

Estate staff salary survey

2020

Welcome to the 2020 edition of the biennial Knight Frank Estate Staff Salary Survey, we hope you find the results interesting and helpful.

Estate salaries are extremely varied, due to an estate's location and size. The locational differences are understandable and reflected in the national picture of wages (as shown in the 2019 Office for National Statistics UK Wages Report). It will be no surprise that the South East was at the top and the North West at the bottom.

The size of estates and whether an estate manager oversees more than one estate impacts on salaries for this role. Larger estates also employ more of the same types of staff (i.e. gardeners or gamekeepers) and generally they are a well-known and trusted local employer.

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**Bonuses are a more
challenging subject**



People like the prestige and association of these larger estates, and therefore employment for some roles appears easier and a lesser salary incentive is required.

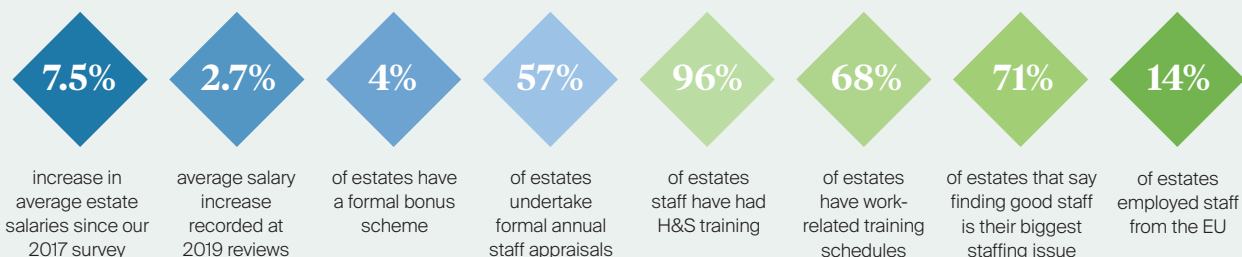
We have been undertaking this survey for a number of years and this year we decided to engage early with various estates to try and identify the employment issues that they are facing. The two most prominent being, should they look at salaries every year? And how do they tackle the issue of bonuses?

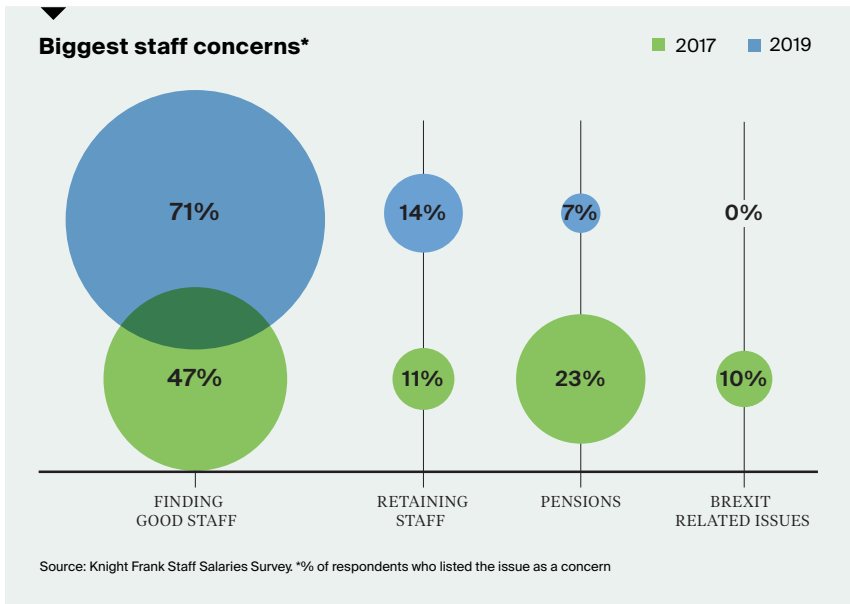
We feel that undertaking a salary review every year is challenging. The feedback is that salaries do not move sufficiently often and what can be a time consuming job for those in a management role is not relished every year. We understand both elements and certainly agree that salary levels appear to move slower than in a corporate environment.

AVERAGE SALARIES BY TYPE

JOB TITLE	SALARY
Estate Director	£83,224
House Manager/Butler	£54,686
Estate Manager	£54,505
Farm Manager	£43,225
Head of Security	£39,383
Driver	£36,500
Butler	£33,865
Estate Foreman	£29,740
Cook	£29,505
Head Gardener	£28,806
Farm/Estate Secretary	£27,188
Game Keeper	£26,670
Head Forester	£26,294
Security Guard	£26,225
Farm Worker (skilled)	£25,842
Ghillie	£24,720
Maintenance/Handyman	£24,445
Housekeeper	£24,292
Head Stalker	£23,300
Under Gardener	£21,118
Underkeeper	£20,912
Farm Worker (unskilled)	£20,799
Estate Worker	£20,564
Groom	£20,462
Forestry Worker	£20,128
Cleaner/maid	£19,308

THE LATEST FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY





If annual salary reviews are not undertaken then we feel that a market based review is required once every other year rather than an RPI (or similar index) based review which can overtime end up out of kilter with market based salaries.

Bonuses are a more challenging subject. Particularly since the credit crunch, they have been a low risk way for a business to keep its costs minimised but reward its staff when results are better than expected. Therefore bonuses have been used to prop up salaries across the workplace and, as Brexit arrived just as the

economy appeared to recover from the credit crunch (but not quite), bonuses have now become a part of an employee's salary that they depend on.

Whilst we don't feel that this is the case on estates, we do feel that bonuses are becoming expected by staff.

Our view is that if bonuses are given, they should be in addition to, not as part of or to prop up a salary



57% of estates undertake formal staff appraisals



and they should be clearly related to performance. Our survey showed that 57% of estates undertake formal staff appraisals and it would be quite straightforward to prepare a simple matrix which would allow an estate to decide and demonstrate performance during the year.

We were pleased to see that 96% of estates in the survey undertook health and safety training with their staff, but we would expect farming businesses in the UK to be well below this figure.

Finally, by far the biggest issue for estates is finding good staff. Local advertising and word of mouth were, according to our survey, by far, the chosen methods of recruitment. This is not for all levels of estate staff and we find that estate manager, CEO and estate director positions are sought through consultants, and house staff positions still rely on the traditional recruitment routes i.e. the Lady Magazine.

We set out a schedule of average salaries for each position and very much hope this will be a useful benchmark going forwards. If you require further detail on any particular position or are trying to find a new member of staff then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

We like questions, if you've got one about our research, or would like some property advice or consultancy, we would love to hear from you.



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