

Excellence in building  
materials supply

# Builders Merchant Building Index



**Executive Summary - April 2024**

(Published 02 July 2024)

# Highlights

Total sales in January 2024 to April 2024 were -4.4% lower than the same period last year. Volume sales were -5.3% down with prices slightly up (+1.0%). Full comment on page [7](#).

## BMBI Report

April 2024 Highlights

(unadjusted for trading days)

[www.bmbi.co.uk](http://www.bmbi.co.uk)

**+3.9%**



Latest month v last year  
Apr 2024 sales up +3.9%  
on Apr 2023

**+5.0%**



Latest month v previous month  
Apr 2024 sales up +5.0%  
on Mar 2024



Latest three months v last year  
Feb 2024 - Apr 2024 sales down -5.0%  
on Feb 2023 - Apr 2023



Year-to-date v last year  
Jan 2024 - Apr 2024 sales down -4.4%  
on Jan 2023 - Apr 2023

**-5.0%**

**-4.4%**

“ Total Builders Merchants value sales were up +3.9% in April 2024 compared with the same month last year. Volume sales were +4.7% higher with prices down -0.8%. ”

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# Introduction:

## Builders Merchant Building Index



This **Builders Merchant Building Index (BMBI)** report contains data from GfK's ground-breaking Builders Merchants Panel, which analyses data from over 88% of generalist builders' merchants' sales throughout Great Britain. GfK's Builders Merchant Point of Sale Tracking Data sets a gold standard in reliable market trends. Unlike data from sources based on relatively small samples or estimates, or sales from suppliers to the supply chain, this up-to-date data is based on actual sales from merchants to builders and other trades. It's therefore a very good proxy for housing RMI.

The monthly series tracks what is happening in the market month by month and includes an in-depth review every quarter. BMBI Index data is calculated on the 12-month base period January 2019 to December 2019.

### Executive Summary

Short of time and just want to read the headlines? Download an Executive Summary that provides a snapshot of value sales and trends from Britain's Builders' Merchants for April 2024 [here](#).

### BMBI Expert Panel

MRA Research produces the Builders Merchant Building Index, a brand of the BMF, to communicate to the wider market as the voice of the industry as well as the voice of individual Expert Brands. **Meet the Experts and read their comments on pages 5 and 6 of this report or read their previous comments [here](#).**

### Recognition for BMBI

One of the aims of BMBI is to reach across and beyond construction. It's now syndicated to a growing number of trade magazines in different sectors on a regular basis. Outside the industry, economists, banks, consultancies, investment bodies and the big accountants regularly refer to it and BMBI is referenced alongside the Office for National Statistics (ONS) data in the Government **Department for Business & Trade** monthly construction update. **Download the latest update [here](#).**



### More data available

This BMBI report provides valuable top-level indices but there's considerably more data available. GfK insights go much deeper and include sales value data. GfK can quantify market values and drill down into contributing categories, tracing product group performance, to focus on aspects that are critical to you.

GfK can also produce robust like-for-like market comparability tailored to the requirements of an individual business. As more merchants join to submit their monthly sales-out data the quality of this information can only become more extensive and rigorous. Merchants or suppliers who are interested in acquiring data or getting involved should contact **Emile van der Ryst** at [emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com](mailto:emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com).

# The Expert Panel

## Speaking for their markets - 1

The Builders Merchant Building Index (BMBI) includes a panel of industry Experts. In each quarterly report they comment on the market, with a particular focus on the story behind the trends. Experts are leading brands, or brands aspiring to become leaders, who are the voice of their markets.

The Q1 2024 report, which includes commentary from our experts is available [here](#)

Meet the Builders Merchant Building Index Experts here and on the next page:

### Expert for Drylining Systems:



**Gordon Parnell**  
Sales Director British  
Gypsum

[Read latest comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Bricks & Roof Tiles:



**Gonzalo Bunse**, Director of Sales  
and Customer Experience  
Wienerberger UK

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Natural Stone & Porcelain Paving:



**Krystal Williams**  
Managing Director  
Pavestone UK Ltd

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Fasteners and Fixings:



**Ian Doherty**  
Chief Executive  
Owlett-Jaton

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Roof Windows:



**Jim Blanthorne**  
Managing Director  
Keylite Roof Windows

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Wood-Based Panels:



**Simon Woods**, European Sales Marketing  
& Logistics Director  
West Fraser (formerly known as Norbord)

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

# The Expert Panel

## Speaking for their markets - 2

### Expert for Steel Lintels:



**Derrick McFarland**  
Managing Director  
Keystone Lintels

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Adhesives & Sealants:



**Mathew Whitehouse**  
Marketing Director  
Bostik UK

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Mineral Wool Insulation:



**Neil Hargreaves**  
Managing Director  
Knauf Insulation

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Cement & Aggregates:



**Andrew Simpson**  
Packed Products Director  
Heidelberg Materials

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Paint:



**Paul Edworthy**  
Commercial Lead  
Dulux Trade

[Read latest Comment: Q1 2024 Report](#)

### Expert for Website & Product Data Management Solutions:



**Chris Fisher**  
Vice President of the EMEA lumber,  
building material and hardware  
(LBMH) division

[Read latest Comment: Q4 2023 Report](#)

### Expert for Plumbing & Drainage:



**Charles Burns**  
Divisional Director  
Brett Martin

[Read latest Comment: Q4 2023 Report](#)

### Expert for Heating & Cooling:



**Matt Williams**  
Managing Director  
Polypipe

[Read latest Comment: Q4 2023 Report](#)

# 88% coverage of the market

As part of its ongoing drive to ensure the most accurate and relevant understanding of market coverage GfK conducts universe studies every few years.

These studies aim to understand the number of retailers / merchants and the branches they have in a defined universe - in this case the mainland Great Britain Builders Merchants channel.

The previous iteration of the BMBI used a universe study conducted in 2019, with coverage then estimated at 82% and revised up to 92% in the October 2023 report with the introduction of CMO, Huws Gray and JT Dove.

GfK has just completed its latest universe study for the channel and now estimates coverage to sit at 88%.

For any queries around this, please reach out to Emile van der Ryst at [emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com](mailto:emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com)

GfK has just completed its latest universe study for the builders' merchant channel and estimates coverage is 88%.

# Overview - 1

## April 2024 value sales were +3.9% up compared with last year

**Now based on 88% of actual sales in the market (see page 7),** Total Builders Merchants value sales were up +3.9% in April 2024 compared with the same month last year. Volume sales were +4.7% higher with prices down -0.8%. Eight of the twelve categories performed better than Total Merchants, led by Workwear & Safetywear (+28.9%), Miscellaneous (+15.0%), Decorating (+14.1%) and Plumbing Heating & Electrical (+13.2%). But the three largest categories Heavy Building Materials (+1.4%), Timber & Joinery Products (+1.4%), and Landscaping (+3.2%) grew more slowly than Total Merchants. With three more trading days this year, like-for-like value sales (which take trading day differences into account) were down -11.0%.

### April 2024 v March 2024

Total Merchants sales were +5.0% higher in April than in March 2024. Volume sales were +7.4% up, while prices were down -2.3%. Ten of the twelve categories sold more, with one of the largest categories, Landscaping (+15.4%), well up. But the two largest, Heavy Building Materials (+4.8%) and Timber & Joinery Products (+3.6%), grew more slowly. Plumbing Heating & Electrical (-1.4%) and Workwear & Safetywear (-4.6%) were the weakest performing categories. With one more trading day this month, like-for-like sales were flat (+0.0%).

### April Index:

April's overall BMBI index was 117.7. All twelve categories exceeded 100. Seasonal category Landscaping (139.5) led the field followed by Workwear & Safetywear (131.8) and Renewables & Water Saving (130.8). There was no difference in trading days.

### Latest three months v last year - February 2024 - April 2024 v February 2023 - April 2023

Total sales in February 2024 to April 2024 were -5.0% lower than the same period last year. Volume sales were down -5.9% and prices were slightly up (+0.9%). Six of the twelve categories sold more with Workwear & Safetywear (+14.3%) up the most. Renewables & Water Saving (-23.9%) was the weakest performing category. With one more trading day this year, like-for-like sales were down -6.6%.

Total Merchants sales were +5.0% higher in April than in March 2024.

Volume sales were +7.4% up. Prices were down -2.3%.

Overview continues on the next page...

# Overview - 2

... continued from the previous page:

## **Latest three months v previous three months - February 2024 - April 2024 v November 2023 - January 2024**

Total sales in February 2024 to April 2024 were +15.6% higher than in November 2023 to January 2024. Volume sales were up +20.8% but prices were down -4.3%. Eleven of twelve categories sold more. The three largest categories, Landscaping (+50.6%), Heavy Building Materials (+16.1%) and Timber & Joinery Products (+12.6%) grew strongly. Tools (+12.2%) and Decorating (+10.2%) also performed well. Workwear & Safetywear was weakest (-0.5%). With two more trading days this period, like-for-like sales were +11.8% higher.

## **Year-to-date v last year - January 2024 to April 2024 v January 2023 to April 2023**

Total sales in January 2024 to April 2024 were -4.4% lower than the same period last year. Volume sales were -5.3% down with prices slightly up (+1.0%). Seven of the twelve categories sold more led by Workwear & Safetywear (+15.3%), but the two largest categories Heavy Building Materials (-6.7%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-7.6%) were down. Renewables & Water Saving (-25.0%) was weakest. With two more trading days this period, like-for-like sales were -6.6% lower.

## **Latest 12 months v last year - May 2023 - April 2024 v May 2022 - April 2023**

Total value sales in the last 12 months, May 2023 to April 2024, were -4.7% down on the previous period, May 2022 to April 2023. Volume sales were -9.6% down with prices up +5.4%. Nine categories sold more, with Workwear & Safetywear (+8.3%), Decorating (+7.5%) and Miscellaneous (+5.3%) ahead the most. However, the three largest categories, Heavy Building Materials (-5.0%), Landscaping (-5.7%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-11.3%) sold less. With four more trading days this period, like-for-like sales were -6.3% lower.

Total value sales in the last 12 months, May 2023 to April 2024, were -4.7% down on the previous period, May 2022 to April 2023.

Volume sales were -9.6% down with prices up +5.4%.



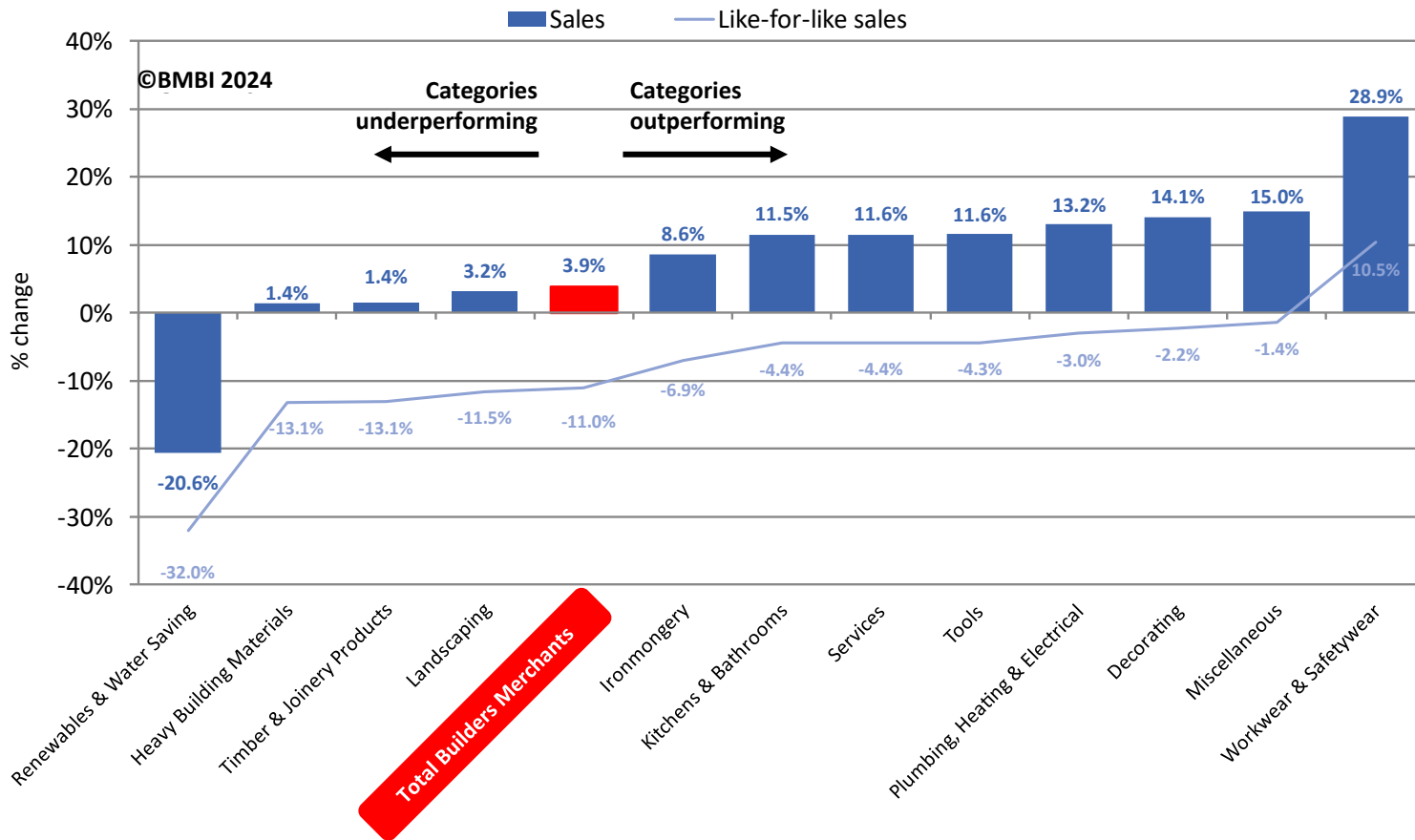
# Latest month v last year

## Sales and Like-for-like sales

21 trading days this year v 18 trading days last year.  
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



### April 2024 v April 2023



Source: GfK's Builders Merchants Total Category Report January 2019 to April 2024

Eight of the twelve categories performed better than Total Merchants.

But the three largest, Heavy Building Materials (+1.4%), Timber & Joinery Products (+1.4%), and Landscaping (+3.2%) grew more slowly.

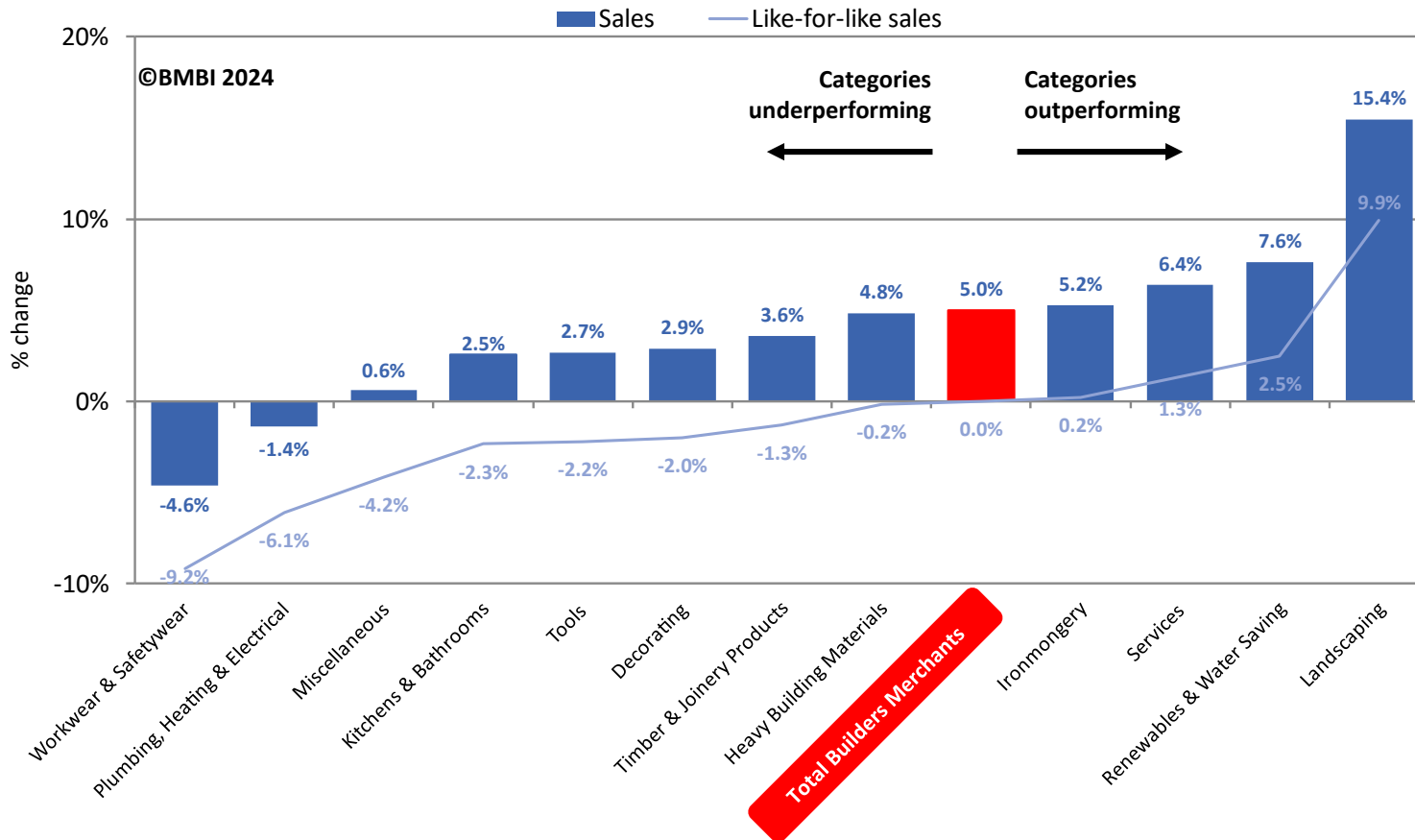
# Latest month v previous month

## Sales and Like-for-like sales

21 trading days this month v 20 trading days last month.  
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



### April 2024 v March 2024



Source: GfK's  
Builders Merchants  
Total Category Report  
January 2019 to April 2024

Total Merchants sales were +5.0% higher in April than in March 2024.

Volume sales were +7.4% up, but prices were down -2.3%.

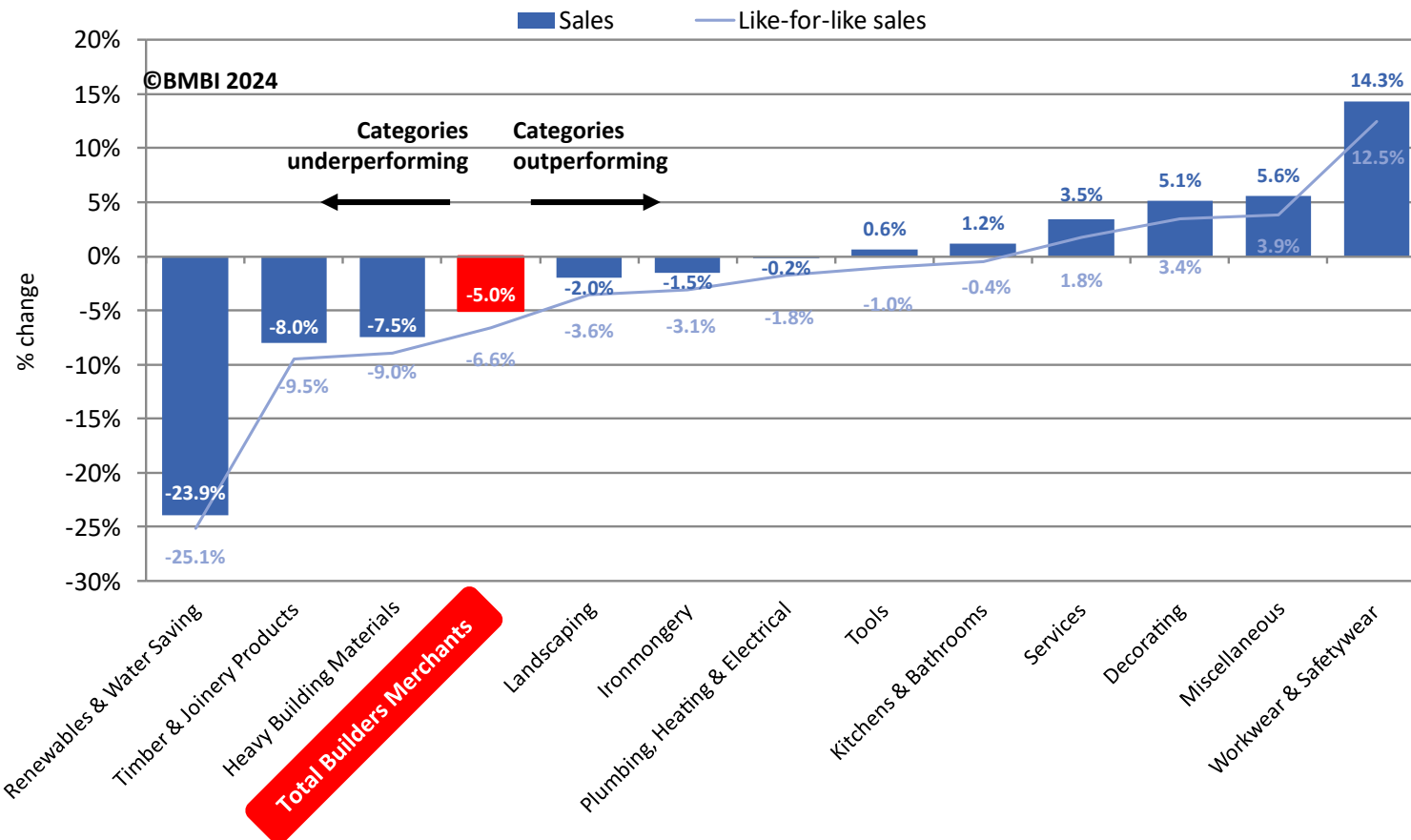
# Latest 3 months v last year

## Sales and Like-for-like sales

62 trading days in the last three months v 61 in the same three months last year.  
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



### 3 months Feb 24 to Apr 24 v 3 months Feb 23 to Apr 23



Source: GfK's  
Builders Merchants  
Total Category Report  
January 2019 to April 2024

Total sales in February to April 2024 were -5.0% lower than the same period last year.

Volume sales were down -5.9% and prices slightly up (+0.9%).

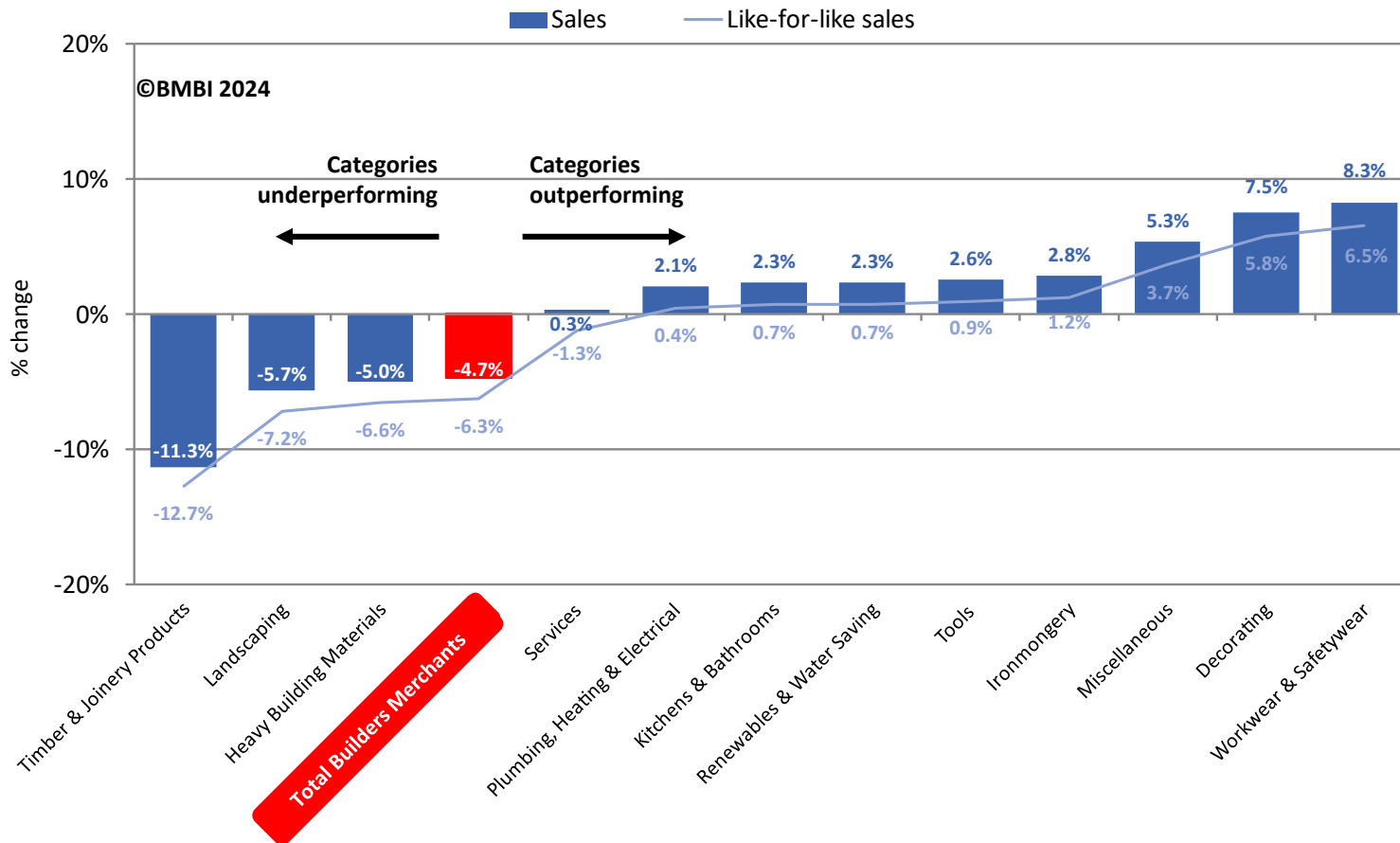
# Latest 12 months v last year

## Sales and Like-for-like sales

250 trading days this period v 246 trading days last 12 months.  
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



### 12 months May 23 to Apr 24 v 12 months May 22 to Apr 23



Source: GfK's Builders Merchants Total Category Report January 2019 to April 2024

Nine categories sold more, with Workwear & Safetywear (+8.3%), Decorating (+7.5%) and Miscellaneous (+5.3%) ahead the most.

But the three largest categories, Heavy Building Materials (-5.0%), Landscaping (-5.7%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-11.3%) sold less.

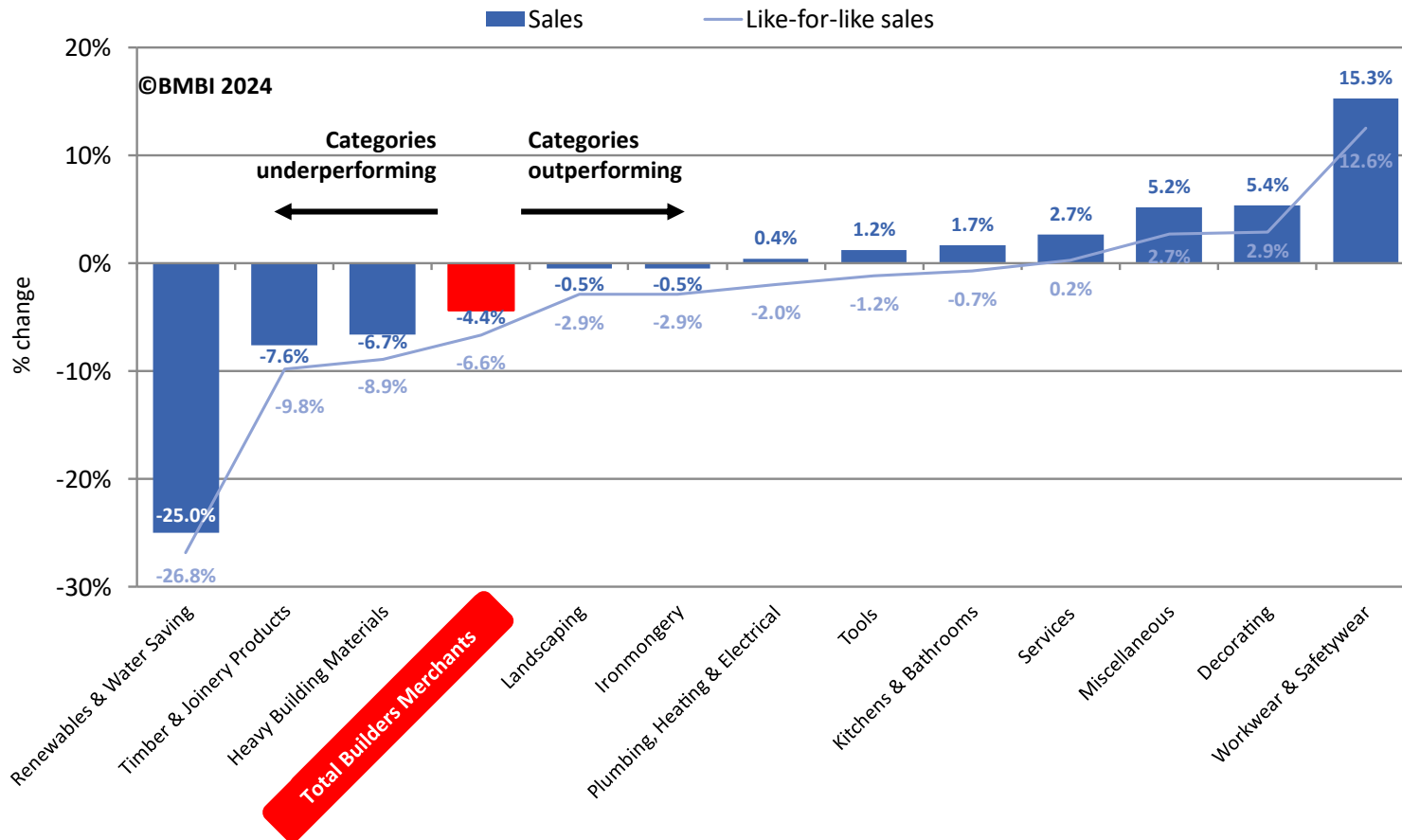
# Year-to-date v last year

## Sales and Like-for-like sales

84 trading days this year v 82 trading days last year.  
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



### Year to date: Jan 24 to Apr 24 v Jan 23 v Apr 23



Source: GfK's  
Builders Merchants  
Total Category Report  
January 2019 to April 2024

Seven categories sold more led by Workwear & Safetywear (+15.3%), but the two largest Heavy Building Materials (-6.7%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-7.6%) were down.

# Appendix

# Trading Days

## Monthly

Index: 20.7

2022											
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
20	20	23	19	21	20	21	22	21	21	22	16
2023											
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
21	20	23	18	20	22	21	22	21	22	22	16
2024											
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
22	21	20	21								

## Quarterly

Index: 62

2022			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
63	60	64	59
2023			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
64	60	64	60
2024			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
63			

## Half Year

2022	
H1	H2
123	123
2023	
H1	H2
124	124
2024	
H1	H2

## Full Year

2022
246
2023
248
2024

# GfK's Definition of Builders Merchant Panel



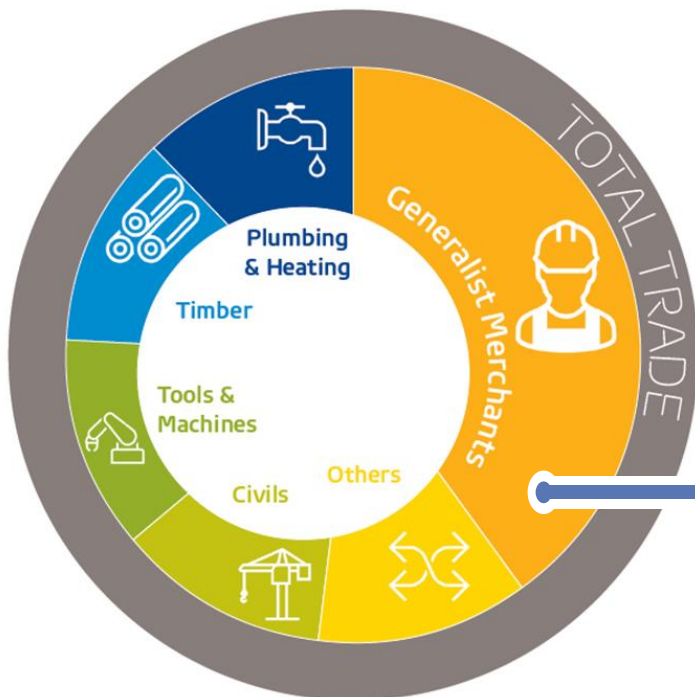
## Generalist Builders Merchants definition:

- Builder Merchants handle an extended range of building materials and components (e.g. doors, windows, interior furnishing materials, insulation materials, tiles, cement, mortar, adhesives, sealants, nails, hardware products, pipes, ironware, paint) and generate their turnover with professional end users. Only multiple merchants are considered; they are defined as having more than 3 outlets or a turnover of greater than £3m p.a.
- This excludes branches that generate all their sales from specialized areas such as Civils, Tiles and Tools. Estimated coverage of this channel sits at 88%.

## Examples include:



INDEPENDENT BUILDERS MERCHANT GROUP





# GfK's Product Categories

Reports cover category headline values & in-depth, brand-level insights



## Headline values available

### Timber & Joinery Products

Timber  
Sheet Materials  
Cladding  
Flooring & Flooring Accessories  
Mouldings  
Stairs & Stairparts  
Window & Frames  
Doors/Door Frames

### Heavy Building Materials

Bricks Blocks & Damp Proofing  
Drainage/Civils/Guttering  
Lintels  
Cement/Aggregate/Cement Accs  
Concrete Mix/Products  
Plasters Plasterboards and Accessories  
Roofing Products  
Insulation  
Cement Mixers/Mixing Buckets Products  
Builders Metalwork  
Other Heavy Building Equipment/Material

### Decorating

Paint/Woodcare  
Paint Brushes Rollers & Pads  
Adhesives/Sealants/Fillers  
Tiles And Tiling Accessories  
Decoration Preparation & Decorating Sundries  
Wall Coverings

### Tools

Hand Tools  
Power Tools  
Power Tool Accessories  
Ladders & Access Equipment

### Workwear And Safetywear

Clothing  
Safety Equipment

### Ironmongery

Fixings And Fastenings  
Security  
Other Ironmongery

### Landscaping

Garden Walling/Paving  
Driveways/Block Paving/Kerbs  
Decorative Aggregates  
Fencing And Gates  
Decking  
Other Gardening Equipment

### Plumbing Heating & Electrical

Plumbing Equipment  
Boilers Tanks & Accessories  
Heating Equipment/Water Heaters/Temperature Control/Air Treatment  
Radiators And Accessories  
Electrical Equipment  
Lighting And Light Bulbs

### Renewables And Water Management

Water Saving  
Renewables & Ventilation

### Kitchens & Bathrooms

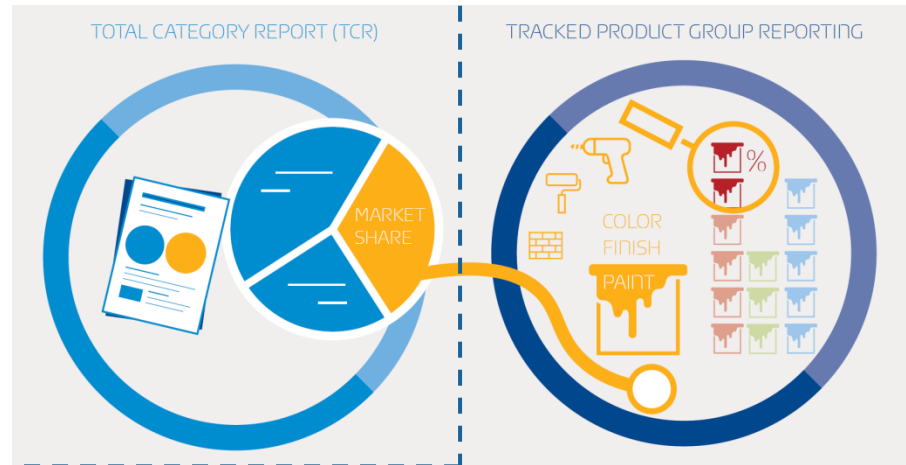
Bathroom (Including Showering)  
Fitted Kitchens  
Major Appliances

### Miscellaneous

Cleaning/Domestic/Personal  
Automotive  
Glass  
Other Furniture & Shelving  
Other Misc

### Services

Toolhire / Hire Services  
Other Services



## In-depth product group reporting

Monthly sales values, volumes, pricing analysis & distribution facts available by brand and key product features.

For insights on your product group please contact Emile van der Ryst at GfK  
[emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com](mailto:emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com)

### Available categories:

#### Heavyside

Bricks  
Insulation

#### Lightside

Emulsion Paints (incl. Masonry & Base)  
Trim Paints  
Primers/Undercoats  
Woodcare  
Adhesives  
Sealants  
Fillers/PU Foam  
Tile Fixing (Adhesives/Grout)

# Building the Industry & Building Brands from Knowledge



# Excellence in building materials supply



## BMF (Builders Merchant Federation) Forecast Report

# BMF Forecast Report

## Spring 2024 Edition

### Builders Merchants Industry Forecast Report

The latest forecast report of the BMF's Builders Merchants Industry Forecast, covering Spring 2024 onwards, is available now.

While Builders Merchants Building Index (BMBI) data, which is provided by GfK and is based on actual sales category performance, has enabled users to see which products and regions are currently growing, the forecast report takes this one stage further to meet the industry's need for accurate forecasting.

The BMF forecast model incorporates several lead indicators to signal future events that will impact our markets.

Using BMBI data coupled with advanced modelling techniques the BMF has developed a channel-specific forecasting model to show what is likely to happen in the next 12 months, making it possible for merchants and suppliers to forecast their customers' requirements more accurately.

The report is updated on a quarterly basis, with the Spring 2024 Edition now available. The forecast report and its previous editions can be downloaded by BMF members free of charge – once logged in – [here](#).

Non-members can purchase the report by contacting Thomas Lowe on 024 7685 4994 or email: [thomas.lowe@bmf.org.uk](mailto:thomas.lowe@bmf.org.uk)



# Contact us

For further information



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