

Commercial Cleaning: Predictions for 2025

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The commercial cleaning industry is evolving rapidly, driven by shifting customer expectations, technological innovation and a focus on sustainability. With consistent year-on-year growth the cleaning, hygiene, and waste disposal sector makes up 5% of the UK's entire workforce – 1.47 million people in total. However, despite a generally positive outlook, the industry continues to face a number of challenges, including pressures caused by economic uncertainty and severe staff shortages. While the British Cleaning Council (BCC) predicted that the UK cleaning industry would generate 93,000 new jobs in 2024, it also predicted that 29% of those jobs would be 'hard to fill'. Stuart Conroy, Commercial Director at [Peartree Cleaning](#), tells us more.

Workforce challenges and evolving expectations

Staff shortages remain a challenge for our industry. Employees demand improved working conditions, flexibility and a genuine culture of wellbeing. Organisations must offer competitive wages, training programs and career growth opportunities in order to attract and retain good people.

At Peartree, creating and maintaining a culture that benefits, recognises, and rewards our employees is our focus. We invest in the personal and professional growth of our employees, ensuring they feel valued and supported every step of the way. Our team qualify for sick pay from day one, and we have never employed anyone on a zero hours contract.

We're also proud advocates of fair compensation and in 2014, we became a Living Wage Employer demonstrating our commitment to fair pay for all employees and setting a benchmark for ethical employment practices.

Robotics and automation: The future of operational efficiency

Automation and smart technologies are revolutionising commercial cleaning with businesses adopting robotic cleaning solutions to tackle labour shortages and enhance efficiency; and leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to optimise cleaning schedules.

We've embraced innovative cleaning solutions that deliver efficiencies for us and our clients. We recently invested over £50,000 in new ZAKO X1000 robots to use specifically at our open plan office contracts, meaning we can free existing workers to take on more value-adding tasks while the robots look after repetitive and time-consuming tasks, like large space floor cleaning.

We believe that the key to success for commercial cleaning is a balance between automation and people, and as part of our broader strategy to use technology for smarter, more effective cleaning solutions we introduced a QR codebased task validation system. Peartree 360, our bespoke management tool, revolutionises service tracking for our clients, providing them with access to real-time data on health and safety, sustainability, quality audits, management visits, PPMs, staff training records and now smart scheduling.

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) integration

ESG is a critical requirement in client partnerships and tender processes with a focus on reducing carbon emissions. For the commercial cleaning industry, this means adopting sustainable practices that minimise negative effects on the environment, while still delivering high-quality results.

In 2024, we pledged to the Science-Based Targets Initiative. Our strategies include incorporating electric vehicles, optimising travel routes, and managing energy use efficiently to reduce our carbon emissions. Through eco-friendly cleaning practices and efficient tracking and reporting, we're not only meeting our sustainability goals but also empowering our clients to achieve theirs. We only work with suppliers who responsibly manage their manufacturing impacts, ensuring they comply with environmental regulations, use renewable energy sources and reduce waste and emissions. And, we're minimising the environmental impacts that arise during our cleaning operations by reducing water and energy consumption, avoiding unnecessary cleaning tasks, and disposing of our waste in a responsible manner.

Peartree 360 tracks ESG metrics such as emissions from staff commutes and plastic usage at client sites, providing transparency across our contracts and actionable insights. It also gives access to our comprehensive Scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions data providing valuable information on an organisation's carbon footprint, enabling science-based calculations.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives

We've found that enhanced CSR initiatives including community engagement and creating opportunities for disadvantaged groups, are becoming key differentiators for our clients. We're committed to fostering diversity and inclusion, and maintaining ethical governance to make a meaningful community impact.

Data-driven decision making and predictive insights

Data is transforming how cleaning services are delivered. Advanced software platforms allow cleaning companies to optimise cleaning schedules, monitor performance metrics, track employee productivity and provide clients with predictive insights. Peartree 360 helps us to make smarter decisions, tracking everything from ESG metrics to client satisfaction through innovative QR feedback forms. This

transparency helps to build client trust and demonstrates our commitment to quality and accountability.

Our Occupancy Driven Cleaning (ODC) methodology uses real-time occupancy data to optimise cleaning schedules and we use Internet of Things (IoT) sensors to gather, analyse, and act on real-time data. Strategically positioned sensors and devices collect data on building occupancy levels, cleaning needs and even consumable usage. With this information, our managers can identify high-traffic areas requiring frequent cleaning and allocate resources accordingly. This data-driven approach allows us to transition from fixed-time interval cleaning to a more responsive service, aligning with the hybrid working model and saving our clients up to 20% in costs without compromising quality.

Looking ahead

Rising staffing costs driven by National Insurance changes, increases to the National Living Wage, and Employers National Insurance Contributions in April, will be felt across the UK by all sectors and we will no doubt result in an increased demand for flexible contract models to mitigate budget pressures for clients.

Employee wellbeing, innovation and sustainability will be key for commercial cleaners in 2025, and as client demands evolve, the ability to provide measurable value and flexible solutions will set the industry leaders apart. Companies that embrace these trends and invest in cutting-edge technologies, eco-friendly practices, and skilled labour will thrive.