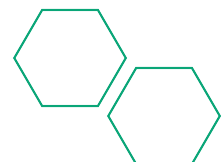
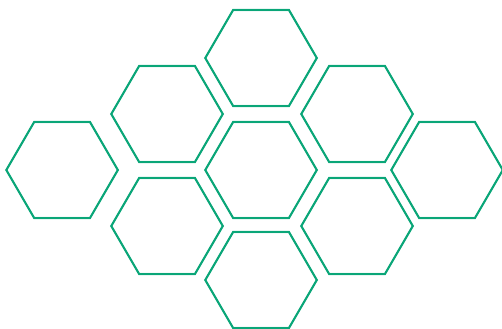
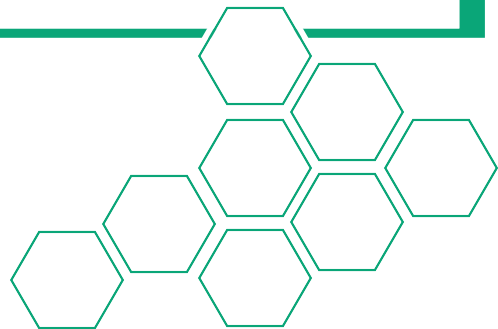
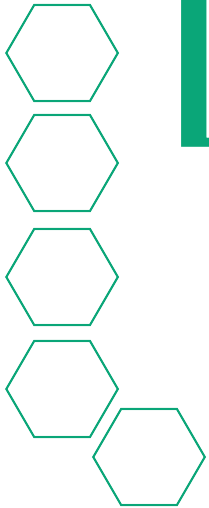


Oldham

Data from the Greater Manchester
Local Skills Improvement Plan



**Funded by
UK Government**



Greater Manchester
Chamber of Commerce

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Introduction

Understanding the ever-evolving employment landscape is critical for nurturing a workforce that is well-prepared for future opportunities and enabling local economies to thrive.

This report, produced as part of the Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan (GM LSIP), is one of a series of ten reports, each focusing on a different local authority area in Greater Manchester. The aim of this report is to provide a comprehensive breakdown of how employment patterns in Oldham may change over time. By providing this detailed breakdown, this report will help stakeholders including colleges, independent training providers, Councils and businesses to foresee trends in the local labour market and align skills provision with future demand.

Central to this report is an assessment of the local economy, beginning with an overview of Gross Value Added (GVA) sourced from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Employment statistics, drawn from the ONS' Business Register and Employment Survey, have been included to present a baseline for understanding workforce distribution across different industries. Understanding the qualifications held by residents offers valuable insight into the workforce's readiness for both current and emerging job opportunities. For this, the report includes information on qualification levels of the local population.

The above demographic information is followed by an in-depth analysis of job demand, using two distinct data sources: vacancy information from Adzuna and responses from the surveys conducted to gather labour market intelligence for the GM LSIP. The survey specifically asked business respondents to list job titles that they had attempted to recruit for, as well as "hard to fill" roles, which are jobs the respondents found difficult to recruit for.

It is important to note that there may be differences between these two data sets. While certain jobs may be in high demand, businesses may not always struggle to recruit for them if the supply of qualified candidates is sufficient. Conversely, some roles may be particularly hard to fill, reflecting a mismatch between employer needs and the available talent pool. This variation highlights key recruitment challenges in specific sectors and underscores the importance of targeted skills development.

Going beyond current job demand, this report includes an analysis of significant projects that are set to reshape the employment landscape in Oldham. These major initiatives, such as the Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Development sites, represent substantial investments in Oldham. Such projects are often in addition to plans for new residential and commercial developments and, collectively, they are expected to generate considerable employment demand, both during the building phase and as businesses establish themselves in these new developments.



Subrah Krishnan-Harihara
Deputy Director of
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of Commerce

Introduction

During the initial construction phase, there will be increased demand for construction workers such as those skilled in trades such as electrical work, plumbing, bricklaying and site management. Because of the volume of construction projects planned, this phase alone will create numerous opportunities for local employment in construction. Consequently, there is the need to maintain and expand provision for vocational training and apprenticeships in construction trades.

Notably, the impact of these projects extends well beyond construction. As developments are completed, they will give rise to new job opportunities across a diverse range of sectors. For example, the completion of a large-scale logistics hub will drive demand for warehouse operatives, supply chain managers, and transport coordinators. Similarly, investments in health or education facilities will necessitate a skilled workforce of nurses, medical technicians, teachers and tutors.

To provide clarity on these developments, this report includes a key table (on page 11) outlining major projects within the local authority, detailing their objectives and sectoral priorities. This is followed by a sector-specific evaluation, mapping out how these projects will translate into job creation. It categorises anticipated roles across industries such as construction, manufacturing, health and social care, etc. An extensive amount of research has gone into identifying job roles and the key skills that these job roles will require. Although the report does not claim to have an exhaustive list of job roles and skills, the structured approach enables all stakeholders to gain a clear picture of where employment opportunities are likely to arise and what skills will be in demand.

By highlighting the interplay between development initiatives, potential growth in sectoral employment and skills requirements, this report will help inform strategic workforce planning at the local authority level. The report thus underscores the importance of aligning training programmes with the needs of growth sectors and emerging requirements.

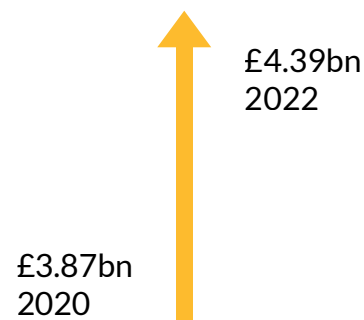
This report is a vital output from the research conducted for developing and implementing the GM LSIP and positioned as a resource for local stakeholders to inform their strategic planning. It provides an evidence-based overview of expected labour market shifts, highlighting where job demand is likely to grow and where potential skills gaps may arise.

For colleges and independent training providers, the report serves as a valuable reference point for curriculum planning. Nonetheless, the findings in this report should not be interpreted as a directive for immediate changes to course provision. Instead, the insights should be used to inform long-term curriculum planning and ensure that training programmes evolve in line with broader economic trends and emerging labour requirements.

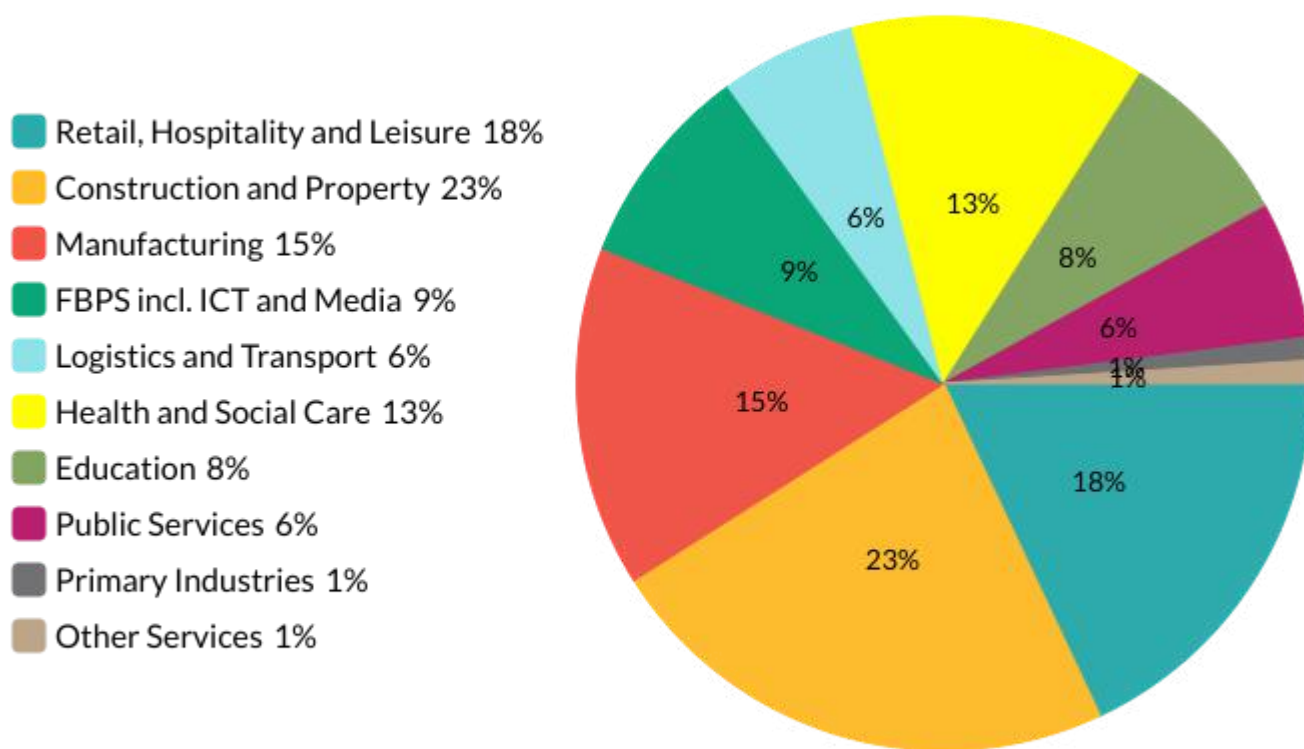
For local councils and business organisations, this report offers insights for workforce development. Using the insights contained in this report about job creation and skills demand, they can encourage stronger partnerships between employers, educators and business representative organisations to ensure that Greater Manchester's workforce remains competitive and resilient and, ultimately, contributes to a more dynamic and responsive local economy.

Gross Value Added (GVA) in Oldham

- Construction and property; retail, hospitality and leisure; and manufacturing were the sectors with the highest GVA in 2022.
- With a growth of 15.3%, the construction and property sector grew the most between 2021 and 2022. The retail, hospitality and leisure sector and the manufacturing sector grew by 7.2% and 13.1%, respectively.
- The GVA of the Financial, Business and Professional Services (FBPS) sector, including ICT and media, decreased by 2% between 2021 and 2022.



GVA by sector in 2022



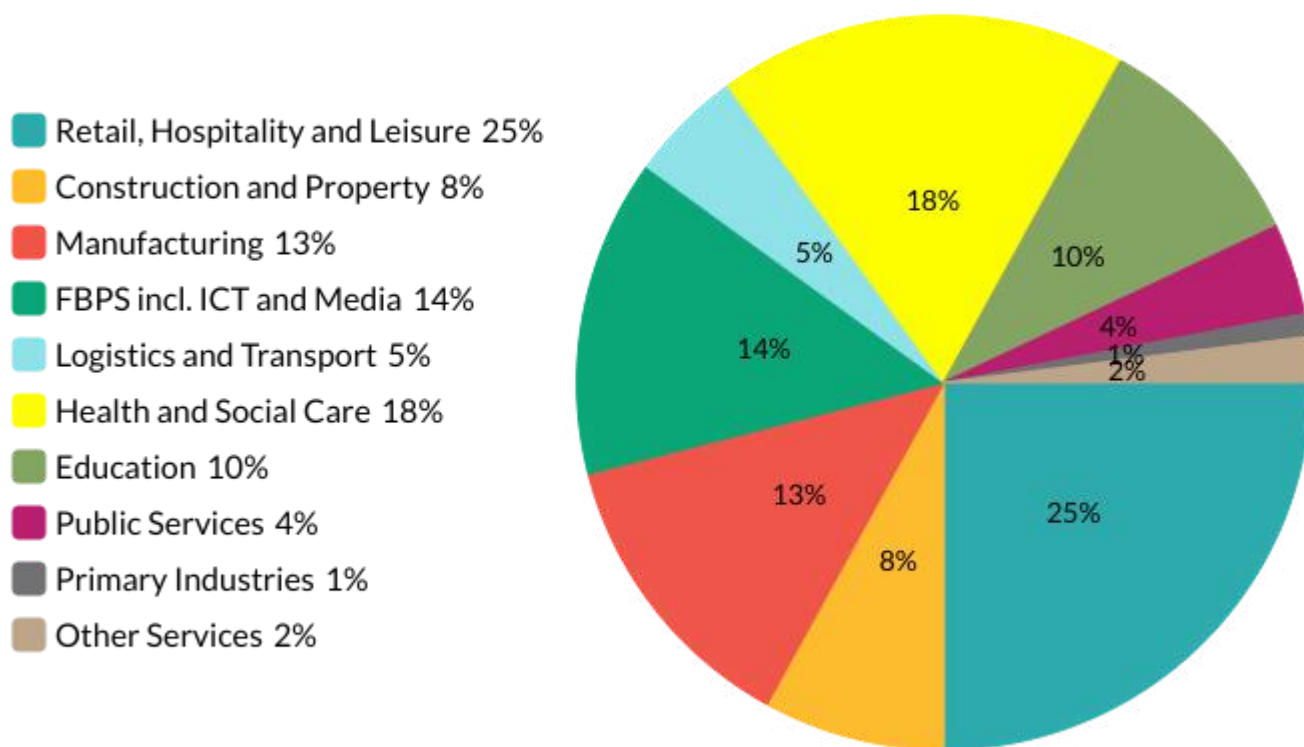
Source: ONS

Employment in Oldham

Total employment in 2023 - 87,005

- The sectors with the highest number of employees in 2023 were: retail, hospitality and leisure; health and social care; and FBPS, including ICT and media .
- Primary industries, other services and public services were the sectors with the lowest number of employees in 2023.
- The sectors that grew the most between 2022 and 2023 in terms of the number of employees were education, which saw an increase of 12.5%, and FBPS, including ICT and media, which increased by 8%.

Employment by sector in 2023

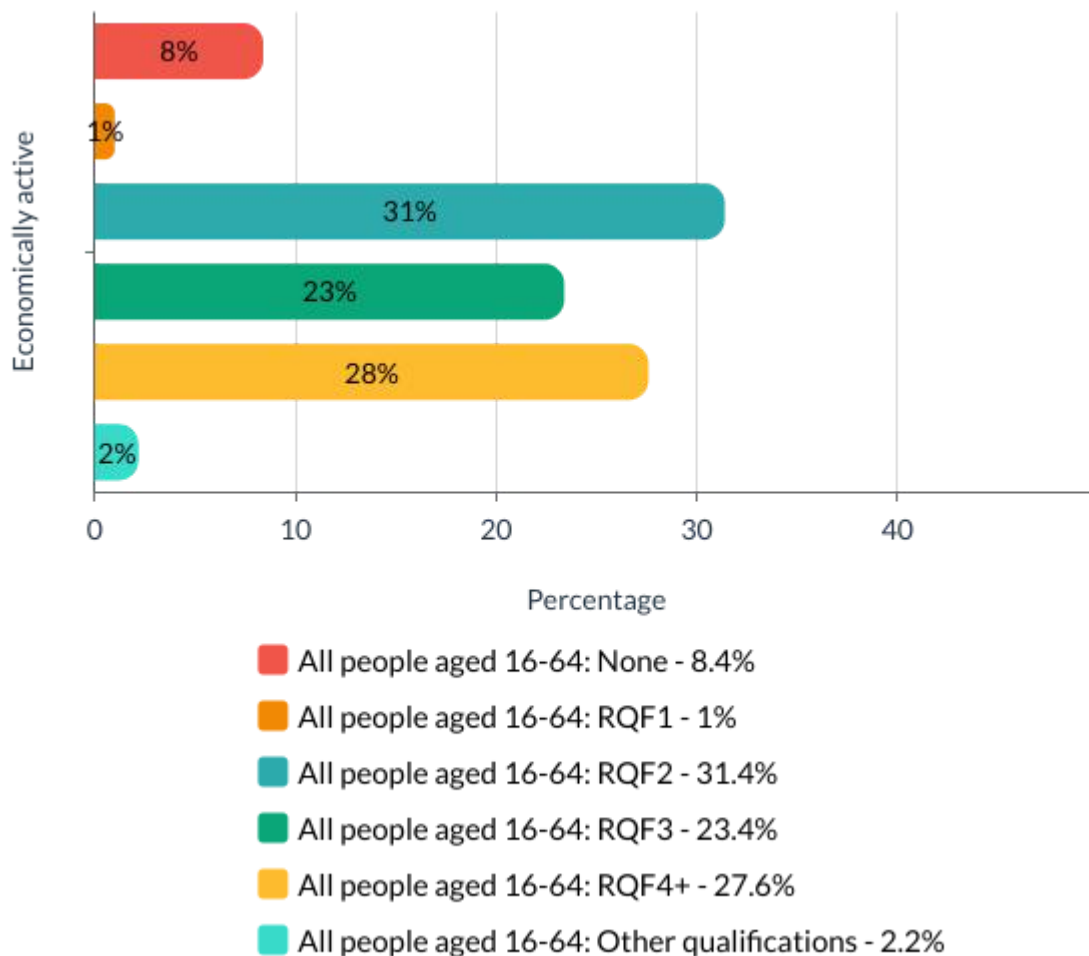


Source: ONS

Economic activity levels in Oldham

- The information for the total number of economically active people in the local authority and those with different levels of qualifications has been taken from the ONS Annual Population Survey. In light of recent concerns about some ONS statistics, there could be revisions to some data points.
- In Oldham, the majority of the economically active population had RQF (Regulated Qualifications Framework) Level 2 (31%).
- Shortly behind, were those with RQF4+ qualifications (28%).
- The percentage of the economically active population with no qualifications was 8%.

Percentage of economically active population with qualifications



Source: ONS

Occupations in high demand

In general, Adzuna's data categorises job postings based on the sector of the employer advertising the position, rather than the sector typically associated with the job title itself. For example, if a college advertises a vacancy for a caterer, the job would be classified under the education sector rather than the hospitality sector, even though catering roles are traditionally linked to hospitality. This classification occurs because the job posting originates from an educational institution. However, for the purposes of this report, the data has been reclassified to align job postings with the sectors most commonly associated with their respective job titles. This adjustment ensures a more accurate representation of industry trends by reflecting the nature of the job rather than the employer's sector. The occupations with the highest demand according to Adzuna data are listed in the following table. These job titles had the highest number of vacancies between May and October 2024.

Sector	Job titles
Construction and Property	Manager
	Cleaning supervisor
	Facilities manager
	Cleaner
Education	Early years teacher
	Driving instructor
FBPS including IT	Data scientist
	Administrator
	Receptionist
	Executive assistant
	Management assistant
	Service manager
	Category manager
	IT system architect
	Database developer

Occupations in high demand - continued

Sector	Job titles
Health and Social Care	Social care worker
	Mental health nurse
	Psychologist
	Dental nurse
	Occupational therapist
	Consultant psychiatrist
	Ward sister
	Healthcare assistant
Retail, Hospitality and Leisure	Shift manager
	Store assistant
	Sales assistant
	Merchandise
	Retail sales adviser
	Chef
	Chef manager
	Management assistant
	Barista
	Shop manager
	Kitchen assistant
	Delivery driver
	Duty manager
	Waiter/waitress

Occupations in high demand - continued

The high-demand occupations and the hard-to-fill occupations according to Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce's survey are shown in the table below. High-demand occupations refer to roles that many employers attempted to recruit for, while hard-to-fill occupations refer to roles that employers struggled to recruit. This data covers the period from June 2023 to December 2024.

High-demand occupations	Hard-to-fill occupations
Welder	Welder
Engineer	Teacher
Tutor	
Teacher	
Sales representative	
Customer service representative	
Administrative assistant	

Ongoing/future investment projects

The main investment projects that are taking place in Oldham, or that are planned to commence in the next few years, are presented in this section. This list is not exhaustive, but includes the projects that have the potential to impact the labour market.

Project	Project description	Project priorities
Homes in Oldham town centre	Oldham Council and Muse developers have teamed up to deliver 2,000 homes in Oldham town centre. Some of the sites that will be redeveloped to make way for new homes are the Oldham Civic Centre, the former Oldham leisure centre and the former Magistrates' Court.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential development
	Status: Site preparation work for one of the sites was approved in September 2024. The homes will be delivered over a period of 15 years.	
	Residential space: 2,000 homes will be built, most of which will be apartments.	
Spindles Shopping Centre Renovation	Oldham Council is nearing completion of the Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and retail • Entertainment and leisure • Office space • FBPS
	Status: The renovation started in 2023/2024 and it will reach completion this year.	
	Commercial space: It will include a food and drink market, events venue and retail space. The Hive co-working centre opened in 2024 and offers business support, from growth assistance to support with grant applications.	
	Public space: The development will have a public archive centre, which will house Oldham's archives and museum artefacts. The new office for Oldham Council staff and strategic partners opened in February 2024.	
	Economic impact: Footfall has already increased since the opening of the offices and the Hive. The Council expects to further increase footfall into the shopping centre with the opening of the market and events venue this year.	

Ongoing/future investment projects - continued

Project	Project description	Project priorities
Oldham Coliseum Refurbishment	Oldham Council is renovating the Oldham Coliseum theatre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertainment and leisure
	Status: Refurbishment work started in 2024. The venue is expected to reopen in December 2025.	
	Cultural space: The Oldham Coliseum will continue to produce shows.	
Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (AVMDZ)	The Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (AVMDZ) is being developed across three sites in Bury, Rochdale and Oldham. It is a public-private partnership, with an approximate investment of £1bn. Once fully developed, it will form a cluster of companies specialised in advanced manufacturing and materials. One of the sites is Stakehill Industrial Estate, which spans Oldham and Rochdale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced manufacturing • Sustainability • Innovation • Business growth and expansion • Economic expansion • Inward investment • Residential development • Transport infrastructure
	Commercial space: The project will cover 17 million sq ft of employment space across the three sites. It will mainly host advanced manufacturing, machinery and advanced materials businesses. It will also include research facilities and business support services.	
	Residential development: The target is to build 7,000 homes across the locations.	
	Transport infrastructure: The project includes increased bus services between the employment sites and Rochdale, Bury and Oldham.	
	Economic impact: The creation of 20,000 jobs is expected across the three Atom Valley sites.	
Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Development sites	Two adjoining PfE allocations within the North Oldham Cluster Local Improvement Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential development • Transport infrastructure • Logistics • Industrial units
	Status: Construction work has not started. Specific timescales have not been disclosed.	

Ongoing/future investment projects - continued

Project	Project description	Project priorities
Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Development sites - continued	Residential development: 2,000 new homes will be built.	
	Commercial space: The development will include 21,000 sq m of industrial and warehouse floorspace.	
	Transport infrastructure: New Metrolink stop proposed within the Broadbent Moss site with park and ride facilities. New link road across the sites to connect the developments with existing road network. Creation of new active travel routes across the sites, both north-south and east-west.	
	Green space: Improved wetland nature habitats to be created on-site.	
Logistics space in Chadderton	Chancerygate and Hines have plans to develop a logistics space in the Broadway Green Business Park in Chadderton.	• Logistics
	Status: Details on the expected start or completion dates unknown.	
	Commercial space: It will be a 166,500 sq ft development with 18 units to let mainly for logistics and distribution companies.	
	Economic impact: The space is expected to create over 100 jobs.	
Solar Farm in Failsworth	Oldham Council has plans to develop its first solar farm at Wrigley Head in Failsworth, with an estimated cost of £2m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-carbon energy generation • Innovation in local energy supply • Bringing low quality Council land into productive use
	Status: In Autumn 2024, the Council awarded the Engineer, Procure and Construct (EPC) contract for the solar farm to regionally based Vital Energi.	
	Sustainability: The solar farm will have a capacity of around 888kW, generating low carbon electricity to feed into the grid.	

Ongoing/future investment projects - continued

Project	Project description	Project priorities
Oldham Low Carbon Heat Network	Oldham Council is working to develop a £27m low carbon heat network to serve town centre buildings, Council sites and residential sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-carbon heat • Energy security • Strategic Energy Partner anchor project
	Status: The project is currently in the design process (RIBA stage 3). Specific construction timescales have not been disclosed.	
	Sustainability: The network will use floodwater from disused coal mines to generate heat. The heat from the water will be recovered using heat pumps.	

Sector priorities

This section introduces the Council's priorities and targets for each of the principal sectors in Oldham. The jobs and skills that are needed to achieve these ambitions are included in the analysis.

Sector: Construction and property

Initiatives/Priorities:

There are several upcoming construction projects in Oldham, mainly housing and commercial developments. The demand for construction workers will remain high.

Places for Everyone (PfE) construction plans:

- In the PfE plan, it was stipulated that 11,560 new homes, 81,998 sqm of office space and 278,922 sqm of industrial floor space would be delivered in Oldham by 2039.

Housing:

- In the Creating a Better Place plan, Oldham Council committed to build 2,000 homes in Oldham town centre.
- 7,000 homes will be built across the AVMDZ.

Industrial space:

- There are plans to build a 166,500 sq ft logistics space in Chadderton.

Commercial space:

- The Creating a Better Place plan entails the creation of new leisure and cultural spaces in the town centre. The flagship project is the renovation of the Spindles Shopping Centre.

Energy infrastructure:

- The Council has plans to build a solar farm in Failsworth and a low carbon heat network in the town centre.

Transport infrastructure:

- Transport infrastructure will be further developed to better connect Atom Valley sites.
- A new Metrolink stop within the Broadbent Moss development site has been proposed.

Sector priorities - continued

Job Creation	Anticipated Skills Requirements
<p>Electrician, Plumber, Welder, Roofer, Tile fitter, Plasterer, Painter, Bricklayer, Carpenter, Ceiling fixer, HVAC technician, Heavy equipment operator, Water resource operative, Smart meter installer, Site engineer, Mechanical engineer, Civil engineer, Electrical engineer, Architect, Landscape architect, Quantity surveyor, Urban planner, Environmental consultant, Retrofit coordinator, Sustainability officer, Real estate agent, Facilities manager, Construction manager, Structural steel fabricator, Steel erector, Steel fixer, Scaffolder, Solar PV technician, Heat pump technician, Renewable energy engineer.</p>	<p>Planning Project management Quantity surveying Construction and site planning Procurement Civil engineering and structural design Knowledge of building regulations and safety codes Operation of heavy machinery Ability to use CAD software (for engineers, architects and high-skilled technicians) Ability to use BIM software (for engineers, architects and high-skilled technicians) Green skills Retrofitting SMART buildings Carbon literacy Social Value</p>

Sector priorities - continued

Sector: Retail, Hospitality and Leisure

Initiatives/Priorities:

- The plan to regenerate Oldham town centre aims to increase the food and beverage, leisure and retail offering, which will create more jobs in the sector. The major projects include the revamp of the Spindles Shopping Centre and the Oldham Coliseum.
- In the Shared Vision for 2030 document, the Council highlighted that it would focus on the leisure industry, instead of only retail.
- In the Oldham Cultural Strategy, the Council committed to increase the availability and quality of creative workspaces and cultural facilities. The Council stated that it would work with training providers to create more progression routes in the cultural and creative industry.

Job Creation	Anticipated Skills Requirements
Cleaner Food and beverage assistant Kitchen assistant Chef Waiter/Waitress Barperson Barista Cashier Delivery driver Shop assistant Sales associate Shift manager Shop manager Visual artist Leisure centre assistant Leisure centre manager Receptionist Event coordinator	Nutrition Food preparation Leadership and team management Sales Customer service Inventory management Store operations Strong communication and conflict resolution Ability to use POS systems

Sector priorities - continued

Sector: Manufacturing

Initiatives/Priorities:

- The increase in industrial floorspace projected in the PfE plan, along with the potential expansion of the Stakehill Industrial Estate, will likely attract more businesses to Oldham.
- The low carbon heat network will require roles in manufacturing,
- Skilled manufacturing technicians will remain in high demand.

Job Creation	Anticipated Skills Requirements
Production operative Spray painter CNC machinist Industrial electrician Metal fabricator/welder Electrical/electronics assembler Fitter CAD technician Engineering manufacturing technician Electrical engineering technician Mechanical engineering technician Electrical engineer Mechanical engineer Manufacturing engineer Operations manager Production manager	Manual dexterity Ability to read blueprints Ability to use CAD software Knowledge of electrical systems specific to a manufacturing setup Welding skills Numeric and mathematical skills Understanding of engineering concepts and principles Knowledge of health and safety regulations Knowledge of their specific field of engineering Heat network component manufacturing skills

Sector priorities - continued

Sector: Financial, Business and Professional Services, including ICT

Initiatives/Priorities:

- The new provision of office floorspace envisioned in the PfE plan will create more opportunities for professional services businesses to establish and grow.
- It is intended that the Hive co-working space in the Spindles Shopping Centre will boost SME creation.
- There will be continued demand for administration, legal, accounting and IT support jobs.

Job Creation	Anticipated Skills Requirements
Payroll clerk Accounting assistant Purchase ledger administrator Credit manager Accountant Management accountant Finance manager Paralegal Solicitor Administrator Receptionist IT technician Data analyst Software developer	Accounting Bookkeeping Database management Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite Ability to use accounting software Ability to use CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software Knowledge of law Programming skills Scripting Cyber security

Sector priorities - continued

Sector: Education

Initiatives/Priorities:

- Oldham's population increased at an annual rate of .74% between 2014 and 2023. Likewise, the number of people in the age group 0-15 grew over the same time period (ONS, 2024). The demand for educational services will increase slightly if these trends continue.
- More educational services will be needed to serve the residents of the new housing developments.
- School teachers and related occupations will be much needed.

Job Creation	Anticipated Skills Requirements
Nursery nurse / Early years practitioner Primary school teacher Secondary school teacher Teaching assistant SEND teacher Tutor	Tutoring Teaching Motivating students Working with children Understanding learning difficulties Digital literacy Diversity and inclusion

Sector priorities - continued

Sector: Health and Social Care

Initiatives/Priorities:

- The new residential developments will increase the demand for health and care services in those areas.
- The proportion of Oldham's population in the 65+ age category increased between 2014 and 2023 (ONS, 2024). If the population continues to age, there will be a greater demand for adult care services.
- The demand for adult care workers and related occupations will likely increase.

Job Creation	Anticipated Skills Requirements
Care worker Support worker Healthcare support worker/ Healthcare assistant Nursing associate Nurse General Practitioner Recreational therapist Occupational therapist Dental nurse Dental hygienist Dental practitioner Medical and dental specialities	Knowledge on patient safety Check and monitor vital signs Ability to use digital devices and applications to record patients' data Physical strength (for care workers, nurses and roles in between) Knowledge on the specific field of medicine/dentistry Customer service Respond to emergency situations Empathy Sensitivity

Sector priorities - continued

Sector: Low carbon

Initiatives/Priorities:

- In the Oldham Green New Deal Strategy, the Council committed to making itself carbon neutral by 2025 and the borough by 2030. The Council is committed to supporting the low carbon/ green sector and creating more green jobs.
- The solar farm in Failsworth and the low carbon heat network will require technicians with green skills for their operation and maintenance.

Job Creation	Anticipated Skills Requirements
Heat pump technician EV charge point technician Solar PV technician Solar thermal technician Retrofit coordinator Renewable energy engineer Carbon accountant	Electrical skills Plumbing skills Ability to use CAD software Retrofitting Understanding of energy-efficiency measures Knowledge of health and safety regulations Knowledge of building regulations Data analysis (carbon accountant)

Conclusions

This local authority level report offers an in-depth analysis of the current and projected employment landscape within Oldham. By incorporating information on the local economy and the anticipated impact of significant development projects, the report provides a comprehensive overview of the local labour market's dynamics.

A noteworthy aspect of this analysis is the examination of discrepancies between high-demand roles and those identified as hard-to-fill by employers. Recognising the distinction between the two is necessary to address immediate recruitment needs. The exploration of major development initiatives, such as the Spindles Shopping Centre Renovation and Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone, will enable stakeholders to develop long-term workforce development strategies. The projects included in the table starting on page 11 are poised to shape local labour requirements, initially driving demand for construction-related roles and subsequently generating opportunities across a range of sectors.

This report is a critical component of the Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan (GM LSIP), which aims to align technical and vocational education with the actual needs of the local economy. Integrating this report into the broader context of the GM LSIP offers updated insights that complement the existing analyses and reports. This positioning also ensures that training and skills development interventions are tailored to address both Oldham-specific and Greater Manchester-wide skills priorities.

To maintain its relevance and accuracy, this report will undergo a comprehensive refresh every 18 to 24 months. The updates will incorporate the latest data and developments, ensuring that all stakeholders have continued access to current information. It is anticipated that this report will serve as an invaluable resource for strategic skills planning in Oldham. For policy makers, it offers evidence-based insights into current and emerging labour market trends while aiding colleges and independent training providers in making informed decisions about curriculum development and training provision. While the report is not intended to prompt immediate curriculum changes, it should inform medium- to long-term planning to ensure that available training meets employers' needs and also evolves in tandem with the shifting economic landscape.

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