

Estate staff salary survey

2022

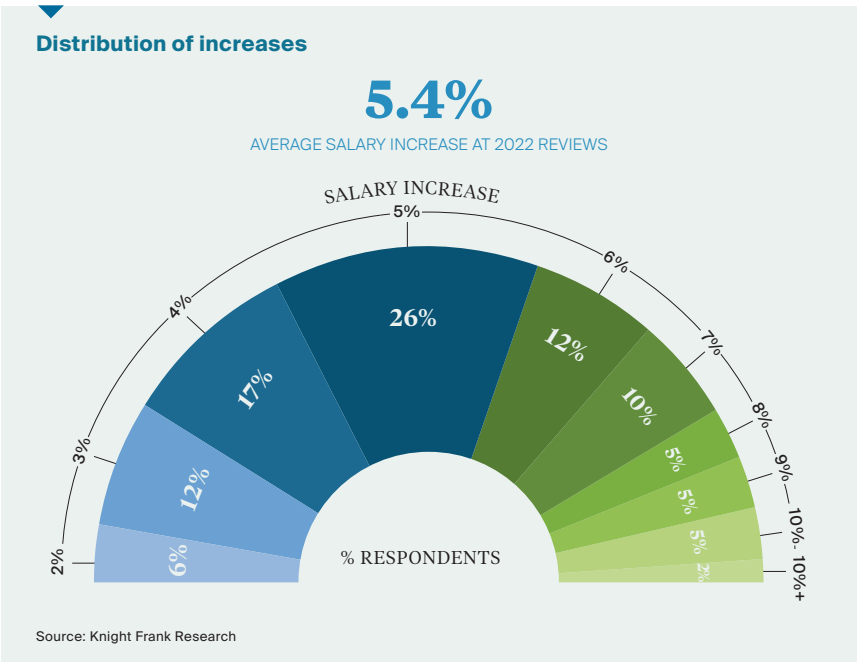
Welcome to the 2022 edition of the biennial Knight Frank Estate Staff Salary Survey, we hope you find the results interesting and helpful

We first decided to track estate staff salaries about ten years ago in response to client requests for benchmarking data. For most of that period inflation has been relatively benign so the biggest driver of salaries has been a shortage of good staff. Now, not only are well qualified staff still in short supply, but the cost of living crisis – annual inflation has now hit double-digit levels – is pushing demands for significant wage increases.

This is clearly reflected in the results of this year's survey. The average increase in salaries following pay reviews this year was 5.4%, exactly double the level recorded by

the 2020 edition of the survey. The increase is well above the average boost of around 2% or so received by public sector workers this year, but slightly below the 6.2% hike received by private sector workers between June and August.

It is, however, difficult to make exact comparisons given that many estate staff remuneration packages include some kind of subsidised accommodation. The average figure also hides a wide range of increases. A small number of estates seem to have fully matched the increase in inflation when calculating salary rises for their staff, while a number are some way below.



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**During interviews we are
certainly getting asked more
if we have measures in place
specifically concerning
welfare and wellbeing**

SURVEY RESPONDENT

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AVERAGE SALARIES BY TYPE

JOB TITLE	ANNUAL SALARY
Estate director	£93,266
Estate manager	£70,259
Farm manager	£49,686
Head gardener	£40,217
House manager/butler	£37,908
Cook	£37,661
Estate foreman	£37,056
Head forester	£31,281
Farmworker (skilled)	£30,443
Farm/Estate secretary	£30,118
Maintenance person	£27,377
Gamekeeper	£26,187
Housekeeper	£25,278
Estate worker	£25,035
Farmworker (unskilled)	£24,129
Under gardener	£23,725
Forestry worker	£23,622
Underkeeper	£22,209
Cleaner/maid	£21,857
Groom	£19,900

Source: The Knight Frank Estate Staff Salary Survey
(completed in Oct/Nov 2022)

Despite the economic turmoil the country is currently experiencing with little let up predicted in the near future, staff availability remains extremely limited and recruitment was highlighted as an increasingly difficult issue by 86% of our survey respondents. Even specialist agencies often provide unmotivated and under-skilled candidates unwilling to work hard, say a number of our participants.

When asked which roles were hardest to fill, a wide range of positions was listed, but estates with diversified hospitality businesses like catering or wedding venues seemed to be struggling the most. This is perhaps unsurprising given the huge levels of competition from the wider hospitality sector suffering from a lack of EU workers post-Brexit. Even McDonalds is now offering salaries of over £13/hour, which is well above the new minimum wage announced in Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's Autumn Statement.

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Accommodation is becoming a problem as not many applicants for rural positions are local

SURVEY RESPONDENT

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Encouragingly, significantly fewer of our respondents (42%) listed staff retention as a growing problem. This suggests, once recruited, estate staff feel well looked after in their roles.

With such an imbalance between staff supply and demand, potential recruits are also becoming increasingly selective about the roles they are prepared to take on, with remuneration just part of their criteria. Over 40% of survey respondents said that they were increasingly being questioned about their social and environmental policies.

While it is easy to dismiss such requests as the preoccupations of Gen-Z workers, they are unlikely to diminish. Putting in place strong environmental and social policies also undoubtedly creates businesses that are more sustainable and better placed to weather the growing climate change and biodiversity challenges. A good example is the net zero strategy recently released by the Duchy of Cornwall. Employers who recognise and respond to the big issues of the day, particularly environmental matters, will be in a better position to attract the most motivated staff.

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It's hard to find people with traditional/artisanal property maintenance skills

SURVEY RESPONDENT

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STAFFING ISSUE FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY

86%

of respondents said it was becoming harder to recruit staff

42%

of respondents said it was becoming harder to retain staff

57%

of respondents employing overseas staff are finding it harder to recruit

42%

of applicants are becoming more interested in employers' social and environmental policies

5%

of respondents said they had schemes to encourage greater workforce diversity

For more information about the survey and for help with any staffing issues please do get in touch with any of the contacts listed below

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