



**FRAME**

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**ARCHITECTURE  
& INTERIOR  
DESIGN SALARY  
SURVEY AND  
EMPLOYMENT  
REVIEW 2022**

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# Welcome



FRAME is a recruitment specialist in the architecture, interior design, and visualisation industry. We are part of the Faststream Recruitment Group, employing over 100 people and with a history beginning in 1999.

We are proud of the relationships we have made across the industry and have helped thousands of people find new roles as well as aided practices with their recruitment strategies. Our team recruit across all industry sectors including commercial, education, healthcare, hospitality, leisure, mixed-use, residential, retail and transport.

Architecture, interior design, and visualisation are a huge part of our lives. They have the power to impact our environment, our homes, our workplaces and even where we spend our leisure time. Being able to be part of this industry is a privilege and we enthusiastically immerse ourselves into the community that work so hard to improve our surroundings. We are passionate about people and getting to know every individual, whether they are a graduate job hunter or a Managing Director of a large practice. People are what we know, and people are our passion.

Our parent company, the Faststream Recruitment Group is a global people specialist in shipping, maritime, and offshore recruitment. We know what it is to be a true specialist in a generalist recruitment marketplace.

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## MARTIN BENNELL

Martin Bennell is the Managing Director of FRAME Recruitment. He is a recruitment veteran, celebrating his 21st year in recruitment in 2021. He has spent the last four years leading FRAME Recruitment.

He has a wealth of knowledge and experience in recruiting in high-demand, skill short sectors globally. As a Fellow of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, he is a renowned thought leader in specialist recruitment. Martin's involvement as a speaker, panellist and writer provides a head hunters perspective into human factors in the workplace.

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*This report has been produced internally by FRAME Recruitment. The data was collected in November and December 2021. All salary data is listed in GBP.*

*Please note, quotes from survey respondents represent their thoughts and views and not those of FRAME Recruitment.*

*At the time that respondents took part in this survey, the Omicron variant of COVID-19 had not been identified.*

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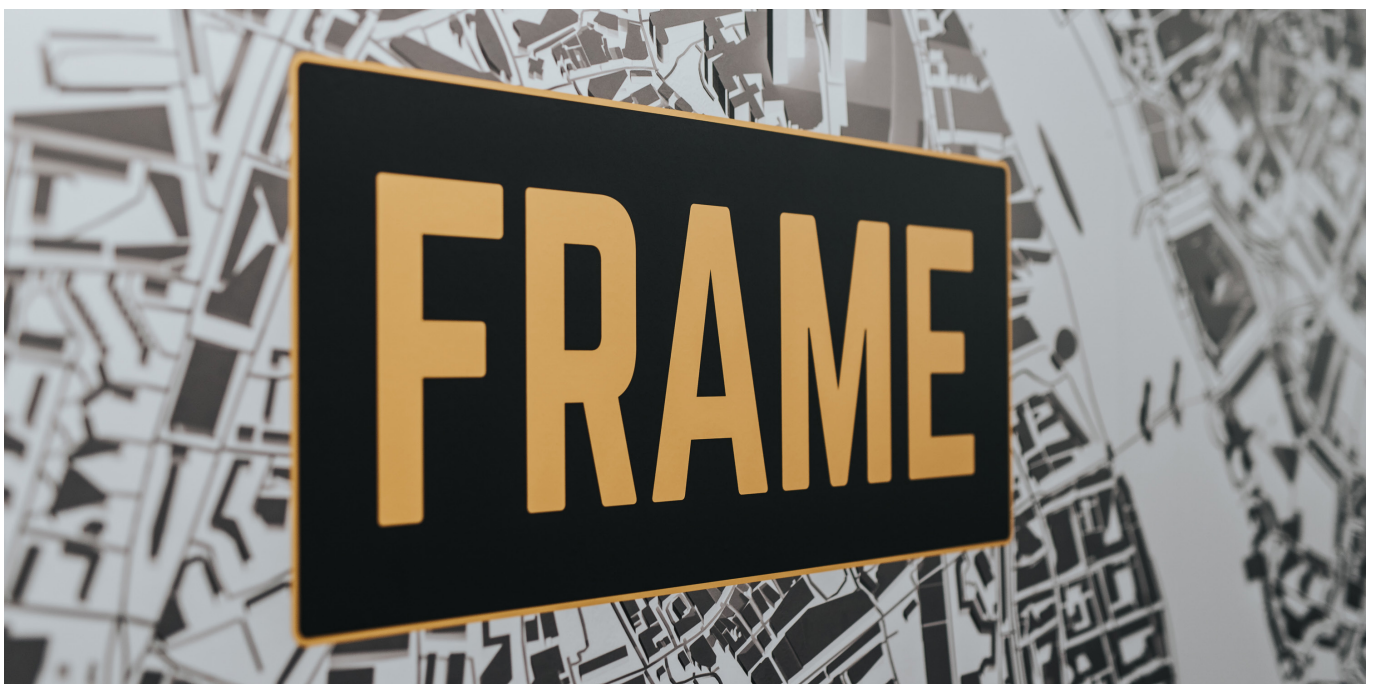
# Foreword

Architecture and interior design have been significantly impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some practices are still having to work in survival mode, whilst others are busy, in-demand, hiring new staff and prospering. The COVID-19 pandemic has quickly made employees face adaption to new ways of working, including remote working, social distancing, reduced pay, loss of benefits such as staff events as well as being given more time to think and re-evaluate what is important to them in their careers.

As a business supporting the architecture and interior design industry, we design our survey each year based on the conversations we are having with practice leaders, hiring managers, as well as those who are seeking new opportunities in the market.

My team and I have created this unique survey to establish how the events of 2021 have impacted the UK's architecture and interior design recruitment market. This report aims to highlight and establish trends in remuneration, benefits, overtime, working styles, job seeking and retention.

It covers areas such as: Are you being paid for overtime? Why will you stay with your employer over the next 12 months? Do you feel secure in your role? What benefits do you want in your next job? Does it matter to you if your values don't match with an employer's? Does an employer's policy on diversity and inclusion matter to you? These are just a few of the questions and ones that only the people in architecture and interior design themselves will answer.



# Market trends



The last 24 months have changed so many things and it has truly been a rollercoaster for practices, for leaders and employees. In any period, we see highs and lows in the marketplace and 2021 has been no exception. Candidates have once again become more selective about the sectors they will and will not consider, quite a change since our findings last year.

Those working in the retail sector have had it tough over the last 24 months. Whilst the sector held steady from 2018, we have seen the number of candidates working in the sector drop over the last 12 months and the once sought-after sector has declined as an option. The retail sector has had to rely on practices to create more innovative and creative high street shopping experiences. You must question why young and aspiring talent would enter what seems a fading sector. Yet we

CANDIDATES BY SECTOR							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Commercial	24%	23%	24%	19%	21%	20%	<b>24%</b>
Education	5%	6%	5%	6%	2%	5%	<b>4%</b>
Healthcare	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	<b>5%</b>
Hospitality	3%	6%	7%	13%	13%	12%	<b>9%</b>
Leisure	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	<b>1%</b>
Mixed Use	13%	11%	12%	11%	12%	11%	<b>15%</b>
Residential	44%	45%	40%	36%	39%	37%	<b>36%</b>
Retail	3%	3%	5%	5%	6%	5%	<b>3%</b>
Transport	3%	1%	1%	5%	3%	4%	<b>3%</b>

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## Market trends *continued*

still see a small group of faithful talent who wouldn't work anywhere else.

Within 24 months we have returned to the all-time high of 2018 in the commercial sector. Unsurprisingly we saw fewer candidates working in this sector in 2020 with many projects being put on hold. However, the last year has seen an increase in optimism in this sector, with most projects restarting and new ones being generated. What has been interesting is the number of businesses that have sought practices to help them redesign their offices. Workplace design is enjoying one of its best times yet. Some of these changes have been to create social distancing for the current COVID-19 pandemic, but others are thinking long term about potential future pandemics too. Many businesses are completely redesigning office space so there is more room for collaboration and meetings, and less space focussed on the traditional desk set-up. Many people are hot-desking now, utilising hybrid working policies. Other businesses don't want their staff to work from home and looking for new ways to make the office attractive again.

The healthcare sector continues to grow. We reported back in Spring 2021 of practices that were working on interesting projects, such as how hospitals can be designed or redesigned to facilitate the current pandemic and future ones. We continue to see more hospitals changing their design direction to one that is medically led - how do medical professionals utilise space? What design features could make the space more effective for them? We predict that we will see

more talent want to work in healthcare, especially in new generations. We will talk more later in this report about the changing needs of these generations but what has been poignant is their need to have a purpose in their work. Many experiencing this pandemic will see developing hospitals and medical centres to benefit not only the patients but the medical staff themselves as something that gives them a real purpose to do great work.

The popularity of sectors continues to change over time, but we have also seen some changes in types of employment too. The much-anticipated IR35 changes that were delayed by a year by the late deferral of reform, combined with the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic were finally instated on the 6th of April 2021. The impact was not immediate. Some people who traditionally worked as permanent employees were forced to seek contract work during parts of the pandemic, there simply weren't enough permanent opportunities to fulfil those who had been made redundant or who were newly qualified. Yet as we closed out the year, IR35 has really started to demonstrate its impact. We have seen a reduction in traditional contractors who are finding this employment route less attractive. There are fewer contract opportunities now and more employers are keen to hold on to great contractor talent and are offering fixed term and permanent contracts whereby the person is employed by the practice. Contract work is by no means finished, there are still opportunities, but we can say that for both employers and employees, it isn't as attractive as it once was.



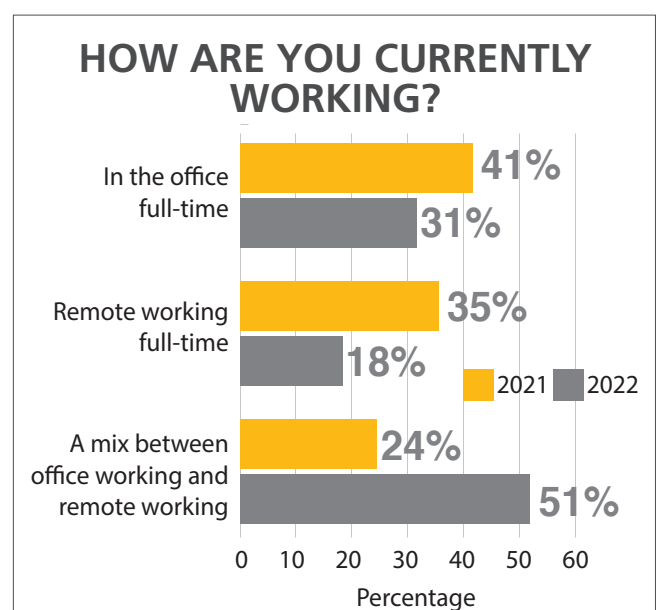
**MANY BUSINESSES ARE COMPLETELY REDESIGNING OFFICE SPACE SO THERE IS MORE ROOM FOR COLLABORATION AND MEETINGS, AND LESS SPACE FOCUSED ON THE TRADITIONAL DESK SET-UP. MANY PEOPLE ARE HOT-DESKING NOW, UTILISING HYBRID WORKING POLICIES.**

# Working styles



The debate continues on working styles and the future role of the office remains a popular subject in architecture and interior design. Previous lockdowns enforced home working but do people in architecture and interior design want this in reality?

Notably, those working in London were more likely to be utilising a hybrid working style at 61% versus those who were working outside of London at 40%.



## Working styles *continued*

*"We can see a notable shift in just 12 months\*. Both full-time working in the office and full-time working remotely have decreased year on year. Hybrid working has emerged as the 'new normal' and signalling a step change for the industry from years gone by."*

Practices have not had it easy deciding on what working styles to offer employees. Whilst practice leaders may have already surveyed their current staff on what style they would prefer, we asked our respondents so we could give you an overview of the market, comparing responses year on year.

WHICH STYLE OF WORKING DO YOU PREFER?		
	2021	2022
In the office full-time	15%	18%
Remote working full-time	16%	15%
A mix between office working and remote working	69%	67%

Within 12 months, the only work style to have increased in preference is working in the office full-time. Those working outside of London were more likely to want to work in the office compared to those working within London, with 22% and 14% choosing this preference respectively. Males were also more likely to want to work in the office full-time than females, with 22% and 12% agreeing respectively.

For the 67% of respondents who would prefer to work in a hybrid style between the office and remote, 86% of these people said they would want to work two or three days in the office each week.

What impact do working styles have on different aspects of the job? We asked respondents where they believe they perform better, in the office or remotely against five different work elements.

WHERE DO YOU PERFORM BETTER?		
	Office	Remote
Creativity	42%	58%
Collaboration	82%	18%
Productivity	35%	65%
Learning	54%	46%
Establishing relationships	87%	13%

The majority of respondents agreed that collaboration was performed better in the office. This was backed by responses from last year, where 73% agreed in-person collaboration was superior to virtual meetings and 62% agreed that collaboration suffers when workers do not share space. 87% of respondents this year also agreed that establishing relationships was performed better in the office.

*"Collaboration and building relationships are an important part of the industry, and it appears it is here to stay in the office. In my own business, nothing beats an in-person meeting, collaborating in the same room and establishing relationships with your colleagues. I feel so much can be missed when we aren't together. Sometimes it can be difficult to get your personality, opinions and thoughts across via video."*

Respondents did see their performance increase in productivity when they work remotely at 65%. An increase from 63% last year.

*"These answers are highlighting a need for hybrid working. Some days need to be focussed on getting the job done and being productive remotely, whilst other days need to be spent collaborating and building relationships."*

We sought the thoughts of respondents on this:

- ◆ Creativity occurs 24 hours a day so it's not important where you are – what's important is being able to perform. **Architectural Technologist with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ Working from home makes me feel less stressed and that helps me be more productive and more creative. Not having to commute has generally improved my quality of life and therefore my productivity at work. **Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**
- ◆ Although working from the office may be more productive per hour, in remote work the workload is typically much higher, including long meetings with no lunch break, staying very late or starting very early for overseas meetings etc. **Associate Director with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ It is easier to discuss ideas with people in person in the office and utilise the materials library. There are



less distractions at home so easier to concentrate on producing work. **Mid-Weight Interior Design with 6 to 9 years' experience**

- ◆ I am a collaborator; I do all my best work in relationships with others. Alone I become distracted and unfocused. **Associate Director with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ I find working in a team is easier from the office, however, this also impacts my productivity as the social aspect can be a bit distracting at times. **Project Architect with 3 to 5 years' experience**
- ◆ Architecture is a creative and collaborative profession. I can't see how you can work remotely in this role. **Architect with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ Willingness to return to the office is greatly influenced by how the environment is perceived and experienced, over and above the space it offers. **Senior Interior Design with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ Without the imprisonment of office space, I can do my work with more motivation. I can spend even a little time doing my leisure activities or chores in between work. I do not have to spend all my day among toxic



**"67% OF RESPONDENTS WANT TO WORK A HYBRID BETWEEN THE OFFICE AND REMOTE."**

people including my co-workers and people using transportation etc. **Architectural Assistant with 3 to 5 years' experience**

- ◆ I prefer working in the office as it provides not only the opportunity to focus more but also the socialisation with team members and quicker productivity. I can also work remotely as I did on some occasions but as a preference working from the office is better. **Graduate Architect with 0 to 2 years' experience**
- ◆ Collaboration and productivity are better to get done in the office because you learn more than you do individually. **Architectural Assistant with 3 to 5 years' experience**



**"I PREFER WORKING IN THE OFFICE AS IT PROVIDES NOT ONLY THE OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS MORE BUT ALSO THE SOCIALISATION WITH TEAM MEMBERS AND QUICKER PRODUCTIVITY. I CAN ALSO WORK REMOTELY AS I DID ON SOME OCCASIONS BUT AS A PREFERENCE WORKING FROM THE OFFICE IS BETTER."** SURVEY RESPONDENT

*\*These responses were received before the government released the advice to work from home due to the Omicron COVID-19 variant.*

# Overtime

When it comes to the balance of home life and work, are employers putting excessive pressure on employees to work overtime? Or do employees just see it as part of the job? Are employees being paid for this extra work? We have brought back our question on unpaid overtime for this year's survey. There have been some startling reports in the architecture and interior design media about this subject, but we wanted to see what the reality is.

We asked respondents, "On average, how many hours of overtime do you work per week?" 16% worked over 10 hours, 13% worked between seven and nine, 27% worked between four and six, 28% worked one to three and 16% worked none, working strictly to their contracted hours.

Those with the most experience, ten plus years', were the most likely to be working seven or more hours of overtime a week at 40%. Those with the least experience, up to two years', were the least likely to work overtime out of all the respondents.

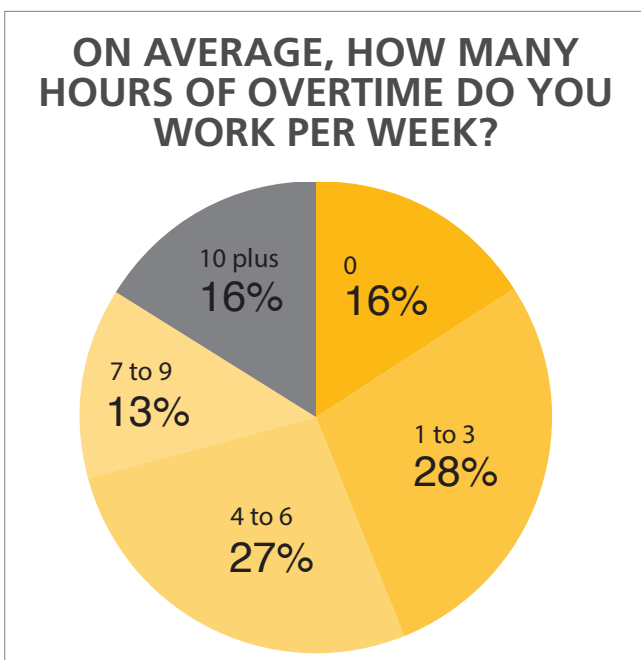
*"Overtime is an interesting topic and one of many internal as well as industry-wide debates. In my experience, overtime is either forced upon staff or is a choice and with it usually comes either the attitude of 'it is what it is and part of the job' or it creates a vast array of resentment. The reality in*

*business is that deadlines need to be met, and work needs to be completed. The question is, ultimately, who suffers and who wins?"*

We continued with our questioning and asked, "Does your practice pay for overtime worked?" 73% did not. 16% were paid for overtime by their practice and a further 11% said there were inconsistent rules on it.

We wanted to hear what the respondents had to say:

- ◆ Sometimes paid, sometimes time off in lieu. Dependent on the amount of overtime. Small amounts not recognised. **Project Architect with 3 to 5 years' experience**
- ◆ Unpaid overtime is expected and has been for the past 30 years of my working life - under-pricing projects and getting resource plans wrong are a daily failing of the industry I'm afraid. **Architectural Technologist with 10 years' plus experience**
- ◆ We get other benefits from working late including ordering in dinner and transport paid for travelling back home if working late. **Mid-Weight Interior Designer with 3 to 5 years' experience**
- ◆ Overtime for me says that either you don't manage your time well or most likely, your management doesn't manage your time and resources well. **BIM Coordinator with 3 to 5 years' experience**
- ◆ I feel under pressure to work extra hours to meet deadlines. **Senior Architectural Designer with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ I used to do 15-20 and more hours of unpaid overtime a week. It is unacceptable that we are in the



middle of a mental health crisis and industries such as the architectural one still sees working all-nighters as a normal part of our job. This is something embedded in our industry since our university years, all the way to how companies operate nowadays and how their business models have been set up. It is so embedded in our industry that most people give away their right as a protected worker and the maximum working hours a week, on day one signing their contracts, scratching

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**“84% OF EMPLOYEES ARE WORKING OVERTIME”**



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## Overtime *continued*

this, and agreeing that they will work as much as the employer requires them to. No wonder people are depressed, burnt out, getting divorced etc. Reality check, I would not want to be the daughter/son of a London based architect. **Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**

- ◆ Unpaid overtime is unethical, and it goes against our own benefit. It should be illegal and punished. **Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**
- ◆ This is a problem in this industry that should be fixed as soon as possible as it lowers productivity and undercuts the value of our job. **Project Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**
- ◆ Overtime is discouraged and not expected. When it is needed, it is agreed in advance and overtime rates are paid. I do overtime to clear my workload and to attend networking events outside of work hours. **Architect with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ They don't have overtime - but if we do overwork, we can claim back the hours getting extra holiday but it's



**"73% OF PRACTICES DO NOT PAY FOR OVERTIME"**

capped. **Mid-Weight Interior Design with 3 to 5 years' experience**

- ◆ The policy is that you should not need to work overtime and it is generally adhered to. If you are seen to work late or send emails out of work hours, a director will speak to staff and see what the reason is and reduce workload etc. or recommend finishing early on a Friday etc. to claim back the time. **Project Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**
- ◆ I hate doing unpaid overtime, this is a problem in the profession that needs a global approach. **Architect with 10 plus years' experience**



**"OVERTIME IS AN INTERESTING TOPIC AND ONE OF MANY INTERNAL AS WELL AS INDUSTRY-WIDE DEBATES. IN MY EXPERIENCE, OVERTIME IS EITHER FORCED UPON STAFF OR IS A CHOICE AND WITH IT USUALLY COMES EITHER THE ATTITUDE OF 'IT IS WHAT IT IS AND PART OF THE JOB' OR IT CREATES A VAST ARRAY OF RESENTMENT. THE REALITY IN BUSINESS IS THAT DEADLINES NEED TO BE MET, AND WORK NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED. THE QUESTION IS, ULTIMATELY, WHO SUFFERS AND WHO WINS?"** MARTIN BENNELL

# Remuneration and benefits



We described in our report last year that we had seen 49% of professionals working in architecture and interior design take a pay cut during the pandemic. We were also seeing salary offers up to 20% down year on year. Our findings this year mark the recovery and optimism in the market with salaries increasing across the board.

AVERAGE SALARY BY ROLE AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE					
Role	Working in London	0 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 9	10+
3D Visualiser	Yes	£31,083	£35,750	£42,750	£50,810
3D Visualiser	No	£27,555	£32,850	£35,750	£43,475
Architect	Yes	£34,995	£37,375	£43,412	£53,823
Architect	No	£31,555	£38,220	£41,834	£51,510
Architectural Assistant	Yes	£24,352	£33,500	£37,250	£38,575
Architectural Assistant	No	£20,670	£26,927	£31,635	£36,295
Architectural Technician	Yes	£26,333	£34,750	£41,665	£46,750
Architectural Technician	No	£24,308	£29,340	£36,266	£43,822
Project Architect	Yes	£37,500	£44,333	£47,550	£53,294
Project Architect	No	£34,992	£39,320	£40,055	£50,452
Interior Designer	Yes	£29,666	£32,634	£41,610	£51,087
Interior Designer	No	£21,200	£30,325	£39,449	£48,360
Interior Technician	Yes	£23,933	£30,335	£40,787	£49,500
Interior Technician	No	£20,865	£28,560	£38,697	£44,890

*"The pay cuts that were seen in 2020 and early 2021 seem to be a thing of the past and practices have reinstated previous salaries. I must mention the impact of the change from an employer-led market to a candidate-led one. This has also impacted salaries, and some hiring managers have made decisions to offer at the higher end of salary scales to ensure they can attract the best talent in the market."*

## Remuneration and benefits *continued*

*"The sector average for pay increases over the last 12 months has been between 5 and 10%. There have been some highlights for specific roles across the sector. Architects with six to nine years' experience have seen an uptick in salaries between seven and ten percent. Project Architects working in London with over 10 years' experience on average have seen salaries rise by 12%. Architectural Technicians working in London with six to nine years' experience have seen salary increases of 18%, but we would factor in the premium paid for skills like Revit. Entry-level and the least experienced Interior Designers with up to two years' experience have seen salaries increase by between 15 and 21%."*

In our report last year, we revealed that there was a re-prioritisation of benefits by employees occurring and we have seen employers respond this year. The percentage of employees being offered flexi-time has increased from 20% to 35% from 2020 to 2022. Working from home has seen a staggering uptick from 21% to 59% in 24 months.

*"Practice leaders have listened, and it is evident in the adjustments that are now being offered to staff in terms of benefits. The increase in flexi-time and working from home shows an understanding of how employees' needs have transformed. If we look back to three years ago, flexi-time and working from home were nearly unheard of."*

BENEFITS THAT HAVE INCREASED BETWEEN 2020 AND 2022		
	2020	2022
Bonus	42%	43%
Company Car / Car Allowance	8%	12%
Enhanced Maternity / Adoption / Paternity Benefits	6%	10%
Enhanced Pension	18%	23%
Flexi-Time	20%	35%
Gym Membership	7%	8%
Mobile Phone / Laptop	24%	38%
Personal Development Fund	4%	9%
Private Dental Care	8%	11%
Private Medical (Individual)	16%	20%
Shares	5%	7%
Subscriptions	14%	17%
Working From Home	21%	59%



**"PROJECT ARCHITECT SALARIES HAVE RISEN BY 12%"**

# Job security

In the 2021 review, 63% of respondents were concerned about their job security. Concerns were mainly focused on projects being put on hold, some practices ceasing operations and the implementation of high-profile layoffs as well as the COVID-19 virus itself. A year on, we wanted to see if perspectives had changed and if people felt as concerned as they once did.

What a difference a year makes. In 2022 we can report that only 38% of respondents were concerned about their job security. We saw those respondents with six to nine years' experience in the industry particularly grow in positivity, with job insecurity levels dropping from 68% in 2021 to 29% in 2022.

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR JOB SECURITY?		
	2021	2022
Yes	63%	38%
No	37%	62%

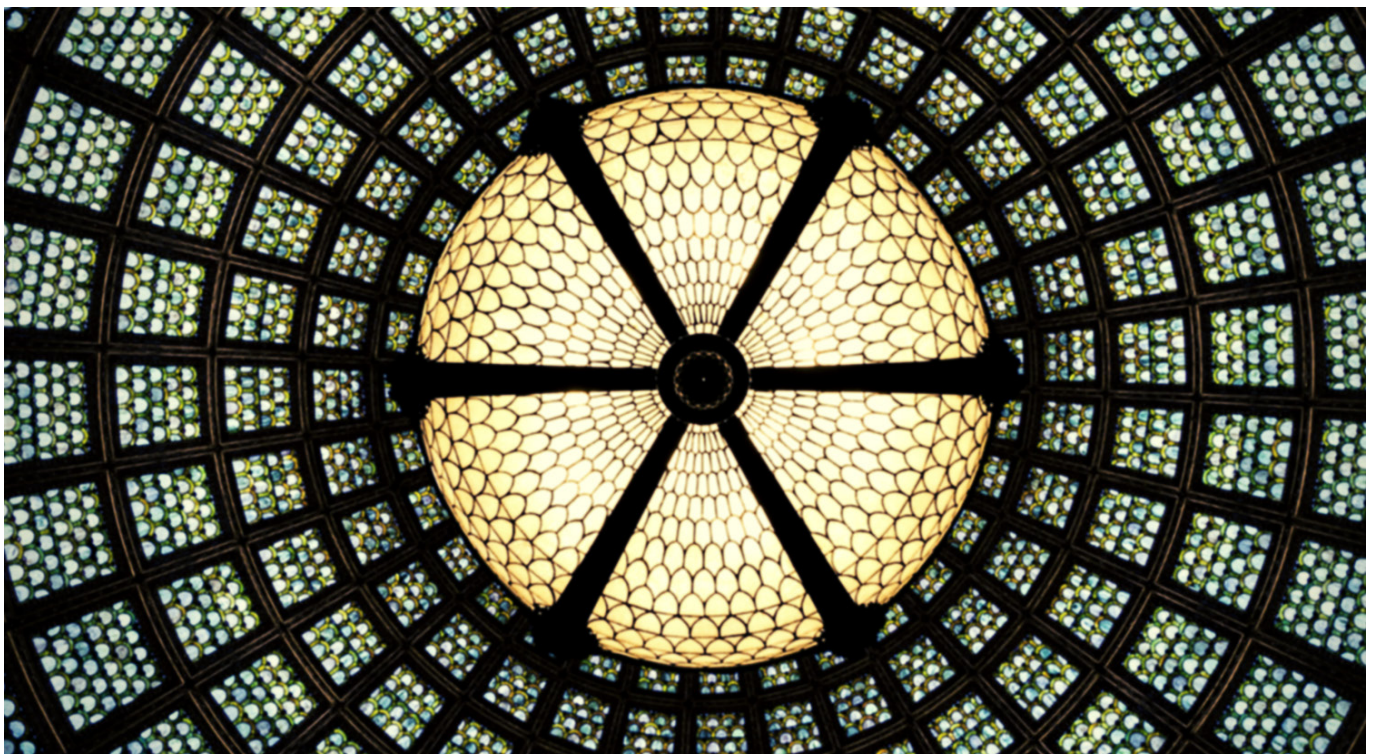
*"People feeling secure in their jobs is so important to the overall optimism in the market. When practices experience success and growth, we normally see job security increase. If your employees feel secure it gives them the opportunity to*

*stay with you and increases the probability they will remain with your practice. It enables them to focus on reaching their long-term career goals, boosts employee engagement and advocacy, as well as creates a more pleasant working environment."*

Contractors were understandably more concerned about their job security.

*"The nature of contract work can mean that at one time your skillset is highly desired and there are numerous concurrent contracts on offer. However, there can be times when contractors are unsure of when their next contract job might be. They can be left feeling insecure about their next employment position."*

For those who were in the unfortunate position of feeling insecure in their jobs, we asked "What has made you



## Job security *continued*

concerned about your job security?" The global pandemic topped the answers for the second year running.

*"We may never completely overcome the impact of COVID-19, the unpredictable nature of it breeds uncertainty for many at work and home. Yet I do hope we can reach a point where we can live with it, and it no longer affects job security."*

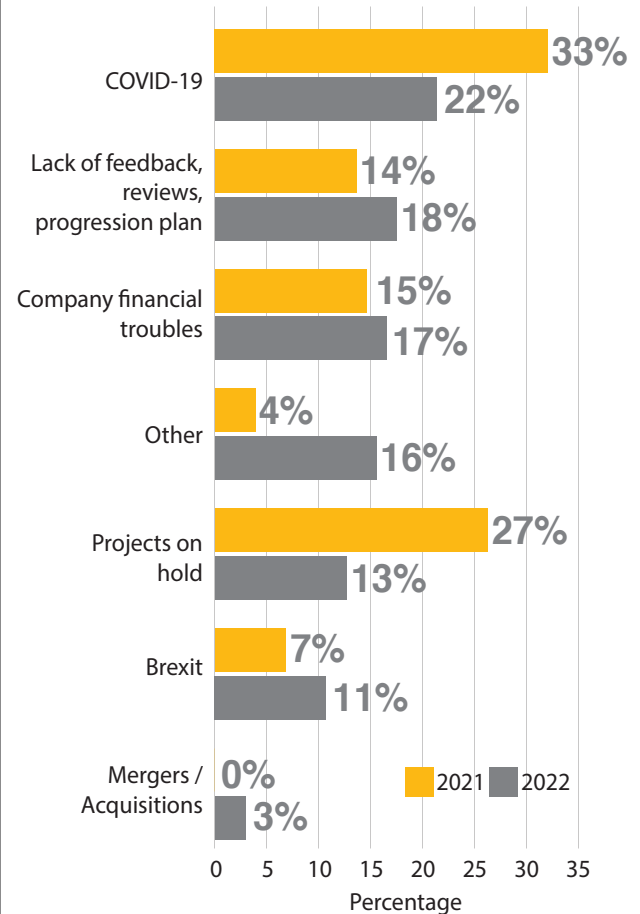
This year we have seen the reason for job insecurity increase because of the lack of feedback, reviews, and progression plans.

*"The industry is busier and when your practice is in high demand it can be easy to focus on the job at hand, completing projects, bidding for new ones, and hiring new employees. You might negate things like reviews, feedback sessions and progression plans. Unfortunately, a side effect of not taking the time to do these things can simply make some employees feel insecure about their jobs and their future with you. Not recognising good or great performance can make employees feel despondent. In the worst-case scenarios where they feel they have failed to receive the recognition and opportunities they deserve; it can lead to staff turnover."*

We wanted to note that Brexit has also increased as a reason for job insecurity, from 7% in 2021 up to 11% in 2022.

*"For the architecture and design industry, the concerns raised regarding Brexit in the early days seem to be coming to fruition. It has been over 12 months since the UK left the EU and it's hard to pinpoint any specific positives for the sector."*

### WHAT HAS MADE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR JOB SECURITY?

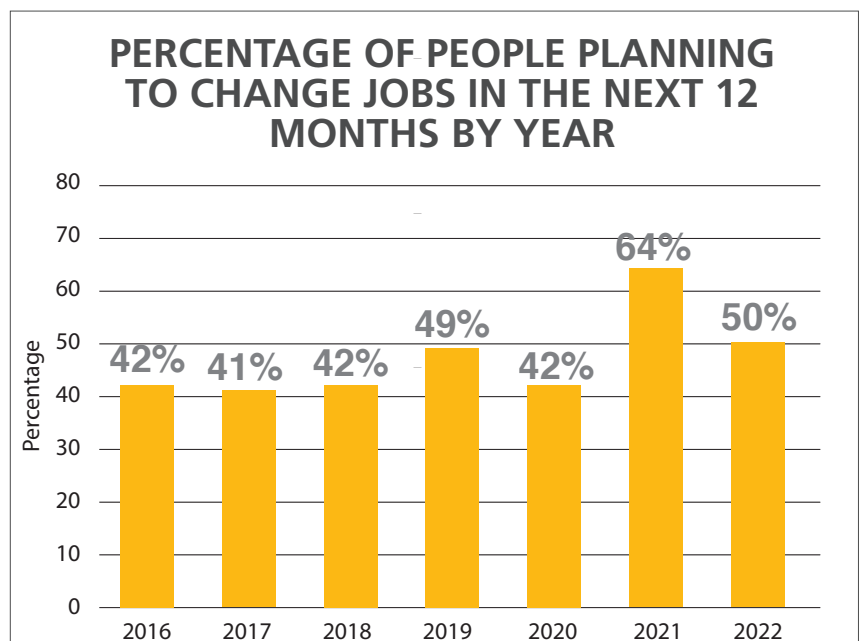




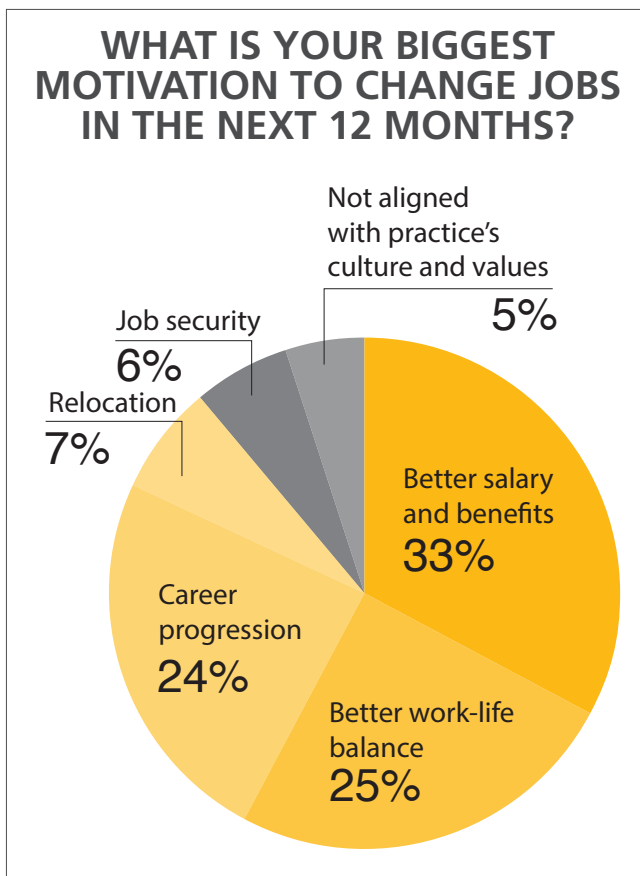
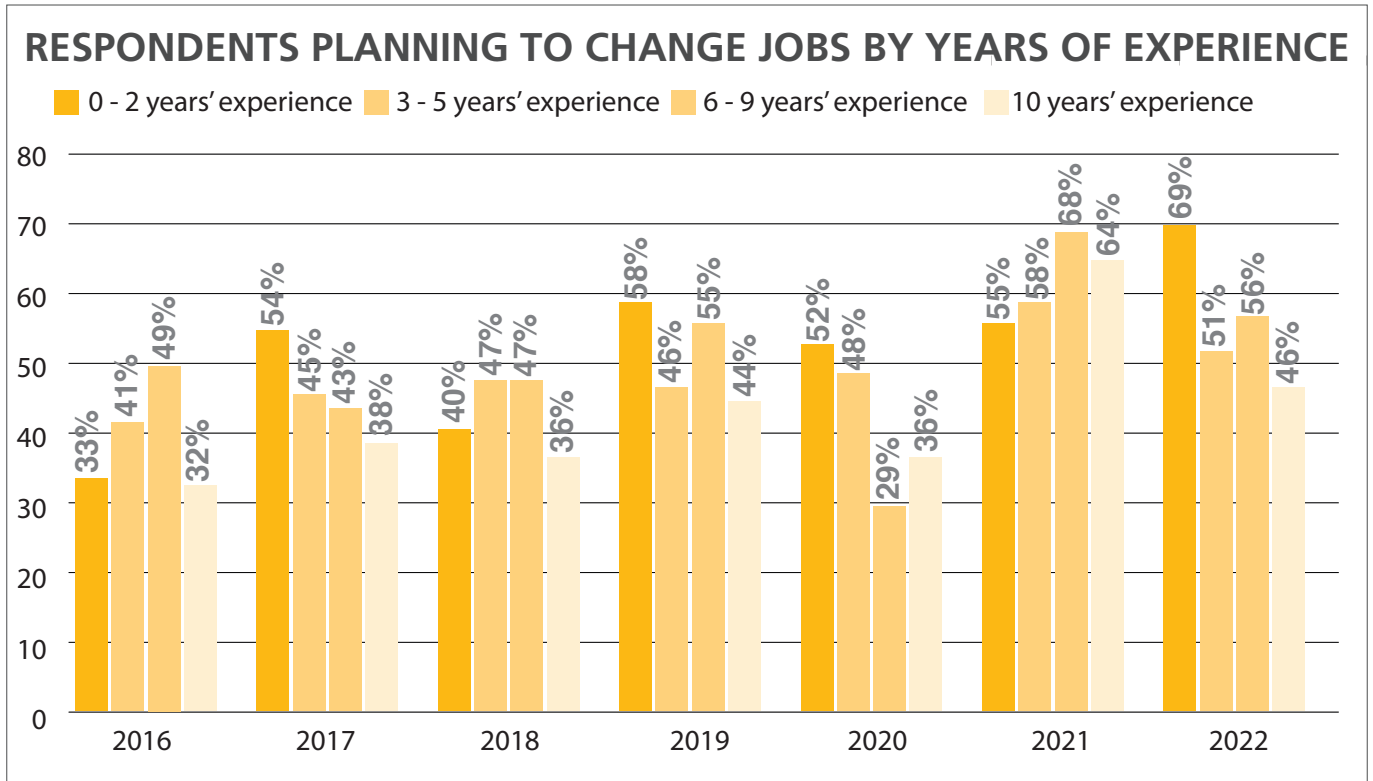
# Retention



With job security higher year on year, we wanted to find out in the next 12 months whether respondents would change jobs. We reported in 2021 that a staggering 64% agreed that they would. This year, it has dropped quite significantly down to 50%.



# Retention *continued*



*"We still aren't quite back to 'normal' in terms of retention. Now for any business leader, it could be quite alarming to consider having to replace 50% of your staff over the next 12 months. Yet, we must contemplate the reasoning behind it. Several factors could be coming into play here. The market is busier, and the number of permanent employment opportunities has risen exponentially. I won't ignore that some employees could still be harbouring bad feelings about how they were treated at different points through the COVID-19 pandemic. Some will be looking for career progression and pay rises. Others may not feel they fit the culture of the practice they are currently working for."*



**"50% OF EMPLOYEES ARE PLANNING TO CHANGE JOBS IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS"**



## “WORK-LIFE BALANCE IS THE BIGGEST MOTIVATOR TO NOT CHANGE JOBS.”

Significantly we can see that the most experienced respondents, those with over 10 plus years' experience, saw the biggest decline in changing jobs over the next 12 months.

*“I think we are already seeing a change in the mindset of practice leaders, and they are once again 'bear-hugging' their most experienced employees. This is paying dividends in terms of loyalty from this group of employees, and I believe this will eventually create a greater skill shortage in the market for experienced individuals.”*

For those who answered they would be planning to change jobs, we enquired what the motivation was behind this.

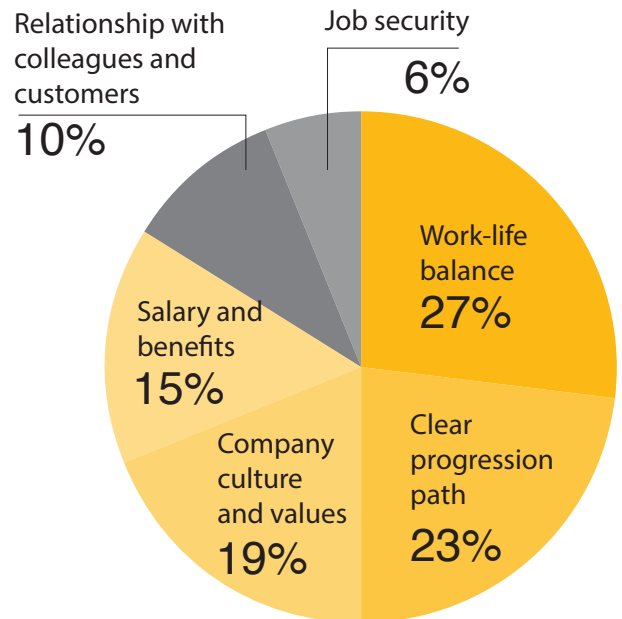
Out on top, was a third of respondents wanted to receive better salary and benefits, followed by better work-life balance at 25% and career progression at 24%.

*“There were no surprises here. My team concurred enthusiastically with these statistics. The daily conversations they have with job seekers about their motivations to change jobs is either about money, progression or needing more of a work-life balance.”*

It has been widespread in the media as well in our insights that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed people and what they want out of their work and their personal lives. People working in architecture and interior design appear no different.

*“Some people have become more ambitious, and want to progress further, faster and be rewarded for doing so. Others might want to take a step back and focus on their family and their other personal interests. Sometimes it can seem easier to change jobs to secure what you want*

### WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST MOTIVATION TO STAY IN YOUR CURRENT JOB?



*rather than having what can be perceived as a difficult conversation with practice leaders about the changes you need. Establishing, improving, or maintaining open and honest communications with employees, I think, could really make a difference in the next 12 months, helping to avoid a mass exit.”*

For those who were planning on remaining in their current roles, we asked what their motivation was to stay.

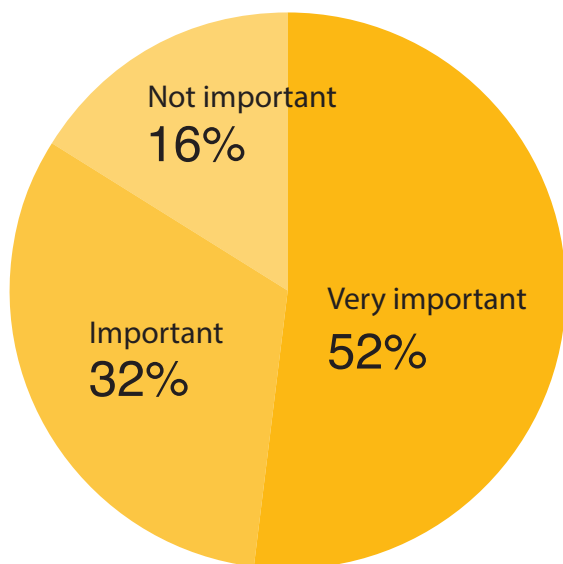
*“I believe that as we see more of Generation Z (those born between 1997 and 2012) enter our workforces, we will see these three areas grow in terms of whether to stay in jobs or leave them. This generation are looking for a purpose in their roles, for example, some are very interested in environmental sustainability, and may want to work for a practice that supports this in their work. They want fulfilling lives, progression in their careers, being remunerated accordingly but having the time to explore other interests too. By 2029, it is estimated that 72% of our workforce will be made up of Generation Z and Millennials. We must act now to ensure that what we offer as employers matches with these growing generations in our teams.”*

# Career moves

We speak to job seekers every day, finding out why they want to change jobs and what they are looking for in their next career move. We also get asked questions by hiring managers on what it is job seekers are looking for, and how they can make themselves stand out in a competitive market. We asked respondents a series of questions to get an overall view of what it is that job seekers will want from their next role and employer.



## HOW IMPORTANT IS AN EMPLOYER'S POLICY ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO YOU?



Both the youngest respondents, up to 34 years old, and the least experienced, up to five years' experience, were the most likely to rate it as very important out of all the respondents.

*"As I mentioned earlier, younger generations often have different priorities. This response portrays their desire to work for a responsible employer who is keen to embrace diversity and inclusion in their team."*

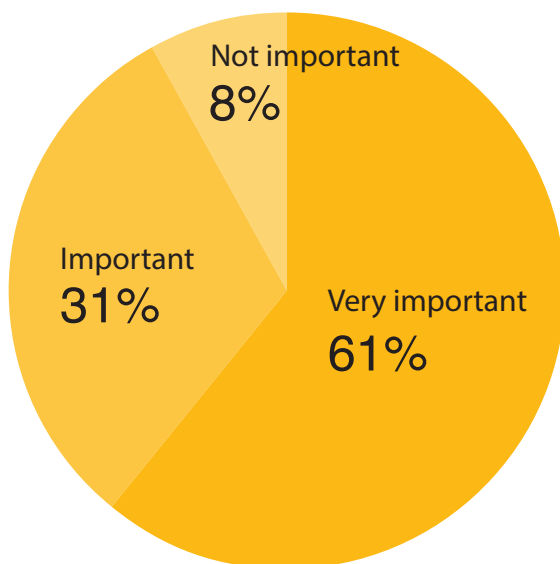
We next asked, "How important is it that your values match with your employer's?" 92% of all respondents rated this as very important or important.

*"Employees want to share values with their employer. An employer's values set the tone for the practice's culture and identify what the practice cares about. If employees share the same values, it helps the practice to achieve its core mission."*

We asked respondents to leave their own commentary on their thoughts around diversity, inclusion, and values:



## HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT YOUR VALUES MATCH WITH YOUR EMPLOYER'S?



- ◆ I go to work to work, process work and to execute work including winning work. An employer's policy on diversity and inclusion nor their values have no bearing on this for me. **Architectural Technologist with 10 plus years' experience**
- ◆ Culture and design direction is very important as a designer. **Mid-Weight Interior Designer with 3 to 5 years' experience**
- ◆ To create a stable relationship in the workplace with your employer or your colleagues, it is important that no discrimination takes place. **Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**
- ◆ Diversity brings different perspectives and solutions come quicker. **BIM Coordinator with 3 to 5 years' experience**
- ◆ As a minority, I feel I need to be heard by my employer, or I can't work for them. **Associate with 10 plus years' experience**

## Career moves *continued*

◆ The industry has been doing the minimum in terms of sustainability for quite some time now and most companies are not ready to face the responsibility and effects their work has on the global crisis. Companies that have sustainability embedded in their agenda (not just as greenwashing for clients) will be the ones to thrive in the future. I don't believe companies are really tapping into this potential in the market mainly because they don't understand their capability, they don't care enough, or they don't have time to invest in this transformation. However, I truly believe that we as a profession have the responsibility towards the clients, our cities and the environment to actively seek solutions in this direction, at the end of the day it is part of the Architects Code of Conduct. The companies that move in this direction, will stand out in the market, will secure easier projects in the future, and will benefit from and have engaged and pro-active members of staff. **Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**

◆ Being in a diverse and creative environment is important for other creatives. **Senior Interior Designer with 6 to 9 years' experience**

◆ Without shared values and an inclusive policy, I cannot be truly creative. **Visualiser with 10 plus years' experience**

◆ A culture where people are kind to each other and inclusive is important. Design can and should be fun, not political or ego-based. **Interior Design Director with 10 plus years' experience**

◆ Culture helps with different ways of thinking and looking at things (challenging you). Company morals matching your own - help with promoting yourself and makes you feel comfortable in the job you are in (happy to go the extra mile). **Mid-Weight Interior Designer with 3 to 5 years' experience**

◆ My current office is very diverse, so it is not something I even considered. After working in an office where individuals were not valued and seen as replaceable, I value somewhere that values staff retention. **Project Architect with 6 to 9 years' experience**

◆ I believe an employer-employee match in what they think, support, and reinforce under Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) is incredibly important. D&I is



**“84% RATE AN EMPLOYER'S POLICY ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AS IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT TO THEM”**

unnegotiable for any innovative forward-thinking organisation. **Senior Interior Designer with 10 plus years' experience**

◆ I appreciate the values of my employer and respect them. It's important to be on the same page for a good work environment but most importantly is the mutual respect of diverse opinions and values. For me, that's more important. **Graduate Architect with under 2 years' experience**

◆ Too much is placed on diversity rather than skills. It's more important that the person can do the job rather than their sex, ethnicity, or background. The employer's values reflect the company values, I am there to do a job for a company. **Mid-Weight Interior Designer with 10 plus years' experience**

◆ The office culture is key, how I feel working with my colleagues and superiors determines 90% of my happiness in the company. Also, if they care about overtime and exploiting the staff. **Architect with 10 plus years' experience**

Moving on to what they prioritise in a job, we asked “What is most important to you, work-life balance or salary?” An astounding 75% agreed that work-life balance was more important than salary.

*“When people are looking for a positive work-life balance – this does not mean that they don't want to work hard, rather they don't want it to negatively affect their home life overall. 25% of those looking to change jobs in the next 12 months cited a better work-life balance as a motivation. 27% of respondents who wanted to stay in their current role over the*

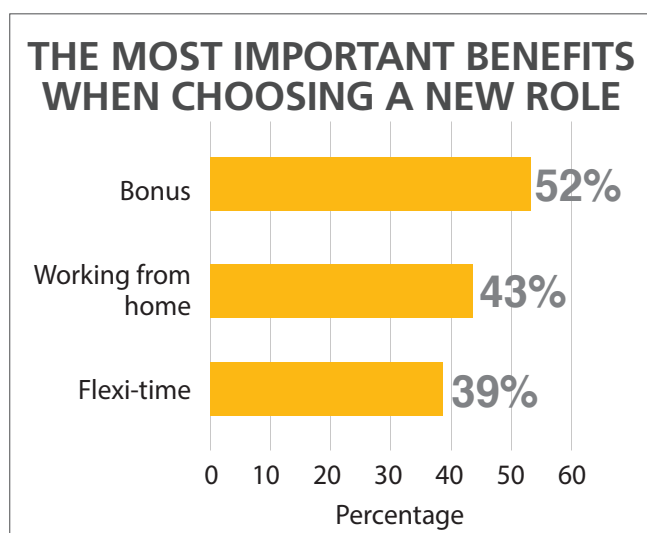
next 12 months said it was because of the work-life balance they had.”

Remuneration and benefits will always play some factor in choosing a new role, so we asked in our survey what the top three benefits would be the most important when choosing a new role.

The most popular benefit was receiving a bonus (52%), followed by working from home (43%) and flexi-time (39%). Practices want their teams to come to work feeling motivated every day. A driver of motivation can come in the form of the benefits that an employer is offering.

“No two employees are the same and practices that can offer a range of benefits are more likely to offer something that motivates most of their employees. Well managed bonus schemes can have a positive impact on an employee’s productivity, motivation and dependant on the bonus structure, collaboration and teamwork. Utilising bonus schemes in practices means that employees can be rewarded for meeting and exceeding goals. This in turn can help practices meet their overall objectives by hitting deadlines, completing projects and winning business. However, bonus schemes do need to be factored into employee costs versus the budget for projects.”

Working from home was cited as the second most important benefit and one many practices would have been required to offer during the COVID-19 lockdowns in the UK. The financial investment in equipment has potentially already been made, but there are many



reasons for and against home working that practice leaders have shared with us. Trust is a huge factor, as is collaboration, building relationships, productivity, creativity, learning and development as well as a practice’s culture.

“The UK lockdowns forced practice leaders to trust their employees to work productively and collaborate online. Many leaders have risen to the challenge of remote leadership and have been delighted with the results that some of their employees have achieved in this new working style. Yet some leaders have struggled and resorted to micromanaging and implementing software to ‘check on’ employees. Others have seen a deterioration of teamwork and practice culture. I think that for working from home to be a benefit available in a practice, the decision is going to come from the top down and will be heavily influenced by whether the practice saw more benefits than negatives during the enforced working from home in lockdowns.”

Flexi-time was rated as the third most attractive benefit. Flexi-time can vary from practice to practice, with some only offering an adjustment in the start and finish times, whilst others also offer shorter work weeks and extended breaks throughout the day. Many people in architecture and interior design desire flexi-time and it can have its benefits for both employees and employers alike.

“In my own business, the lockdowns and then the return to the office highlighted that our employees needed more flexibility in their working lives. We now have team members who like to start as early as 6 am and others who would prefer their day to finish at 9 pm. Parents have been able to leave the office for a couple of hours to take part in an activity at their children’s school and others have been able to attend yoga and fitness classes on an extended lunch break. Overall, we have seen an increased sense of satisfaction and happiness as well as increased retention levels.”

Flexi-time can push employers out of their comfort zones and can create more in-depth thoughts about how a team will work together. If a practice does not implement a formal way of inputting hours, there is a huge element of trust put upon the employee to continue to work their contracted hours. On top of that, it can be difficult to know when employees will be working and not, organising meetings, creating training sessions, catching up with clients to fit with the different working hours are all things that need to be considered.

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# Conclusion

The people working and leading in architecture and interior design have done it with diligence and pure resilience to survive the COVID-19 pandemic so far. The industry feels more optimistic, and the establishment of the global vaccine and booster programme means there are high hopes going forward into 2022.

We are learning lessons all the time about life and business, the pandemic has taught many of us what is important to us as individuals as well as what is and will be vital for the industry going forward.

We consider:

- ◆ How will practices retain more staff long-term?
- ◆ Can hybrid working become the industry norm?
- ◆ Can in-office collaboration days and productive remote working days be embedded?
- ◆ Will more practice's pay for overtime?
- ◆ What impact will Generation Z have on practice values, culture, and benefits?
- ◆ Will practice leaders re-prioritise reviews, feedback sessions and progression plans?

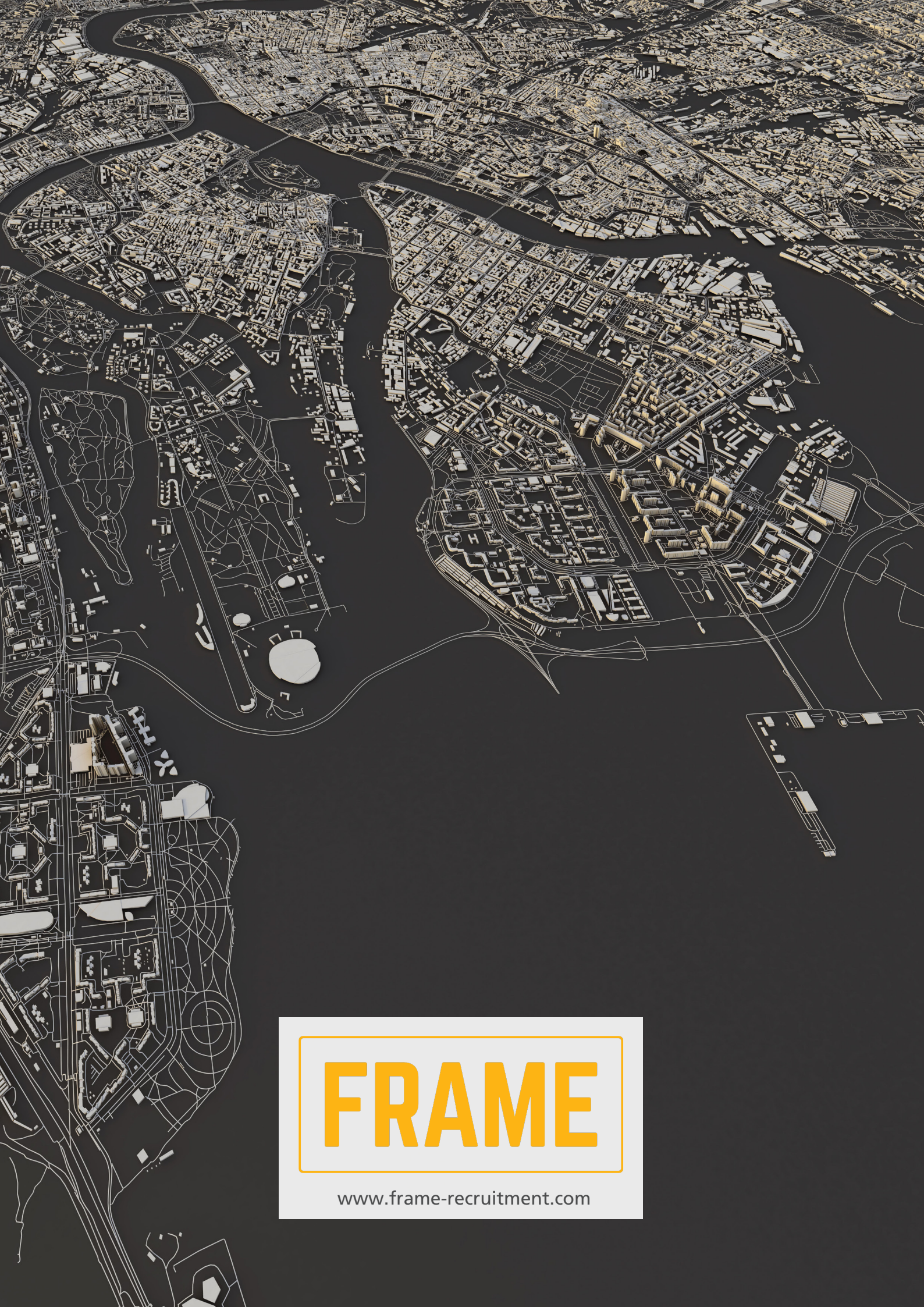
- ◆ Will we see more contractors take on permanent roles?
- ◆ How will the industry address a skill shortage of experienced people?

In our seventh consecutive year of running The Architecture & Interior Design Survey, we would like to say a huge thank you to the people who have taken part. We are privileged to be able to create and share this report again with the community. We have been astounded by the response and support of our previous reports and take our responsibility seriously to share the thoughts, feelings, and realities that people working in architecture and interior design face.

We hope that you have found this year's report as thought-provoking and fascinating as it was to research, analyse and produce.

*Martin*





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