will ai take the job - or transform it?

the future of the FM workforce



the industry backdrop

51%
see AI and automation as the leading FM trend over the next five years

24%
of FM organisations rate themselves as ready for AI

42%
report a digital and IT skills gap in their FM teams

Source: SFG20, The State of Facilities Management Report 2026

THEME 1 — 01

roles changing first

- **Repetitive, low touch moves first.** HR admin, service desk tickets and first-pass recruitment screening are already being automated in parts of the sector.
- **Specialist writing is accelerating, not vanishing.** Bid writing is faster with AI support, but risks generic output without a human touch.
- **Technical roles feel it too.** As coding, CAFM/SaaS and scheduling tasks get automated, hiring criteria for these roles need to shift with them.

AI is reallocating capacity away from monotonous tasks, not eliminating whole job families overnight.

THEME 2 — 02

skills & gaps

- **Judgement is the differentiator.** Professional opinion, client-facing skill and cultural fit are hard for AI to replicate - and rising in value.
- **Domain knowledge still needs to be verified.** AI-assisted applications can improve how candidates present themselves, but assessment must confirm that the information is accurate and that candidates have the practical ability the role requires.
- **The gaps are digital, not just technical.** Teams need to learn how to use licensed AI tools, understand governance and privacy, and check AI output critically.

Assessment has to work harder to surface real judgement and practical competence - not just a polished CV.

THEME 3 — 03

reskill, redeploy & recruit

- **Reskill before you recruit.** The preferred approach: free up time from admin work with AI, then retrain people into higher-value roles.
- **Structured upskilling is already being used.** Apprenticeships, internal courses and monitored competency testing were cited as the routes that build capability.
- **Look sideways before you look outward.** Consider transferable skills across hard FM, soft services and adjacent sectors before recruiting externally.

Reskilling existing teams was voted unanimously as the single biggest workforce priority AI creates for FM.

THEME 4 — 04

governance, risk & fairness

- **Control the data risk.** Company-licensed tools, restrictions on public platforms and role-based access were among the controls discussed.
- **Bias doesn't disappear on its own.** AI screening can quietly disadvantage candidates without a polished CV or digital fluency.
- **Keep a human in the loop.** A face-to-face stage, alongside structured practical assessment, can help validate capability and reduce the risk of AI-assisted misrepresentation.

AI increases speed and scale, but cannot replace the human elements of recruitment and FM delivery.

practical actions

RESKILLING
Reskill before your recruit
Audit where AI frees up admin time, then map a retraining path before hiring externally.

GOVERNANCE
License & govern AI use
Roll out company-licensed tools and ban unlicensed platforms for candidate data.

ASSESSMENT
Test, don't just screen
Add monitored, practical competency tests that go beyond the CV.

THE HUMAN CHECK
Keep a face-to-face step
Require at least one in-person interview for every hire.

bodengroup

www.boden-group.co.uk Speak to us about your FM talent strategy