

Excellence in building
materials supply

Builders Merchant Building Index



Executive Summary - May 2024

(Published 30 July 2024)

Highlights

Total sales in January to May 2024 were -4.5% lower than the same period last year. Volume sales were -5.7% down with prices up +1.2%. Full comment on page [7](#).

BMBI Report

May 2024 Highlights

(unadjusted for trading days)

www.bmbi.co.uk

+3.0%



Latest month v last year
May 2024 sales down -5.2%
on May 2023

-5.2%



Latest month v previous month
May 2024 sales up +3.0%
on Apr 2024



Latest three months v last year
Mar 2024 - May 2024 sales down -5.2%
on Mar 2023 - May 2023

-5.2%



Year-to-date v last year
Jan 2024 - May 2024 sales down -4.5%
on Jan 2023 - May 2023

-4.5%

“ Total Builders Merchants value sales were down -5.2% in May 2024 compared with the same month last year. Volume sales were -7.0% lower with prices up +2.0%.”

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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 May 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 4 and 5 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.

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% was revised up to 92% in the October 2023 report with the introduction of CMO, Huws Gray and JT Dove.

GfK has since 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

Based on its latest universe study for the builders' merchant channel, GfK estimates coverage is 88%.

Overview - 1

May 2024 value sales were -5.2% down compared with May last year

Now based on 88% of actual sales in the market (see page 6), Total Builders Merchants value sales were down -5.2% in May 2024 compared with the same month last year. Volume sales were -7.0% lower with prices up +2.0%. Nine of the twelve categories performed better than Total Merchants, led by Workwear & Safetywear (+18.8%), Decorating (+3.7%) and Kitchens & Bathrooms (+2.0%). But the two largest categories Timber & Joinery Products (-6.9%) and Heavy Building Materials (-7.7%) declined more than Total Merchants. Renewables & Water Saving (-37.1%) was the weakest category. With one more trading day this year, like-for-like value sales (which take trading day differences into account) were down -9.7%.

May 2024 v April 2024

Total Merchants sales were +3.0% higher in May than in April 2024. Volume sales were +2.2% up and prices were up +0.8%. Six of the twelve categories sold more, with two of the largest categories, Landscaping (+12.7%) and Heavy Building Materials (+3.7%) doing best. Plumbing Heating & Electrical (-5.8%) and Renewables & Water Saving (-18.4%) were the weakest performing categories. There was no difference in trading days.

May Index:

May's overall BMBI index was 121.2. All twelve categories exceeded 100. Seasonal category Landscaping (157.1) led the field followed by Workwear & Safetywear (135.5) and Decorating (124.2). There was no difference in trading days.

Latest three months v last year: March 2024 - May 2024 v March 2023 - May 2023

Total sales in March to May 2024 were -5.2% lower than the same period last year. Volume sales were down -5.8% and prices were up +0.6%. Six of the twelve categories sold more, with Workwear & Safetywear (+14.4%) up the most. Renewables & Water Saving (-29.3%) was the weakest performing category. With one more trading day this year, like-for-like sales were down -6.7%.

Total Merchants value sales were +3.0% higher in May than in April 2024.

Volume sales were +2.2% up and prices were up +0.8%.

Overview continues on the next page...

Overview - 2

... continued from the previous page:

Latest three months v previous three months: March 2024 - May 2024 v December 2023 - February 2024

Total sales in March 2024 to May 2024 were +24.0% higher than in December 2023 to February 2024. Volume sales were up +29.8% while prices were down -4.5%. All categories sold more. Seasonal category Landscaping (+72.3) was ahead the most followed by Heavy Building Materials (+25.3%). Timber & Joinery Products increased +19.6% but performed below Total Merchants.

Latest 12 months v last year: June 2023 - May 2024 v June 2022 - May 2023

Total value sales in the last 12 months, June 2023 to May 2024, were -4.5% down on the previous period, June 2022 to May 2023. Volume sales were down -8.9% with prices up +4.8%. Workwear & Safetywear (+9.5%), Decorating (+7.1%) and Miscellaneous (+5.4%) did best. However, the two largest categories, Heavy Building Materials (-5.4%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-10.2%) declined more than Total Merchants. With six more trading days this period, like-for-like sales were -6.8% lower.

Year-to-date v last year: January 2024 to May 2024 v January 2023 to May 2023

Total sales in January to May 2024 were -4.5% lower than the same period last year. Volume sales were -5.7% down with prices up +1.2%. Seven of the twelve categories sold more led by Workwear & Safetywear (+16.0%). But the three largest categories Landscaping (-0.9%), Heavy Building Materials (-6.9%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-7.4%) sold less. Renewables & Water Saving (-27.5%) was weakest. With three more trading days this period, like-for-like sales were -7.3% lower.

Total value sales in the last 12 months, June 2023 to May 2024, were -4.5% down on the 12 months June 2022 to May 2023.

Volume sales were -8.9% down with prices up +4.8%.

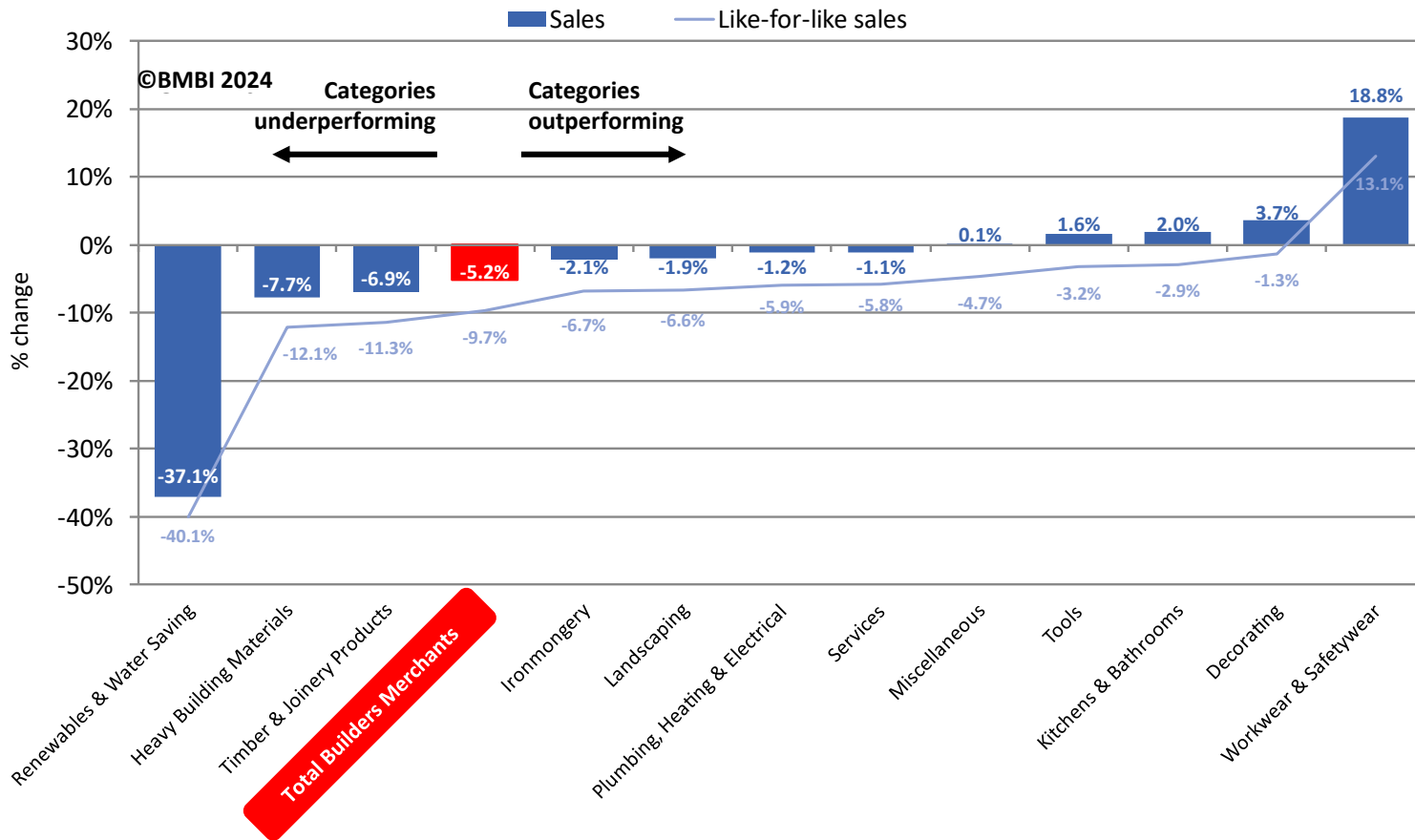
Latest month v last year

Sales and Like-for-like sales

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



May 2024 v May 2023



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

Nine categories did better than Total Merchants, led by Workwear & Safetywear (+18.8%), Decorating (+3.7%) and Kitchens & Bathrooms (+2.0%).

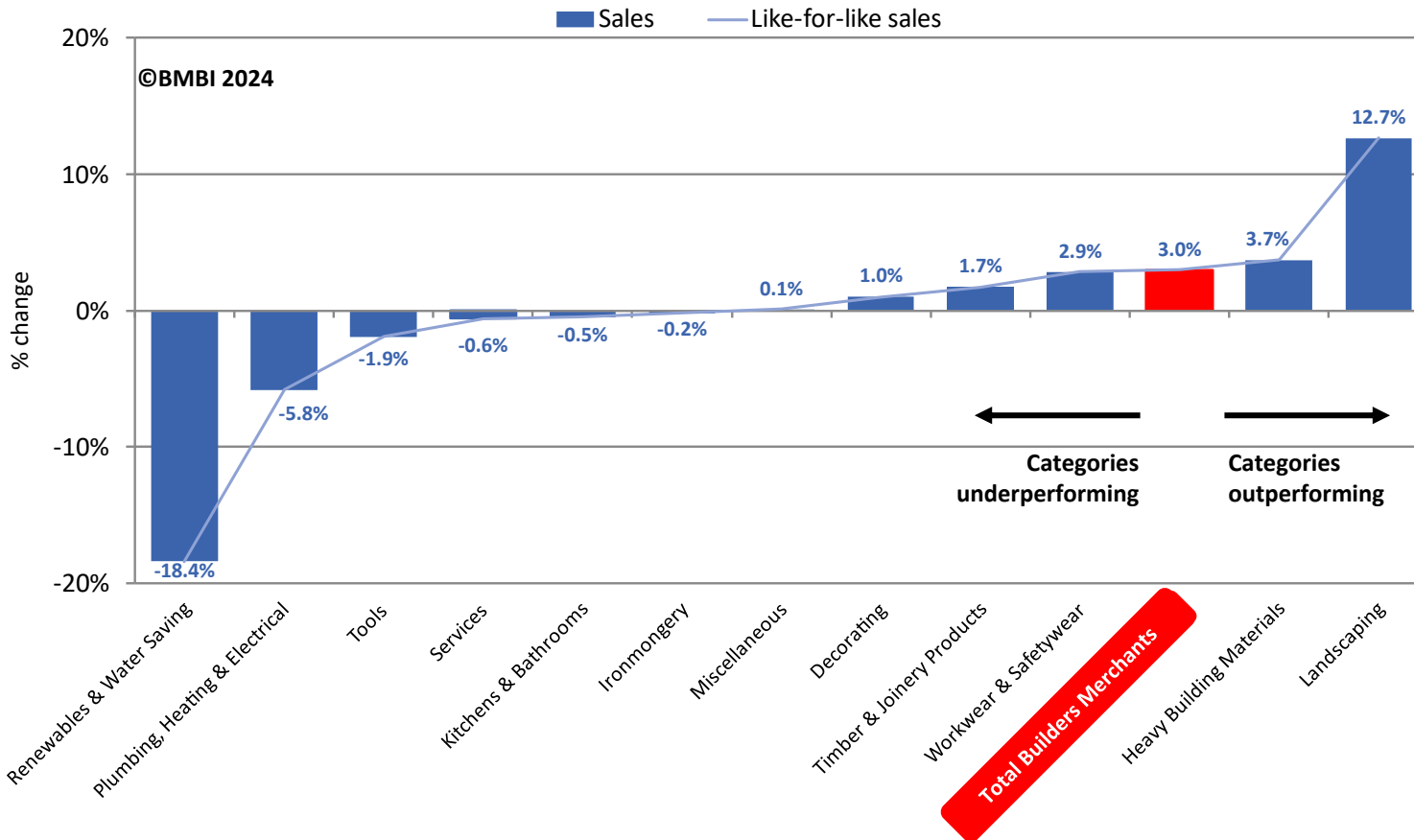
Latest month v previous month

Sales and Like-for-like sales

There was no difference in trading days (21).
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



May 2024 v April 2024



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

Total Merchants sales were +3.0% higher in May than in April 2024.

Volume sales were +2.2% up and prices were up +0.8%.

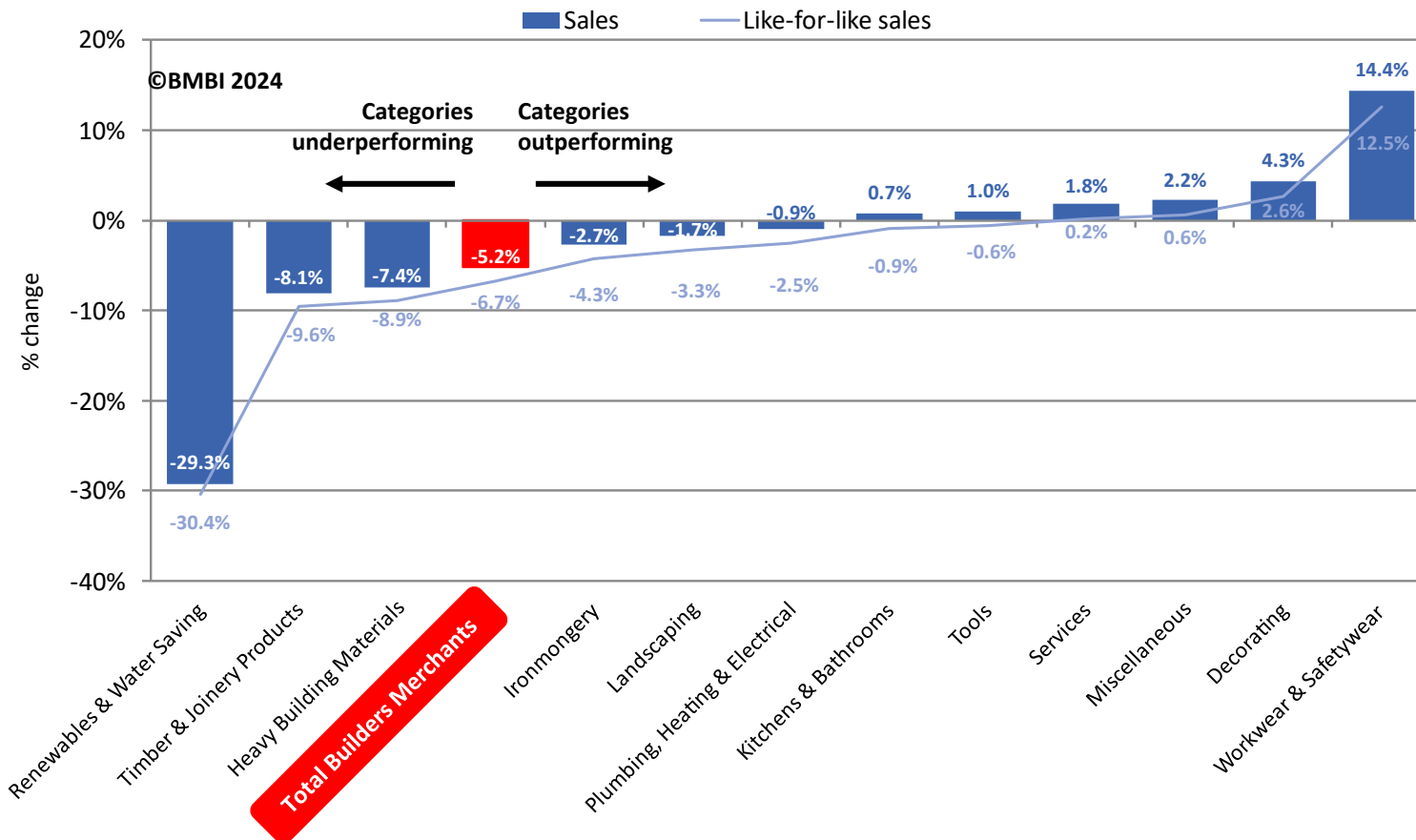
Latest 3 months v last year

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 Mar 24 to May 24 v 3 months Mar 23 to May 23



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

Total sales in March to May 2024 were -5.2% lower than the same period last year.

Volume sales were down -5.8%. Prices were up +0.6%.

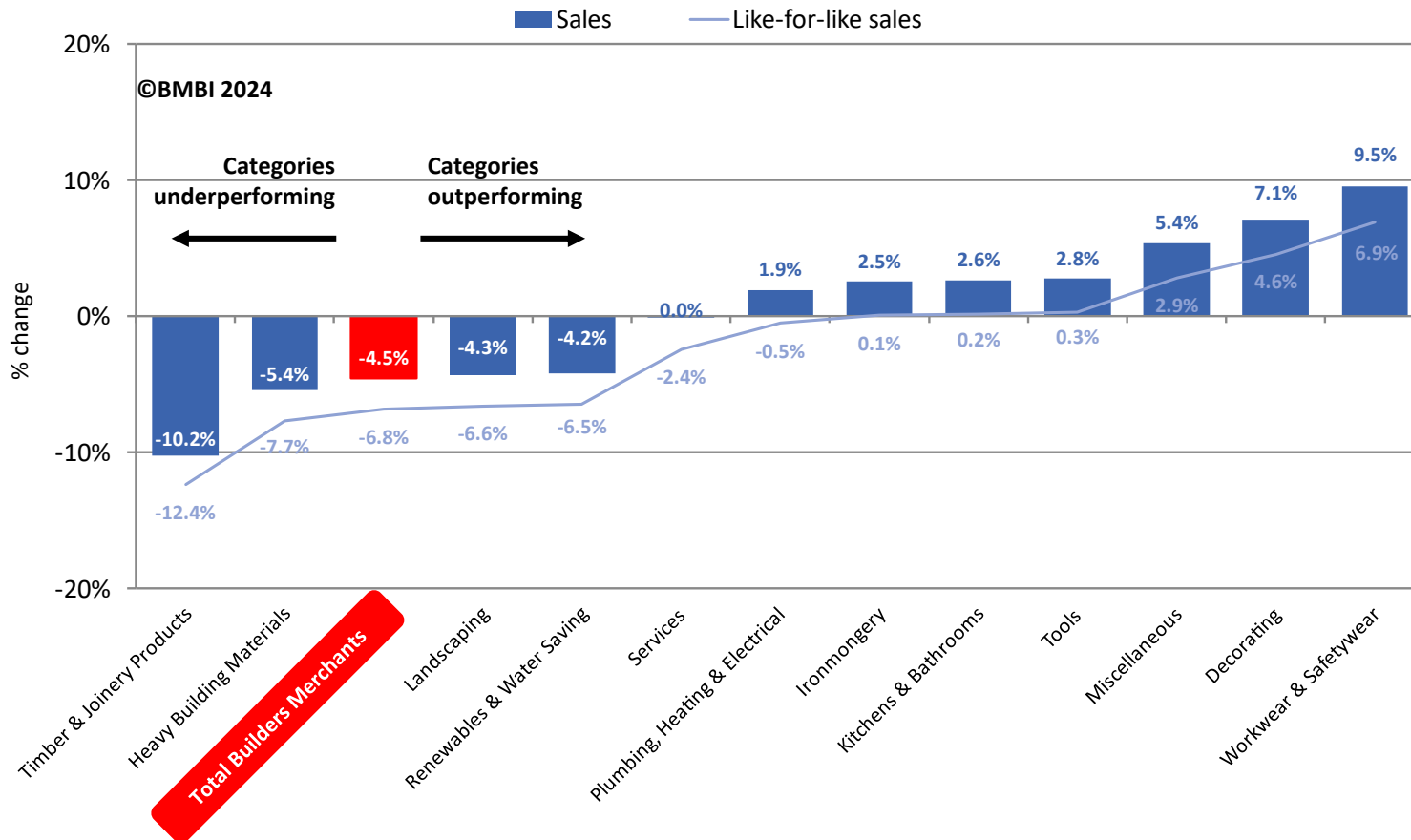
Latest 12 months v last year

Sales and Like-for-like sales

251 trading days this year v 245 trading days last year.
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



12 months Jun 23 to May 24 v 12 months Jun 22 to May 23



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

Workwear & Safetywear (+9.5%), Decorating (+7.1%) and Miscellaneous (+5.4%) were the best performing categories.

But, the two largest categories, Heavy Building Materials (-5.4%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-10.2%) declined more than Total Merchants.

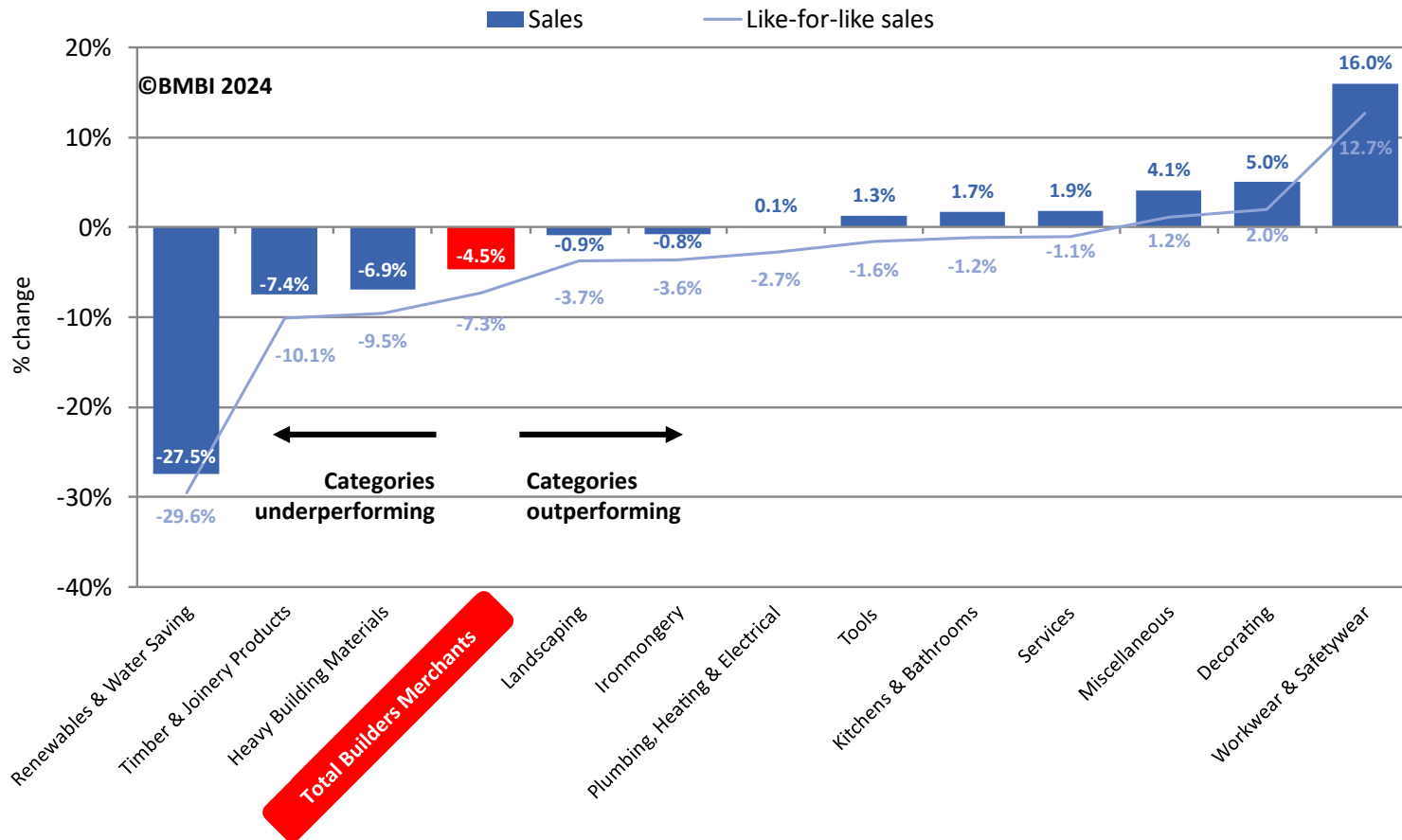
Year-to-date v last year

Sales and Like-for-like sales

105 trading days this year v 102 trading days last year.
Like-for-like sales take trading day differences into account.



Year to date: Jan 24 to May 24 v Jan 23 v May 23



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

Seven categories sold more with Workwear & Safetywear +16.0%.

But the three largest categories Landscaping (-0.9%), Heavy Building Materials (-6.9%) and Timber & Joinery Products (-7.4%) sold less.

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	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



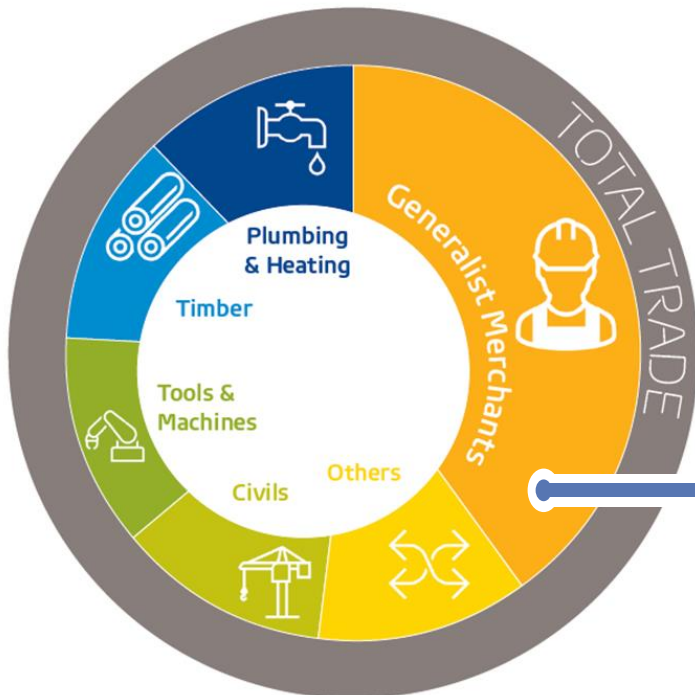
Generalist Builders Merchants definition:

- 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

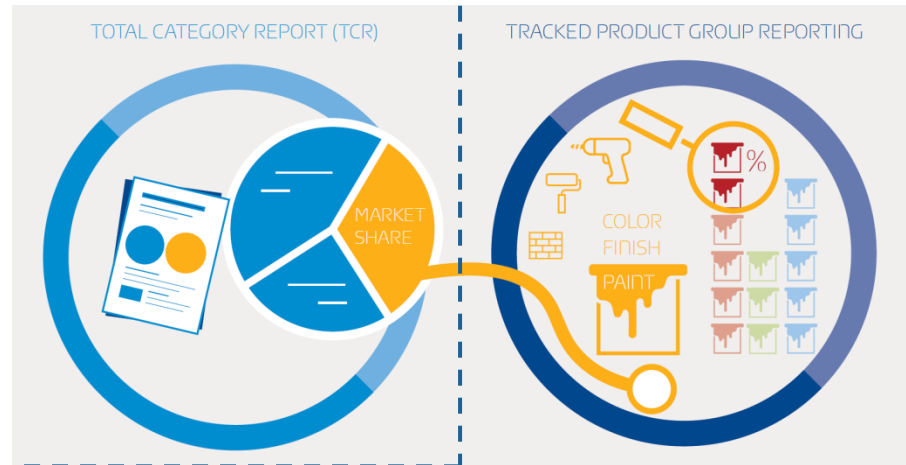
Bathroom (Including Showering)
Fitted Kitchens
Major Appliances

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

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



Contact us

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