use a specialist procurement recruiter with a good network in the IT procurement category. In contrast, the private sector retains more flexibility, using performance bonuses, car allowances, and private healthcare to attract and retain top leadership talent.

Across both sectors, leadership professionals are becoming more selective. They are scrutinising a company's culture and the strategic importance placed on their function before

applying. A role that is purely operational, with little scope for transformational change, is less attractive to ambitious leaders.

Hybrid working remains a key expectation, with a model of two or three days onsite being the norm. While private sector companies may offer more comprehensive benefits, public sector organisations often leverage flexibility to compete for talent. Ultimately, leaders are seeking roles where they can make a tangible impact, supported by a forward-thinking culture and a competitive remuneration package that reflects their strategic value.

Increasingly, senior leadership will also need to champion priorities like ESG and sustainability, which are growing in prominence across all sectors. The integration of digital transformation initiatives – such as automation, advanced analytics, and AI – requires experienced managers who can bridge technology with business goals. Furthermore, recent regulatory changes demand those in senior roles who can adapt to heightened governance requirements and upskill teams to stay compliant. Leaders who can successfully balance these demands will be best positioned to drive lasting organisational success in 2026. //

Procurement



London

South East

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assistant Buyer	£29,000	£30,800	£32,600	£28,200	£29,900	£31,600
Bid Manager	£54,600	£58,800	£81,400	£51,400	£56,200	£61,100
Bid Writer	£41,600	£47,100	£52,700	£41,300	£45,300	£49,200
Buyer	£41,700	£46,200	£50,700	£36,500	£40,100	£43,500
Category Manager	£62,500	£68,300	£74,200	£53,300	£58,300	£63,300
Category Specialist	£53,600	£64,300	£75,000	£48,200	£57,800	£67,500
Commercial Manager	£58,900	£69,600	£80,300	£53,000	£62,700	£72,300
Contracts Manager	£47,100	£54,600	£77,100	£59,800	£61,400	£63,000
ESG Procurement Manager	£77,100	£88,900	£101,800	£69,400	£80,000	£91,600
Operations Manager	£59,400	£66,900	£74,400	£48,600	£54,000	£59,500
Procurement Analyst	£42,400	£47,200	£52,000	£33,700	£37,600	£42,300
Procurement Assistant	£38,700	£41,300	£43,800	£31,000	£33,400	£36,400
Procurement Manager	£68,800	£75,100	£81,400	£55,700	£60,500	£65,300
Procurement Officer	£52,000	£55,300	£58,600	£42,100	£45,600	£49,300
Procurement Specialist	£47,400	£51,300	£55,300	£46,000	£49,600	£53,100
Procurement/Purchasing Manager	£68,500	£74,600	£80,800	£55,100	£60,300	£65,600
Purchasing Manager	£53,600	£58,900	£69,600	£48,200	£53,000	£62,700
Senior Buyer	£62,500	£70,500	£78,500	£40,100	£45,000	£50,000
Senior Category Manager	£67,000	£72,200	£77,500	£53,700	£60,700	£67,800
Sourcing Manager	£58,900	£69,600	£80,300	£53,000	£62,700	£72,300
Strategic Procurement Manager	£75,000	£85,700	£96,400	£67,500	£77,100	£86,800
Supplier Relationship Manager	£65,800	£72,600	£79,500	£49,900	£55,700	£61,600

Procurement



South West

East Midlands

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assistant Buyer	£26,800	£30,100	£32,100	£24,500	£27,800	£31,500
Bid Manager	£53,600	£67,100	£75,000	£40,600	£44,200	£47,700
Bid Writer	£37,500	£42,600	£48,200	£32,500	£36,700	£41,100
Buyer	£37,500	£45,500	£48,200	£32,500	£36,000	£39,500
Category Manager	£50,100	£55,100	£60,300	£48,700	£53,300	£58,000
Category Specialist	£43,000	£51,900	£60,800	£41,800	£50,100	£58,500
Commercial Manager	£47,200	£56,100	£65,200	£46,000	£54,300	£62,700
Contracts Manager	£48,200	£54,600	£58,900	£31,500	£34,700	£38,000
ESG Procurement Manager	£61,900	£71,700	£82,600	£60,200	£69,300	£79,400
Operations Manager	£47,700	£53,900	£60,300	£46,300	£52,200	£58,000
Procurement Analyst	£30,500	£33,500	£39,900	£33,100	£36,800	£40,500
Procurement Assistant	£26,000	£31,300	£33,700	£30,200	£32,200	£34,100
Procurement Manager	£55,200	£60,500	£66,100	£53,700	£58,600	£63,500
Procurement Officer	£41,700	£44,600	£47,600	£40,500	£43,100	£45,700
Procurement Specialist	£38,000	£41,300	£44,900	£37,000	£40,100	£43,100
Procurement/Purchasing Manager	£55,000	£60,100	£65,600	£53,300	£58,200	£63,000
Purchasing Manager	£43,000	£47,500	£56,600	£41,800	£46,000	£54,300
Senior Buyer	£50,100	£56,800	£63,700	£48,700	£55,000	£61,300
Senior Category Manager	£53,800	£58,200	£69,600	£52,300	£56,300	£60,400
Sourcing Manager	£47,200	£56,100	£69,600	£46,000	£54,300	£62,700
Strategic Procurement Manager	£60,200	£69,100	£78,300	£58,500	£66,900	£75,200
Supplier Relationship Manager	£52,800	£58,600	£64,500	£51,300	£56,700	£62,000

Procurement



West Midlands

East Anglia

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assistant Buyer	£25,400	£26,700	£31,300	£24,800	£28,400	£33,200
Bid Manager	£41,100	£45,000	£48,500	£49,300	£52,300	£55,200
Bid Writer	£32,900	£37,400	£41,900	£33,500	£37,800	£42,900
Buyer	£32,900	£36,600	£40,300	£35,800	£39,600	£48,200
Category Manager	£49,400	£54,200	£58,900	£48,500	£52,600	£56,700
Category Specialist	£42,300	£51,000	£59,600	£48,200	£53,600	£58,900
Commercial Manager	£46,600	£55,300	£63,800	£53,600	£66,400	£75,000
Contracts Manager	£31,900	£35,400	£38,700	£49,500	£52,500	£55,500
ESG Procurement Manager	£61,000	£70,500	£80,800	£66,400	£75,000	£85,700
Operations Manager	£46,900	£53,000	£59,000	£49,000	£56,800	£69,600
Procurement Analyst	£33,500	£37,500	£41,300	£26,300	£29,200	£32,000
Procurement Assistant	£30,600	£32,700	£34,700	£26,000	£31,300	£33,700
Procurement Manager	£54,300	£59,600	£64,600	£49,100	£58,900	£69,600
Procurement Officer	£41,000	£43,800	£46,500	£34,100	£36,100	£38,000
Procurement Specialist	£37,400	£40,700	£43,900	£46,400	£58,100	£69,700
Procurement/Purchasing Manager	£54,100	£59,100	£64,200	£48,700	£58,900	£69,600
Purchasing Manager	£42,300	£46,700	£55,300	£42,900	£58,900	£69,600
Senior Buyer	£49,400	£55,900	£62,400	£42,900	£51,400	£58,900
Senior Category Manager	£52,900	£57,300	£61,500	£53,600	£64,300	£75,000
Sourcing Manager	£46,600	£55,300	£63,800	£53,600	£58,900	£67,500
Strategic Procurement Manager	£59,200	£68,000	£76,600	£53,600	£60,000	£75,000
Supplier Relationship Manager	£52,000	£57,600	£63,100	£43,800	£47,000	£50,100

Procurement



North East

North West

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assistant Buyer	£24,800	£27,800	£31,600	£24,800	£27,800	£31,600
Bid Manager	£40,100	£43,600	£47,100	£43,200	£47,000	£50,800
Bid Writer	£32,000	£36,300	£40,600	£34,500	£39,100	£43,700
Buyer	£32,100	£35,600	£39,000	£34,600	£38,400	£42,100
Category Manager	£48,100	£52,600	£57,200	£51,900	£56,800	£61,600
Category Specialist	£41,200	£49,500	£57,700	£44,500	£53,300	£62,200
Commercial Manager	£45,400	£53,700	£61,900	£49,000	£57,800	£66,700
Contracts Manager	£31,100	£34,300	£37,500	£33,500	£37,000	£40,500
ESG Procurement Manager	£59,400	£68,500	£78,400	£64,100	£73,800	£84,500
Operations Manager	£45,700	£51,400	£57,200	£49,300	£55,500	£61,700
Procurement Analyst	£32,700	£36,300	£40,000	£35,200	£39,200	£43,100
Procurement Assistant	£29,800	£31,800	£33,700	£32,100	£34,200	£36,300
Procurement Manager	£52,900	£57,800	£62,700	£57,100	£62,400	£67,600
Procurement Officer	£40,000	£42,500	£45,100	£43,200	£45,900	£48,600
Procurement Specialist	£36,400	£39,500	£42,500	£39,300	£42,600	£45,900
Procurement/Purchasing Manager	£52,700	£57,400	£62,200	£56,800	£61,900	£67,100
Purchasing Manager	£41,200	£45,400	£53,700	£44,500	£49,000	£57,800
Senior Buyer	£48,100	£54,300	£60,400	£51,900	£58,500	£65,100
Senior Category Manager	£51,500	£55,600	£59,700	£55,600	£59,900	£64,300
Sourcing Manager	£45,400	£53,700	£61,900	£49,000	£57,800	£66,700
Strategic Procurement Manager	£57,700	£66,000	£74,200	£62,200	£71,100	£80,000
Supplier Relationship Manager	£50,700	£55,900	£61,200	£54,600	£60,300	£66,000

Procurement



Yorkshire & Humberside

Northern Ireland

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assistant Buyer	£24,800	£27,800	£31,600	£24,800	£27,800	£31,600
Bid Manager	£40,900	£44,500	£48,000	£38,000	£41,300	£44,700
Bid Writer	£32,700	£37,000	£41,300	£30,300	£34,400	£38,500
Buyer	£32,700	£36,200	£39,700	£30,400	£33,700	£37,000
Category Manager	£49,100	£53,700	£58,300	£45,600	£49,900	£54,200
Category Specialist	£42,100	£50,500	£58,900	£39,100	£46,900	£54,700
Commercial Manager	£46,300	£54,600	£63,100	£43,100	£50,900	£58,700
Contracts Manager	£31,700	£35,000	£38,200	£29,500	£32,600	£35,600
ESG Procurement Manager	£60,500	£69,800	£79,900	£56,300	£64,900	£74,400
Operations Manager	£46,600	£52,500	£58,400	£43,300	£48,800	£54,300
Procurement Analyst	£33,300	£37,000	£40,800	£30,900	£34,500	£37,900
Procurement Assistant	£30,400	£32,400	£34,300	£28,200	£30,100	£31,900
Procurement Manager	£54,000	£58,900	£64,000	£49,900	£54,900	£59,500
Procurement Officer	£40,800	£43,400	£46,000	£37,900	£40,400	£42,800
Procurement Specialist	£37,200	£40,300	£43,400	£34,600	£37,500	£40,400
Procurement/Purchasing Manager	£53,800	£58,500	£63,400	£49,900	£54,400	£58,900
Purchasing Manager	£42,100	£46,300	£54,600	£39,100	£43,100	£50,900
Senior Buyer	£49,100	£55,400	£61,600	£45,600	£51,400	£57,300
Senior Category Manager	£52,600	£56,700	£60,800	£48,800	£52,700	£56,600
Sourcing Manager	£46,300	£54,600	£63,100	£43,100	£50,900	£58,700
Strategic Procurement Manager	£58,900	£67,300	£75,700	£54,700	£62,600	£70,400
Supplier Relationship Manager	£51,600	£57,000	£62,400	£48,000	£53,000	£58,100

Procurement



Scotland

Wales

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assistant Buyer	£24,800	£28,300	£32,900	£24,800	£27,700	£31,700
Bid Manager	£40,400	£45,000	£49,600	£39,500	£43,100	£46,500
Bid Writer	£32,200	£37,500	£42,800	£31,600	£35,800	£40,100
Buyer	£32,400	£36,700	£41,000	£32,100	£35,100	£40,700
Category Manager	£48,400	£54,300	£60,200	£47,500	£52,000	£56,500
Category Specialist	£41,600	£51,100	£60,700	£40,700	£48,800	£57,000
Commercial Manager	£45,700	£55,400	£65,100	£44,800	£52,900	£61,100
Contracts Manager	£31,400	£35,500	£39,500	£30,800	£33,900	£37,100
ESG Procurement Manager	£59,900	£70,700	£82,500	£58,600	£67,600	£77,300
Operations Manager	£46,100	£53,100	£60,200	£45,100	£50,800	£56,500
Procurement Analyst	£32,900	£37,500	£42,100	£32,200	£35,900	£39,500
Procurement Assistant	£30,000	£32,800	£35,500	£28,200	£30,200	£32,400
Procurement Manager	£53,300	£59,700	£66,000	£52,300	£57,100	£64,300
Procurement Officer	£40,300	£43,900	£47,500	£39,500	£42,000	£44,600
Procurement Specialist	£36,700	£40,800	£44,800	£36,000	£39,000	£42,000
Procurement/Purchasing Manager	£53,100	£59,200	£65,500	£52,100	£56,700	£61,400
Purchasing Manager	£41,600	£46,800	£56,500	£40,700	£44,800	£52,900
Senior Buyer	£48,400	£56,000	£63,600	£47,500	£53,600	£59,700
Senior Category Manager	£52,000	£57,400	£62,800	£50,900	£54,900	£58,800
Sourcing Manager	£45,700	£55,400	£65,100	£44,800	£52,900	£61,100
Strategic Procurement Manager	£58,200	£68,100	£78,100	£57,000	£65,100	£73,300
Supplier Relationship Manager	£51,000	£57,700	£64,400	£50,000	£55,200	£60,400

Procurement insight



Daniel Paul

Procurement Expert, Reed

// Moving into 2026, the procurement sector is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by technological advancements and a renewed focus on strategic value. Digital platforms and AI tools are automating routine administrative tasks like supplier checks, contract reviews, and invoice processing. This shift allows procurement teams to dedicate more time to strategy and less to manual, repetitive work. However, it also raises questions about the future of junior roles, which have traditionally served as a training ground for learning the fundamentals of the profession.

The demand for skilled procurement professionals remains high, with good people still hard to find – that’s why using a recruiter is vital for many businesses. Employers are often seeking individuals with specific experience to tackle unique challenges, from navigating post-Brexit trade complexities to implementing new systems. While many companies prefer ready-made experience, there is an opportunity for those who can demonstrate a tangible impact, such as cost savings or process improvements.

Sustainability and environmental, social and governance (ESG) targets are now integral to procurement strategy. Following new rules for public contracts that consider carbon emissions and community benefits, there is a growing need for professionals who understand the ESG agenda. Procurement teams are working more closely with sustainability and finance departments to evaluate suppliers based on their environmental and social impact. This has created a demand for professionals who can navigate these complex requirements.




In response to these trends, salary expectations are rising. Professionals with recognised qualifications, strong digital skills, and experience in ESG can command higher salaries. Larger companies with deeper pockets are often able to meet these expectations, while some smaller employers struggle to keep pace. To compete, these businesses must offer compelling non-monetary benefits. Flexible working arrangements, clear career progression pathways, and a strong, purpose-driven company culture are becoming crucial differentiators in attracting and retaining procurement professionals. //

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Supply chain



London

South East

Role	London			South East		
	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Demand Planner	£39,100	£44,900	£50,600	£35,200	£40,400	£45,500
Demand Planning Manager	£52,500	£58,500	£78,200	£47,800	£53,200	£71,100
Head of Supply Chain	£66,400	£84,600	£102,800	£59,800	£76,200	£92,600
Inventory Analyst	£36,600	£41,200	£44,900	£33,000	£37,100	£40,400
Inventory Control Manager	£40,700	£45,300	£48,200	£36,600	£40,800	£43,400
Inventory Planner	£41,900	£46,100	£49,000	£37,700	£41,500	£44,000
Merchandise Planner	£31,700	£40,600	£49,600	£28,500	£36,500	£44,700
Merchandiser	£34,300	£47,800	£64,300	£25,400	£33,300	£42,400
Operations Manager	£66,400	£72,900	£80,900	£59,800	£65,700	£72,800
Production Lead	£35,300	£38,600	£41,800	£31,800	£34,700	£37,600
Production Manager	£54,200	£64,700	£75,300	£48,700	£58,300	£67,800
Production Planner	£46,700	£49,600	£52,500	£42,000	£44,700	£47,200
Supply Chain Analyst	£38,100	£43,800	£49,600	£34,300	£39,400	£44,700
Supply Chain Coordinator	£29,700	£33,400	£37,100	£26,700	£30,100	£33,300
Supply Chain Director	£103,100	£115,800	£128,500	£92,800	£104,200	£115,700
Supply Chain Manager	£63,400	£69,600	£75,800	£57,100	£62,700	£68,200
Supply Chain Planner	£36,100	£39,100	£42,100	£32,500	£35,200	£37,900
Supply Chain Project Manager	£48,200	£56,800	£64,300	£43,400	£51,100	£57,800
Supply Manager	£62,000	£68,000	£74,000	£55,800	£61,300	£66,600
Vendor Manager	£43,500	£64,600	£80,300	£39,100	£58,200	£72,300

Supply chain



South West

East Midlands

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Demand Planner	£37,500	£41,300	£45,000	£30,500	£35,000	£39,400
Demand Planning Manager	£45,100	£50,300	£67,200	£40,900	£45,500	£61,000
Head of Supply Chain	£58,900	£67,900	£82,500	£51,900	£66,000	£80,200
Inventory Analyst	£32,100	£35,200	£37,500	£28,600	£32,100	£35,000
Inventory Control Manager	£37,500	£39,900	£42,800	£31,700	£35,300	£37,600
Inventory Planner	£33,600	£37,000	£39,300	£32,700	£35,900	£38,100
Merchandise Planner	£28,900	£32,600	£39,700	£24,800	£31,700	£38,700
Merchandiser	£32,100	£34,900	£37,800	£24,800	£28,500	£33,500
Operations Manager	£53,300	£58,500	£64,900	£51,900	£56,900	£63,100
Production Lead	£32,100	£35,300	£37,500	£27,500	£30,100	£32,600
Production Manager	£43,500	£52,000	£60,400	£42,300	£50,400	£58,700
Production Planner	£37,500	£39,900	£42,100	£36,400	£38,700	£40,900
Supply Chain Analyst	£32,100	£39,400	£42,800	£29,800	£34,200	£38,700
Supply Chain Coordinator	£26,800	£28,900	£32,100	£24,800	£26,000	£28,900
Supply Chain Director	£82,700	£92,900	£103,200	£80,300	£90,300	£100,300
Supply Chain Manager	£50,900	£55,900	£60,800	£49,500	£54,300	£59,100
Supply Chain Planner	£32,100	£38,800	£42,800	£28,200	£30,500	£32,900
Supply Chain Project Manager	£38,700	£45,500	£51,500	£37,600	£44,200	£50,100
Supply Manager	£49,800	£54,600	£59,500	£48,400	£53,000	£57,700
Vendor Manager	£34,900	£51,900	£64,500	£34,000	£50,300	£62,700

Supply chain



West Midlands

East Anglia

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Demand Planner	£30,800	£35,500	£40,000	£32,000	£36,900	£45,000
Demand Planning Manager	£41,500	£46,200	£61,700	£42,000	£46,800	£62,600
Head of Supply Chain	£52,500	£66,800	£81,200	£54,400	£69,400	£84,300
Inventory Analyst	£28,900	£32,600	£35,500	£30,100	£33,700	£36,700
Inventory Control Manager	£32,100	£35,800	£38,100	£33,400	£37,200	£39,500
Inventory Planner	£33,100	£36,300	£38,700	£34,400	£37,700	£40,200
Merchandise Planner	£25,100	£32,100	£39,200	£30,000	£36,400	£40,700
Merchandiser	£24,800	£28,800	£33,900	£24,800	£28,700	£34,000
Operations Manager	£52,500	£57,600	£63,800	£54,400	£59,800	£69,600
Production Lead	£28,000	£30,400	£33,000	£34,300	£37,500	£40,800
Production Manager	£42,800	£51,100	£59,500	£51,400	£57,800	£64,300
Production Planner	£36,900	£39,200	£41,500	£33,700	£40,700	£43,100
Supply Chain Analyst	£30,100	£34,600	£39,200	£37,300	£42,800	£48,200
Supply Chain Coordinator	£25,400	£26,700	£31,300	£28,900	£33,700	£37,500
Supply Chain Director	£81,400	£91,500	£101,500	£84,500	£94,900	£117,800
Supply Chain Manager	£50,100	£55,100	£59,900	£52,000	£57,100	£64,300
Supply Chain Planner	£28,500	£30,800	£33,200	£32,100	£34,500	£36,700
Supply Chain Project Manager	£38,100	£44,900	£50,800	£45,000	£51,400	£58,900
Supply Manager	£49,000	£53,800	£58,500	£50,900	£55,800	£64,300
Vendor Manager	£34,400	£51,000	£63,500	£35,700	£53,000	£65,900

Supply chain



North East

North West

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Demand Planner	£30,100	£34,600	£38,900	£32,500	£37,300	£42,000
Demand Planning Manager	£39,400	£43,800	£58,600	£42,400	£47,300	£63,300
Head of Supply Chain	£51,100	£65,100	£79,200	£55,200	£70,300	£85,400
Inventory Analyst	£28,200	£31,700	£34,500	£30,400	£34,200	£37,300
Inventory Control Manager	£31,400	£34,900	£37,200	£33,700	£37,600	£40,100
Inventory Planner	£32,200	£35,500	£37,700	£34,800	£38,200	£40,600
Merchandise Planner	£28,000	£31,300	£38,100	£26,200	£33,700	£41,100
Merchandiser	£24,800	£28,500	£36,300	£27,600	£30,700	£39,100
Operations Manager	£51,100	£56,100	£62,200	£55,200	£60,500	£67,200
Production Lead	£27,200	£29,700	£32,100	£29,400	£32,000	£34,700
Production Manager	£41,800	£49,800	£57,900	£45,000	£53,700	£62,400
Production Planner	£36,000	£38,200	£40,400	£38,800	£41,100	£43,600
Supply Chain Analyst	£29,400	£33,700	£38,200	£31,600	£36,300	£41,100
Supply Chain Coordinator	£24,800	£25,700	£28,500	£24,800	£27,700	£30,700
Supply Chain Director	£79,400	£89,100	£99,000	£85,500	£96,100	£106,700
Supply Chain Manager	£48,800	£53,700	£58,400	£52,600	£57,800	£63,000
Supply Chain Planner	£27,700	£30,100	£32,500	£30,000	£32,500	£34,900
Supply Chain Project Manager	£37,200	£43,700	£49,500	£40,100	£47,100	£53,400
Supply Manager	£47,800	£52,400	£57,000	£51,500	£56,500	£61,500
Vendor Manager	£33,500	£49,700	£61,900	£36,100	£53,700	£66,700

Supply chain



Yorkshire & Humberside

Northern Ireland

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Demand Planner	£30,700	£35,200	£39,700	£28,500	£32,800	£37,000
Demand Planning Manager	£40,900	£45,500	£61,000	£37,700	£42,100	£56,300
Head of Supply Chain	£52,200	£66,400	£80,800	£48,500	£61,800	£75,100
Inventory Analyst	£28,800	£32,400	£35,200	£26,800	£30,100	£32,800
Inventory Control Manager	£31,900	£35,600	£37,800	£29,700	£33,100	£35,200
Inventory Planner	£32,900	£36,100	£38,500	£30,500	£33,600	£35,700
Merchandise Planner	£24,900	£31,900	£38,900	£26,000	£29,700	£36,200
Merchandiser	£26,700	£29,100	£37,000	£25,700	£27,100	£34,400
Operations Manager	£52,200	£57,300	£63,500	£48,500	£53,200	£59,000
Production Lead	£27,700	£30,300	£32,800	£25,800	£28,200	£30,500
Production Manager	£42,500	£50,800	£59,100	£39,500	£47,200	£55,000
Production Planner	£36,600	£38,900	£41,200	£34,100	£36,200	£38,300
Supply Chain Analyst	£29,900	£34,400	£38,900	£27,900	£32,000	£36,200
Supply Chain Coordinator	£24,800	£26,200	£29,100	£24,800	£27,800	£32,300
Supply Chain Director	£80,900	£90,900	£100,900	£75,200	£84,500	£93,800
Supply Chain Manager	£49,800	£54,600	£59,600	£46,300	£50,900	£55,400
Supply Chain Planner	£28,400	£30,700	£33,100	£26,300	£28,500	£30,700
Supply Chain Project Manager	£37,800	£44,600	£50,400	£35,200	£41,500	£46,900
Supply Manager	£48,700	£53,300	£58,100	£45,300	£49,700	£54,000
Vendor Manager	£34,200	£50,700	£63,100	£31,700	£47,100	£58,700

Supply chain



Scotland

Wales

Role	Scotland			Wales		
	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Demand Planner	£30,300	£34,800	£39,200	£29,200	£33,500	£37,800
Demand Planning Manager	£42,700	£47,700	£63,300	£48,200	£52,500	£58,900
Head of Supply Chain	£51,500	£65,700	£79,800	£64,300	£69,600	£77,100
Inventory Analyst	£28,400	£31,900	£34,800	£27,400	£30,800	£33,500
Inventory Control Manager	£31,600	£35,200	£37,400	£30,400	£34,000	£36,100
Inventory Planner	£32,500	£35,700	£37,900	£31,300	£34,400	£36,600
Merchandise Planner	£24,800	£31,500	£38,500	£28,500	£30,400	£37,100
Merchandiser	£25,800	£28,800	£36,500	£26,000	£27,700	£35,200
Operations Manager	£51,500	£56,600	£62,800	£49,700	£54,500	£60,500
Production Lead	£27,400	£29,900	£32,500	£26,500	£28,800	£31,300
Production Manager	£42,100	£50,200	£58,500	£40,500	£48,400	£56,300
Production Planner	£36,200	£38,500	£40,700	£34,900	£37,100	£39,200
Supply Chain Analyst	£29,600	£34,000	£38,500	£28,500	£32,800	£37,100
Supply Chain Coordinator	£24,800	£25,900	£28,800	£24,800	£27,800	£31,500
Supply Chain Director	£80,000	£89,900	£99,700	£77,100	£86,600	£96,100
Supply Chain Manager	£49,200	£54,000	£58,800	£51,400	£56,800	£64,300
Supply Chain Planner	£28,100	£30,300	£32,700	£27,000	£29,200	£31,500
Supply Chain Project Manager	£37,400	£44,000	£49,900	£36,100	£42,400	£48,100
Supply Manager	£48,100	£52,800	£57,400	£46,400	£50,900	£55,400
Vendor Manager	£33,700	£50,100	£62,300	£32,600	£48,300	£60,100

Supply chain insight

Zehra Suleyman
Supply Chain Expert, Reed



// The supply chain sector is in a state of rapid evolution, driven by the pursuit of greater operational efficiency. Businesses are adapting their models to leverage technology, meet sustainability goals, and attract professionals with future-focused skills. As 2026 unfolds, the integration of AI, a commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles, and a flexible approach to talent management are defining the path forward.

Artificial intelligence is becoming a transformative force, moving from a buzzword to an essential tool. Companies are embedding AI across their entire supply chain, from inventory management and procurement cycles to logistics. This technology enables real-time, data-driven decisions, creating a more autonomous and streamlined process. As a result, demand is rising for professionals who can not only manage these systems but also translate vast amounts of data into meaningful actions. While specific job titles may not have changed, AI proficiency is increasingly a core requirement within job descriptions, especially for managerial roles.

Sustainability has also cemented its place as a strategic priority. Organisations are expected to track emissions, adopt

circular economy principles, and prioritise ethical sourcing. This has created a demand for professionals with expertise in ESG and carbon efficiency. Those looking for work in the sector are also scrutinising the environmental credentials of potential employers, making a strong sustainability policy crucial for attracting top talent.

The candidate market has strengthened, and professionals are clear about their expectations. While the demand for fully remote roles has softened, flexibility remains key. Employers who offer adaptable hours or a balanced hybrid model are more likely to attract and retain employees. Beyond flexibility, a company's commitment to technology and professional development is a major draw. Professionals in the sector are actively seeking forward-thinking organisations that are investing in upskilling their teams, recognising that continuous learning is vital for career longevity in a rapidly changing industry. Company culture is also under the microscope, with jobseekers wanting to know more about team dynamics and management styles before making a move. //

Logistics



London

South East

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Customs Clerk	£42,200	£46,500	£50,800	£29,700	£32,600	£35,300
Distribution Manager	£50,000	£53,600	£57,100	£46,500	£49,600	£52,800
Export Coordinator	£28,900	£31,200	£36,400	£26,000	£28,900	£35,300
Head of Customs & Trade Compliance	£72,800	£76,100	£85,700	£65,600	£68,500	£77,100
Import / Export Clerk	£32,100	£33,700	£39,600	£28,900	£32,100	£37,500
Import / Export Manager	£42,800	£48,200	£56,800	£38,600	£45,500	£53,600
Import Coordinator	£31,100	£33,600	£38,600	£28,000	£37,500	£40,700
Logistics Analyst	£50,600	£54,600	£58,700	£37,500	£40,200	£42,800
Logistics Coordinator	£30,000	£33,200	£36,300	£28,200	£29,800	£31,500
Logistics Director	£63,600	£79,300	£93,200	£57,300	£71,300	£83,900
Logistics Manager	£57,300	£63,800	£70,400	£51,600	£49,200	£53,500
Shipping Coordinator	£32,900	£36,000	£39,000	£29,600	£30,300	£32,600
Transport Coordinator	£39,900	£42,400	£44,900	£35,900	£39,900	£42,000
Transport Manager	£44,200	£48,700	£53,200	£39,900	£45,300	£49,100

South West

East Midlands

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Customs Clerk	£27,600	£31,400	£35,000	£26,900	£29,200	£31,600
Distribution Manager	£42,800	£49,800	£53,600	£39,000	£45,100	£51,300
Export Coordinator	£25,300	£25,300	£29,500	£26,000	£26,300	£28,400
Head of Customs & Trade Compliance	£59,000	£61,600	£69,400	£56,800	£59,300	£66,800
Import / Export Clerk	£26,000	£27,300	£32,100	£25,100	£26,300	£31,000
Import / Export Manager	£34,700	£39,100	£46,000	£33,400	£37,600	£44,200
Import Coordinator	£25,200	£27,200	£37,500	£26,000	£26,200	£30,100
Logistics Analyst	£36,600	£44,200	£47,600	£34,800	£37,500	£40,200
Logistics Coordinator	£25,700	£29,000	£32,100	£27,900	£29,400	£30,800
Logistics Director	£51,500	£64,200	£75,500	£49,600	£61,800	£72,700
Logistics Manager	£46,400	£51,700	£57,000	£44,700	£49,800	£54,800
Shipping Coordinator	£26,700	£29,100	£31,600	£25,600	£28,100	£30,400
Transport Coordinator	£32,200	£34,400	£36,300	£27,600	£29,500	£34,900
Transport Manager	£35,900	£39,500	£53,600	£38,100	£41,700	£45,100

Logistics



West Midlands

East Anglia

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Customs Clerk	£27,000	£29,500	£31,900	£25,400	£28,800	£32,400
Distribution Manager	£53,300	£58,700	£64,000	£44,400	£49,800	£55,500
Export Coordinator	£25,400	£26,700	£31,300	£28,900	£33,200	£35,300
Head of Customs & Trade Compliance	£57,500	£60,100	£67,700	£59,800	£62,300	£70,300
Import / Export Clerk	£25,400	£26,700	£31,300	£26,300	£27,600	£32,500
Import / Export Manager	£33,800	£38,100	£44,900	£35,100	£39,500	£46,600
Import Coordinator	£25,400	£26,700	£31,300	£30,000	£33,200	£36,400
Logistics Analyst	£30,500	£31,700	£32,900	£31,400	£33,800	£36,200
Logistics Coordinator	£26,900	£28,200	£29,600	£29,100	£30,500	£31,900
Logistics Director	£50,200	£62,700	£73,600	£52,200	£65,000	£76,400
Logistics Manager	£45,300	£50,400	£55,600	£47,000	£52,400	£57,700
Shipping Coordinator	£26,000	£28,400	£30,800	£27,000	£29,600	£31,900
Transport Coordinator	£28,500	£30,100	£36,100	£27,100	£30,200	£35,000
Transport Manager	£39,900	£46,400	£53,000	£36,600	£40,500	£44,500

North East

North West

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Customs Clerk	£24,800	£26,600	£28,700	£27,600	£31,000	£34,200
Distribution Manager	£38,000	£41,800	£45,600	£49,800	£55,500	£61,100
Export Coordinator	£24,800	£26,300	£28,100	£24,800	£25,900	£30,200
Head of Customs & Trade Compliance	£56,100	£58,600	£66,000	£60,400	£63,100	£71,100
Import / Export Clerk	£24,800	£26,000	£30,500	£26,700	£28,000	£32,900
Import / Export Manager	£33,000	£37,200	£43,700	£35,600	£40,100	£47,100
Import Coordinator	£24,500	£25,800	£29,700	£25,800	£27,900	£32,000
Logistics Analyst	£29,100	£31,200	£33,200	£34,900	£38,100	£41,200
Logistics Coordinator	£28,400	£30,200	£31,900	£26,100	£27,600	£29,200
Logistics Director	£49,000	£61,100	£71,800	£52,800	£65,800	£77,300
Logistics Manager	£44,100	£49,200	£54,200	£47,600	£53,000	£58,400
Shipping Coordinator	£25,300	£27,700	£30,000	£27,300	£29,900	£32,400
Transport Coordinator	£31,100	£33,100	£33,600	£31,100	£33,200	£34,300
Transport Manager	£34,000	£37,400	£40,800	£40,600	£44,400	£48,100

Logistics



Yorkshire & Humberside

Northern Ireland

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Customs Clerk	£33,100	£36,500	£39,900	£24,800	£25,200	£27,700
Distribution Manager	£39,300	£42,100	£44,800	£35,300	£39,700	£44,000
Export Coordinator	£26,200	£26,500	£28,600	£24,800	£27,800	£31,500
Head of Customs & Trade Compliance	£57,200	£59,700	£67,300	£51,000	£53,200	£60,000
Import / Export Clerk	£25,300	£26,500	£31,100	£26,600	£27,200	£27,700
Import / Export Manager	£33,600	£37,800	£44,600	£30,000	£33,700	£39,700
Import Coordinator	£25,800	£26,300	£30,300	£26,400	£26,400	£27,000
Logistics Analyst	£32,800	£34,800	£37,000	£27,200	£29,600	£32,000
Logistics Coordinator	£26,500	£28,100	£29,800	£24,800	£28,100	£31,900
Logistics Director	£49,900	£62,200	£73,200	£44,600	£55,500	£65,200
Logistics Manager	£45,000	£50,100	£55,300	£40,200	£44,700	£49,300
Shipping Coordinator	£25,800	£28,300	£30,600	£24,800	£25,200	£27,300
Transport Coordinator	£25,300	£27,700	£30,200	£27,900	£29,700	£31,400
Transport Manager	£41,700	£45,500	£49,500	£31,000	£34,100	£37,300

Scotland

Wales

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Customs Clerk	£27,900	£31,600	£35,300	£27,400	£30,600	£33,800
Distribution Manager	£35,700	£38,500	£41,200	£42,800	£48,200	£53,700
Export Coordinator	£24,800	£27,800	£31,500	£25,800	£26,400	£29,600
Head of Customs & Trade Compliance	£56,600	£57,800	£59,000	£54,500	£54,700	£55,000
Import / Export Clerk	£25,000	£25,500	£26,000	£24,800	£27,800	£31,300
Import / Export Manager	£33,200	£34,100	£34,700	£32,000	£32,100	£32,200
Import Coordinator	£24,800	£24,700	£25,200	£25,400	£25,200	£28,500
Logistics Analyst	£33,300	£37,200	£40,800	£32,900	£36,000	£39,000
Logistics Coordinator	£28,200	£31,200	£34,200	£24,800	£27,600	£30,700
Logistics Director	£49,400	£50,600	£51,600	£47,600	£47,800	£48,000
Logistics Manager	£44,400	£49,900	£55,400	£43,700	£48,400	£53,000
Shipping Coordinator	£25,400	£28,000	£30,400	£26,100	£29,000	£31,800
Transport Coordinator	£26,300	£28,800	£31,300	£25,900	£28,000	£29,900
Transport Manager	£38,900	£44,600	£50,100	£38,300	£43,200	£48,000

Logistics insight

Ashley Turner

Logistics Expert, Reed



// The logistics sector enters 2026 shaped by a blend of caution and transformation. A slower, more considered market has become the norm, with many businesses carefully managing their hiring decisions. Despite this, key areas are evolving, driven by technology, sustainability demands, and persistent talent challenges. Understanding these shifts is crucial for both employers and professionals navigating the year ahead.

One of the most significant changes is the growing impact of automation and AI. New systems have started to reduce the manual workload, particularly in customs processing, which has seen a marked decrease in demand for manpower over the last year. While the human element remains important for oversight and complex problem-solving, technology is undeniably streamlining operations. This shift is reducing the need for large teams to handle routine tasks, changing the skill sets required for frontline roles.

Sustainability has also become a powerful force. Interestingly, in a cost-conscious market, many companies are willing to pay a premium for sustainable logistics services to meet their environmental targets. This has created a niche for businesses that specialise in green logistics, proving that a

commitment to sustainability can be a competitive advantage.

Talent remains a key issue across the sector. The shortage of drivers is a persistent challenge that continues to impact transport companies. In parallel, attracting new blood into the industry is an ongoing battle. While large shipping lines often provide entry-level opportunities, smaller and mid-sized freight forwarders could do more to bring in and train younger talent.

Regional disparities also influence the talent market. In logistics hubs like Felixstowe, a high concentration of companies creates intense competition for local professionals, driving salaries slightly higher than in neighbouring areas. However, this has also resulted in a slight regression in salaries for some roles compared to previous years, reflecting broader economic pressures and rising operational costs for employers.

Flexibility, such as accommodating school runs, is becoming a more valued non-monetary benefit than remote working, which has seen its appeal dampen. //

Industrial



London

South East

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assembly Operative	£25,600	£27,500	£32,400	£25,400	£26,200	£27,000
Assembly Technician	£26,500	£29,900	£31,700	£27,400	£29,100	£31,000
Cleaning Operative	£26,100	£27,000	£27,500	£24,900	£30,200	£32,100
Counterbalance Operator	£25,000	£26,800	£28,500	£24,800	£26,700	£28,700
Dispatch Operative	£25,800	£28,700	£30,900	£25,900	£26,500	£29,300
Driver	£31,400	£33,500	£35,600	£30,700	£33,300	£35,900
Driver's Mate	£28,200	£28,500	£28,800	£24,900	£26,400	£27,800
Factory Line Technician	£25,200	£26,900	£29,000	£24,800	£25,500	£26,700
Factory Operative	£25,500	£27,900	£31,200	£25,600	£26,800	£28,000
Forklift Operator	£26,800	£27,900	£29,000	£25,500	£26,500	£27,400
Hygiene Operative	£25,400	£26,800	£27,900	£25,900	£26,200	£26,400
Industrial Cleaner	£26,200	£26,600	£27,800	£26,300	£26,700	£27,000
Machine Operative	£27,800	£28,700	£29,000	£26,700	£27,900	£29,100
Manufacturing Operative	£24,800	£25,000	£26,200	£24,800	£26,400	£27,900
Parcel Sorter	£27,300	£28,400	£29,000	£28,000	£28,500	£28,900
Production Line Operative	£25,400	£26,400	£27,900	£25,100	£26,500	£27,800
Production Operative	£30,900	£31,300	£31,900	£27,900	£28,700	£29,500
Stock Controller	£38,200	£41,900	£45,500	£27,300	£29,900	£32,600
Transport Coordinator	£39,900	£42,400	£44,900	£35,900	£39,900	£42,000
Transport Manager	£44,200	£48,700	£53,200	£39,900	£45,300	£49,100
Warehouse Assistant	£33,600	£38,200	£43,000	£24,800	£27,100	£31,600
Warehouse Manager	£38,500	£41,200	£50,300	£34,400	£37,000	£48,200
Warehouse Operative	£25,000	£26,100	£27,300	£26,300	£26,900	£30,400
Warehouse Supervisor	£30,400	£32,500	£34,400	£29,500	£31,000	£32,400
Yard Operative	£29,400	£31,400	£32,000	£25,900	£27,300	£28,600

Industrial



South West

East Midlands

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assembly Operative	£25,400	£26,900	£28,500	£24,800	£25,600	£26,200
Assembly Technician	£26,700	£30,100	£32,200	£25,400	£26,600	£27,700
Cleaning Operative	£24,800	£26,200	£29,200	£24,900	£28,000	£30,700
Counterbalance Operator	£25,900	£26,700	£28,700	£24,800	£27,200	£30,100
Dispatch Operative	£24,800	£25,800	£26,100	£26,700	£26,300	£28,700
Driver	£29,800	£31,600	£33,400	£30,300	£34,000	£37,700
Driver's Mate	£24,900	£26,400	£28,000	£24,800	£26,600	£28,700
Factory Line Technician	£25,600	£26,100	£27,000	£24,800	£25,400	£27,000
Factory Operative	£24,800	£26,700	£28,800	£24,800	£27,800	£28,700
Forklift Operator	£24,800	£25,300	£30,500	£24,800	£26,200	£27,700
Hygiene Operative	£26,400	£26,700	£27,100	£25,600	£26,700	£27,800
Industrial Cleaner	£26,300	£26,600	£26,900	£26,800	£28,000	£28,500
Machine Operative	£25,500	£26,600	£27,700	£27,800	£28,500	£29,300
Manufacturing Operative	£24,800	£25,800	£26,600	£24,800	£25,400	£26,300
Parcel Sorter	£25,100	£25,900	£26,800	£24,800	£27,300	£28,400
Production Line Operative	£25,300	£25,600	£27,000	£24,900	£26,300	£27,900
Production Operative	£27,600	£29,900	£30,600	£27,400	£27,600	£28,000
Stock Controller	£26,800	£28,700	£32,100	£26,000	£26,800	£28,600
Transport Coordinator	£32,200	£34,400	£36,300	£27,600	£29,500	£34,900
Transport Manager	£35,900	£39,500	£53,600	£38,100	£41,700	£45,100
Warehouse Assistant	£25,300	£26,100	£29,900	£25,300	£25,600	£28,500
Warehouse Manager	£37,500	£45,500	£48,200	£34,100	£37,700	£41,200
Warehouse Operative	£26,700	£28,800	£30,000	£25,800	£26,300	£29,500
Warehouse Supervisor	£27,300	£29,600	£34,300	£28,400	£30,700	£33,200
Yard Operative	£26,500	£27,400	£27,900	£27,000	£27,800	£28,300

Industrial



West Midlands

East Anglia

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assembly Operative	£24,800	£26,500	£28,200	£24,800	£25,700	£27,300
Assembly Technician	£27,600	£29,700	£31,200	£26,500	£27,800	£29,900
Cleaning Operative	£24,800	£27,000	£30,100	£24,800	£28,300	£30,900
Counterbalance Operator	£25,200	£26,700	£28,100	£25,200	£25,800	£26,300
Dispatch Operative	£25,700	£27,000	£27,900	£24,900	£25,600	£28,800
Driver	£31,200	£34,400	£37,600	£29,800	£32,800	£35,700
Driver's Mate	£25,900	£26,900	£27,900	£25,600	£29,100	£32,400
Factory Line Technician	£24,900	£25,500	£26,100	£24,800	£25,000	£25,100
Factory Operative	£24,700	£27,300	£28,900	£25,000	£25,900	£26,700
Forklift Operator	£24,500	£26,000	£27,400	£26,100	£27,000	£27,700
Hygiene Operative	£24,700	£25,800	£26,200	£25,700	£26,500	£27,300
Industrial Cleaner	£24,900	£25,900	£27,000	£25,800	£26,200	£26,800
Machine Operative	£26,700	£27,600	£28,400	£26,800	£27,700	£28,700
Manufacturing Operative	£24,800	£26,200	£27,200	£25,800	£26,600	£27,400
Parcel Sorter	£24,800	£26,100	£27,500	£25,200	£26,300	£27,100
Production Line Operative	£25,600	£26,700	£27,000	£24,900	£26,400	£27,800
Production Operative	£27,200	£27,900	£28,600	£27,500	£28,000	£28,700
Stock Controller	£25,400	£27,900	£30,400	£28,000	£31,400	£33,300
Transport Coordinator	£28,500	£30,100	£36,100	£27,100	£30,200	£35,000
Transport Manager	£39,900	£46,400	£53,000	£36,600	£40,500	£44,500
Warehouse Assistant	£24,800	£27,800	£31,500	£24,800	£25,600	£26,300
Warehouse Manager	£35,500	£37,400	£39,200	£33,100	£34,800	£36,600
Warehouse Operative	£25,300	£25,500	£27,900	£25,600	£25,700	£28,100
Warehouse Supervisor	£29,400	£31,300	£33,300	£29,100	£30,800	£32,600
Yard Operative	£25,600	£26,200	£27,800	£25,900	£26,400	£26,900

Industrial



North East

North West

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assembly Operative	£24,800	£25,400	£26,400	£26,900	£28,900	£31,000
Assembly Technician	£25,900	£27,300	£29,900	£26,600	£29,300	£31,900
Cleaning Operative	£24,800	£25,800	£28,000	£25,700	£27,000	£28,300
Counterbalance Operator	£24,800	£27,000	£29,100	£26,800	£27,700	£28,100
Dispatch Operative	£24,800	£26,300	£29,700	£25,100	£26,300	£29,600
Driver	£29,500	£32,100	£34,800	£30,300	£32,900	£35,600
Driver's Mate	£29,000	£29,700	£30,500	£25,000	£25,700	£26,400
Factory Line Technician	£24,900	£25,400	£25,800	£24,900	£25,700	£26,700
Factory Operative	£24,800	£27,600	£29,900	£24,800	£26,700	£29,300
Forklift Operator	£25,300	£25,000	£26,200	£25,600	£25,300	£26,700
Hygiene Operative	£25,800	£26,900	£27,900	£25,600	£26,500	£27,500
Industrial Cleaner	£24,800	£26,500	£27,300	£24,800	£25,000	£26,300
Machine Operative	£25,700	£27,000	£28,300	£25,400	£26,700	£28,200
Manufacturing Operative	£25,000	£26,200	£27,400	£25,700	£26,700	£27,400
Parcel Sorter	£24,800	£25,300	£26,000	£24,800	£24,900	£25,900
Production Line Operative	£24,800	£26,000	£27,300	£25,400	£26,100	£26,900
Production Operative	£26,000	£26,600	£27,100	£28,200	£29,000	£29,600
Stock Controller	£24,800	£27,800	£31,500	£25,900	£28,000	£31,900
Transport Coordinator	£31,100	£33,100	£33,600	£31,100	£33,200	£34,300
Transport Manager	£34,000	£37,400	£40,800	£40,600	£44,400	£48,100
Warehouse Assistant	£24,800	£27,800	£31,500	£24,800	£27,800	£31,500
Warehouse Manager	£30,100	£35,000	£39,900	£33,100	£35,500	£37,700
Warehouse Operative	£26,000	£26,600	£30,100	£25,300	£24,900	£27,000
Warehouse Supervisor	£28,800	£30,100	£31,400	£28,500	£29,600	£30,500
Yard Operative	£24,800	£25,700	£26,800	£25,200	£27,200	£28,900

Industrial



Yorkshire & Humberside

Northern Ireland

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assembly Operative	£25,300	£26,400	£27,400	£24,800	£25,900	£29,800
Assembly Technician	£26,700	£28,500	£30,600	£25,300	£26,900	£30,000
Cleaning Operative	£25,200	£27,700	£30,400	£25,300	£26,900	£30,000
Counterbalance Operator	£26,000	£26,700	£28,200	£26,600	£27,000	£28,100
Dispatch Operative	£26,800	£27,000	£29,100	£26,000	£27,000	£29,000
Driver	£30,600	£33,700	£36,800	£30,000	£31,400	£33,200
Driver's Mate	£24,800	£26,000	£27,800	£25,900	£26,900	£27,900
Factory Line Technician	£24,900	£26,200	£27,100	£24,800	£25,000	£26,100
Factory Operative	£26,500	£26,900	£28,100	£24,800	£26,200	£27,900
Forklift Operator	£25,300	£25,800	£27,300	£25,400	£25,100	£26,300
Hygiene Operative	£26,900	£27,500	£28,000	£25,400	£26,200	£27,100
Industrial Cleaner	£25,600	£26,100	£26,900	£24,800	£25,800	£26,100
Machine Operative	£26,400	£27,700	£29,500	£25,500	£26,300	£27,000
Manufacturing Operative	£25,700	£26,000	£26,400	£24,800	£26,600	£27,000
Parcel Sorter	£24,800	£24,900	£25,700	£25,000	£26,400	£27,000
Production Line Operative	£24,800	£26,000	£27,300	£24,800	£26,500	£27,300
Production Operative	£28,000	£28,900	£29,900	£26,100	£26,800	£27,100
Stock Controller	£25,500	£26,900	£28,300	£24,800	£28,000	£31,100
Transport Coordinator	£25,300	£27,700	£30,200	£27,900	£29,700	£31,400
Transport Manager	£41,700	£45,500	£49,500	£31,000	£34,100	£37,300
Warehouse Assistant	£24,800	£26,400	£27,000	£25,500	£25,500	£29,200
Warehouse Manager	£33,500	£36,100	£38,700	£35,500	£37,200	£38,900
Warehouse Operative	£25,300	£25,000	£27,100	£24,800	£28,200	£31,900
Warehouse Supervisor	£29,200	£31,600	£34,000	£28,500	£29,400	£30,300
Yard Operative	£25,800	£29,200	£30,000	£27,600	£28,000	£28,900

Industrial



Scotland

Wales

Role	Min	Average	Max	Min	Average	Max
Assembly Operative	£26,400	£27,600	£29,100	£24,400	£25,000	£25,400
Assembly Technician	£26,300	£29,300	£31,200	£25,100	£27,700	£28,000
Cleaning Operative	£24,800	£26,000	£29,800	£24,500	£26,300	£28,000
Counterbalance Operator	£25,900	£26,900	£29,200	£26,000	£26,300	£27,700
Dispatch Operative	£26,500	£27,100	£29,900	£24,900	£25,600	£28,100
Driver	£30,300	£32,200	£33,900	£28,900	£30,900	£34,000
Driver's Mate	£24,800	£25,400	£26,800	£24,700	£25,100	£25,300
Factory Line Technician	£24,800	£25,000	£25,200	£24,300	£25,400	£26,500
Factory Operative	£24,800	£26,200	£27,900	£25,200	£27,300	£29,400
Forklift Operator	£24,800	£25,600	£26,900	£25,600	£25,100	£25,800
Hygiene Operative	£24,800	£26,500	£27,400	£23,600	£24,800	£25,300
Industrial Cleaner	£24,800	£24,900	£25,900	£23,400	£25,800	£26,100
Machine Operative	£25,600	£26,300	£27,800	£24,800	£27,400	£29,100
Manufacturing Operative	£26,900	£27,500	£28,100	£25,400	£26,300	£27,100
Parcel Sorter	£26,500	£27,400	£27,900	£24,800	£25,200	£26,000
Production Line Operative	£24,800	£25,700	£27,000	£24,800	£25,600	£26,900
Production Operative	£26,600	£27,300	£27,700	£28,000	£28,500	£28,900
Stock Controller	£25,200	£28,500	£31,700	£24,900	£27,500	£30,300
Transport Coordinator	£26,300	£28,800	£31,300	£25,900	£28,000	£29,900
Transport Manager	£38,900	£44,600	£50,100	£38,300	£43,200	£48,000
Warehouse Assistant	£25,500	£26,000	£29,900	£25,400	£25,200	£28,600
Warehouse Manager	£36,200	£37,900	£39,600	£35,800	£37,300	£38,700
Warehouse Operative	£25,300	£25,200	£28,000	£25,300	£27,300	£31,600
Warehouse Supervisor	£29,000	£30,000	£31,000	£31,400	£31,800	£32,200
Yard Operative	£27,800	£28,700	£29,400	£26,200	£26,800	£27,400

Industrial insight

Lee Saunders

Industrial Expert, Reed



// The industrial sector remains a dynamic and essential part of the economy, showing consistent demand throughout 2025 rather than fluctuating with seasonal trends. Driven by the unceasing growth of online shopping, opportunities for skilled individuals are constant, with many companies maintaining open recruitment for key positions year-round – something that will continue in 2026.

The traditional, all-encompassing warehouse operative role is becoming less common. Employers are now seeking candidates with specialised experience for more defined roles such as picker-packer, production line worker, assembly operative, and goods in/out specialist. This move towards specialisation aims to streamline operations and improve efficiency.

Among the most sought-after skills, forklift driving stands out. A valid, transferable forklift licence can significantly increase an individual's earning potential. While some companies are willing to fund refresher courses for those with expired licences, it is less common for them to pay for new training from scratch. Salaries for experienced forklift drivers can range from £28,000 to £35,000, a noticeable increase from the national minimum wage often offered for general operative positions.

While the industrial sector has historically relied on temporary staff, there has been a notable shift towards permanent recruitment, with many businesses now prioritising longevity. The temporary market remains active, particularly for large-scale operations, but it can be characterised by high staff turnover as employees may move for even a minor pay increase.

Despite discussions around robotics, automation has not yet significantly reduced the need for a human workforce. In fact, it has created a demand for technicians who can maintain and repair these complex machines, as downtime can be extremely costly for businesses.

To combat the transient nature of some roles and stand out in a competitive market, employers are recognising the importance of non-monetary benefits. While salary remains a key driver, incentives tied to performance, such as hitting KPI targets, are proving effective. Offering a clear path for progression, including salary reviews after probation and opportunities to gain new skills, also helps in retaining valuable staff. These benefits demonstrate that employees are valued beyond their immediate output, fostering loyalty and stability. //

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