Personal and General Services

If you are a hands on practical person and like to work with other people, then you might find yourself working in this broad ranging but very necessary career sector. Work ranges from providing services for others or helping to keep the environment clean to making sure we all live and work in safe and healthy conditions.

What areas can I work in?

You could work in general services within environmental or public health such as pest control, waste disposal and recycling, including cemetery and crematorium work.

If you prefer to work directly with people you could work in personal services, which ranges from clothes alterations, dry cleaning and laundry work, photograph processing, shoe, clocks or watch repair to funeral services.

What kind of companies can I work for?

There are a wide range of organisations you can work for including:

- local authorities environmental or civic amenity departments
- specialist recycling or waste disposal companies
- private burial and cremation companies
- retail outlets such as jewelry shops, shoe repair shops or dry cleaners
- supermarkets and pharmacy outlets
- private pest control companies
- small and large chain funeral director services.

What's the job market like?

Job opportunities vary depending on the area you live in and the job you want to do.

Competition for jobs in waste management and recycling with local authorities, the main employers, are competitive. Many jobs are at entry level and are manual or practical based, but there are good opportunities to work up to management level jobs.

Due to the nature of the funeral services, cemeteries and crematorium industry, employment demand is stable and immune to economic downturn. This is despite the decline in death rates in recent years due to medical advances and people leading healthier lives.

Facts and figures

- Funeral services, cemeteries and crematorium and its related services employed 28,373 people across 2,309 businesses in the UK in 2024. [1]
- The UK pest control industry market value continues to grow, with a revenue of just over £683 million. It employs 6,281 people across 854 businesses. [2]

- In 2024 the total amount of household waste generated in Scotland was 2.32 million tonnes. Of this 44.3% was recycled. [3]

Want to find out more?

Find out more about recycling in Scotland on the Zero Waste Scotland website.

Sources

[1] Funeral Activities in the UK Industry Data and Analysis (IBISWorld) (December 2025)

[2] Pest Control in the UK Industry Data and Analysis (IBISWorld) (September 2025)

[3] Household waste generated and managed 2024 (SEPA) (October 2025)