

AUTOMOTIVE LABOUR MARKET BRIEFING

Vacancy rates in the sector continue to fall, yet there are still more than 23,000 vacancies



Summary

The automotive sector continues to recover with a further decline in vacancy rates, yet stays volatile, with high demand for all skilled roles in the past three months.

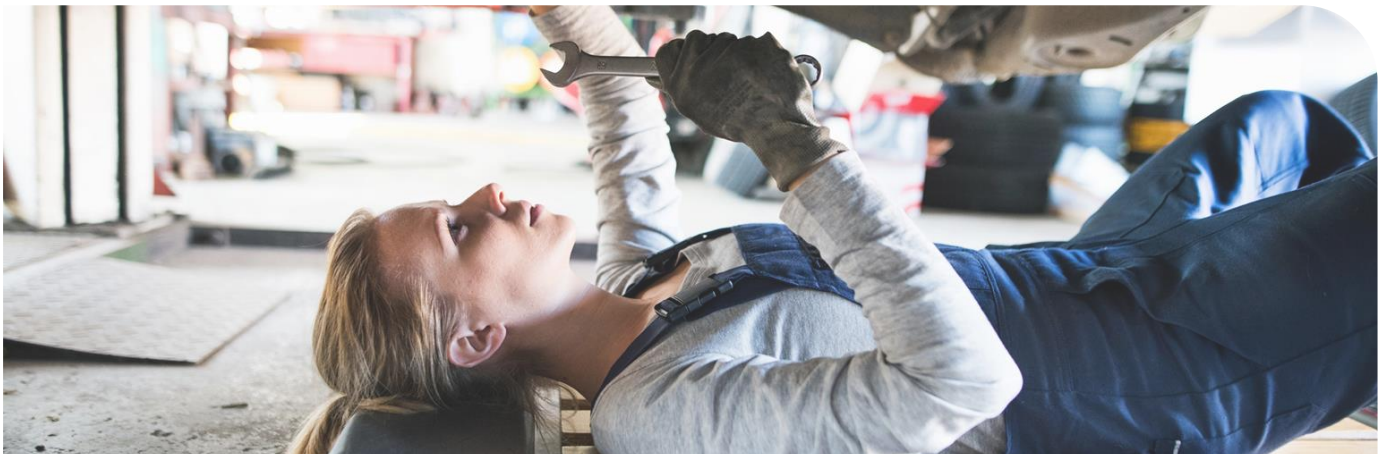
There is a continued cooling in job postings since the start of 2023. Despite this, the vacancy rate in the motor trades remains considerably higher — 40% above the average rate across all industries, which stands at 3.0.

Alongside this, the demand for skills is evolving, with an emphasis on machinery proficiency, strong work ethic, and increasingly, numerical expertise in areas like invoicing. Skills in sales are also beginning to resurge among all Technician types.

Overall, salary trends show an uptick across most roles, despite some disparities. Some roles, like Vehicle Body Builders, are above the government median salary range, while others, like Managers, lag behind. Notably, this marks the first occurrence of such a trend this year.

Key points

- **Decline in vacancy rate:** The vacancy rate in the sector drops by 16% to 4.2, ranking second in job vacancies with about 23,800 positions.
- **Cooling trend in job postings:** A decrease in job postings from August to October 2023, with a peak in August followed by a 16% drop in September and a further 2% in October.
- **Top occupations:** Vehicle Technicians, Mechanics, and Electricians are the most advertised roles.
- **Shift in demanded skills:** Increased importance of machinery proficiency, invoicing, and strong work ethic.
- **Salary trends:** Tyre, Exhaust, and Windscreen Fitters are experiencing a 2% drop below the government median, earning £26,050, while Managers face a 45% reduction to £32,000.

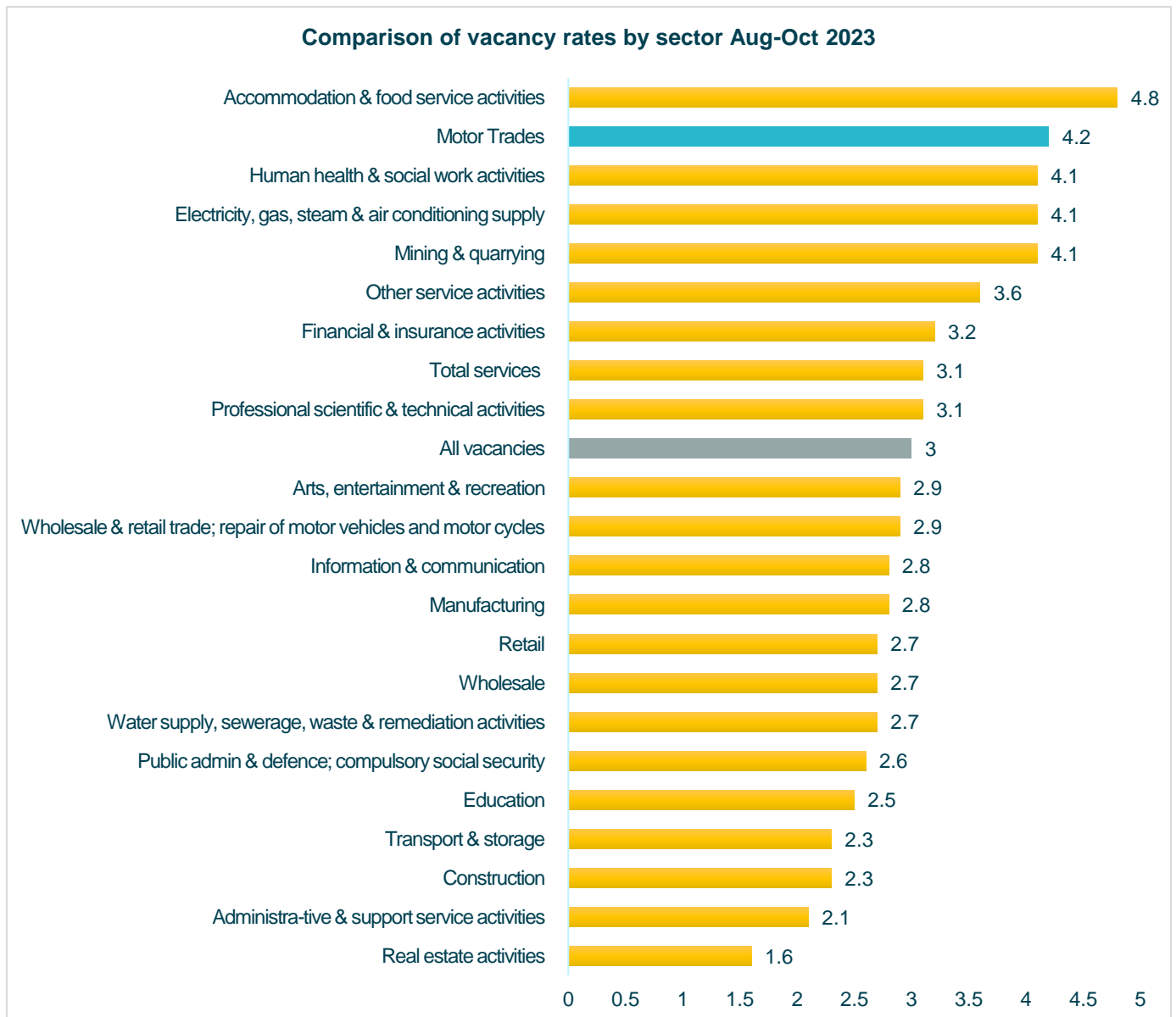
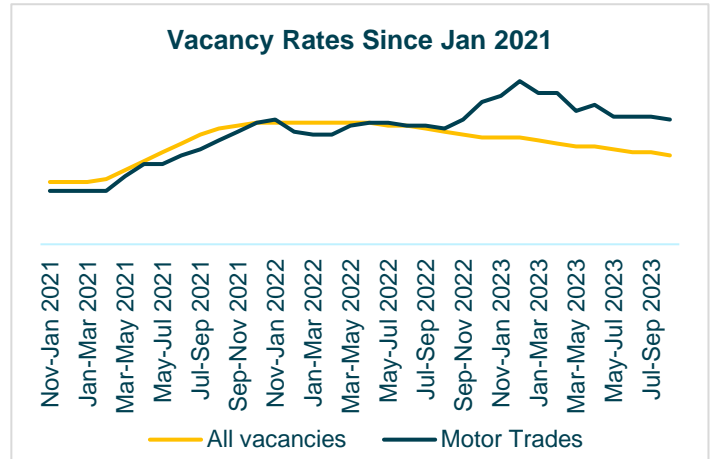


Sector vacancy rates

The Motor Trades sector is experiencing a 16% drop in its vacancy rate to 4.2 since the year's start.

Despite this decline, it's important to note that the vacancy rate in the motor trades is still considerably higher — by 40% — compared to the average rate across all industries, which stands at 3.0.

The sector, with around 23,800 open positions, now moves up one place to rank second in job vacancies, only behind Accommodation and Food Services.



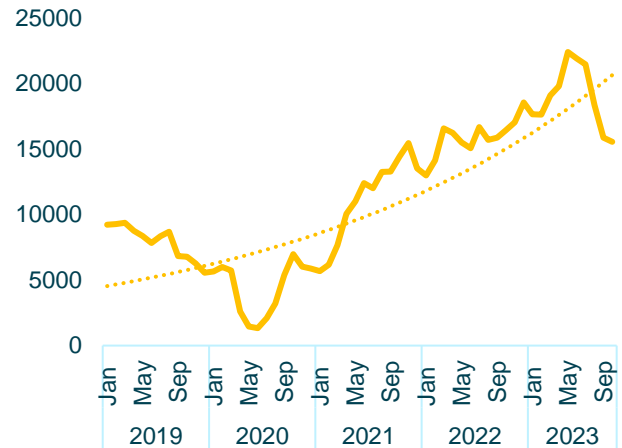
Job postings analysis

The job postings data is showing a clear cooling in the job market for the automotive sector from August to October 2023. In August, the postings peak at over 18,000, the highest in the period. However, they fall 16% in September. This trend continues into October, with postings dropping by a further 2% to reach 15,540.

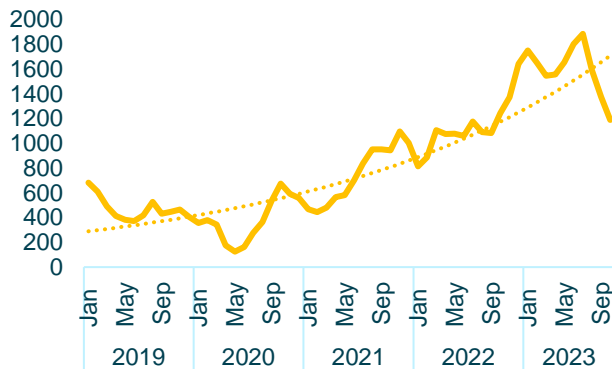
Top 10 advertised occupations

1. Vehicle Technicians, Mechanics, and Electricians
2. Sales Related Occupations N.E.C.
3. Customer Service Occupations N.E.C.
4. Tyre, Exhaust and Windscreen Fitters
5. Vehicle and Parts Salespersons and Advisers
6. Managers and Directors in Retail and Wholesale
7. Large Goods Vehicle Drivers
8. Roundspersons and Van Salespersons
9. Engineering Technicians
10. Warehouse Operatives

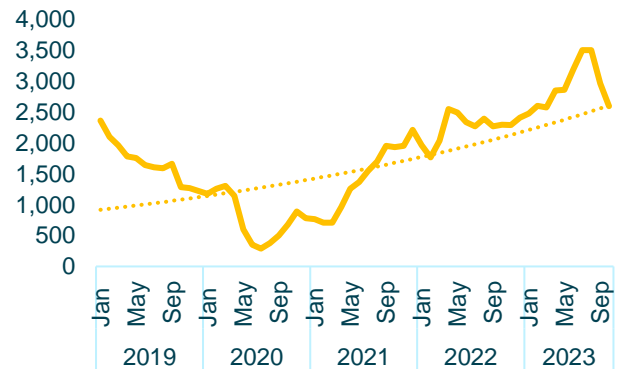
All job postings in sector (SIC45)



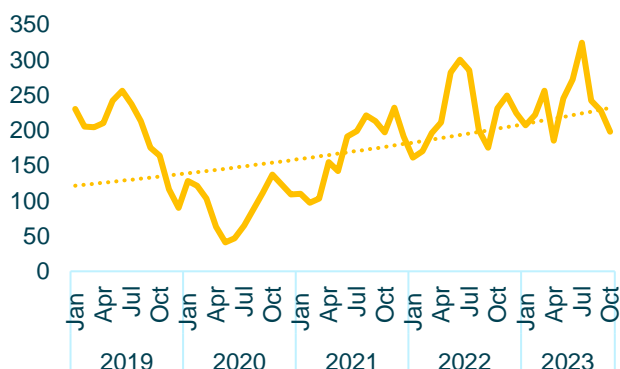
Number of job postings for Tyre, Exhaust and Windscreen Fitters



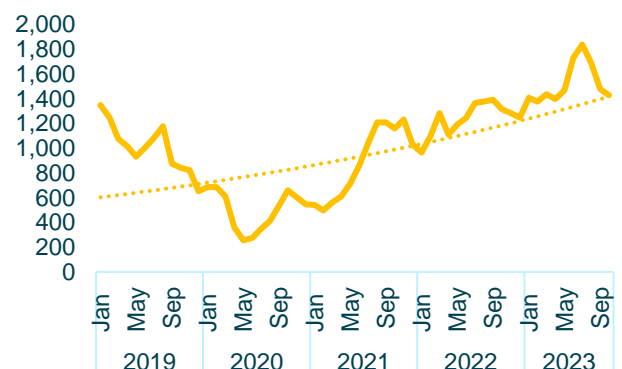
Number of job postings Vehicle and Parts Salespersons and Advisers



Number of job postings for Vehicle Body Builders and Repairers



Number of job postings for Vehicle Paint Technicians



Tyre, Exhaust, and Windscreen Fitters

Job postings declined by 4% over the past year, after a significant increase between May and July 2023. In October, the number dropped sharply by 14% from the previous month, leaving 1,189 open positions. Kwik Fit, Halfords, and Truckforce are the top hiring companies.

In terms of skills, a willingness to learn, ledger balancing, and proficiency in suspension systems now surpass the demand for management and smartphone operation.

Body Repairers and Builders

Bucking the wider industry trend, job postings dropped by 14% year-on-year, reaching 198 in October 2023. Leading recruitment are Direct Line, FMG Repair Services, and Steer Automotive Group.

The skills landscape in job postings has also shifted, with sales prospecting, invoicing, and enthusiasm emerging in the top ten, taking the place of self-motivation, organisational skills, and teamwork.

Paint Technicians

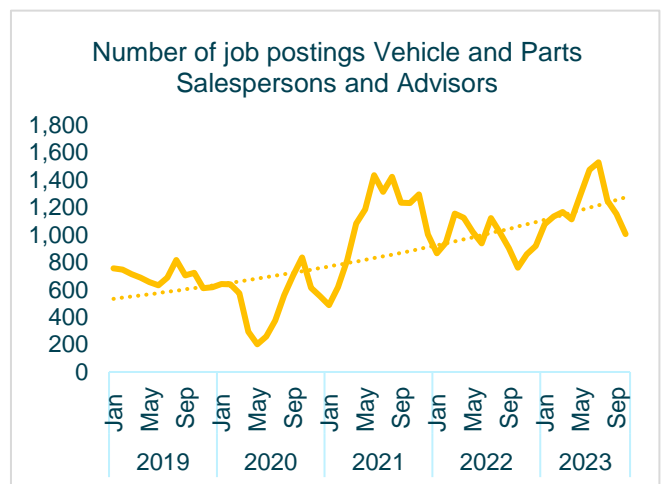
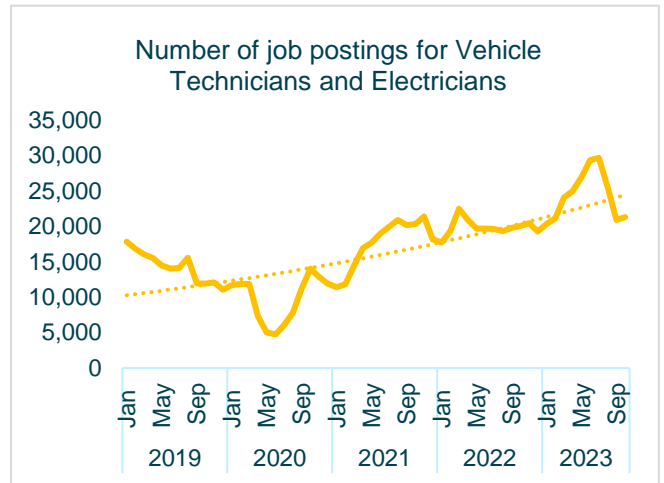
After reaching a record-high peak in July 2023, job postings for paint technicians from August to October 2023 declined by 13% compared to the previous period. Yet, these levels are still 23% higher than in 2022. BMW, FMG Repair Services, and Arnold Clark stand out as the top companies actively hiring in this field.

Self-motivation and enthusiasm surpass rust removal and time-management as the most sought-after skills.

Vehicle Valeters

Job postings are showing a 32% increase compared to the same time last year, yet they are 18% lower than in October 2021. The peak occurs in September 2023, with 1,154 postings. Direct Valeting Ltd, Jardine Motors, and Arnold Clark are leading the hiring efforts.

Cleanliness and interpersonal communication skills have now entered the top ten requested skills, replacing self-motivation and multi-tasking.



Technicians and Electricians

Job postings are rising by 24% compared to the same period last year, showing a 3% increase from October 2021. In October 2023, postings reached a peak with 21,323 positions. Halfords, Sytner Group, and BMW are the top companies actively hiring for these roles.

Proficiency in machinery and a strong work ethic are now two of the top ten skills demanded for technician roles.

Vehicle Parts and Salespersons

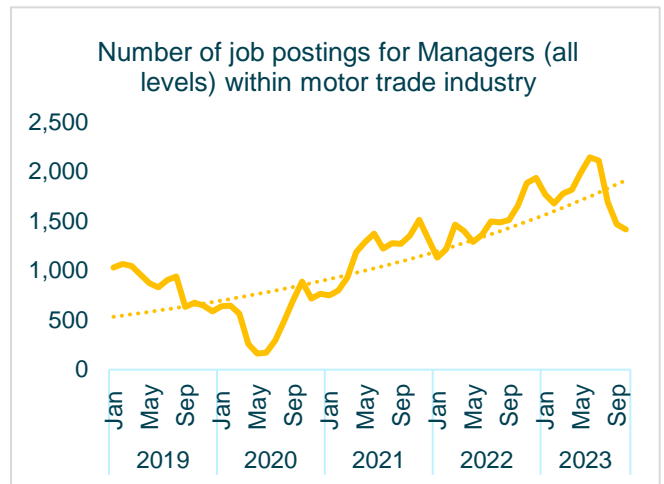
Job postings rose by 17% compared to October last year, marking a 34% increase from 2021. September 2023 sees the peak in postings with 2,963. Lookers, Sytner Group, and BMW are the top companies seeking candidates for these roles.

Vehicle parts, stock control, invoicing, selling techniques, and organisation now take the place of management, planning, teaching, leadership, operations, and problem-solving in the top ten demanded skills.

Managers in the Motor Trade Industry

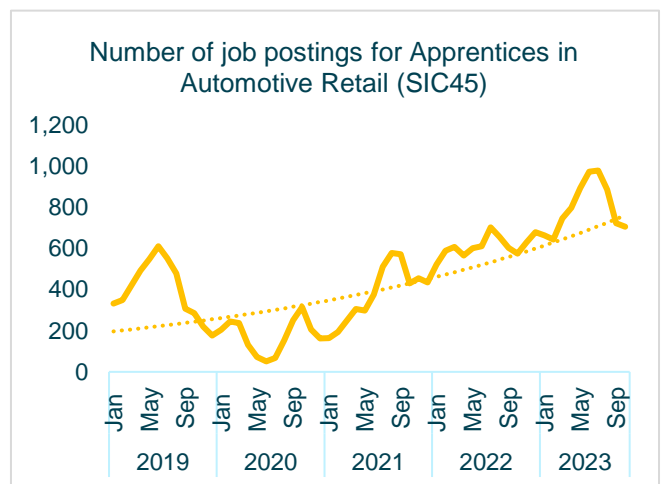
Job postings are experiencing a 14% drop compared to the same time last year, but they show a significant 144% increase from 2021. August 2023 marks the peak in postings, with 1,692 positions. Halfords, Marshall Motor Group, and Brakes International are the top companies seeking managers within the motor industry.

Sales skills have now become one of the top requested skills, taking the place of operations management.



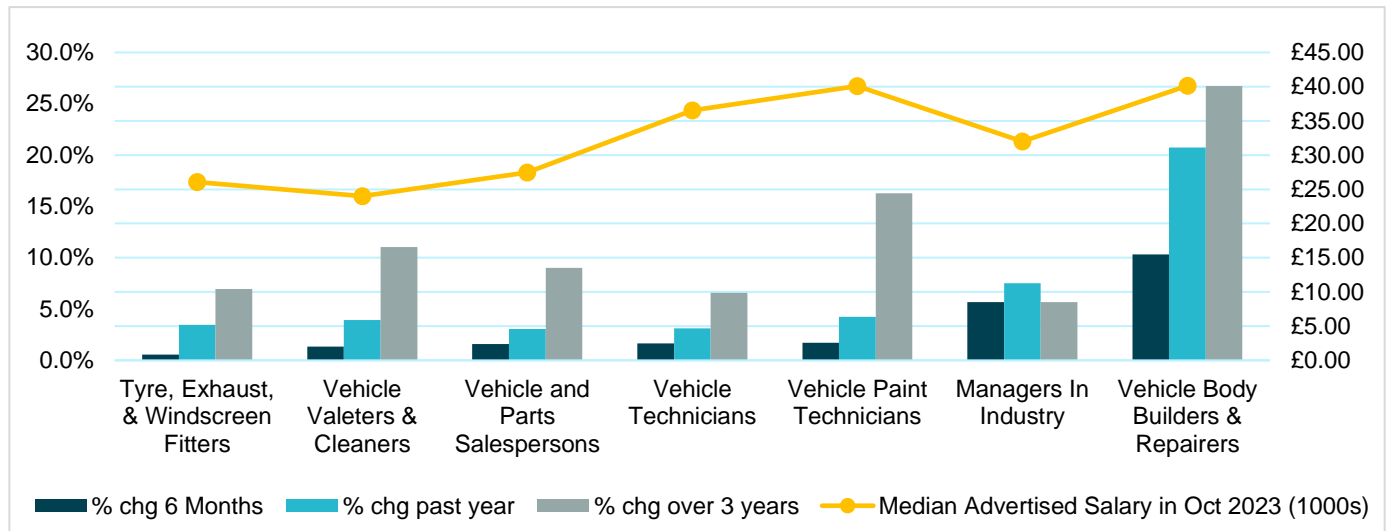
Apprentices in Automotive Retail

Apprenticeship roles are experiencing a 21% drop in job postings compared to the same time last year, yet they present a 23% increase from 2021.



Advertised salaries

The following analysis focuses on medium advertised salaries, excluding any benefit or bonus packages, particularly pertinent for sales roles. Additionally, these figures represent UK averages, which may vary regionally.



Occupation	Median Advertised Salary Oct 23 (1000s)	£ above/below gov. median (1000s)	% chg. 6 Months	% chg. past year	% chg. over 3 years
Managers In Industry	£32.00	-£14.30	5.7%	7.5%	5.7%
Tyre, Exhaust, And Windscreen Fitters	£26.05	-£0.54	0.6%	3.5%	7.0%
Vehicle And Parts Salespersons	£27.46	£3.50	1.6%	3.0%	9.0%
Vehicle Body Builders and Repairers	£40.13	£10.90	10.3%	20.7%	26.7%
Vehicle Paint Technicians	£40.06	£13.10	1.7%	4.2%	16.3%
Vehicle Technicians	£36.54	£6.80	1.7%	3.1%	6.6%
Vehicle Valeters and Cleaners	£24.00	£2.80	1.4%	3.9%	11.0%

Vehicle Body Builders, Repairers, and Vehicle Paint Technicians have salaries well above the government median with the highest growth rates over three years, indicating strong demand. Conversely, Tyre, Exhaust, and Windscreen Fitters lag significantly behind the median.

Despite this, the sector shows healthy growth, with salary increases across all roles, but there's a notable earnings disparity for Vehicle Valeters and Cleaners, and Tyre, Exhaust, and Windscreen Fitters, who are the lowest earners.

Institute of the Motor Industry
Fanshaws, Brickendon, Hertford, SG13 8PQ
+44(0) 1992 519 025
hello@theimi.org.uk
www.theimi.org.uk



Company Number 00225180

