Allen Associates

Recruiting Excellence

Voices of Oxfordshire: Pay & Benefits Report 2025

Finance

allen-associates.co.uk
hello@allen-associates.co.uk
01865 335600

About This Report and Our Survey

This finance-focused report forms part of our Voices of Oxfordshire: Pay & Benefits Report 2025. The wider study surveyed professionals registered within the Allen Associates candidate community across Oxfordshire, gathering insights into pay, benefits, and workplace expectations.

This microanalysis draws specifically on responses from a smaller subset of professionals working in Finance within our candidate network, ranging from entry-level administrators and analysts to senior consultants and Heads of Finance. Their feedback provides a valuable snapshot of what matters most to the finance professionals who took part, offering indicative insights into pay satisfaction, career progression, flexibility, wellbeing, and recognition.

By focusing on this specialist group within our network, we can highlight the themes and trends emerging from their experiences, while setting these findings in the context of Oxfordshire's broader employment landscape.

What Finance Professionals Want

The finance profession continues to play a critical role in helping organisations grow, stay compliant, and make informed decisions. As technology, regulation, and expectations around flexibility and reward evolve, finance professionals are adapting quickly, balancing precision and performance with the human side of leadership and wellbeing.

Our findings from this group reveal a profession that is highly skilled and ambitious, but also increasingly mobile and mindful of wellbeing. While senior finance professionals continue to enjoy strong earning potential, many at junior and mid-levels feel constrained by modest salary growth and limited opportunities for development.

Nearly nine in ten of the finance professionals in our survey who identified as active candidates said they were open to changing jobs within the next 12 months. For employers, this represents a clear retention challenge. For finance professionals, it highlights opportunities in a buoyant but competitive market.

Key Themes

1. Pay Growth Is Slow and Satisfaction Is Mixed

Among the finance professionals in our candidate network who took part in the survey, Oxfordshire remains a strong market for finance talent, but salary progression appears uneven. Over half of respondents (59%) earn below £40,000 despite Oxfordshire's higher cost of living, while only 13% earn more than £70,000. Pay satisfaction is modest:

30% rated their pay low (1-2/5)

30%

36% were neutral (3/5)

36%

Only 12% were highly satisfied (5/5)

12%

Finance Salary Bands
(with % of respondents and UK comparison)

Salary Band	% of Respondents	Typical Role Types
Under £30,000	28%	Entry-level finance support, assistants
£30,000-£39,000	31%	Analysts, officers, part-qualified accountants
£40,000-£49,000	12.7%	Senior analysts, managers
£50,000-£69,000	14.1%	Finance leaders, technical specialists
£70,000+	13%	Heads of Finance, Directors, consultants

Finding: Salary growth within the finance profession in Oxfordshire (3.1%) is roughly half the UK average (6%).

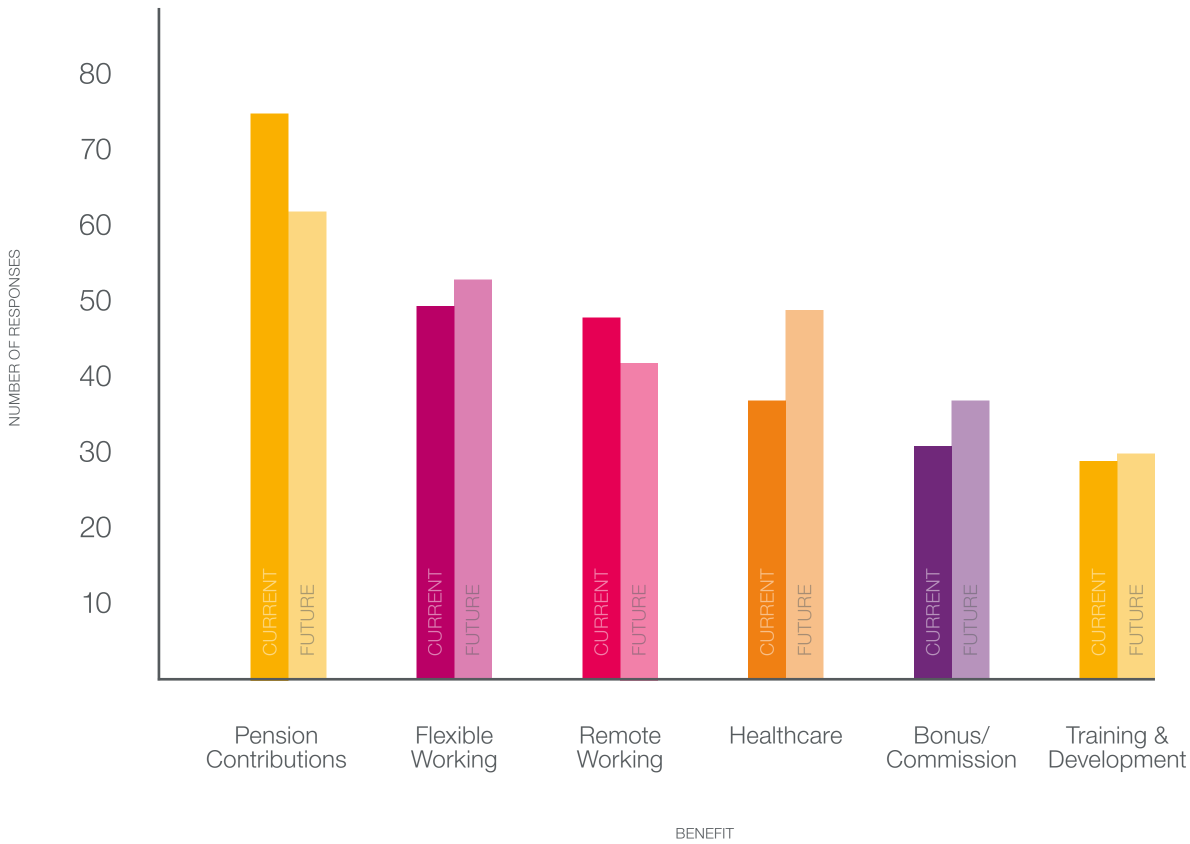
Employers that fail to review pay structures and progression pathways risk losing skilled professionals to competitors and other disciplines.

2. Benefits: Financial Security and Flexibility Lead

Finance professionals in our survey placed high value on benefits that provide long-term stability and practical support.

While pensions, healthcare and flexibility are common, there's still a gap between what's offered and what employees most want.

Current vs Future Benefits (Finance Professionals):

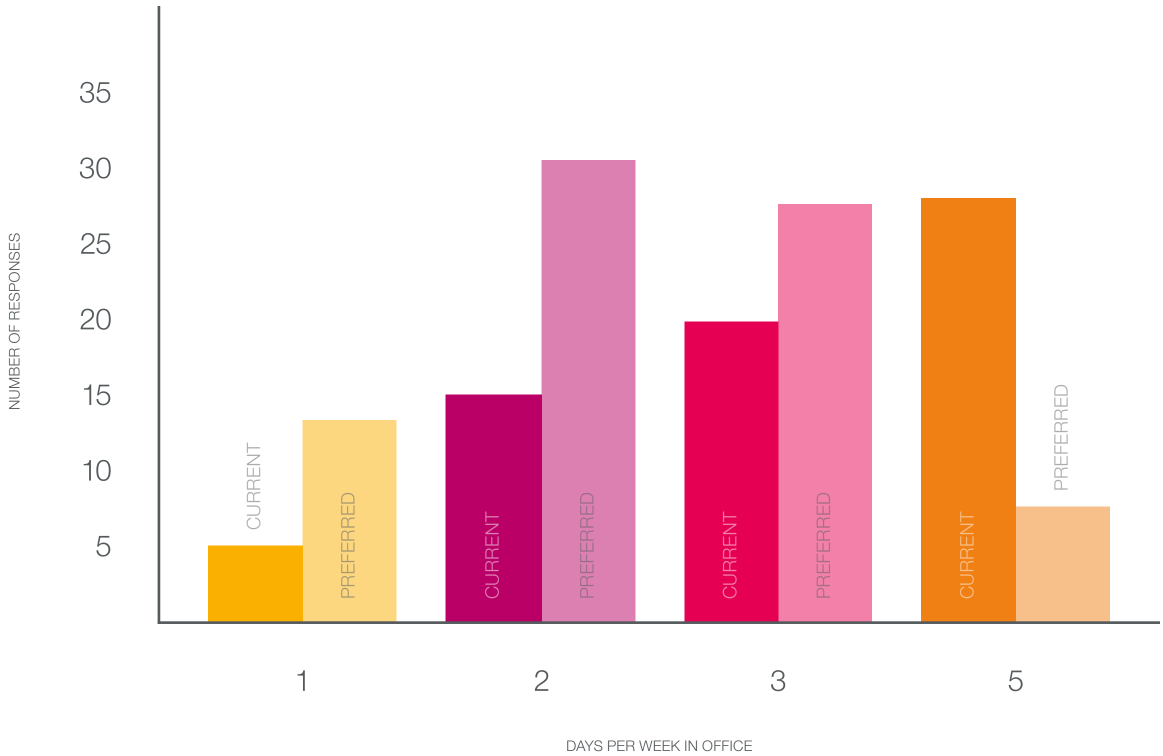


Finding: Finance professionals want benefits that balance financial wellbeing with work-life flexibility. Enhanced pensions and hybrid working are seen as essential, not optional extras.

3. Hybrid Working Is Now the Baseline

Among finance professionals actively seeking new roles, flexibility has become a non-negotiable requirement. Nearly half said they would consider leaving their current job if hybrid working were withdrawn. This growing emphasis on flexibility is creating a disconnect between candidate expectations and employer demands, particularly as many organisations continue to push for a return to the office. As a result, recruitment is taking longer on both sides - with candidates struggling to find roles that align with their needs, and employers finding it more difficult to secure the right talent.

Required vs Preferred Office Days (Finance Professionals)



*Please note: none of the marketing professionals surveyed indicated a requirement to work in the office four days per week.

Finding: Employers mandating five-day office weeks risk narrowing their talent pool. Hybrid flexibility is now foundational to retention and attraction.

4. Wellbeing and Recognition Matter More Than Ever

Finance professionals in our sample reported lower than average wellbeing, with only 36% rating theirs as 4 or 5 out of 5.

The main factors cited for improvement were:

56%
Recognition and Reward

53%
Development Opportunities

51%
Supportive Management

36%
Flexible Working

35%
Better Work-Life Balance

Finding: Financial security alone isn't enough. Employees want to feel valued, supported, and recognised - especially in high-pressure finance environments.

5. Contracting and Interim Roles Offer Flexibility and Reward

Contracting continues to attract many of the finance professionals we surveyed, particularly those seeking autonomy and premium rates. While satisfaction is mixed, top-tier specialists in Oxfordshire are earning £500+ per day, on par with London benchmarks.

Day Rates for Finance Contractors

Day Rate	% of Respondents	Typical Role Types
Under £150	26.8%	Junior / administrative support
£150-£299	16%	Project support / finance assistant
£300-£499	3.3%	Mid-level consultants
£500+	5.5%	Senior consultants, finance leads

Finding: Contractors at senior levels continue to command strong day rates, but satisfaction among mid-level contractors remains low due to rate stagnation.

Implications for Employers

While this is a sample of professionals within our network, the findings provide valuable directional insights for employers looking to strengthen recruitment and retention strategies.

Address Pay Stagnation

Finance salaries in Oxfordshire are rising more slowly than the national average - regular benchmarking and transparent progression reviews are essential.

Prioritise Flexibility

Hybrid models are now standard. Removing them risks immediate attrition.

Enhance Benefits
Pensions, healthcare, and training top employees' wish-lists. Tailored benefits can be decisive in hiring and retention.

Invest in Recognition and Growth
Structured career paths and visible recognition drive engagement and retention.

Streamline Hiring
With high mobility among finance candidates, speed and communication are critical in securing top talent.

Implications for Marketing Professionals

Benchmark Your Worth
Review salary ranges and progression routes regularly to ensure fair market positioning.

Negotiate Benefits, Not Just Pay
Flexible working, pensions and healthcare offer long-term value.

Prioritise Learning
Professional qualifications and regulatory expertise remain strong career differentiators.

Consider Contracting
Specialist contractors with in-demand skills can command premium day rates.

Protect Your Wellbeing
Seek employers that demonstrate supportive management and balanced workloads.

Conclusion

The finance professionals within our network continue to demonstrate strong capability and ambition, but their growing expectations around pay, flexibility, and career development reflect wider trends reshaping what the profession values most.

With nearly nine in ten of those surveyed open to moving roles, retention risk remains high among this group, echoing broader market pressures visible across the profession. Employers that rely solely on base pay without addressing wellbeing, recognition, and flexibility will struggle to compete.

Those who offer clear progression, hybrid working, and meaningful benefits will strengthen both retention and reputation-building teams that are motivated, resilient, and loyal.

About Allen Associates

We understand how critical the right people are to your organisation's success. Based in Oxfordshire, we have been recruiting talented professionals across Marketing, HR, Finance and PA/Administration for over 25 years. Our reputation has been built on the strength of our relationships, our unrivalled knowledge of the local market and our rigorous recruitment process.

Every candidate we put forward is carefully interviewed and assessed by our experienced team. This means employers can be confident that the individuals they meet are not only technically strong but also aligned with their culture, values, and long-term goals.

Insights like those from our Voices of Oxfordshire microanalyses help us stay close to the realities of what our candidate community is experiencing day-to-day. We understand the pressures, regulatory complexity, and evolving demands within this specialism and we know what great finance professionals look for in their next role.

Our insight into the local and regional market means we can connect ambitious finance professionals with employers who value their expertise, attention to detail, and strategic impact.

Whether you're hiring or exploring your next opportunity, our team can help you navigate the Oxfordshire market with clarity and confidence.

Allen Associates

hello@allen-associates.co.uk | 01865 335600 | www.allen-associates.co.uk