



Hertfordshire

2026 Workforce Development Tool Data

Collected May – August 2026 from 43 employers in Hertfordshire

Headline data

43

Sport and physical
activity employers
completed the survey

Lifeguard

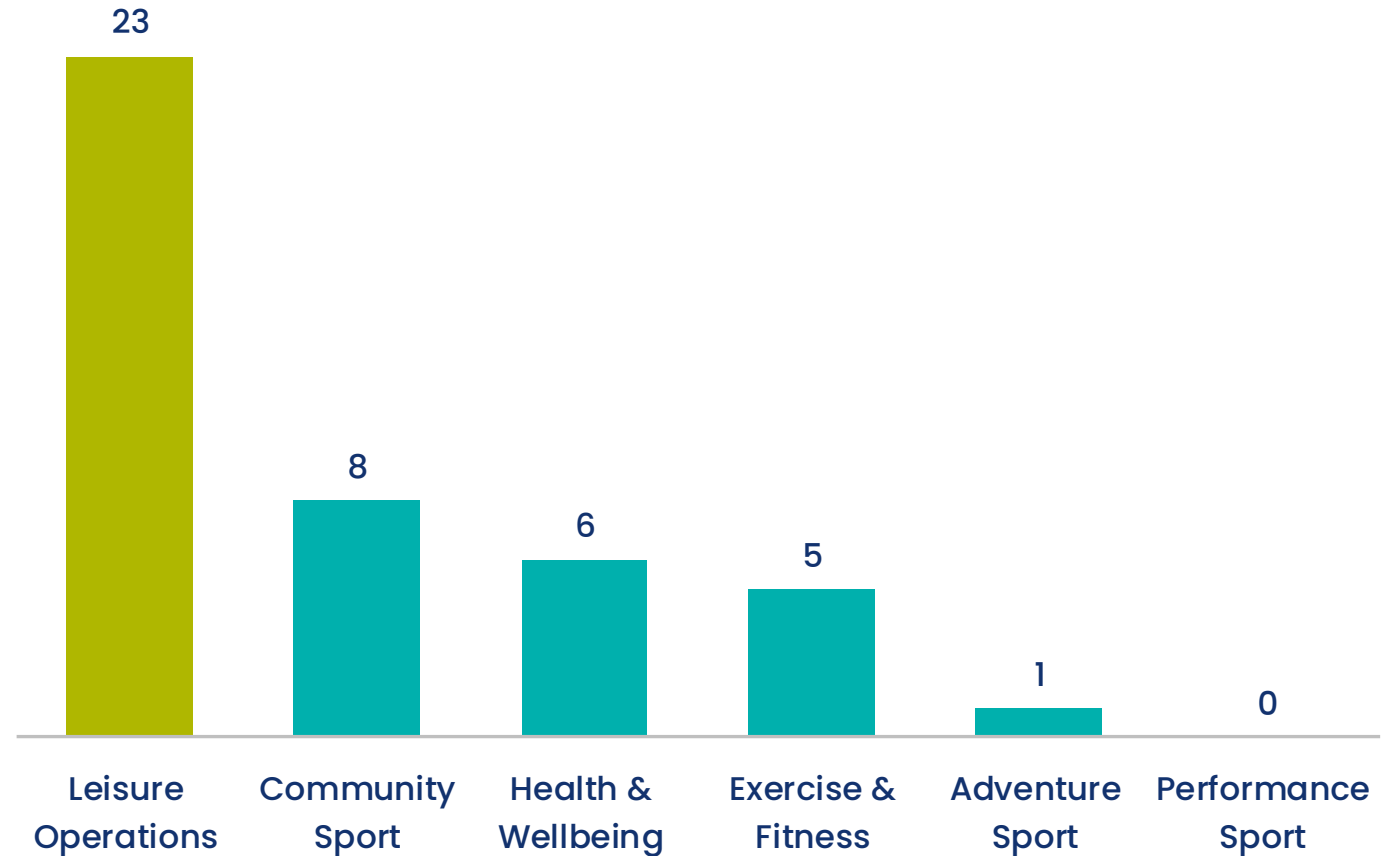
Is the most
in-demand job role

91%

91% of employers
recorded salary as the
biggest retention barrier

Sector industry

Over half the sport and physical activity employers in Hertfordshire who responded to the survey are in the **Leisure Operations** sector industry.



Job roles in demand

As in 2024,
Lifeguard roles
are in high
demand

Lifeguard

Group Exercise Instructor

Swimming Teacher

Sports Coach

(43 survey responses)

Why employers struggle to recruit



Salary and
pay levels



Lack of qualified
candidates



Low interest in
sector careers

This matches similar findings in 2024

Top three skills needed



Leadership
skills



Communication
skills



Customer
service

Emerging areas

Artificial
intelligence
capability

Project
management

Sustainability

Working with
neurodiverse
participants

Commercial
skills

Budget
management

Risk
management

SEND
support

High demand training topics



Leadership and
management



Diversity and
inclusion



Community
related skills

This matches similar findings in 2024

Main barriers to training

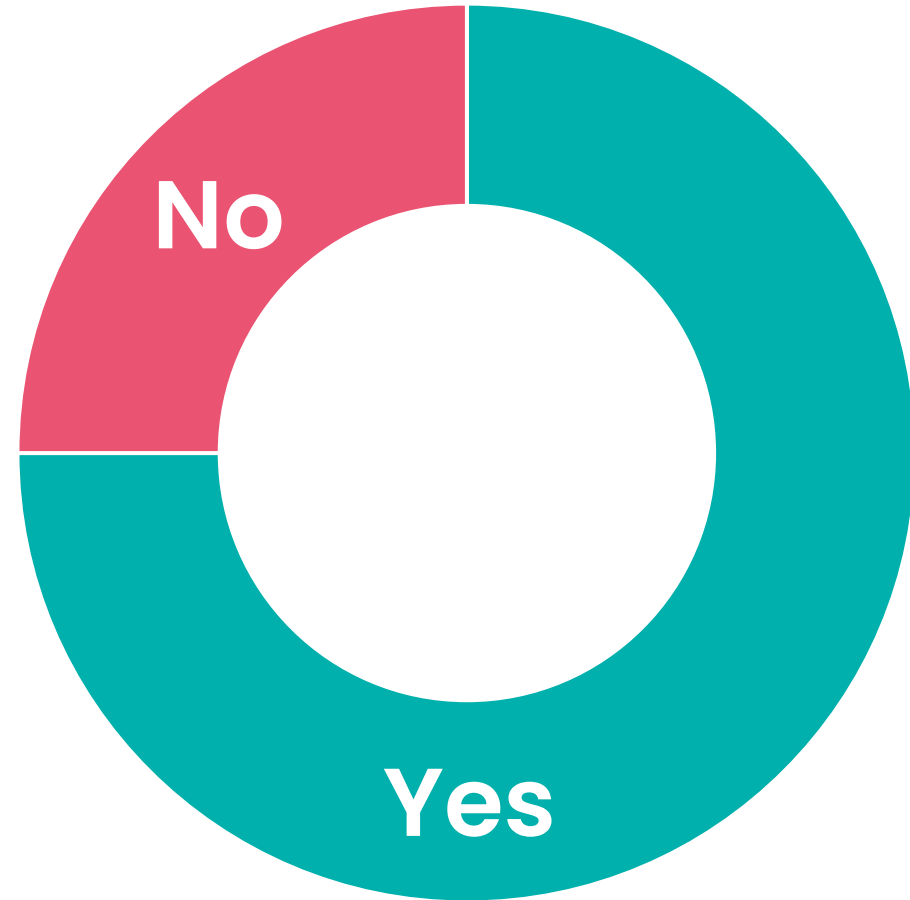


This matches similar findings in 2024

Work placement support

75%

of employers said they were “**already supporting** or would be **happy to support** work placements”



Retention challenges

Across almost every organisation, **four retention issues** dominated:



Salary



Career
progression



Training and
development



Working
patterns and
flexibility



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