Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Building Standards

National Performance and Workforce for Verification Services

Annual Report 2023-24

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1. Introduction

1.1. This report has been produced by the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division to provide an overview of the performance of building standards verification services across Scotland and to provide information on the professional workforce employed by local authorities to provide verification services.

1.2. The report provides aggregated information on the national level of performance against the key performance outcomes (KPO) within the Building Standards Performance Framework for Verifiers 2024. It includes the key findings from the quarterly data returns made by verifiers for the reporting period covering 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

1.3. Annual monitoring is also in place to measure changes to the building standards workforce. The workforce data provides an essential insight into the resourcing of services, the development of competence and an indication of the level of staff turnover affecting verifiers in different parts of Scotland. This report presents data collected as at 31 July 2024, providing commentary on the challenges faced by the profession including:

- the level of supply and demand
- resourcing
- the competency of the building standards profession
- identifying where change is needed for resilience

1.4. All data is collected from each local authority via the ScotXEd web platform and robust validation rules and quality assurance measures are applied to ensure data reported is consistent across all 32 services.

1.5. Building Standards Division provide guidance on data reporting and carry out further quality assurance reviews of all data returns to ensure data is as accurate as possible.

1.6. A three-year trend analysis is included with detailed insights and findings for each section.

2. Background

2.1. The building standards system in Scotland is established by the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. The Act gives Scottish Ministers powers to appoint verifiers and approve certification schemes.

2.2. All 32 local authorities are currently appointed as verifiers for their own geographical area for a period of six years until 30 April 2029.

2.3. The remit of the building standards system is to protect the public interest by setting the standards to be met when new building work or a conversion takes place and providing a system for independent checking.

2.4. Verification is the independent checking of projects against building regulations during the design phase (prior to granting a building warrant) and the construction phase (prior to acceptance of a completion certificate).

2.5. Certification is the recognition of suitably qualified and experienced persons as competent to self-certify specific aspects of development at design or construction stage as building regulation compliant.

2.6. Local authorities are also responsible for the enforcement role under the 2003 Act, which includes building regulations and defective and dangerous buildings.

2.7. Verifiers are appointed on the basis that they can meet conditions set out in:

- Operating Framework 2024
- Performance Framework 2024

2.8. Scottish Government officials proactively monitor and engage with all verifiers over the term of appointment to satisfy Scottish Ministers that they continue to meet performance measures. The national engagement strategy provides tailored support to address performance and business continuity issues.

2.9. The workforce strategy for the building standards verification service was published by Scottish Government in October 2020 and was delivered over three years. The strategy identified a need to support development of the workforce based on the projected loss of expertise by 2025.

2.10. All 32 local authority verifiers are committed to providing an annual return as part of the workforce data collection exercise. This data is used to track and monitor the impact of actions to support workforce development.

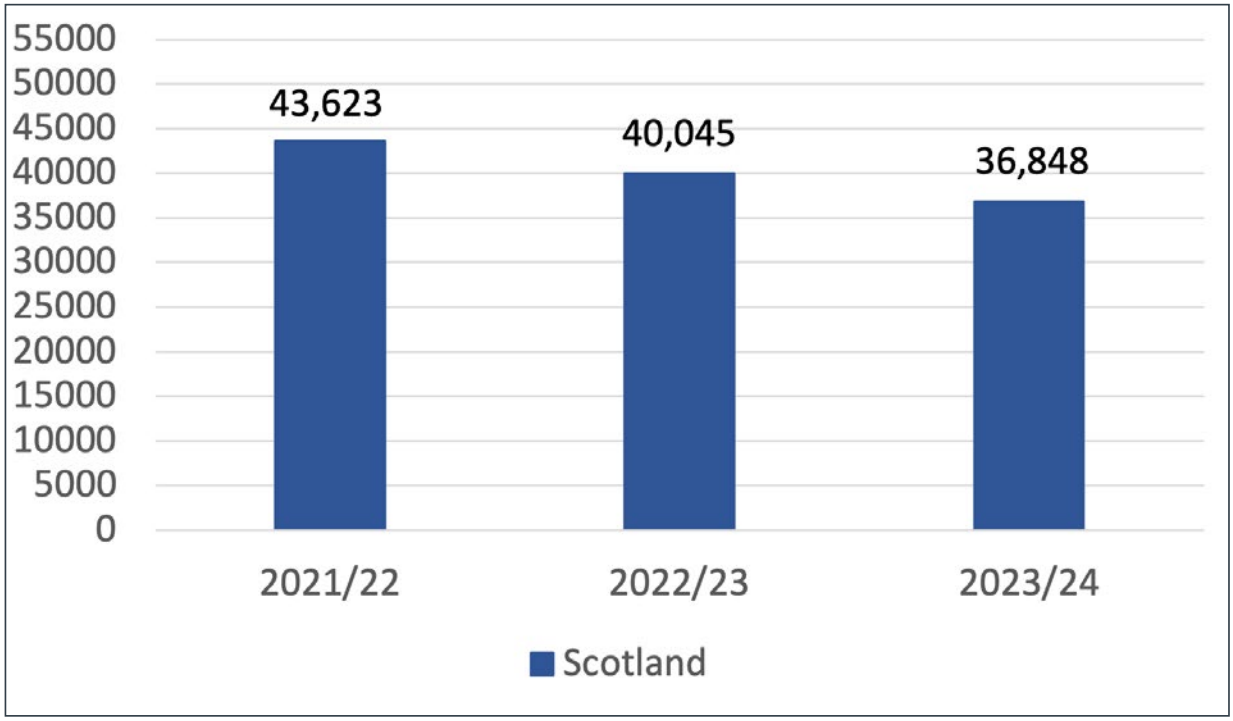
2.11. Following the closure of the workforce strategy, the data is now our primary evidence base that illustrates how resourcing of job roles and a focus on raising competency across the profession are contributing to the performance of verifiers.

3. Construction activity

Building warrant applications

3.1. The number of building warrant applications (including amendments to warrant) issued by verifiers in Scotland shown in **Chart 1** decreased by 16% during the 2021-22 to 2023-24 period.

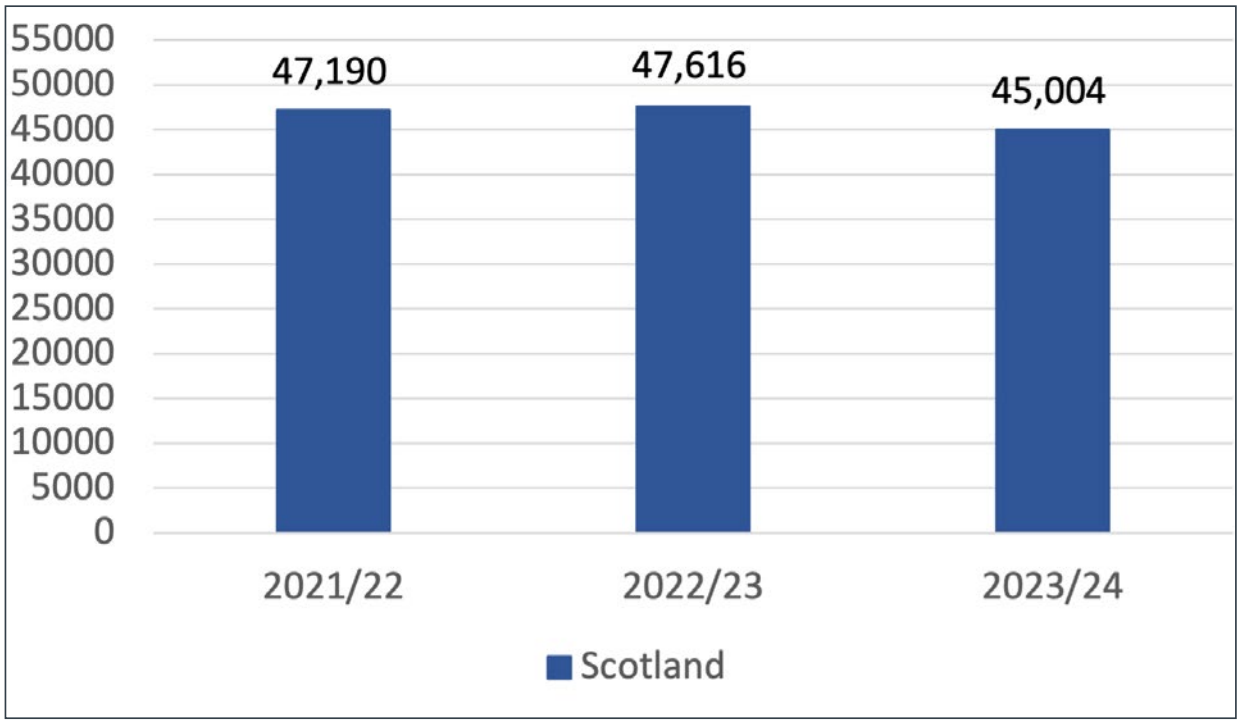
Chart 1: Number of building warrants and amendments issued (Scotland)



Completion certificates

3.2. The number of completion certificates accepted, shown in **Chart 2**, slightly decreased during the 2021-22 to 2023-24 period.

Chart 2: Number of completion certificates accepted (Scotland)

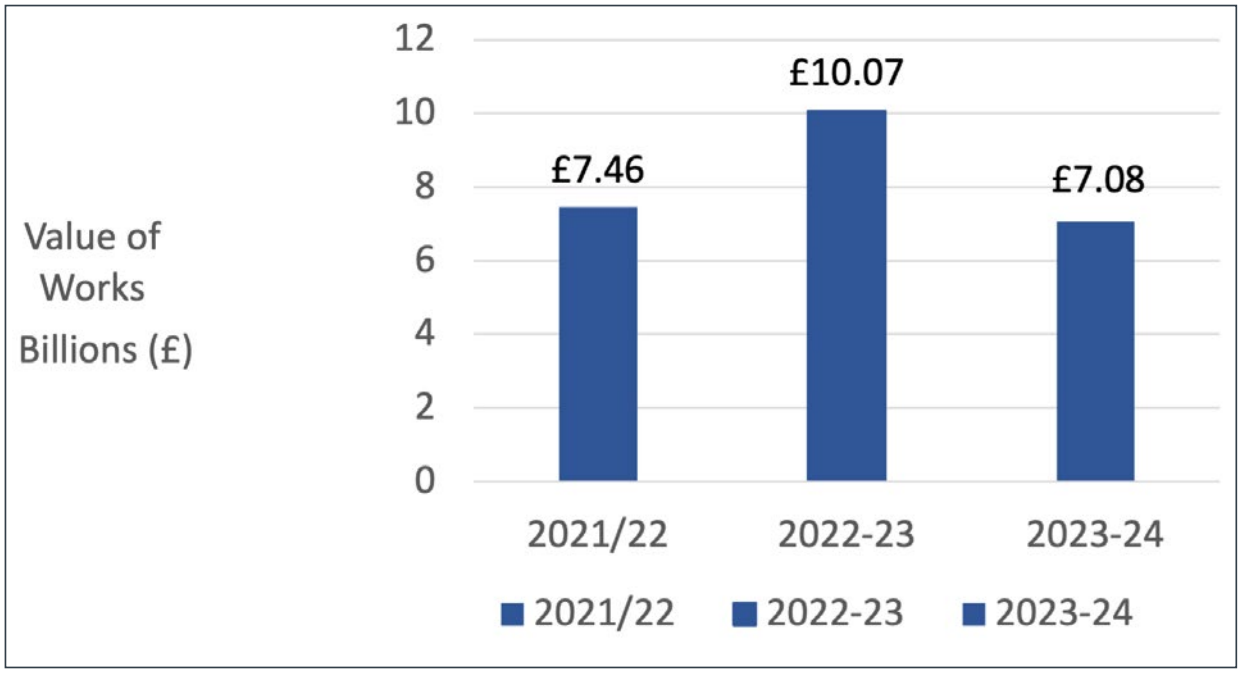


Value of works

3.3. During the three year period, Building Standards services across Scotland have administered and provided independent verification of construction projects with a total value of £24.6 Billion.

3.4. The value of works shown in **Chart 3** shows a sharp rise during 2022-23 period, which then decreased back to average levels during the 2023-24 period.

Chart 3: Value of works (Scotland)



4. Key performance outcomes

4.1. Key performance outcomes (KPOs) are used to monitor the work of building standards local authority verifiers.

4.2. The performance framework is used by verifiers to inform customers on performance levels and to identify and prioritise areas for improvement.

4.3. Reporting against the framework allows performance to be assessed and compared over time, identifying key trends which provide an evidence base for the effectiveness of aligning outcomes to meet key national objectives, which include:

- certainty of timescales in respect of decision making
- reasonable inquiry of compliance during construction
- management and assessment of building warrants and completion certificates
- sharing of best practice
- clear communication, provision of advice and open engagement
- understanding of needs and 'open for business' attitude

4.4. The performance framework sets out the reporting criteria against each KPO and performance target. These measure service delivery and can be used to highlight good practice, see **Table 1**.

Table 1: Key Performance Outcomes (KPO) and national performance targets

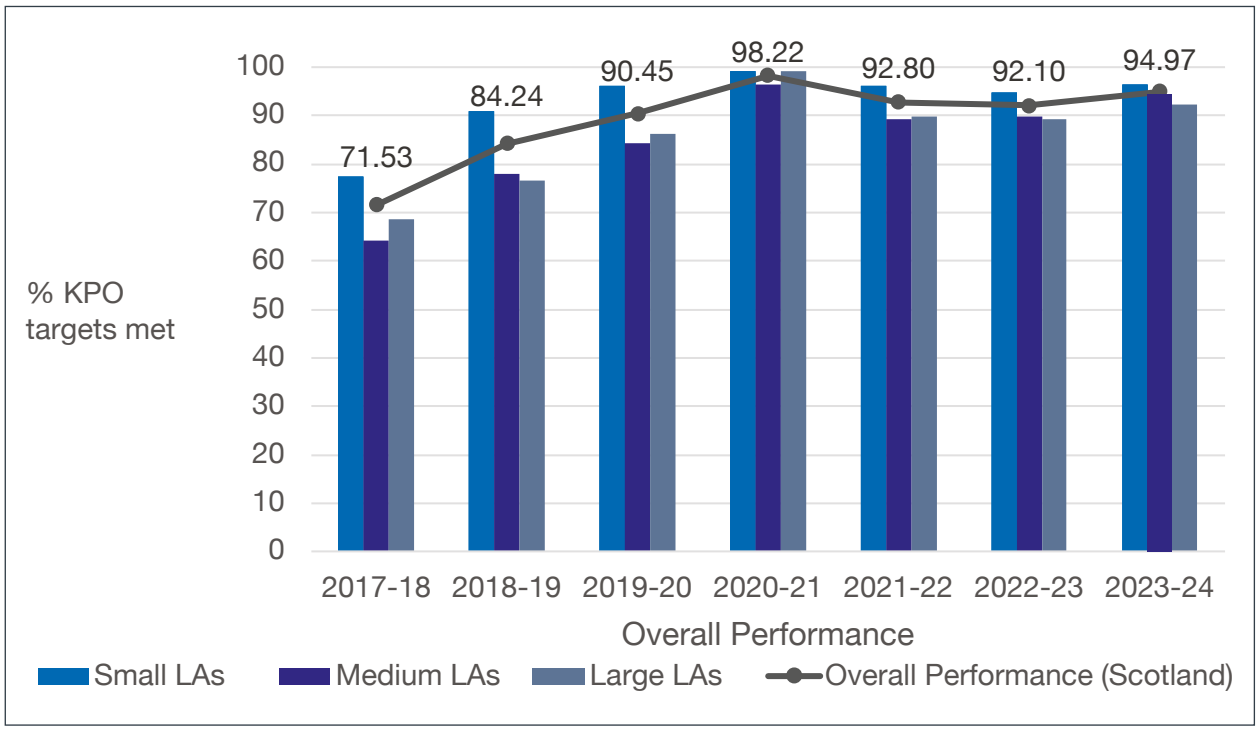
Professional Expertise and Technical Processes	
KPO1	**Minimise time taken to issue a first report or to issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant**
1.1	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including building warrants and amendments issued without a first report).
1.2	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
KPO2	**Increase quality of compliance assessment during the construction processes**
2.1	Targets to be developed as part of future review of KPO2.
Quality Customer Experience	
KPO3	**Commit to the building standards customer charter**
3.1	National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least annually).
3.2	95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case responded to by verifier within 5 days.
KPO4	**Understand and respond to the customer experience**
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
Operational and Financial Efficiency	
KPO5	**Maintain financial governance**
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
KPO6	**Commit to eBuilding Standards**
6.1	Details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier's website.
6.2	75% of each key building warrant related process being done electronically • Plan checking • Building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued • Verification during construction • Completion certificates being accepted
KPO7	**Commit to objectives outlined in the annual verification performance report**
7.1	Annual verification performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least annually).
7.2	Annual verification performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. April 2023 – March 2024).

5. National performance trends

National picture

5.1. The majority of verifiers have improved their overall performance levels providing more consistency to the quality of services across Scotland, as shown broken down by local authority size, in **Chart 4**.

Chart 4: Overall performance trends (Scotland)

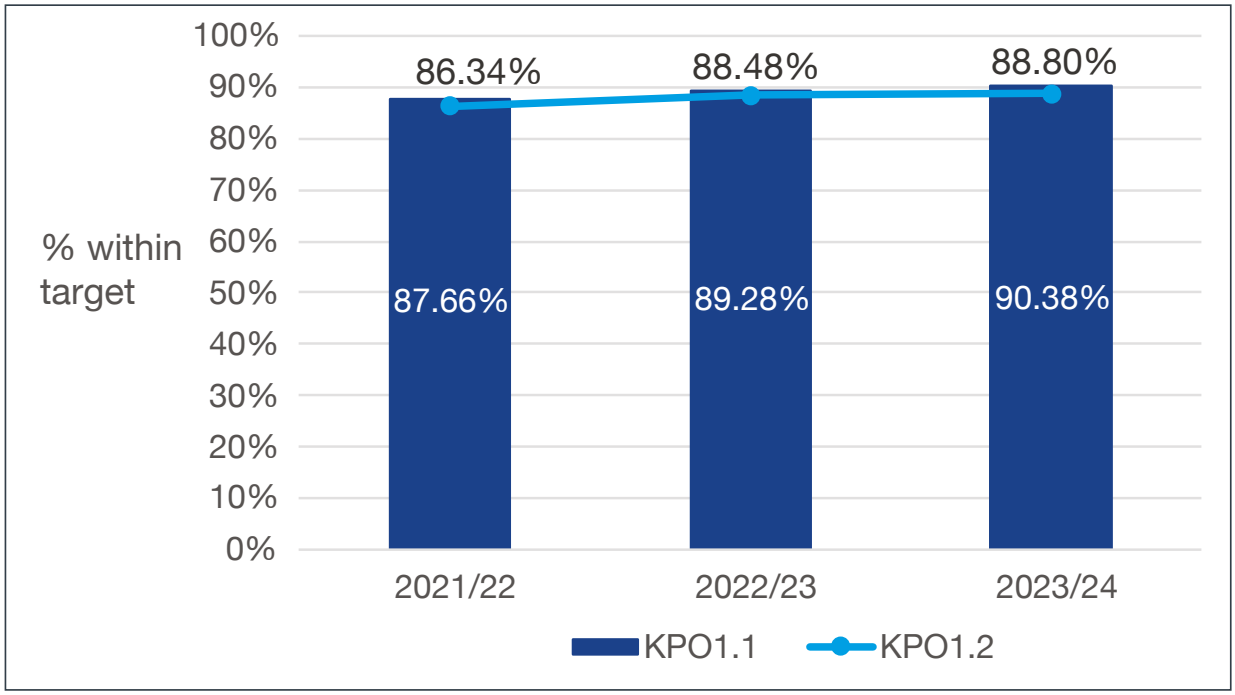


Professional expertise and technical processes

- **KPO1 – Minimise time taken to issue a first report or to issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant**

5.2. The performance for issuing a first report (KPO1.1) and building warrant or amendment to warrant (KPO1.2) has remained steady during the 2021-22 to 2023-24 period, as shown in **Chart 5**.

Chart 5: KPO1 – Minimise time taken to issue a first report or to issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant



- **KPO2 – Increase quality of compliance assessment during the construction processes**

5.3. There are currently no performance targets set for KPO2 and a wider review is currently underway.

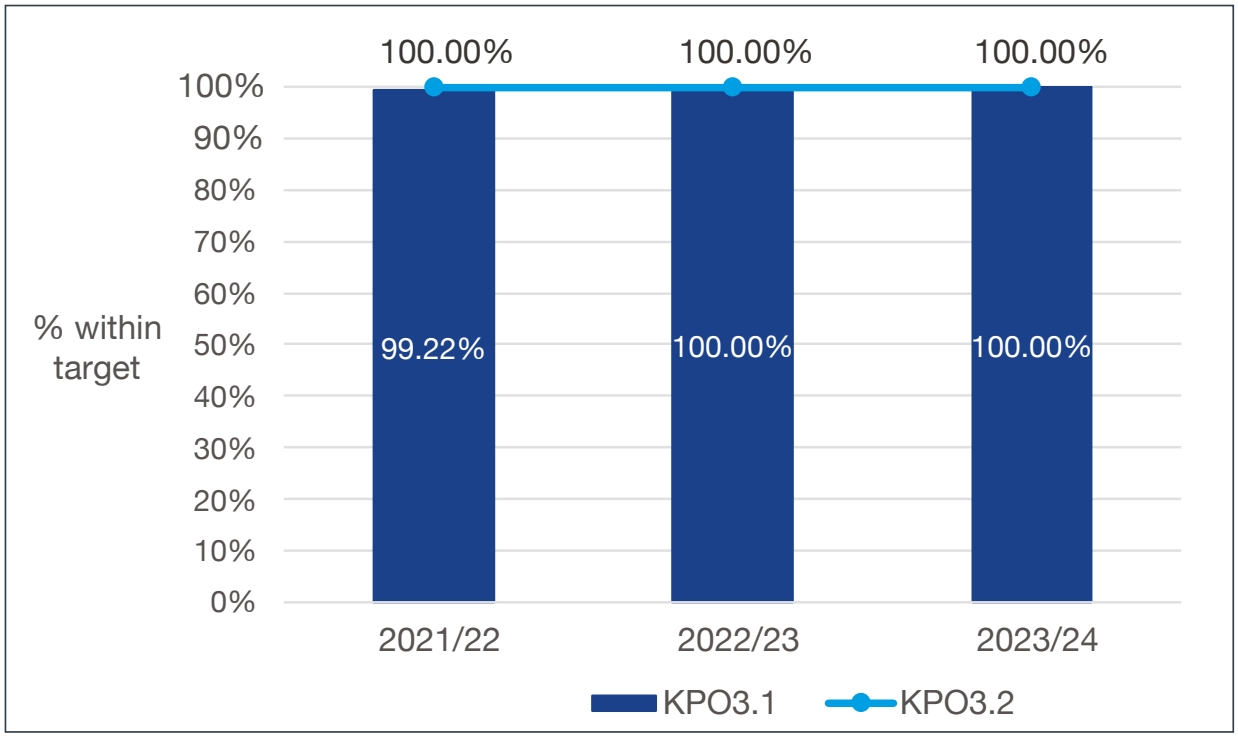
Quality customer experience

- **KPO3 – Commit to the building standards customer charter**

5.4. All 32 verifiers have implemented and published the Building Standards National Customer Charter (KPO3.1). This is supplemented with their own local charters.

5.5. Verifier response times (KPO3.2) to requests for information for customers reporting performance concerns to Scottish Government have been met within the five day target, during the 2021-22 to 2023-24 period, as shown in **Chart 6**.

Chart 6: KPO3 – Commit to the building standards customer charter



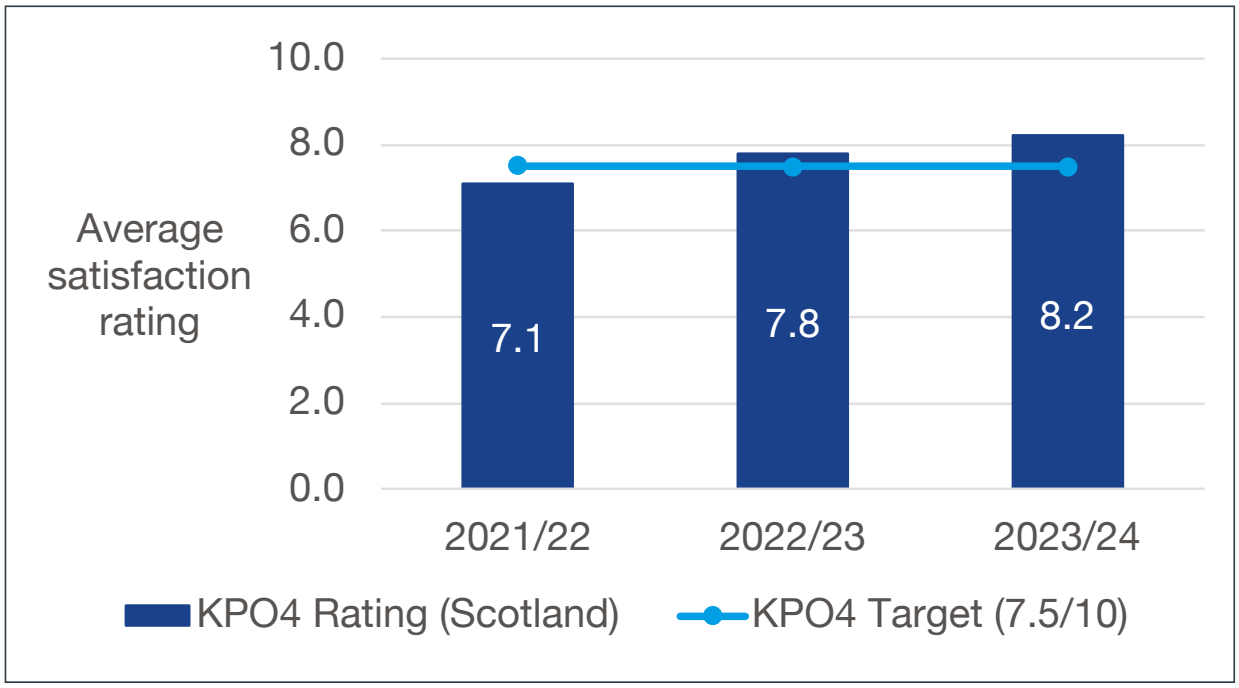
5.6. Verifiers have made improvements to the quality and consistency of information published on their websites which promotes better communication with building standards customers.

- **KPO4 – Understand and respond to the customer experience**

5.7. The National Customer Satisfaction Survey of Building Standards customers has been conducted annually since 2013 by Scottish Government, in close partnership with local authorities. A new digital platform was launched on 1 April 2022 to allow local authorities to collect and analyse customer feedback at the point of service, to support their ability to respond to the customer experience more effectively and in real time.

5.8. The overall National Customer Satisfaction rating for Scotland (KPO4) increased from 7.8 to 8.2 (exceeding the national target of 7.5) during the 2022-23 to 2023-24 period, as shown in **Chart 7**.

Chart 7: KPO4 – Understand and respond to the customer experience



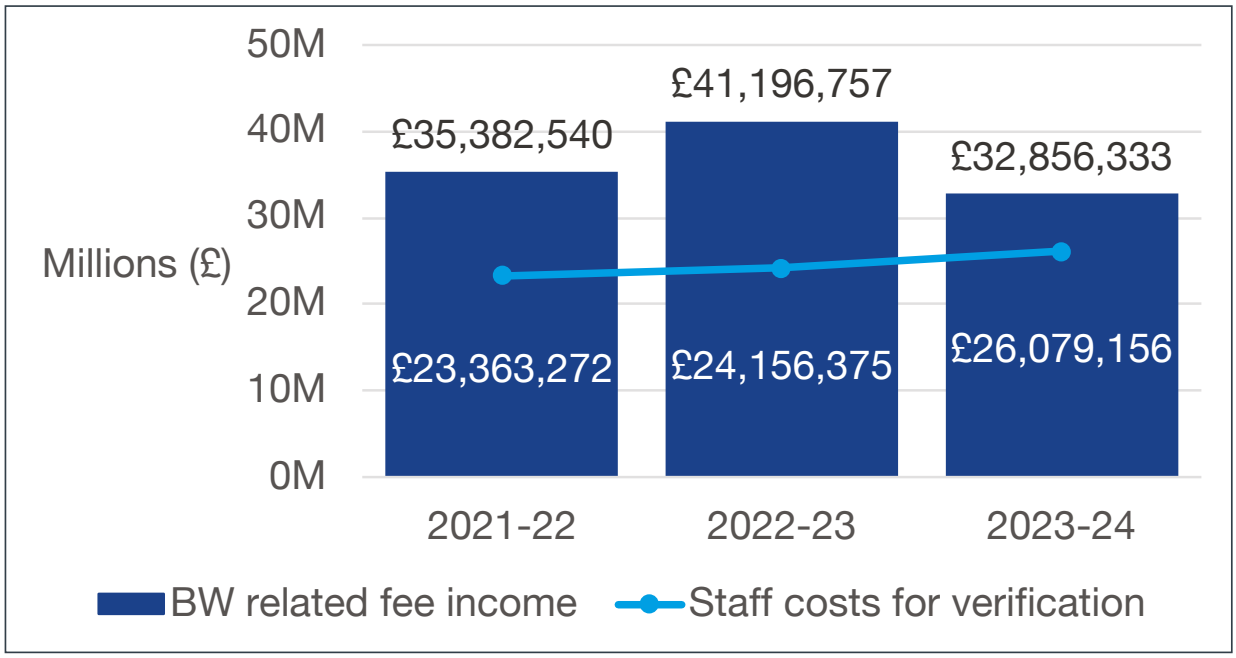
Operational and financial efficiency

- **KPO5 – Maintain financial governance**

5.9. During the three year period, overall fee income saw a sharp increase during 2022-23 period which correlates with a rise in the Value of Works, which decreased back to average levels during 2023-24, as shown in **Chart 8**.

5.10. Verification staff costs increased by 11% during the three year period. This increase has not yet been reflected in workforce supply levels, which decreased by 2.5% during 2024.

Chart 8: KPO5 – Maintain financial governance

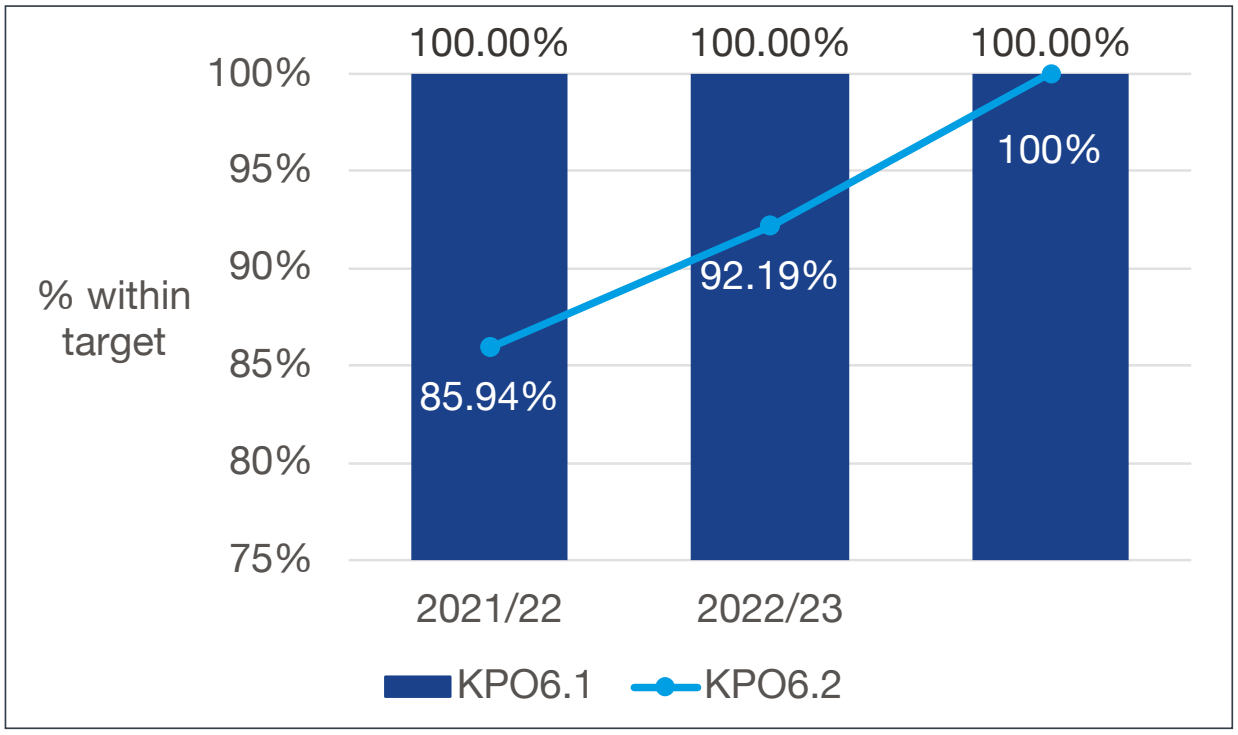


- **KPO6 – Commit to eBuilding Standards**

5.11. Building Standards customers can submit electronic documents and payments directly to local authorities. The move towards digital services has been supported by Scottish Government's eBuilding Standards platform and the number of applications submitted electronically has continued to rise, year on year, since the platform was launched in 2016.

5.12. The eBuilding Standards platform is used and promoted by all 32 local authority verifiers (KPO6.1) and the system facilitates continuous improvement towards fully digitised end-to-end processes, covering the whole customer journey (KPO6.2), as shown in **Chart 9**.

Chart 9: KPO6 – Commit to eBuilding Standards



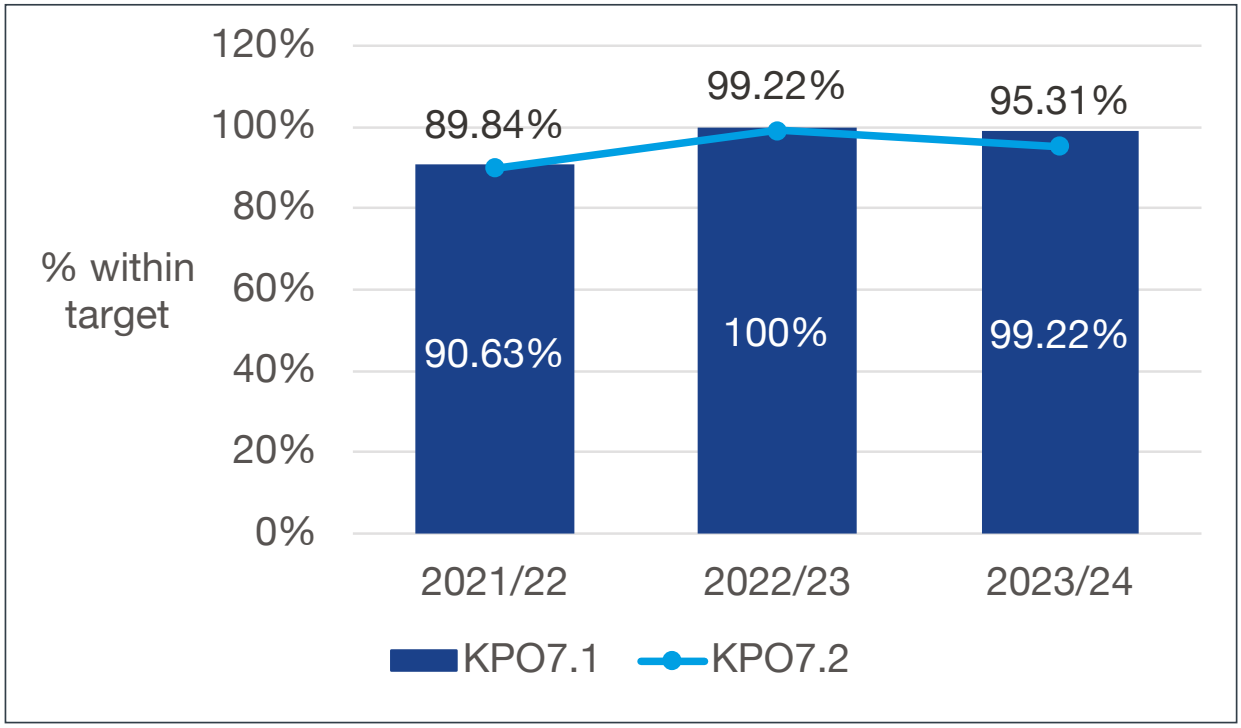
- **KPO7 – Commit to objectives outlined in the annual verification performance report**

5.13. The Annual Verification Performance Reports are a strategic planning and management tool to link performance reporting to continuous improvement actions. Reports include information on the vision for each service and future strategy.

5.14. All 32 local authority verifiers have implemented and published their reports during the 2023-24 period (KPO7.1) as shown in **Chart 10** and they publish performance data against each of the KPOs (KPO7.2) on their local authority websites:

- Annual Reports

Chart 10: KPO7 – Commit to objectives outlined in the annual verification performance report



6. Workforce demand

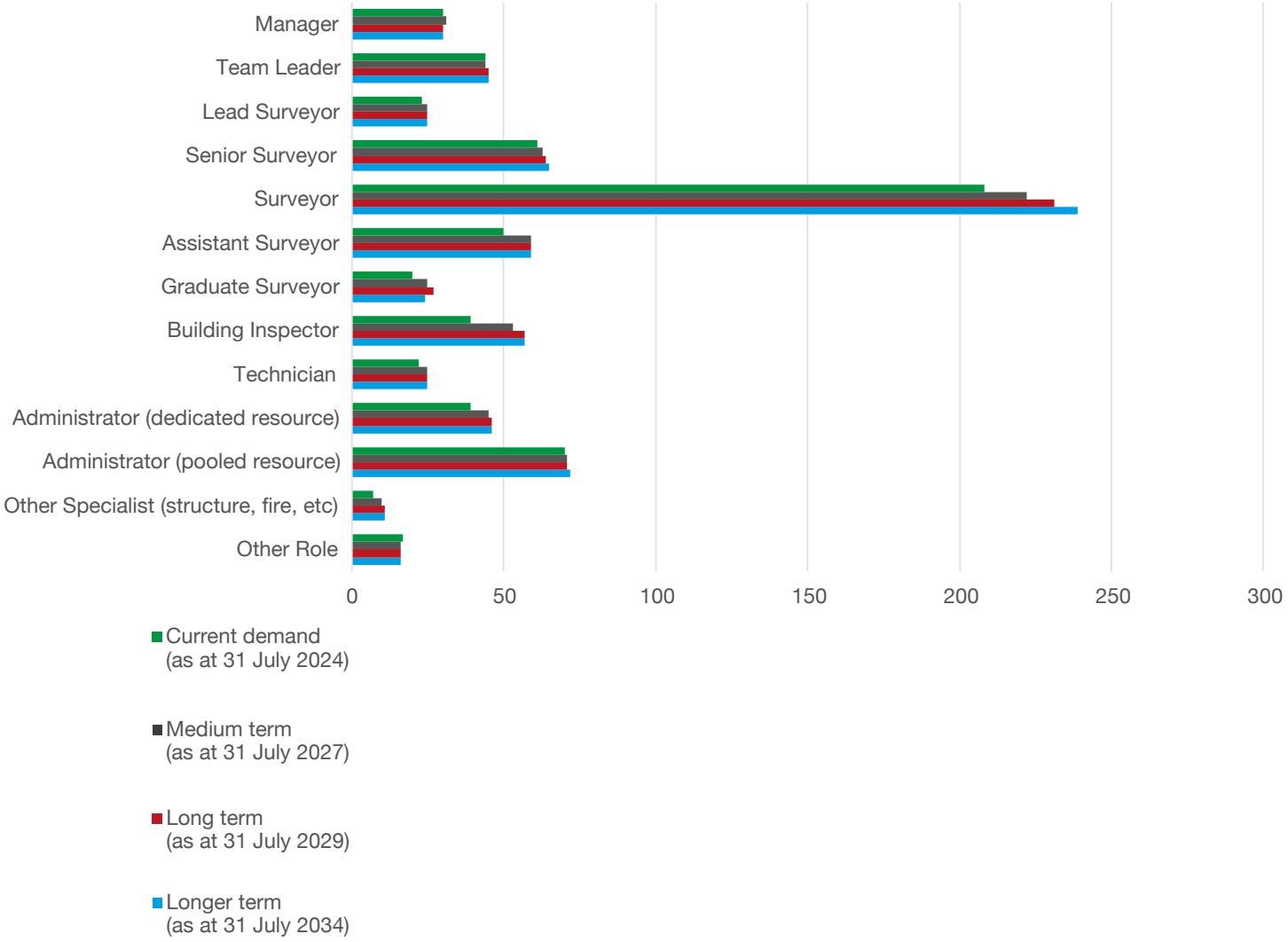
6.1. There is a reduction of seven in the overall demand from 2023. See **Table 2**.

6.2. The roles with an increase in demand are Senior Surveyor and Graduate Surveyor. There remains a demand in the medium to longer term for most job roles (see **Chart 11**).

Table 2: Demand

Role	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
Manager	28	31	30	-1
Team Leader	47	44	44	0
Lead Surveyor	22	23	23	0
Senior Surveyor	54	56	61	+5
Surveyor	209	212	208	-4
Assistant Surveyor	50	52	50	-2
Graduate Surveyor	19	17	20	+3
Building Inspector	43	41	39	-2
Technician	23	24	22	-2
Administrator (dedicated resource)	40	39	39	0
Administrator (pooled resource)	64	70	70	0
Other Specialist (structure, fire, etc)	7	7	7	0
Other Role	18	21	17	-4
Total	**624**	**637**	**630**	**-7**

Chart 11 – Staffing demand per role – current, medium, long and longer term



7. Workforce supply

7.1. The current number of staff (supply) has decreased by 15 (2.5%) from 2023. See **Table 3**.

7.2. There is an increase in the Team Leader, Senior Surveyor and Graduate Surveyor job roles. Surveyor and specialist roles have remained unchanged and the number of people in all other job roles has decreased.

Table 3: Supply

Role	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
Manager	27	31	28	-3
Team Leader	41	40	43	+3
Lead Surveyor	22	21	20	-1
Senior Surveyor	51	55	57	+2
Surveyor	186	198	198	0
Assistant Surveyor	45	45	41	-4
Graduate Surveyor	14	16	18	+2
Building Inspector	34	35	33	-2
Technician	22	23	21	-2
Administrator (dedicated resource)	40	39	38	-1
Administrator (pooled resource)	60	71	67	-4
Other Specialist (structure, fire, etc)	4	4	4	0
Other Role	13	20	15	-5
Total	**559**	**598**	**583**	**-15**

8. Supply and demand – current, medium, long and longer term

8.1. There remains demand for staff in most roles in the building standards profession. The gap between supply and demand has increased from 2023 to 2024 and supply remains insufficient to meet levels of future demand. See **Table 4**.

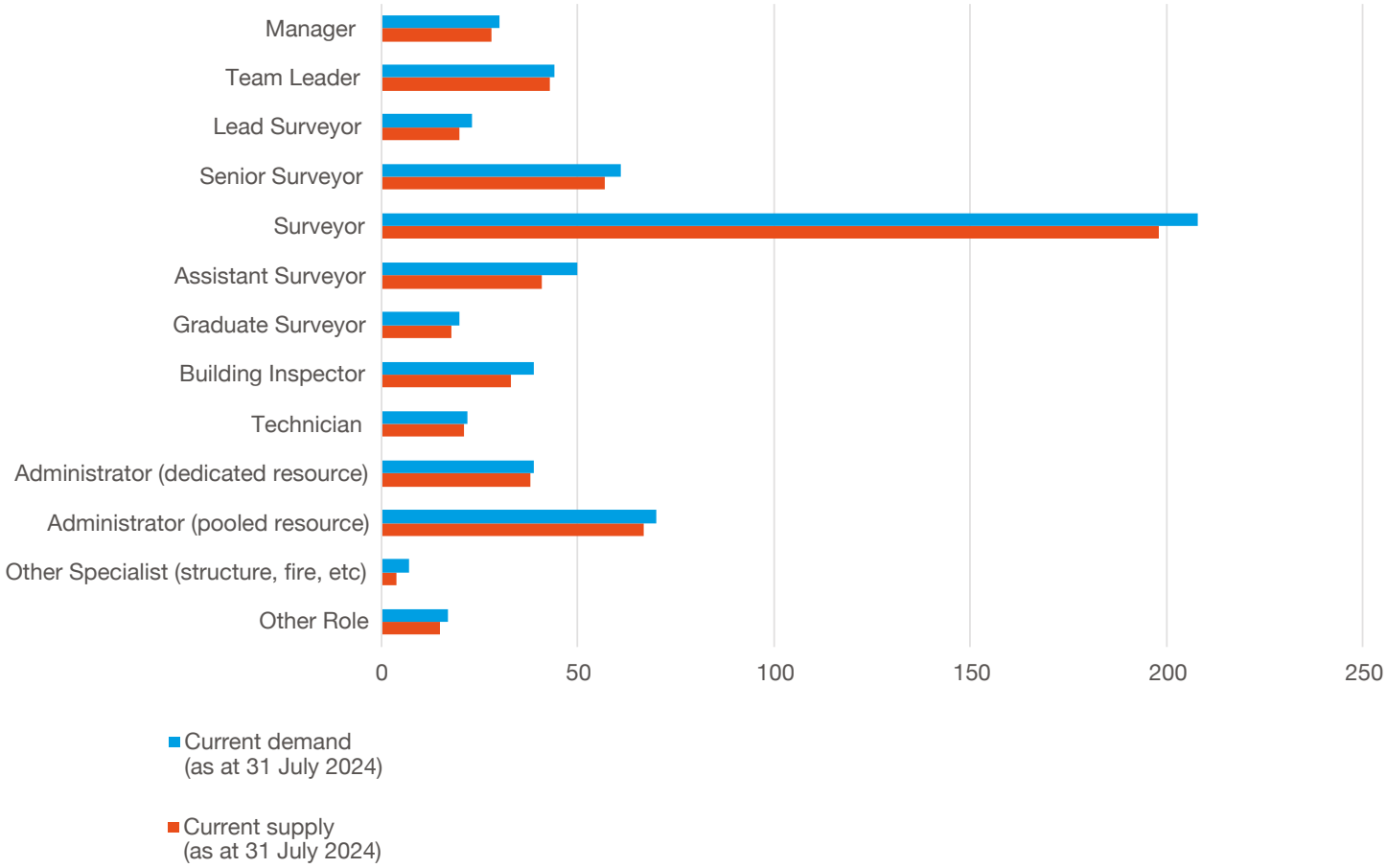
8.2. The current demand is 630 in 2024, which represents a supply gap of 47 (7.5%) staff. See **Chart 12**. It is estimated that demand will continue to increase by an additional 59 (15%) staff by 2027 (medium demand). This represents a shortfall of 106 staff on the current supply level.

8.3. The overall level of demand in the next 10 years (2024 to 2034) remains high with 84 new posts required. This represents a shortfall of 131 (18%) staff by 2034 if the current supply level remains consistent in the longer term (2034).

Table 4: Supply and Demand

Role	Supply 2024	Current demand 2024 (+/-)	Medium demand 2027 (change from 2024) (+/-)	Long demand 2029 (change from 2027) (+/-)	Longer demand 2034 (change from 2029) (+/-)	demand between 2024–2034 (+/-)
Manager	28	30 (+2)	31 (+1)	30 (-1)	30 (0)	0
Team Leader	43	44 (+1)	44 (0)	45 (+1)	45 (0)	+1
Lead Surveyor	20	23 (+3)	25 (+2)	25 (0)	25 (0)	+2
Senior Surveyor	57	61 (+4)	63 (+2)	64 (+1)	65 (+1)	+4
Surveyor	198	208 (+10)	222 (+14)	231 (+9)	239	+31
Assistant Surveyor	41	50 (+9)	59 (+9)	59 (0)	59 (0)	+9
Graduate Surveyor	18	20 (+2)	25 (+5)	27 (+2)	24 (-3)	+4
Building Inspector	33	39 (+6)	53 (+14)	57 (+4)	57 (0)	+18
Technician	21	22 (+1)	25 (+3)	25 (0)	25 (0)	+3
Administrator (dedicated resource)	38	39 (+1)	45 (+6)	46 (+1)	46 (0)	+7
Administrator (pooled resource)	67	70 (+3)	71 (+1)	71 (0)	72 (+1)	+2
Other Specialist (structure, fire, etc)	4	7 (+3)	10 (+3)	11 (+1)	11 (0)	+4
Other Role	15	17 (+2)	16 (-1)	16 (0)	16 (0)	-1
Total	**583**	**630 (+47)**	**689 (+59)**	**707 (+18)**	**714 (+7)**	**+84**

Chart 12 – Staffing current supply and current demand



9. Demographic profile

9.1. There is a reduction in the number of staff in all age ranges with the exception of 40-49 and +61. In the 40-49 age range there has been a gradual increase from 118 (19.7%) in 2023 to 124 (21.3%) in 2024.

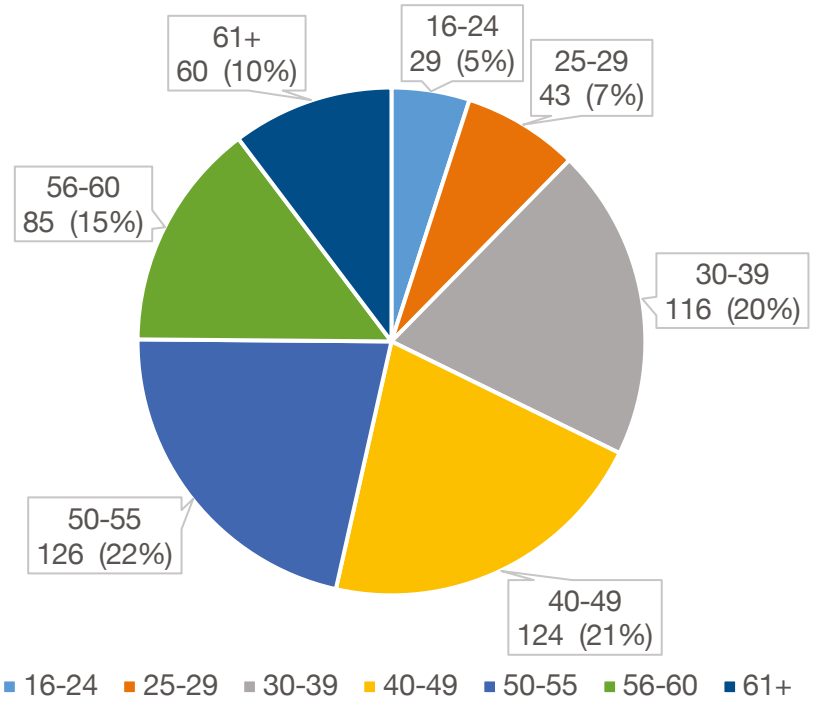
9.2. There is a notable increase in the +61 age range, this has increased by 18 from 42 in 2022 to 60 in 2024 and now accounts for 10.3% of the total workforce. See **Table 5**.

9.3. There are more staff in the age ranges up to 49 (312) compared to the number in age ranges 50+ (217).

Table 5: Demographic

Age Range	No. 2022	No. 2023	No. 2024		Difference from 2023 (+/-)
61+	42	46	60		+14
56-60	84	95	85	271	-10
50-55	131	138	126		-12
40-49	125	118	124		+6
30-39	110	119	116	312	-3
25-29	40	46	43		-3
16-24	27	36	29		-7
Total	**559**	**598**	**583**		**-15**

Chart 13 – Age profile of permanent employees



10. Length of service

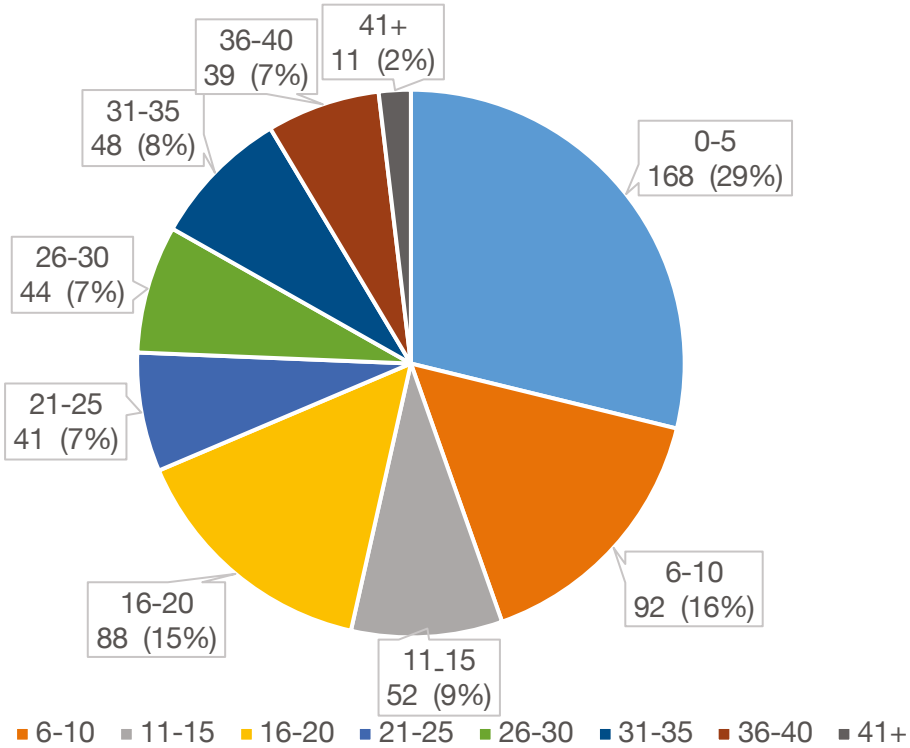
10.1. The percentage of workforce having a length of service 10 years or less remains at 45% of the workforce. See **Table 6**.

10.2. There has been an increase in the number of staff with over 36 years service and a notable decrease in the number of staff with less than 5 years service from 190 in 2023 to 168 in 2024.

Table 6: Length of service

Year Range	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
41+	7	8	11	+3
36-40	28	28	39	+11
31-35	62	57	48	-9
26-30	41	48	44	-4
21-25	45	43	41	-2
16-20	90	89	88	-1
11-15	58	55	52	-3
6-10	71	80	92	+12
0-5	157	190	168	-22
Total	559	598	583	-15

Chart 14 – Length of overall building standards service



11. Professional membership

11.1. Professional memberships held is down by 15. After a slight increase last year this number has now fallen below the number held in 2022. See **Table 7**.

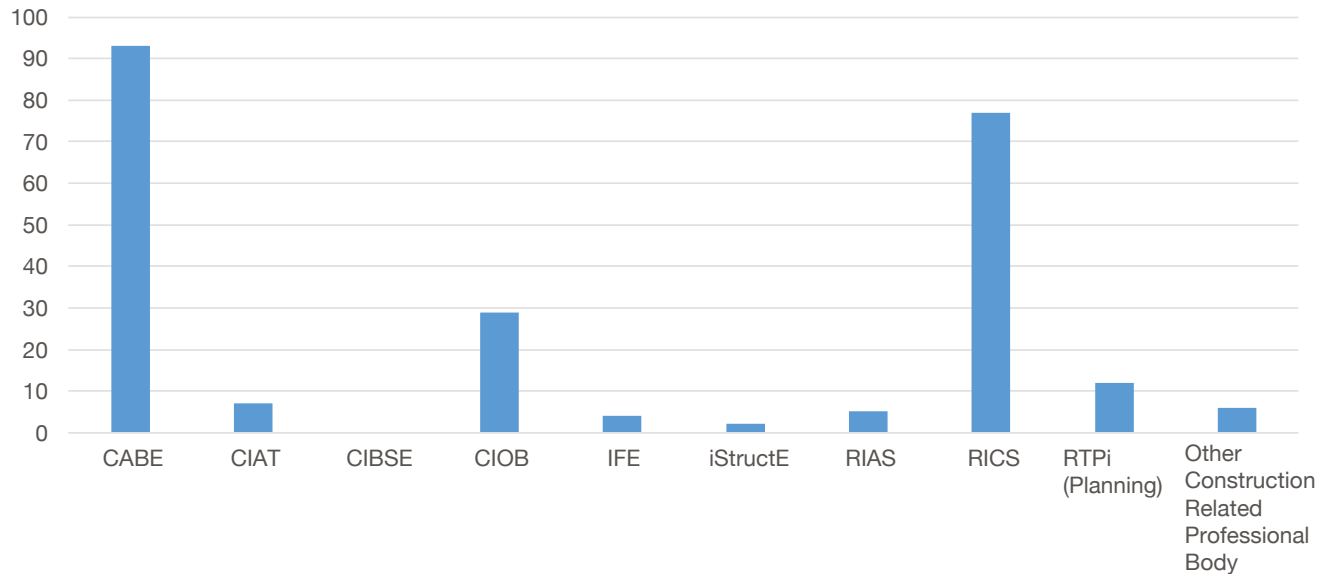
11.2. The number of RICS memberships continues to fall, from 82 in 2022 to 77 in 2024, however as an overall percentage of the workforce this remains around 33%.

11.3. The only increase is in CIAT memberships, which has increased by 75% from 4 to 7.

Table 7: Professional memberships

Membership	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
CABE	93	94	93	-1
CIAT	4	4	7	+3
CIBSE	0	0	0	0
CIOB	33	33	29	-4
IFE	6	5	4	-1
iStructE	2	2	2	0
RIAS	5	5	5	0
RICS	82	81	77	-4
RTPi (Planning)	16	17	12	-5
Other Construction Related Professional Body	5	9	6	-3
Total	246	250	235	-15

Chart 15 – Number of professional mmberships held



12. Qualifications held

12.1. The number of qualifications held by staff continues to increase with the number held increasing by 21 since 2023. See **Table 8**.

12.2. There is a noticeable increase in the number of Honours degrees level 10 held (+24) with increases also seen in National Award Level 5 and HNC Level 7.

Table 8 – Qualifications

SCQF Level	Level	SVQs / MAs	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
Level 12	Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	0	0	0	0
Level 11	Master's Degree, Post Graduate	Professional Apprenticeship SVQ 5	33	53	47	-6
Level 10	Honours Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	187	192	216	+24
Level 9	Professional Award, Bachelor Degree	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4	94	86	85	-1
Level 8	Higher National Diploma	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4	47	49	47	-2
Level 7	Higher National Certificate	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3	82	76	80	+4
Level 6	National Award	Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ 3	32	33	31	-2
Level 5	National Award	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 2	12	12	19	+7
Level 4	National Award	SVQ 1	4	3	3	0
Level 3	National Award	N/A	2	2	1	-1
Level 2	National Award	N/A	1	1	1	0
Level 1	National Award	N/A	4	4	3	-1
Other Construction Related Qualification			0	1	0	-1
Total			**498**	**512**	**533**	**+21**

13. Qualifications – currently studying

13.1. The number of staff currently studying for a qualification has increased slightly from 41 in 2023 to 43 in 2024.

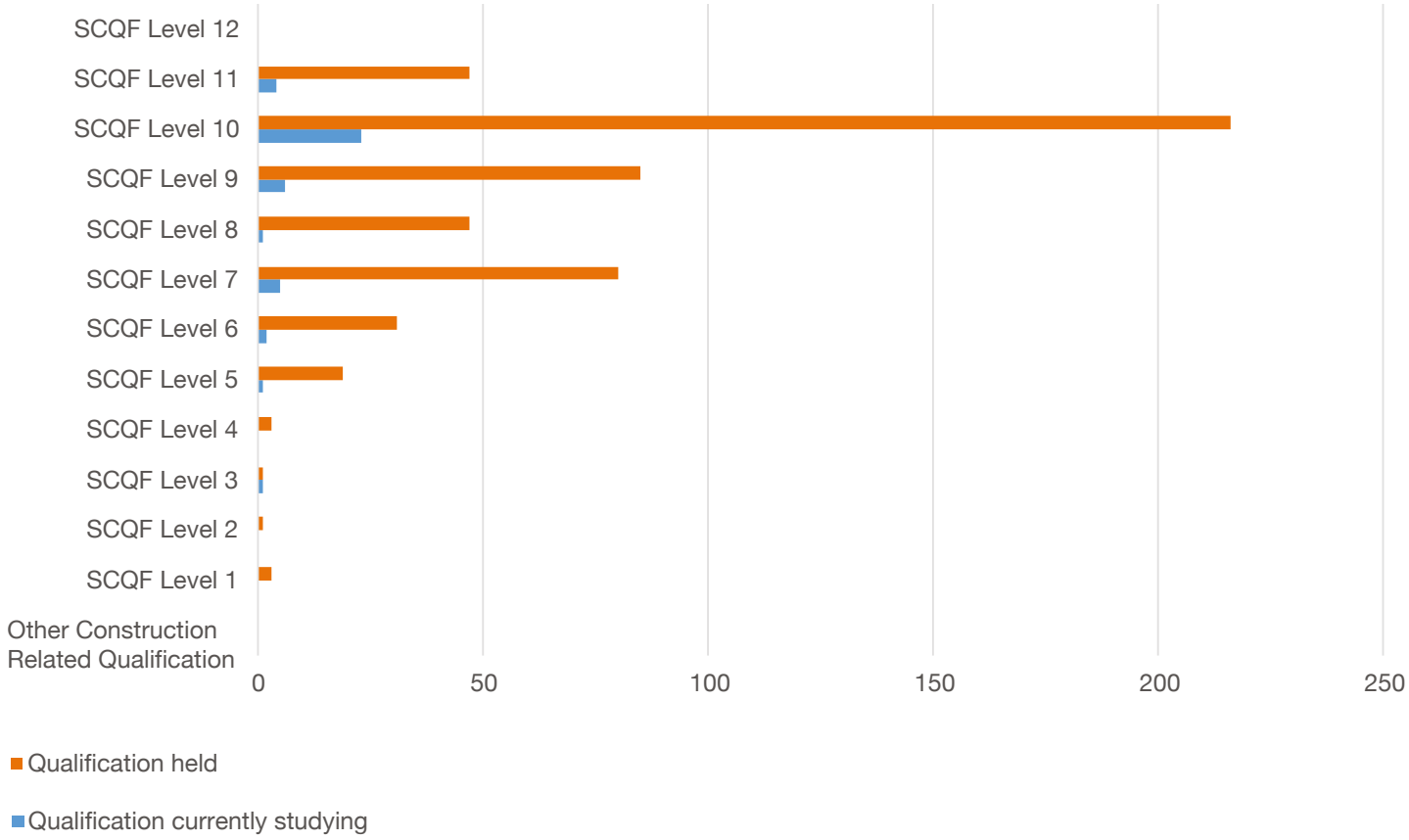
13.2. The biggest increase can be seen in the Bachelor degree level, rising from two in 2023 to six in 2024. There is a reduction of five in the number of staff currently studying towards a HNC, from 10 in 2023 to five in 2024. See **Table 9**.

13.3. The level which represents the largest percentage of qualifications held (40%) and studying (53%) is Level 10 Honours degree. See **Tables 8 & 9 and Chart 16**.

Table 9: Qualifications currently being studied

SCQF Level	Level	SVQs / MAs	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
Level 12	Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	0	0	0	0
Level 11	Master's Degree, Post Graduate	Professional Apprenticeship SVQ 5	1	2	4	+2
Level 10	Honours Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	26	22	23	+1
Level 9	Professional Award, Bachelor Degree	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4	2	2	6	+4
Level 8	Higher National Diploma	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4	0	2	1	-1
Level 7	Higher National Certificate	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3	3	10	5	-5
Level 6	National Award	Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ 3	0	0	2	+2
Level 5	National Award	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 2	0	1	1	0
Level 4	National Award	SVQ 1	1	1	0	-1
Level 3	National Award	N/A	1	0	1	+1
Level 2	National Award	N/A	0	0	0	0
Level 1	National Award	N/A	0	1	0	-1
Total			**34**	**41**	**43**	**+2**

Chart 16 – Qualifications held and currently studying



14. Types of qualification currently being studied

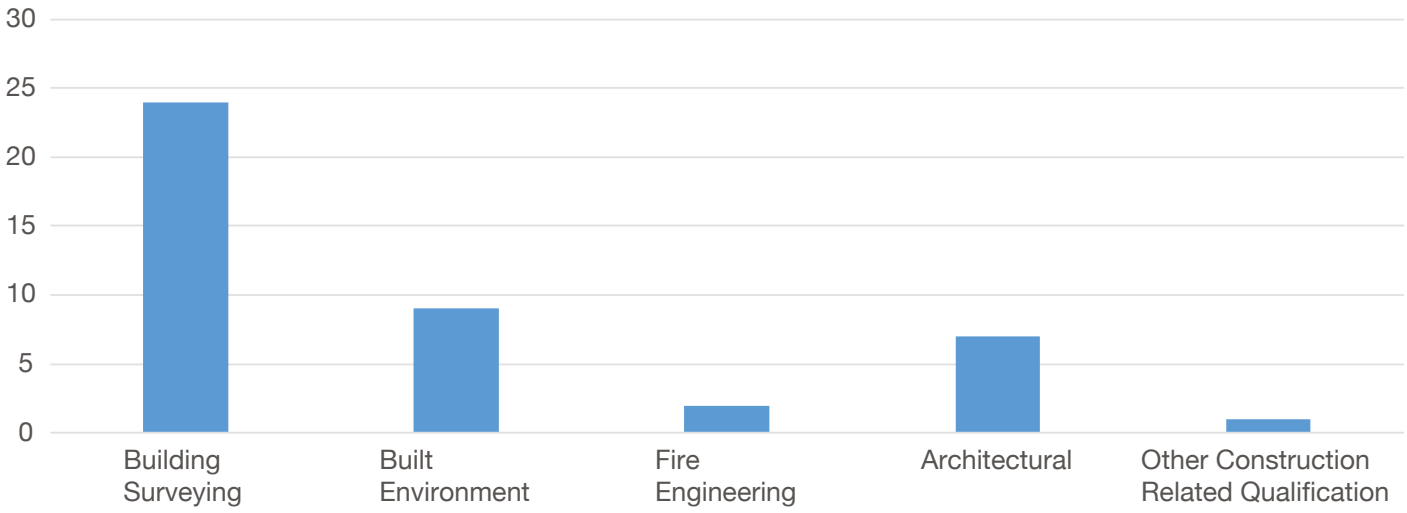
14.1. The most popular qualification being studied remains Building Surveying accounting for 56%.

14.2. The only increase noted is in the number of people studying Building Surveying, increasing by seven (40%) since 2023. There is a slight decrease in the number of staff studying towards a Built Environment qualification (-2) and a Fire Engineering qualification (-1). See **Table 10** and **Chart 17**.

Table 10: Types of qualification currently being studied

Currently Studying Qualification Type	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
Building Surveying	20	17	24	+7
Built Environment	2	11	9	-2
Fire Engineering	3	3	2	-1
Engineering	0	0	0	0
Construction Management	2	0	0	0
Quantity Surveying	0	0	0	0
Architectural	5	7	7	0
Planning	0	0	0	0
Other Construction Related Qualification	2	3	1	-2
Total	**34**	**41**	**43**	**+2**

Chart 17 – Currently studying qualification type



15. Apprenticeships

15.1. The number of apprenticeships has increased by 1 since 2023. See **Table 11**.

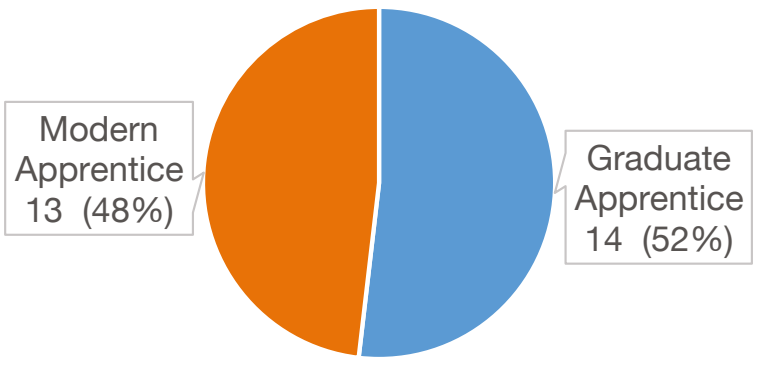
15.2. The split in apprenticeships has changed, with more Graduate Apprentices (14) than Modern Apprentices (13). The number of Graduate Apprentices has increased by five while Modern Apprentices has reduced by 4.

15.3. There are currently no Foundation Apprentices in the workforce.

Table 11: Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship Level	2022	2023	2024	Role as % of total employees	Role as % of total currently studying level
Graduate Apprentice	13 (-4)	9 (-4)	14 (+5)	2.40%	51.85%
Modern Apprentice	6 (+2)	17 (+11)	13 (-4)	2.23%	48.15%
Foundation Apprentice	1 (+1)	0 (-1)	0 (0)	0.00%	0.00%
Total	**20 (-1)**	**26 (+6)**	**27 (+1)**	**4.63%**	**100.00%**

Chart 18 – Apprenticeships



16. Staff moving within or leaving the profession by reason

16.1. The number of staff moving within or leaving the profession in 2024 with a given reason is 50 which is an increase of 15 from 2023 to 2024. However this is still fewer than the number of leavers recorded in 2022.

16.2. The reasons include retirement (12), a public sector role outside the profession (15) and a move into the private sector (11). Those moving to another local authority building standards office (12) are recorded as leavers in this data even though these staff have not left the profession. See **Table 12**.

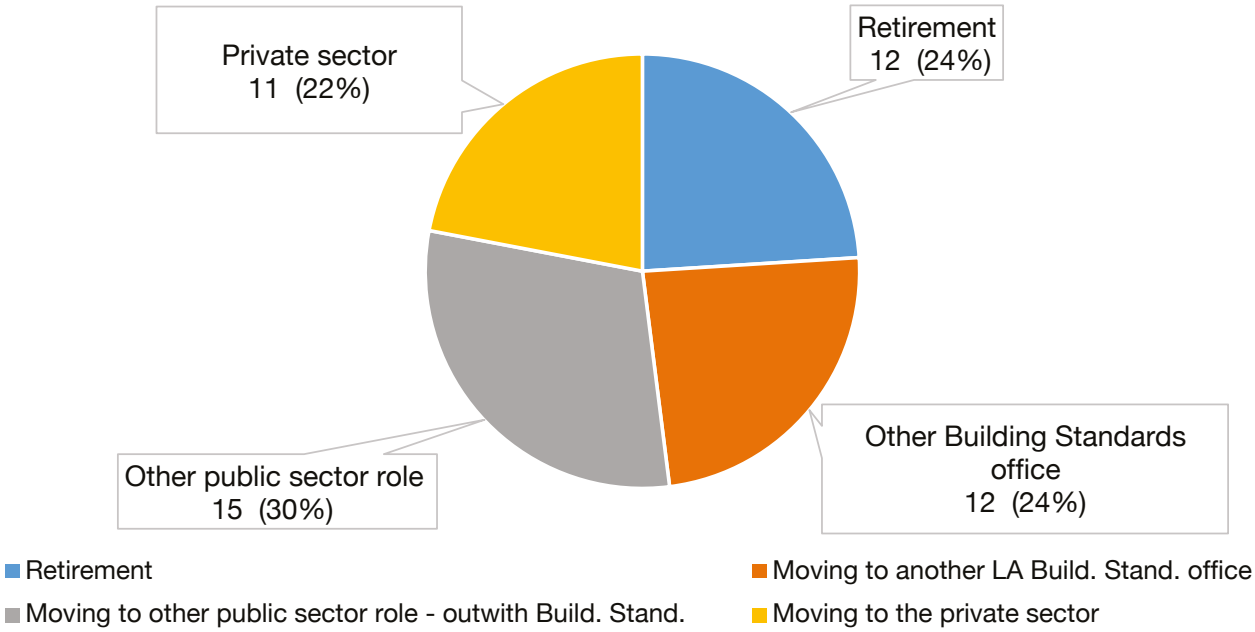
16.3. The number of staff leaving to go into the private sector or to another public sector role outside the profession has increased significantly from eight in 2023 to 26 in 2024.

16.4. An additional two staff left the profession in 2024 but no reason was given and therefore are not reflected in the table below.

Table 12: Staff leaving the profession by reason

Reason	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
Retirement	29	17	12	-5
Local Authority Building Standards Office	19	10	12	+2
Public sector role – out with Building Standards	9	4	15	+11
Private Sector	14	4	11	+7
Total	**71**	**35**	**50**	**+15**

Chart 19 – Permanent employee leavers by reason



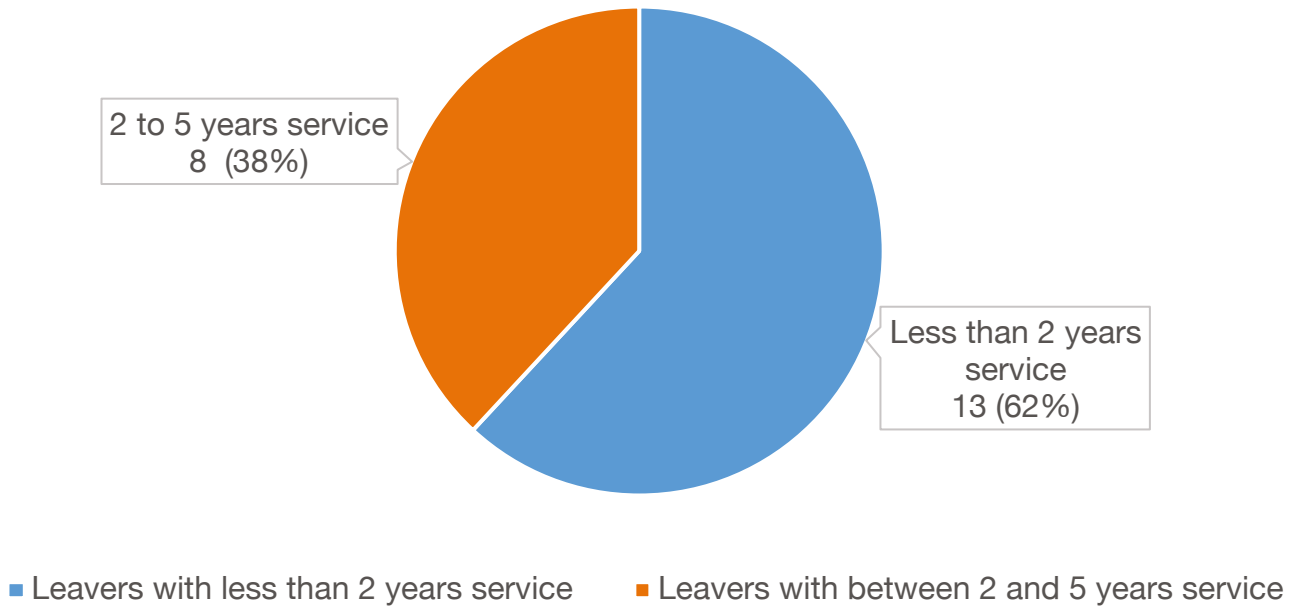
17. Leavers with short service

17.1. The number of staff leaving the profession with short service has increased significantly by 11, from 10 in 2023 to 21 in 2024. Notably the majority (10) are those in the range with less than 2 years service.

Table 13: Permanent employee leavers with short service

Permanent employee leavers with short service	2022	2023	2024	Difference from 2023 (+/-)
Leavers with less than 2 years service	8	3	13	+10
Leavers with between 2 and 5 years service	17	7	8	+1
Total	**25**	**10**	**21**	**+11**

Chart 20 – Permanent employee leavers with short service



18. Workforce data summary and findings

18.1. The workforce data analysis focuses on the current and future levels (supply and demand) for staff and the extent to which this demand is met by supply into job roles.

18.2. The overall size of the workforce has decreased by 15 between 2023 and 2024 from 598 to 583 (2.5%). Even though supply has dropped, the workforce is still greater than the level in 2022. Supply has dropped in the majority of job roles however, there is an increase in both senior surveyor and team leader roles. These increases are not significant and the number of people in each role has remained broadly similar so there is not a shift in the overall workforce.

18.3. The gap between supply and demand has widened, with a shortfall in 2023 of 39 (6.1%) increasing to 47 (7.5%) in 2024. Like last year's data, the 2024 data projects that the gap between supply and demand will double in the next three years (medium term) before seeing more gradual increases in demand in the long to longer term. Longer term demand has steadily increased over the last three years.

Demand for additional staff in the workforce remains above the current level of supply across all job roles, representing an ongoing recruitment challenge for verifiers.

18.4. The increase in demand projected in the medium term is linked to the Building Standards Futures Board compliance agenda and the associated additional workload expected. The increased building warrant fees introduced in April 2024, and the subsequent increase from 1 April 2025, will provide more income for local authority verifiers to allow for investment in the workforce and recruitment into roles for which there is current demand. It is likely any positive impact of the increased fees will not be noticeable until the 31 July 2025 workforce data collection.

18.5. The gaps between supply and demand for the Surveyor and Building Inspector roles are the largest across all job roles. Current demand for the surveyor role is 208 against supply of 198, with this rising to a projected demand of 239 in 2034. The building inspector role has supply of 33 with current demand at 39, however this rises to a demand 57 in the longer term. This indicates there is a need to resource these roles through recruitment or active succession planning. Recruiting staff into more junior roles and focussing on a 'grow your own' approach was recommended in the workforce strategy and remains a realistic approach to help address this gap and in turn support succession planning.

18.6. The demographic of the workforce has remained broadly similar this year, however, a few key changes are noted. In 2023 there was an increase in the younger age ranges but this has not continued in 2024. There has been a reduction of seven in the 16-24 age range, representing a 19.4% decrease. It is also notable there has been a 30% increase in the +61 range from 46 in 2023 to 60 in 2024, with this age range accounting for 10.3% of the total workforce (+2.6% on 2023).

18.7. Leavers in the under 40s age range is up from nine in 2023 to 20 in 2024. The demographic data indicates that there is a need to attract younger people into the workforce to help address succession planning and the loss of expertise from the profession through turnover and retirement. Recruitment of Graduate Apprentices (GA) and the introduction of the Modern Apprenticeship (MAs) pathway will generally drive the trend towards a younger profile to the workforce over time.

18.8. The trend (2022 to 2024) shows increases in the number of GAs and MAs from 20 in 2022 to 27 in 2024. There has been a shift in the split in the apprenticeships with the number of GAs now at 14 and MAs at 13. Due to budget pressures in local authorities, recruitment of MAs has been more difficult for building standards teams, however it is positive that GA numbers have increased.

18.9. Regarding the length of service, there has been a decrease of 22 in the 0-5 years range from 2023. The 0 to 5 years range continues to represent the largest group across the whole profession. It is notable that the number in the 6-10 years range has increased by 12 suggesting that local authorities are retaining staff beyond 5 years service.

18.10. The number of staff with longer service (+36 years) continues to grow. This is a positive trend as it indicates good job retention and illustrates that the profession is able to retain experienced staff. There is a three year trend of continued reduction in the 31-35 years of service range. This may be due to staff retiring after 30 years service or that staff are moving into the next bracket given the increases seen in the +36 years range.

18.11. Professional memberships in 2024 has decreased, the number held has decreased from 250 to 235. The spread of memberships has remained fairly static with no single membership type seeing a significant reduction or increase in number. The Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE) has the highest number of membership in the profession. The 93 CABE memberships represent 40% of the 235 total number held. The Royal Incorporation of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) has continued to see a reduction in the number of memberships across the workforce but the Chartered Institution of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) saw a slight increase in memberships.

18.12. The highest academic and/or vocational qualification held by each member of staff is collected. The number of qualifications held continues to increase (+35) since 2022. The largest increase since 2023 is in the number of honours degree qualifications held (+24) at level 10 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. Similarly, there continues to be an increase in the number of qualifications being studied. The Building Surveying qualification type remains the most popular across the profession with an increase of seven in the number studying this since 2023, this is also an increase on the number in 2022.

18.13. The number of leavers from the profession, with a given reason, has increased on 2023 figures, from 35 in 2023 to 50 in 2024, but is fewer than the 71 leavers in 2022. An additional two staff left the profession without a recorded reason which means the actual number of leavers is 52. The number of retirements from the profession continues to reduce. However, people leaving to go into private sector or to another public sector role has increased significantly from eight in 2023 to 26 in 2024, which is more than the 24 recorded in 2022. Notably, the number of leavers with short service has also increased to 21, which includes 13 with less than 2 years service. This could highlight a potential issue with staff retention in the first two years of service and will be a trend that will be monitored.

19. Conclusions

19.1. This report provides analysis and supporting commentary on the national picture for building standards verification services in Scotland. A range of data gathered from local authorities has been aggregated and presented to show Scotland level building warrant activity, performance against each KPO and the current and future levels (supply and demand) of the building standards professional workforce.

19.2. Overall, the national picture shows a downturn across the construction sector and the impact of this has been a reduction in building warrant activity and fee income levels in Scotland.

19.3. Performance trends across Scotland have improved since the current measures and targets were introduced in 2017 and performance levels have remained steady throughout 2023-24.

19.4. A key driver for change under the workforce strategy was to consider changes to the demographic profile. There was a forecasted loss of expertise due to retirement of long-serving staff and career moves where individuals choose to leave the building standards profession.

19.5. The analysis of workforce data focuses on the extent to which demand is met by supply into job roles. The overall size of the workforce has decreased between 2023 and 2024 from 598 to 583 (2.5%). The demographic of the workforce in the younger profile shows a decline in the 16-39 age range, so further work is required to address succession planning and the loss of expertise through retirement.

19.6. The new pathway for Modern Apprentices introduced under the workforce strategy has realised benefits to the building standards workforce. The introduction of apprentices is helping to balance the demographic of the workforce and provide long term resilience. A 'grow your own' approach supports succession planning by ensuring there are competent individuals working at all levels in the profession. Apprentices can help increase staffing levels in teams where recruitment is difficult or unsuccessful.

19.7. Although the strategy is now delivered, the workforce data allows us to continue measuring the impact of the positive outcomes of the strategy. Key findings are, since the strategy was launched the workforce has increased and the demographic is towards a younger profile.

19.8. An increase in demand for additional staff is expected in the medium term, due to the Futures Board compliance agenda. It is anticipated additional capacity is required to resource inspections as part of the compliance plan approach being introduced from 2026.

19.9. To recognise the resource implication for local authority verifiers, building warrant fees were increased in April 2024, with a further programme of fee increases over the next two years to support service investment.

19.10. Scottish Government will continue to monitor performance levels across Scotland and assess the impact of changes in the workforce and wider policies, including increased fees, professional competency and the compliance agenda.

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