

MAYOR OF LONDON

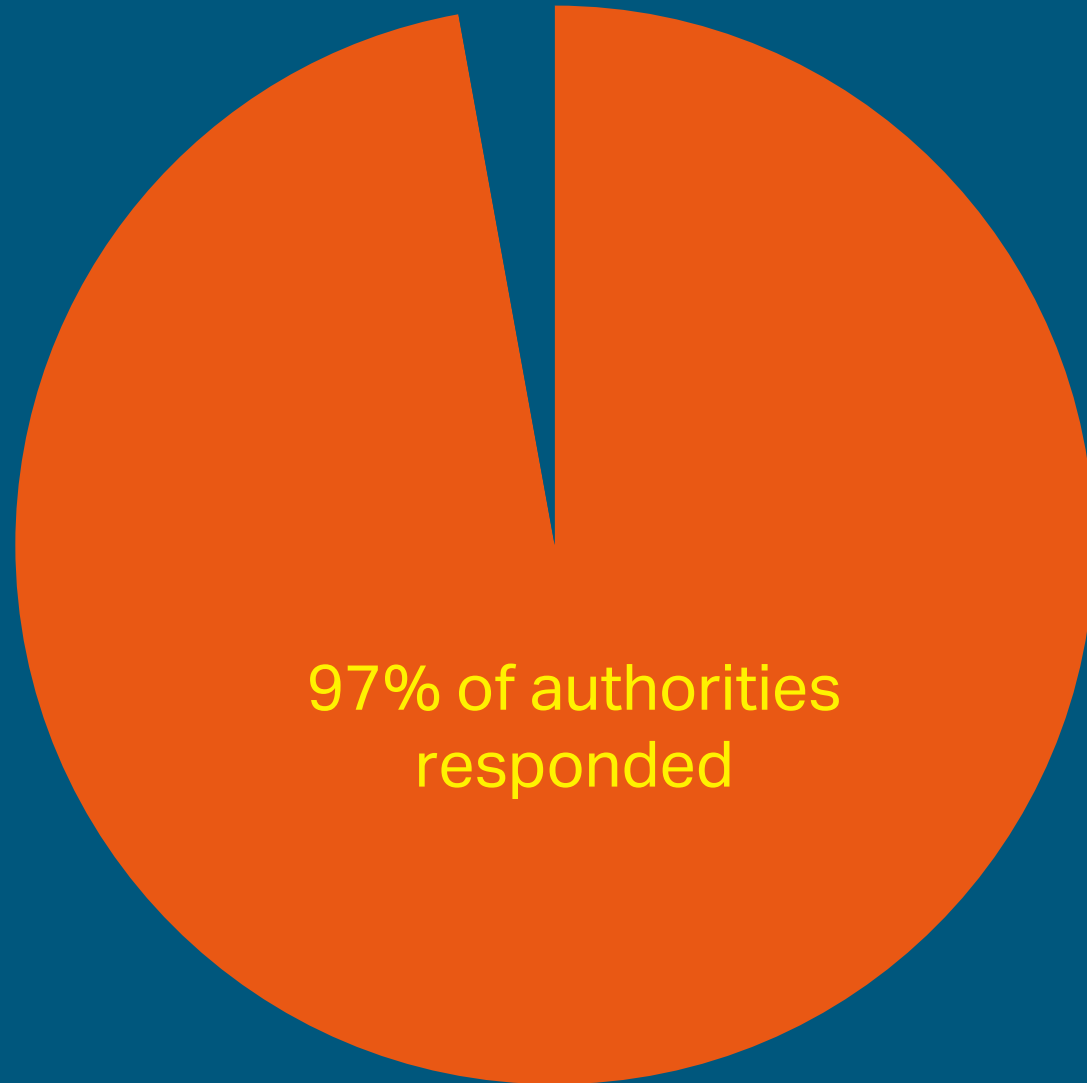
**2020 PLACESHAPING
CAPACITY SURVEY**

Results Report

October 2020

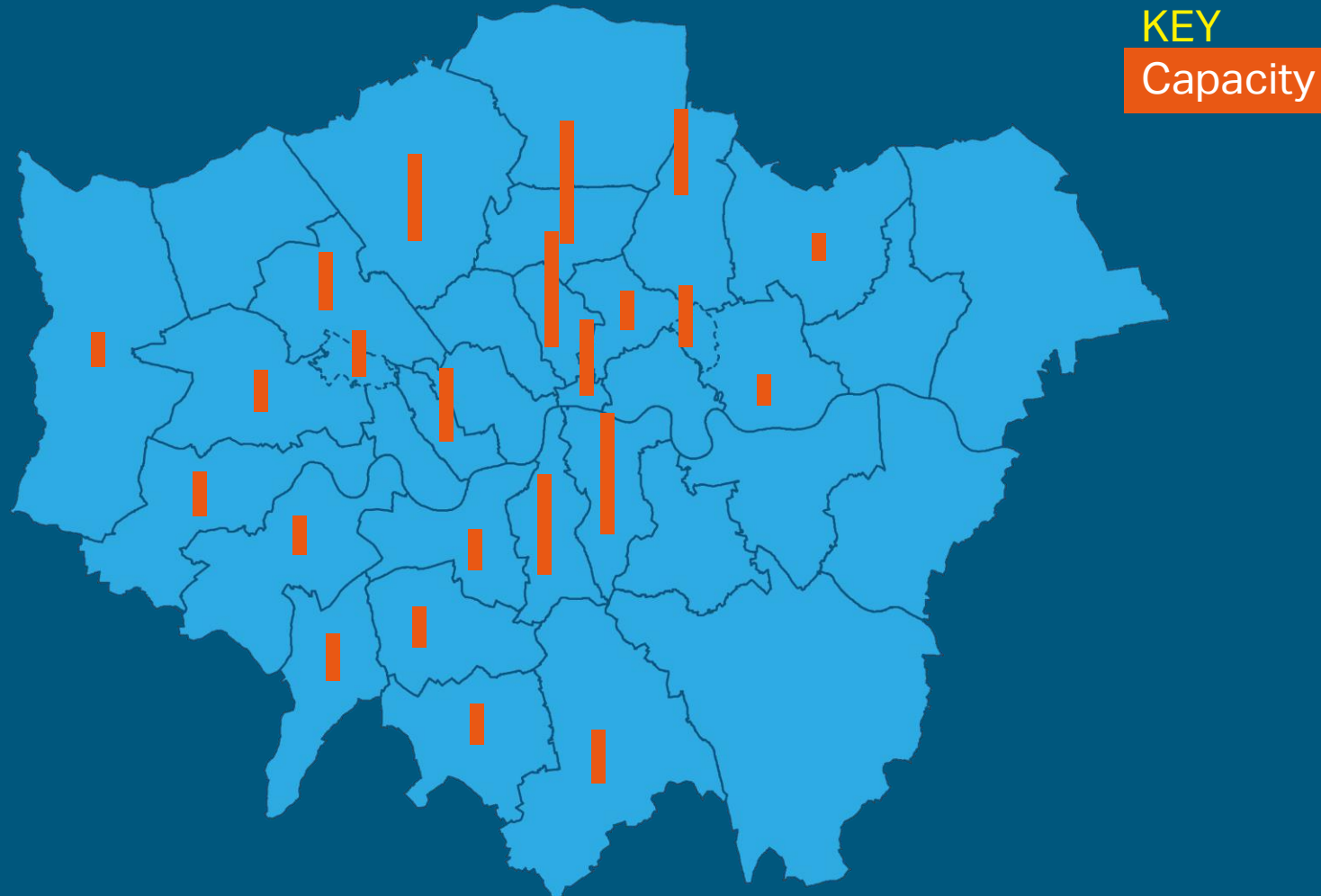
GOOD GROWTH BY DESIGN

Response from Authorities



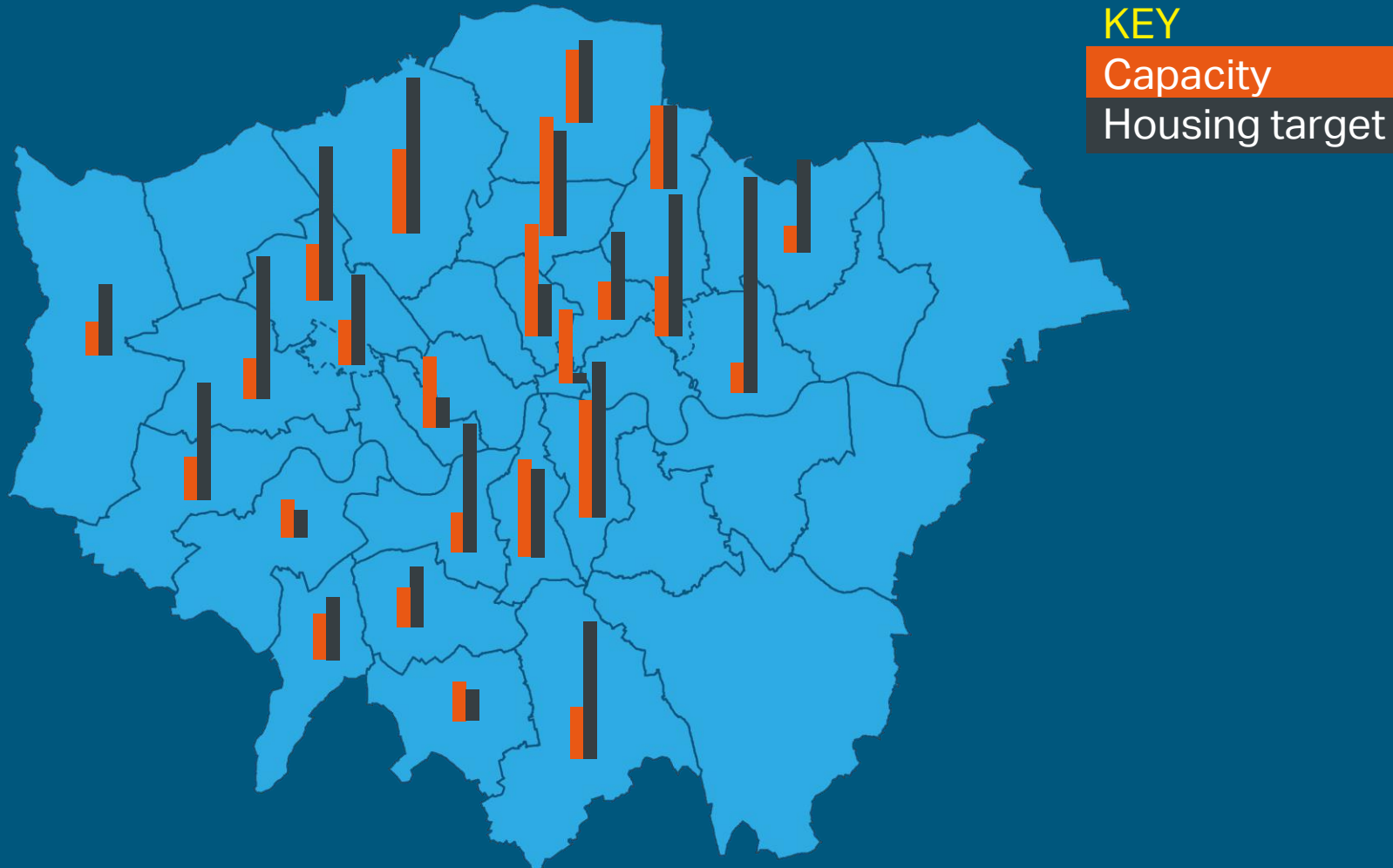
The Placeshaping Capacity Survey was carried out between July and September 2020, with responses from all but one authority (34/35). Responses are self-reporting, and so rely on the accuracy and knowledge of the particular respondent within the organisation.

What is capacity across authorities?



Of the 34 authorities who submitted a response to the survey, 24 provided information on the size of their placeshaping service.

Existing capacity versus housing target



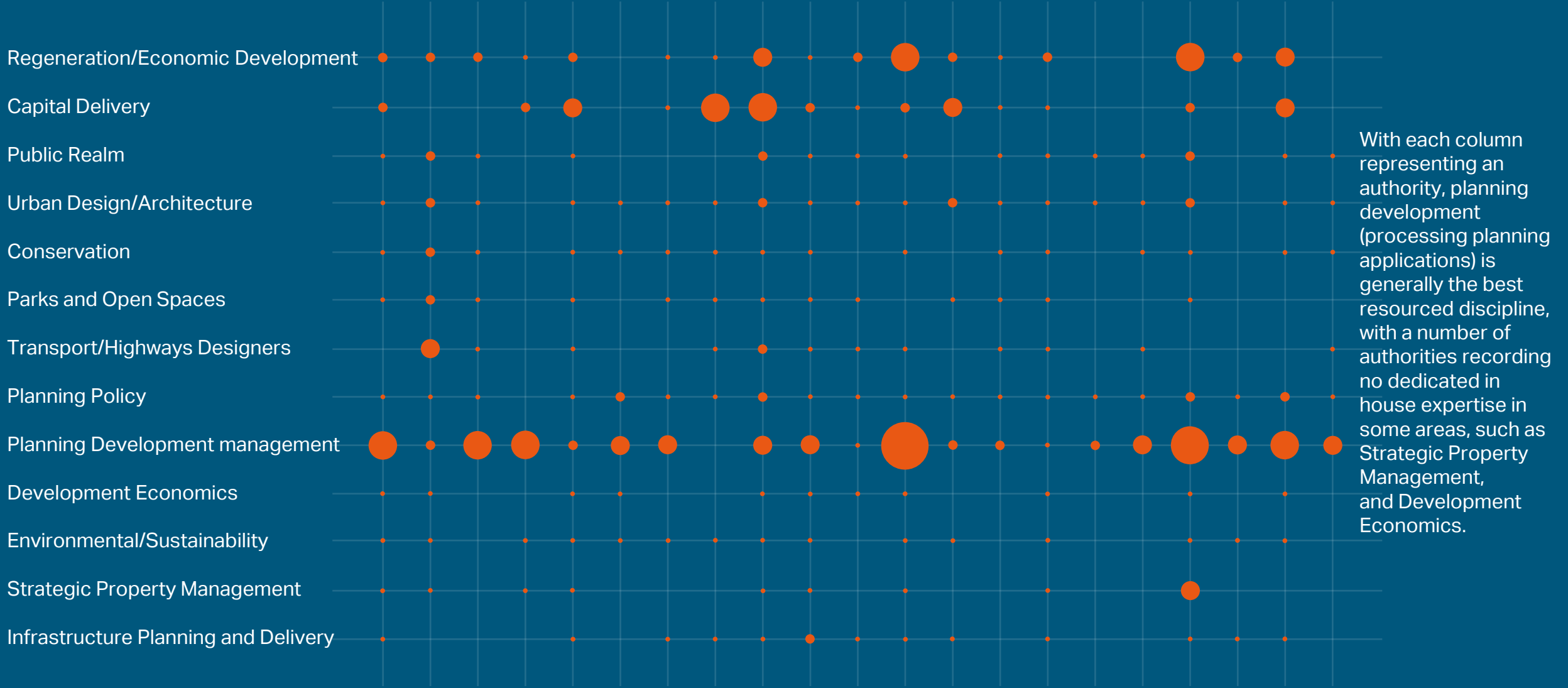
Capacity is not evenly spread across London and within teams, and not necessarily where most development pressure is.

When mapped against the New London Plan housing targets, the variance of capacity is notable, with some London authorities appearing comparatively under resourced when compared to others.

Capacity by discipline, by authority

KEY

FTE Staff



With each column representing an authority, planning development (processing planning applications) is generally the best resourced discipline, with a number of authorities recording no dedicated in house expertise in some areas, such as Strategic Property Management, and Development Economics.

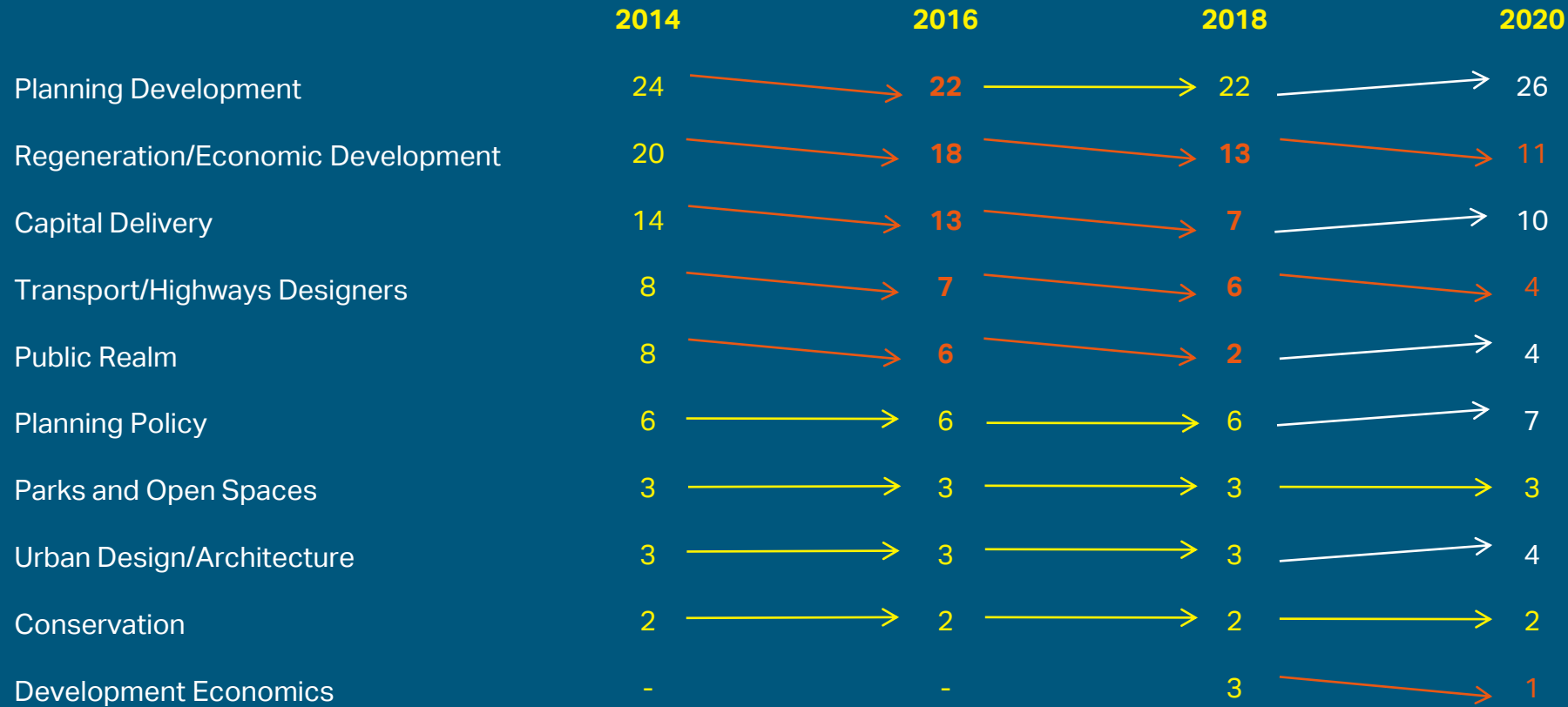
Average capacity (FTEs) by discipline



Placeshaping teams range in size from 40 to 144 people.

Expertise within placeshaping teams are weighted towards the statutory planning system, with some of the disciplines such as Development Economics being very thinly resourced.

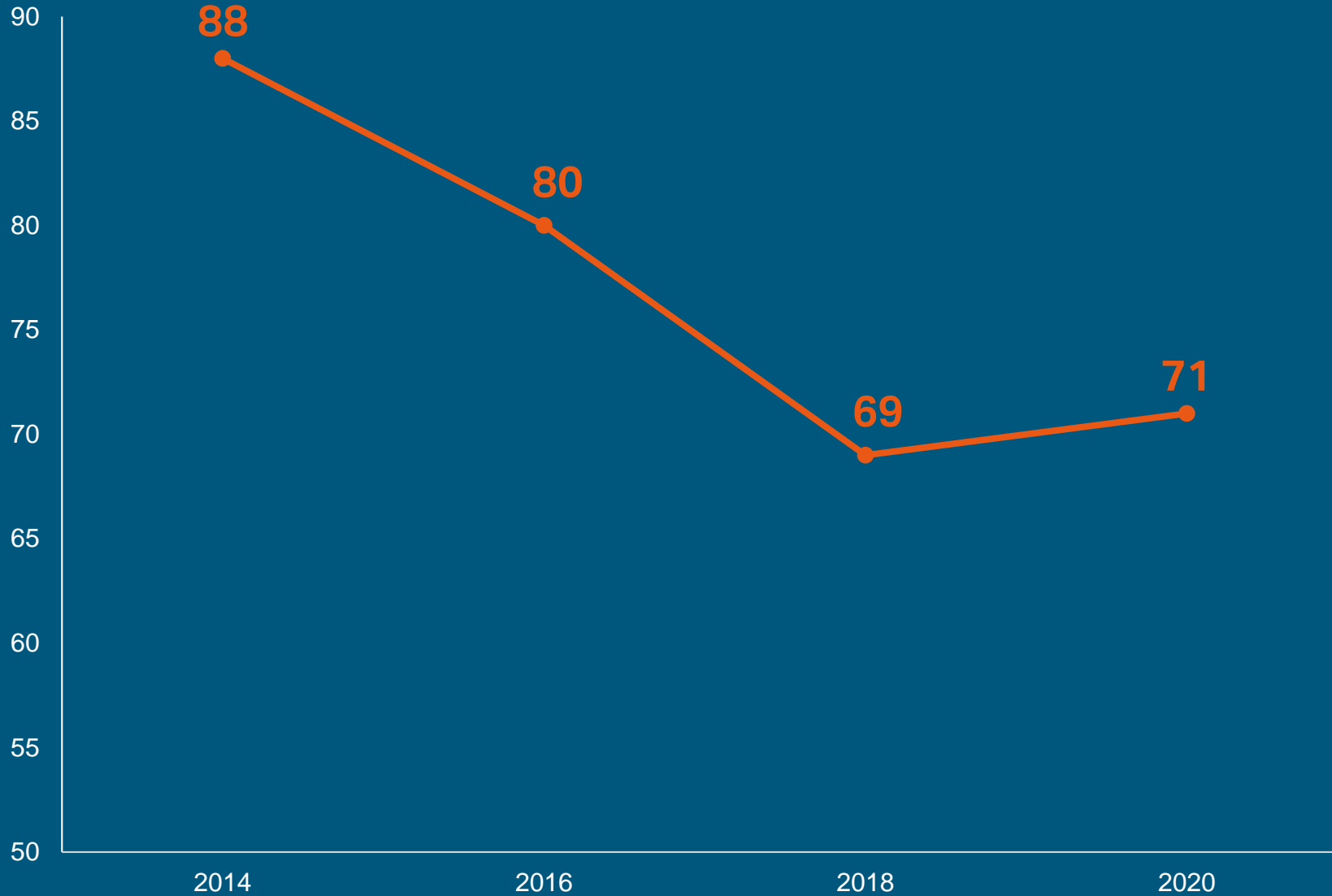
Change in capacity over time, per average discipline size



The capacity of placemaking skills in London authorities is already stretched, especially those dealing with strategic issues such as long-term planning. This data demonstrates that cuts and reductions in capacity have been and continue to be focused on the specialisms within the teams.

The average number of staff (FTEs) over time has dropped since the baseline survey was taken in 2014, most markedly in the disciplines of Regeneration/Economic Development and Transport/Highways Designers.

Average authority placeshaping capacity, over time



Most disciplines tracked since 2014 have reduced in size, and overall, the average placeshaping service in authorities is 19.4% smaller.

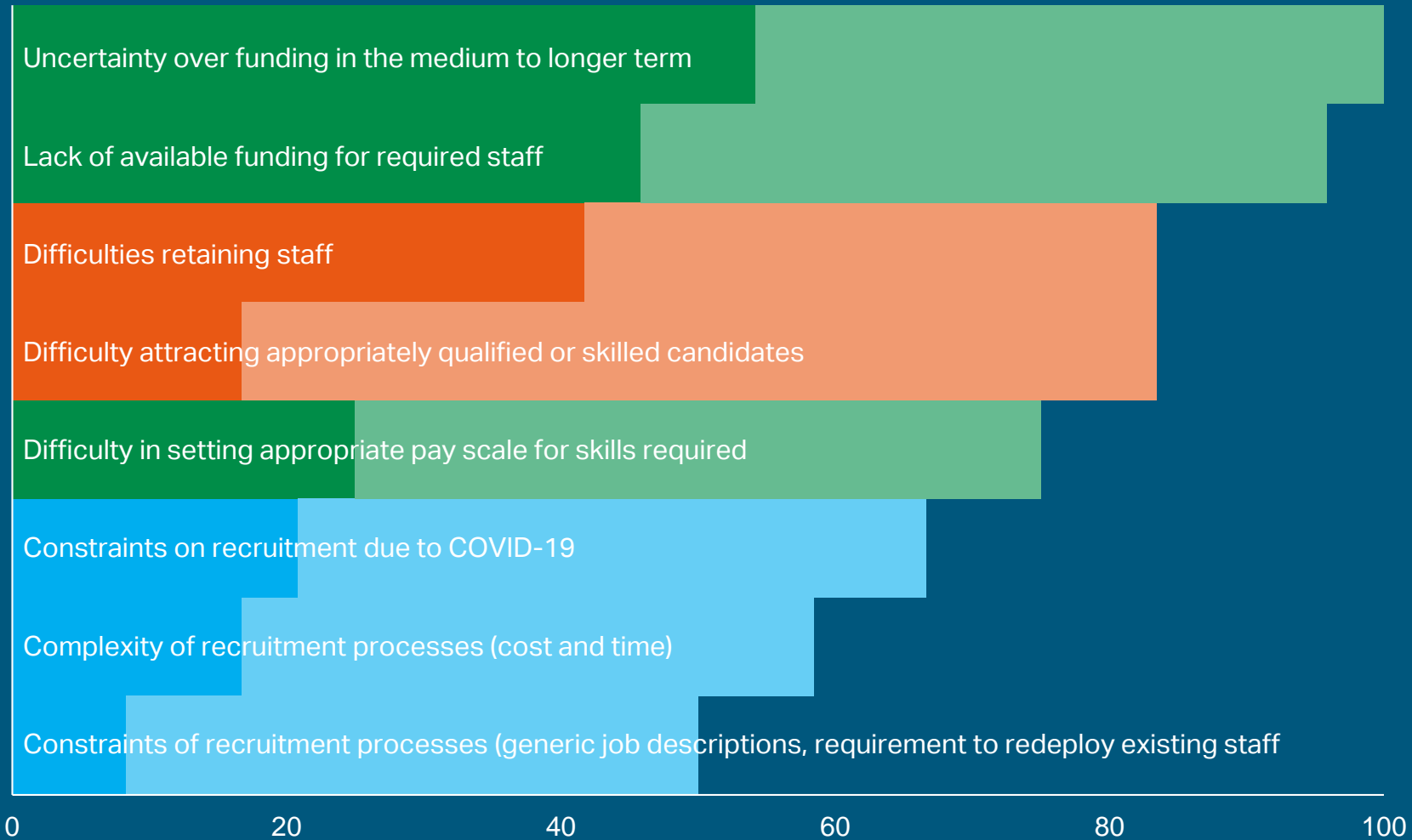
Authority capacity needs



- Key specialisms authorities lack include:
- Environmental sustainability and zero carbon knowledge and skills
 - Evaluating and monitoring the impact of regeneration
 - Understanding of development economics, viability and finance



Barriers to meeting capacity needs



Respondents main barriers to meeting capacity needs were uncertainty over funding and lack of available funding.

TALENT

Significant barrier

Occasional barrier

FUNDING

Significant barrier

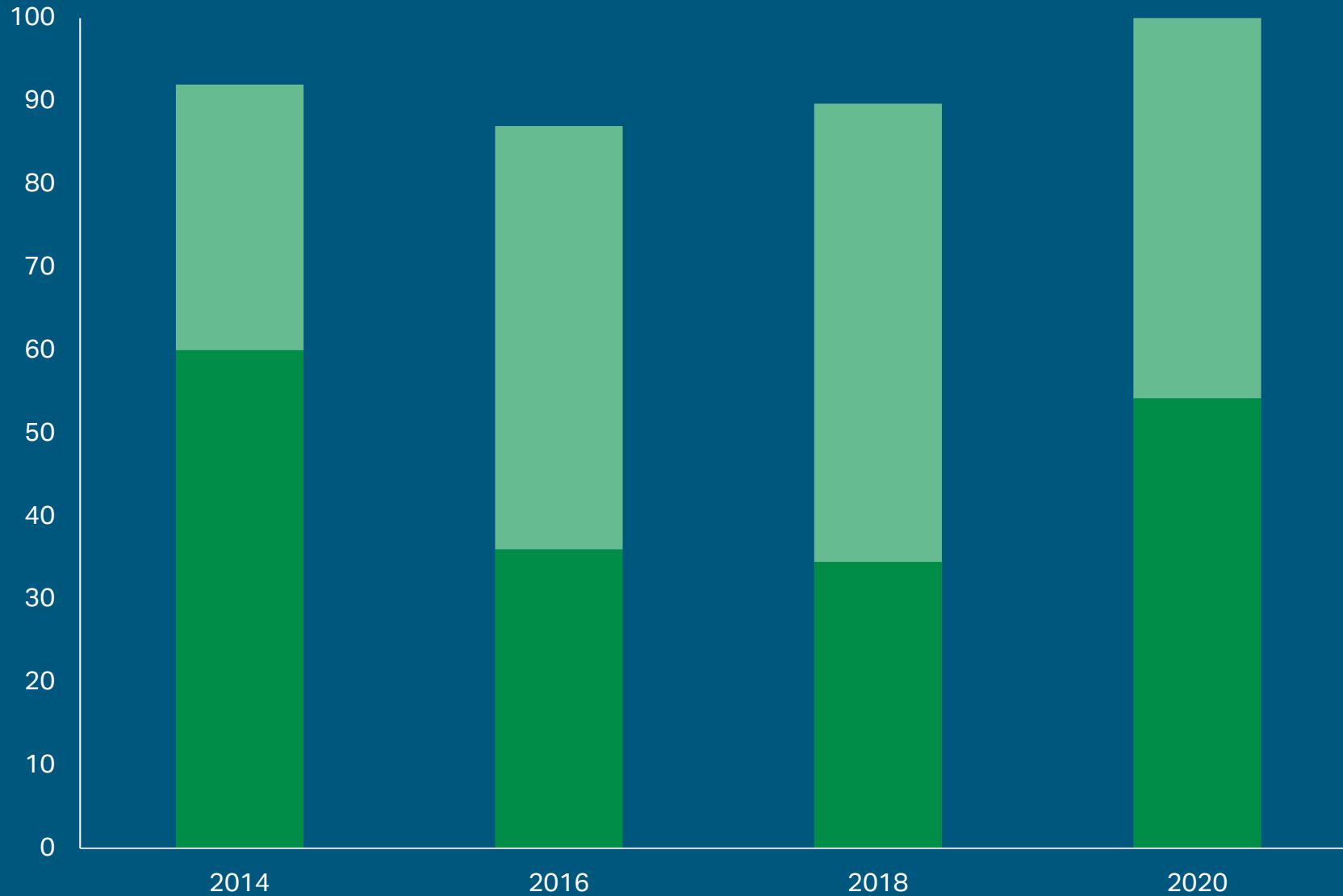
Occasional barrier

PROCESSES

Significant barrier

Occasional barrier

Uncertainty over funding



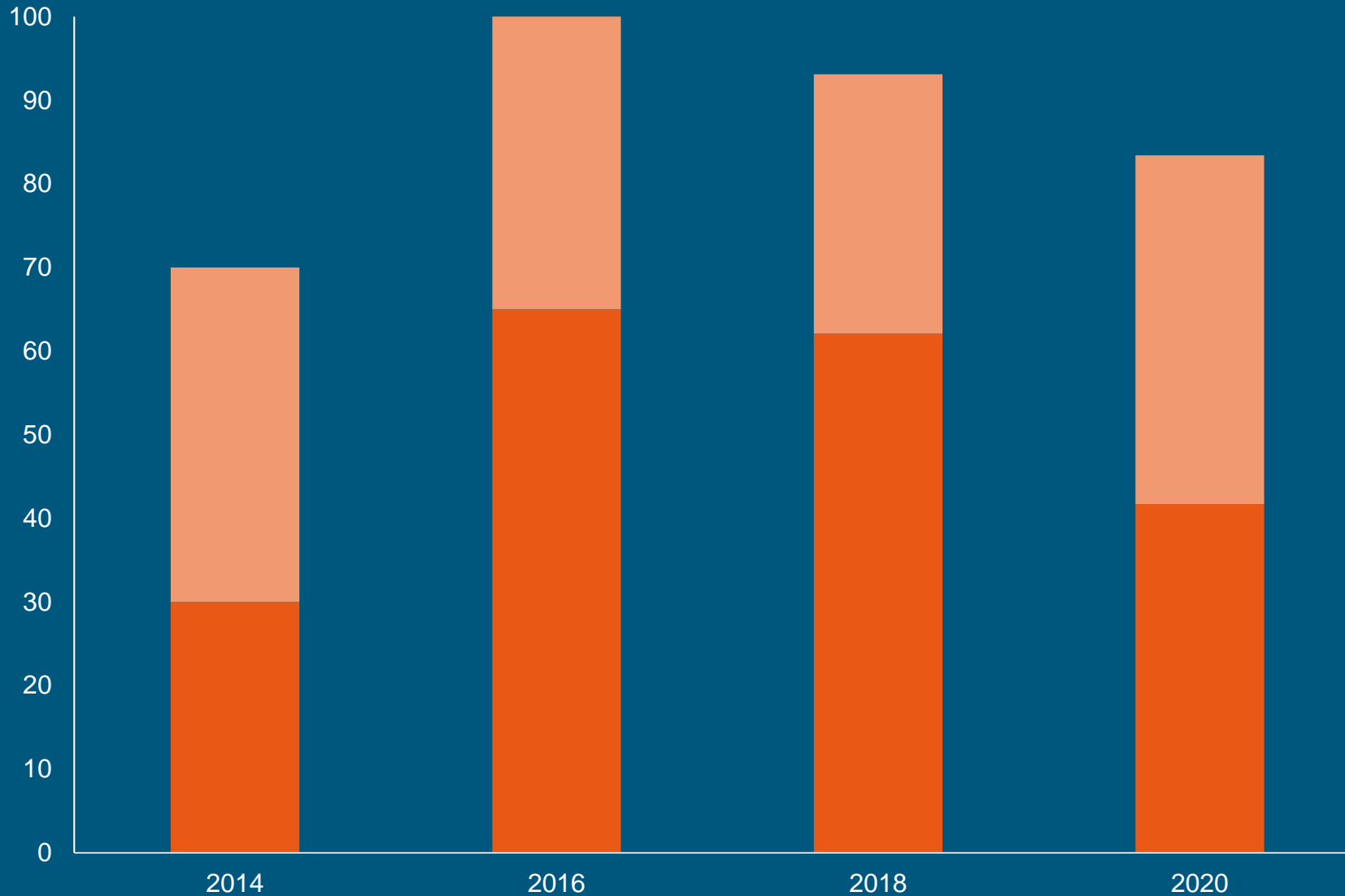
Uncertainty over funding is increasingly seen as the most significant barrier to meeting capacity needs, a noticeable increase on previous years.

KEY

Significant barrier

Occasional barrier

Difficulty attracting candidates



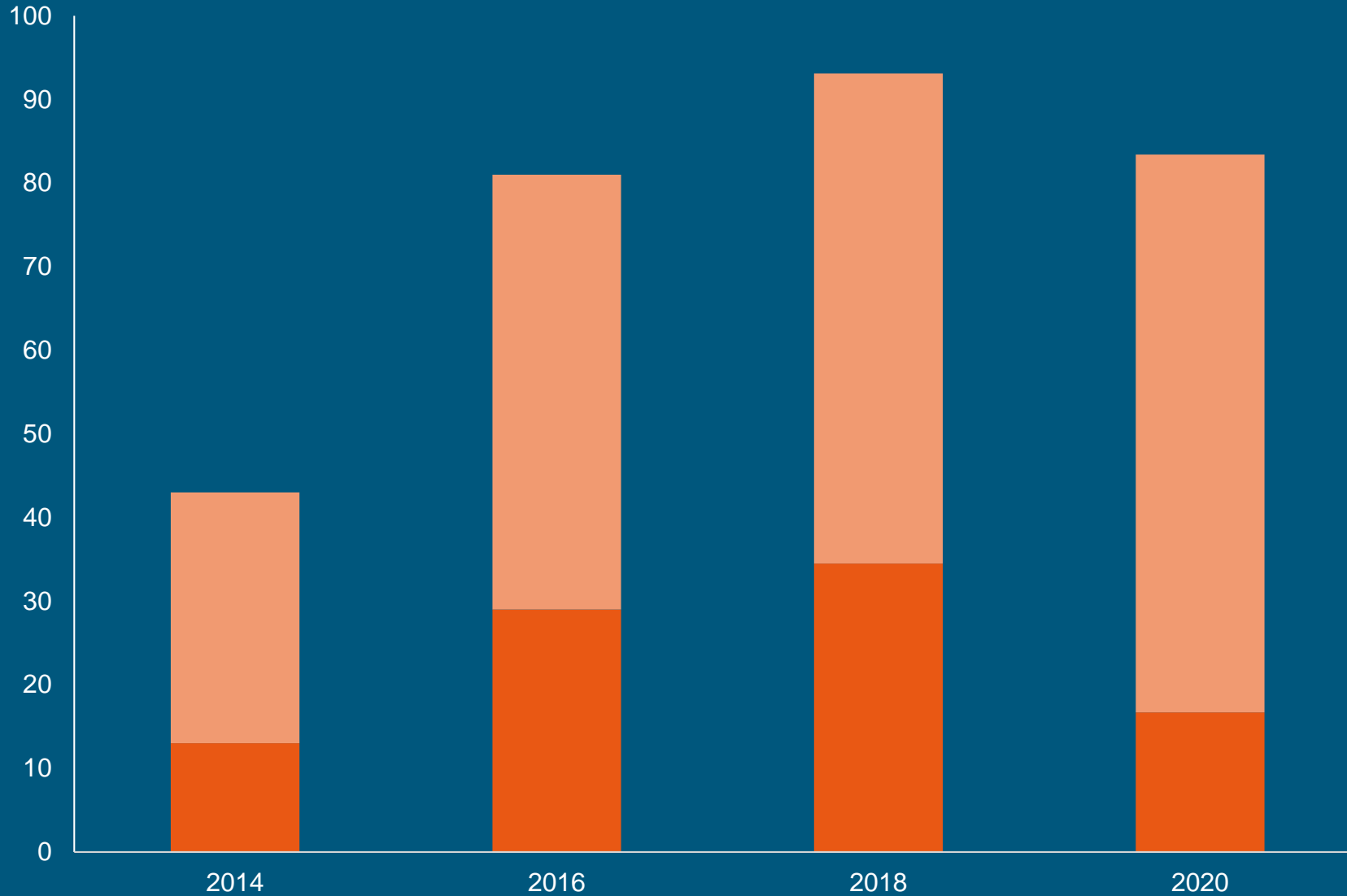
At the time of survey in late summer 2020, attracting suitably skilled or qualified candidates has lessened as an issue for authorities in comparison with previous years, but it continues to be a challenge with 83% of respondents seeing this as a barrier.

KEY

Significant barrier

Occasional barrier

Difficulty retaining staff



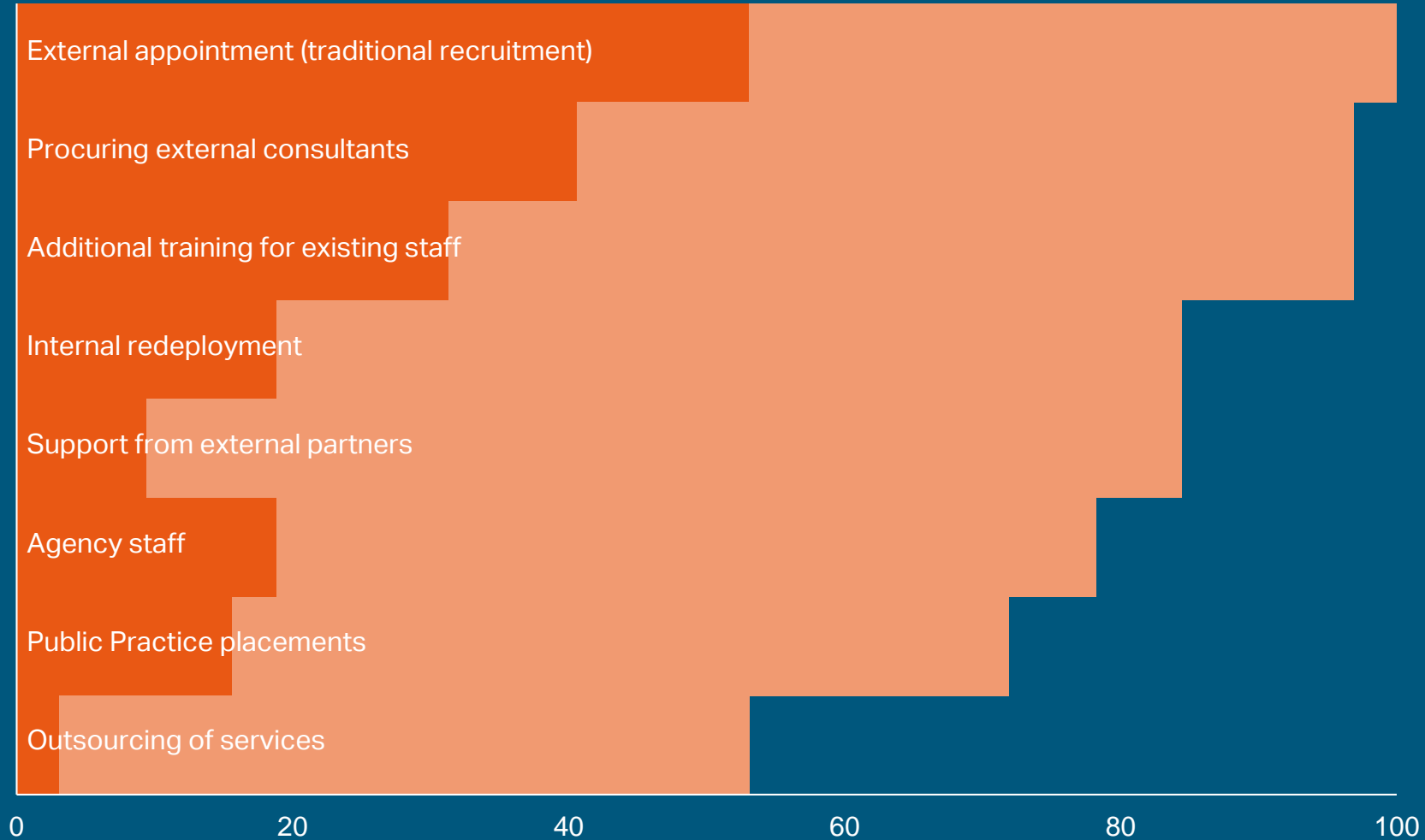
With the survey taking place six months after Covid emerged, it is understandable that retention is less acute than in previous years. However, 83% of respondents still see this as a barrier to meeting capacity.

KEY

Significant barrier

Occasional barrier

Meeting capacity needs



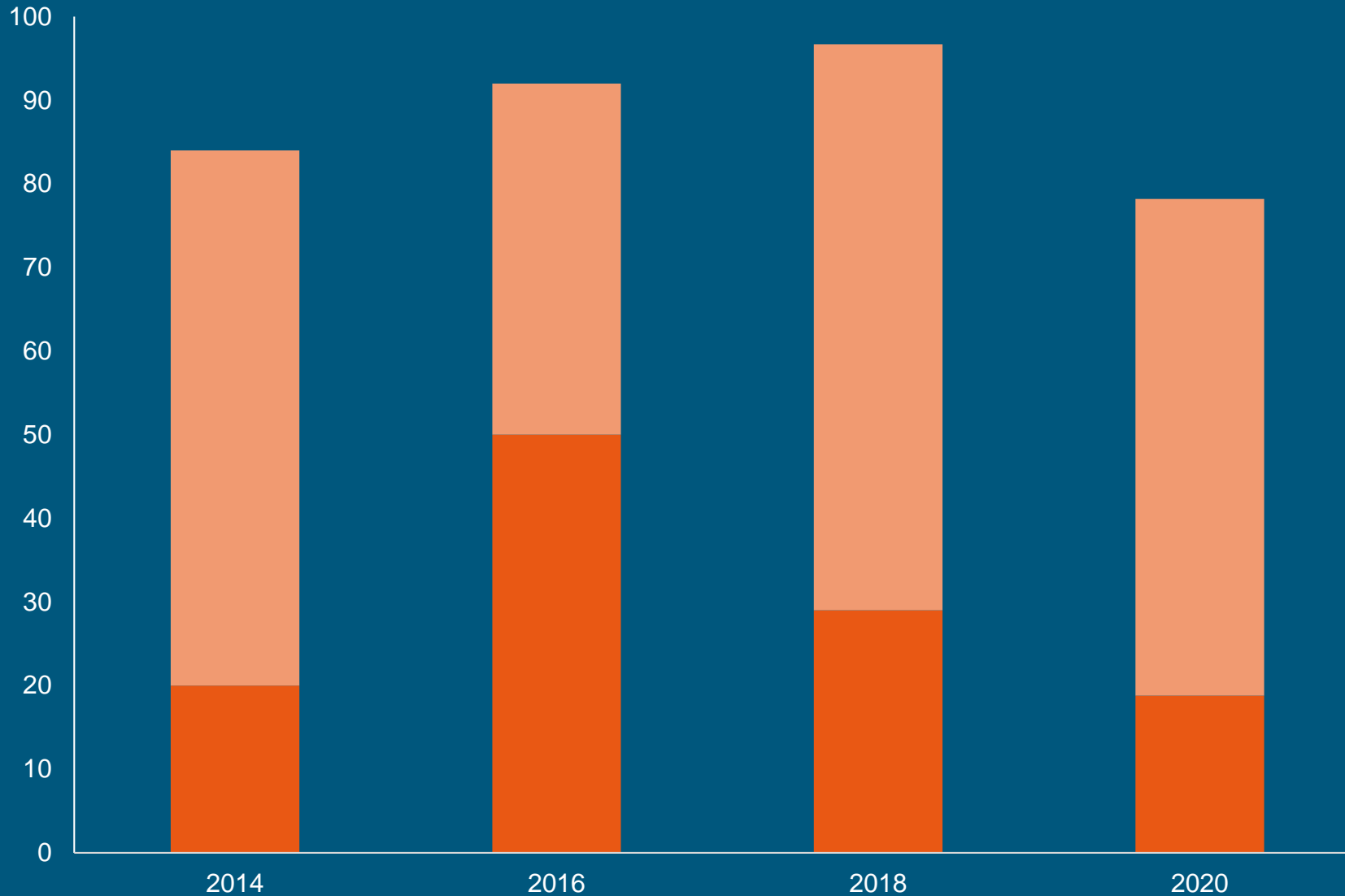
A range of methods are used to meet capacity needs, with external appointments most popular. However, since the last survey, uptake of Public Practice has emerged, and now over 70% of London authorities responding have made Public Practice placements.

KEY

Routinely

Sometimes

Use of agency staff over time



The trend for using agency staff to resolve capacity issues has dropped this year following six years of increases. However, the figure remains high, with 78% of respondents using agency staff.

KEY

Routinely

Sometimes

Potential solutions to capacity needs



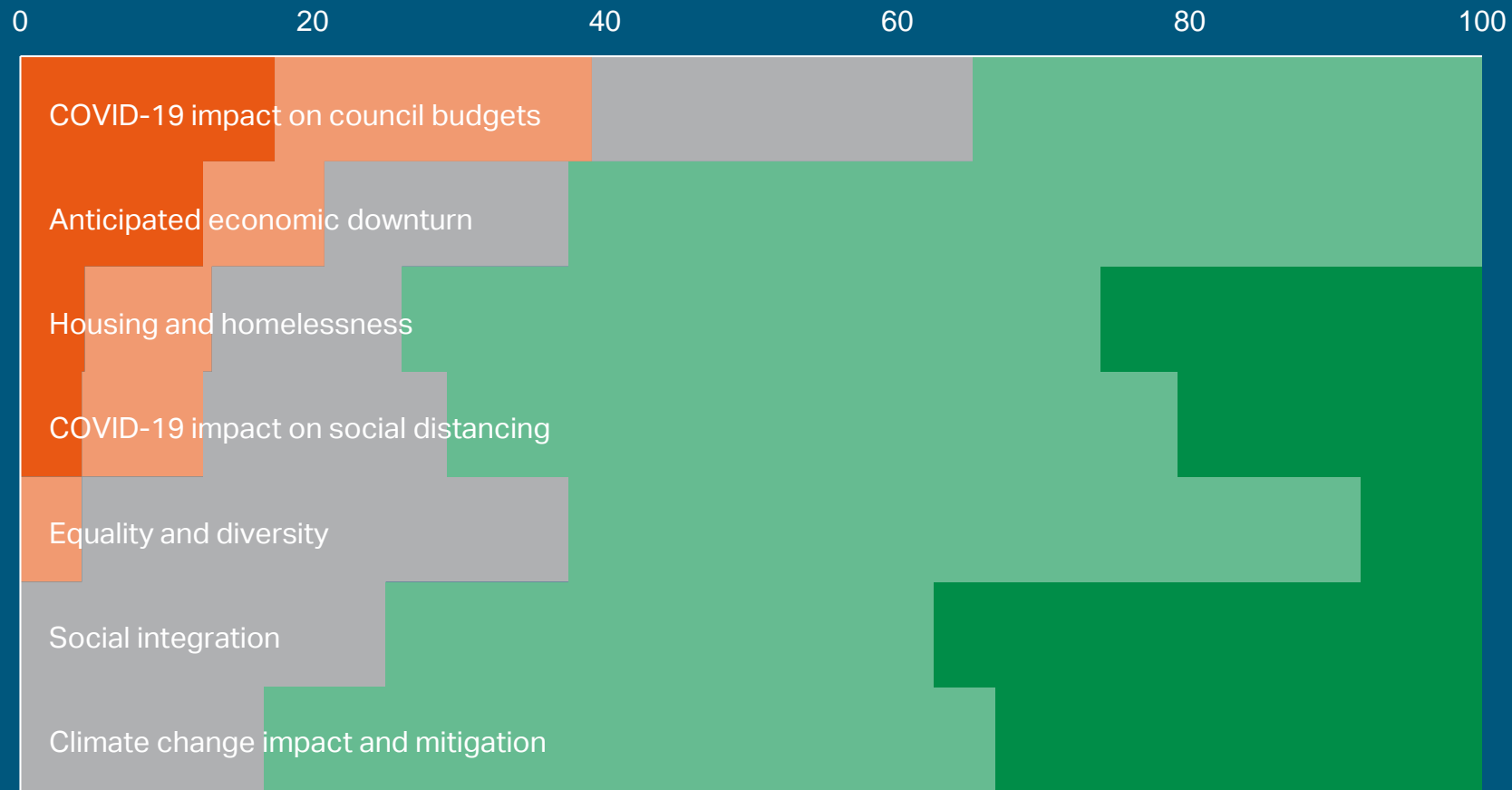
Networks and resources to promote good practice are valued and well-used. That 100% of authorities value sharing best practice across authorities as a potential solution to addressing capacity needs might reflect the growing complexities facing regeneration currently.

KEY

Very Useful

Quite Useful

Preparedness of placeshaping teams to handle challenges

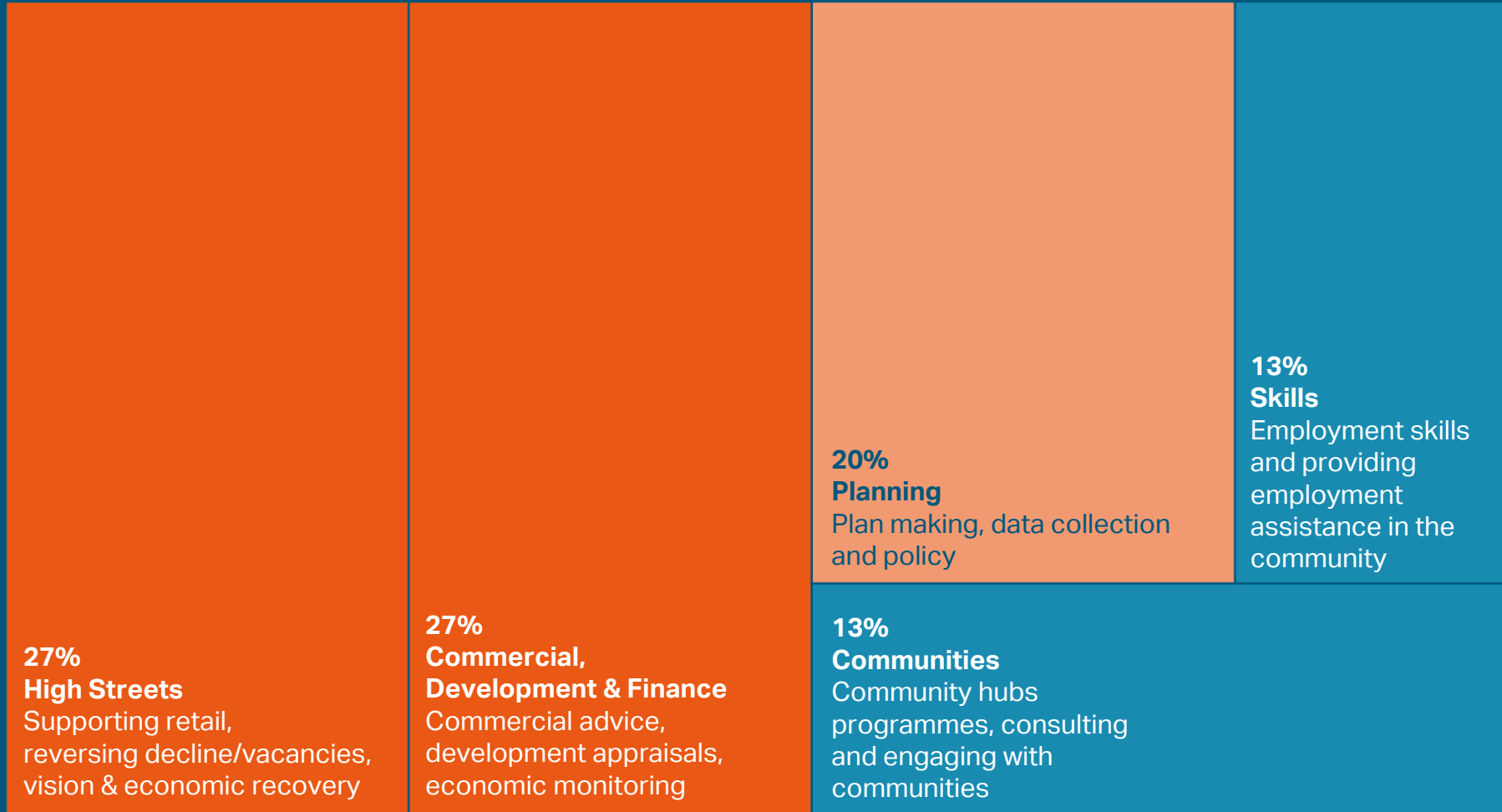


With the effect of Covid on council budgets not being clear at the point of survey, respondents are concerned about their placeshaping budgets being sufficient to overcome the viruses' impact.

KEY

- Confident
- Partially Confident
- Don't Know
- Not Very Confident
- Not At All Confident

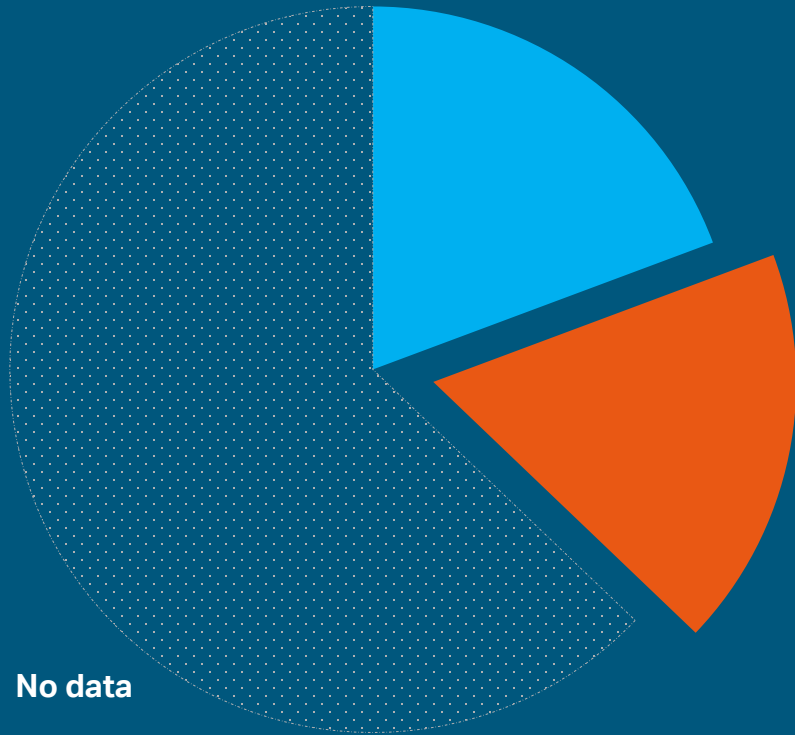
Areas of anticipated additional capacity for recovery from COVID-19



As a result of Covid, authorities have a clear need for additional capacity to assist in high street and economic recovery

Average placeshaping team diversity

Average Female : Male ratio of placeshaping team members

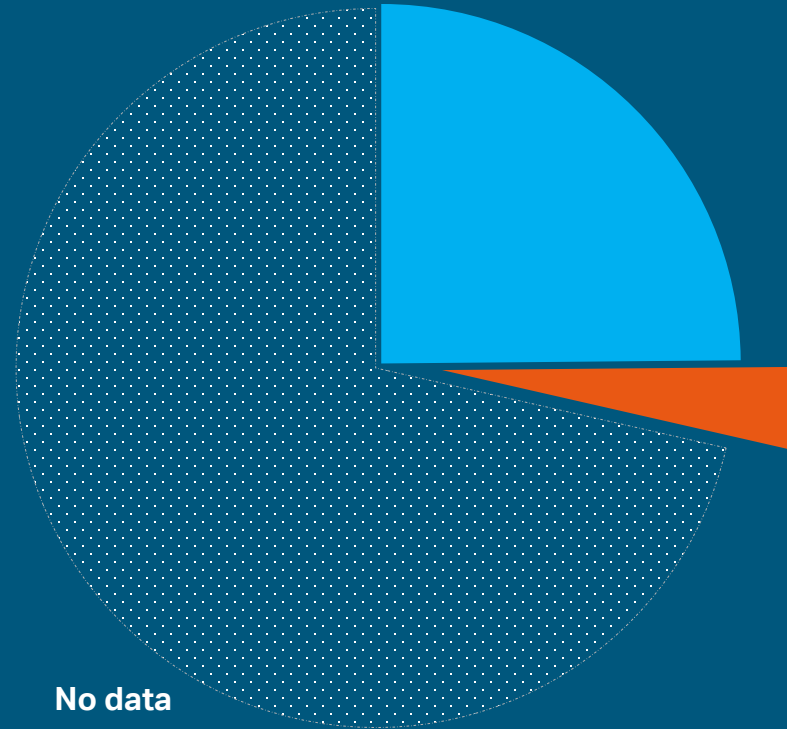


No data

KEY

Female

Average % of Black, Asian and minority ethnic placeshaping team members



No data

KEY

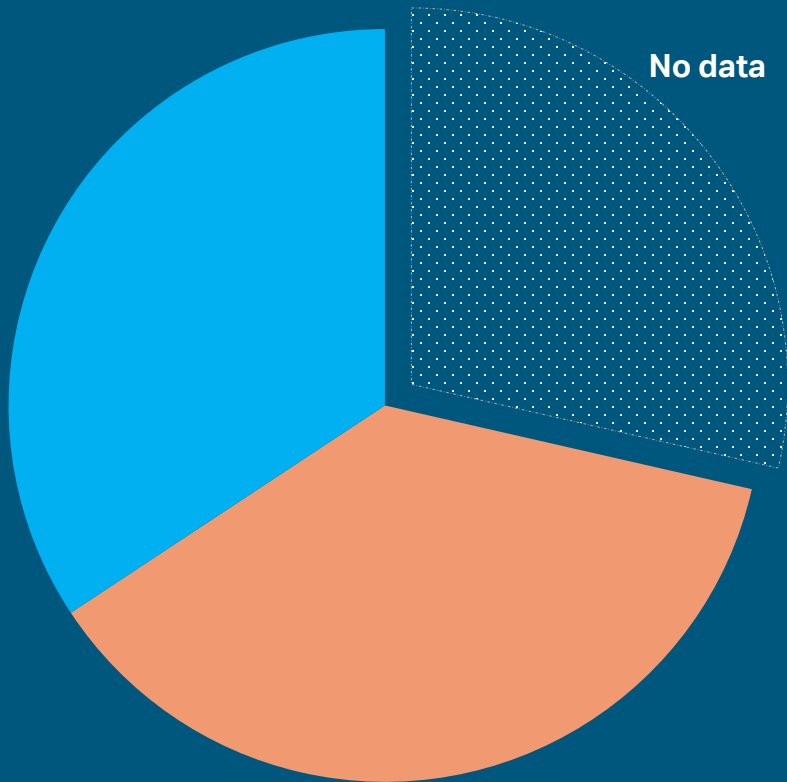
Black, Asian and minority ethnic

The sector is not reflective of London's population, and data is poor.

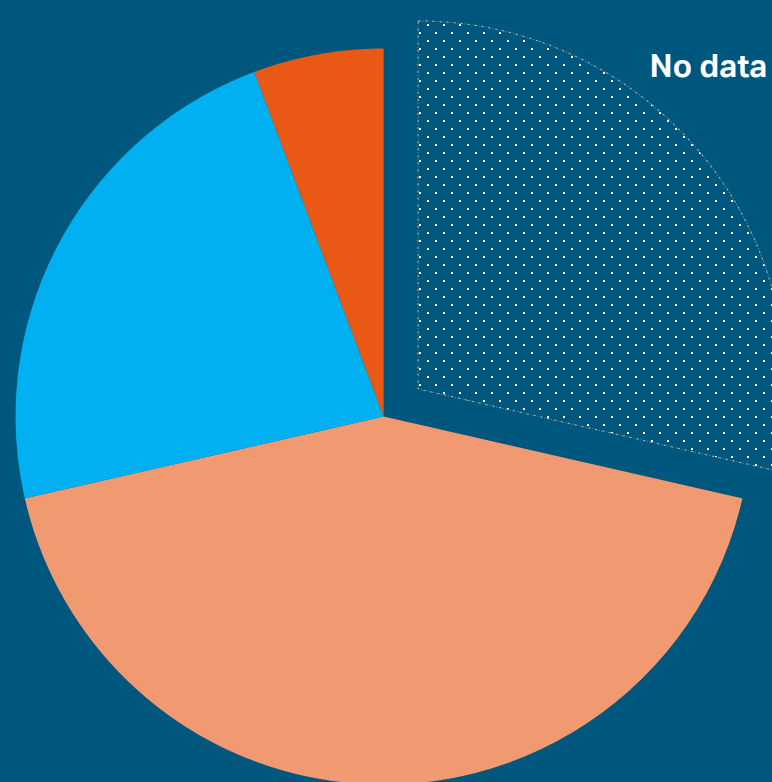
Respondents struggled to respond to questions about the diversity of their staff, with a majority not sure whether their organisation measured the ethnicity or gender pay gap.

The survey suggests that further work would be needed to understand the broader spectrum of protected characteristics for example disability, neurodiversity or LGBTQ+ representation.

Monitoring of gender and ethnicity pay gaps



Does your organisation track the gender pay gap?



Does your organisation track the ethnicity pay gap?

Only 48% of respondents knew if their organisation tracked the gender pay gap and only 32% knew if they tracked the ethnicity pay gap. 8% of respondents said their organisation did not track the ethnicity pay gap.

KEY

Yes
No
Not known

