



**leonid**

# **UK HIRING GUIDE: COMPANY SECRETARY**

**2026**





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# 01.

## INTRODUCTION

The role of the Company Secretary in the UK has evolved more rapidly over the past three years than in any period since the introduction of the UK Corporate Governance Code. Once perceived as a predominantly administrative or statutory function, today's Company Secretary sits firmly at the heart of corporate governance: shaping board effectiveness, stewarding governance culture, and ensuring organisations remain resilient amid increasing regulatory expectations.

Across listed companies, large private groups, PE backed organisations and fast scaling businesses, demand for experienced Company Secretaries continues to rise. With sweeping reforms from the FRC, new expectations around ESG disclosure and audit assurance, and heightened scrutiny from investors and regulators, UK boards are now looking for governance professionals who combine exceptional technical knowledge with strategic influence.

For employers, this creates a competitive hiring landscape. The pool of candidates with strong UK governance experience – particularly those with premium listed FTSE exposure – is limited. As a result, organisations are competing for a relatively small group of senior governance professionals whose skills have never been more valuable.

This guide explores how the Company Secretary role is changing in the UK, the current hiring challenges, and what both employers and candidates prioritise in 2026.



### **Philip Redhead**

Head of Legal & Company  
Secretarial Recruitment



## 02.

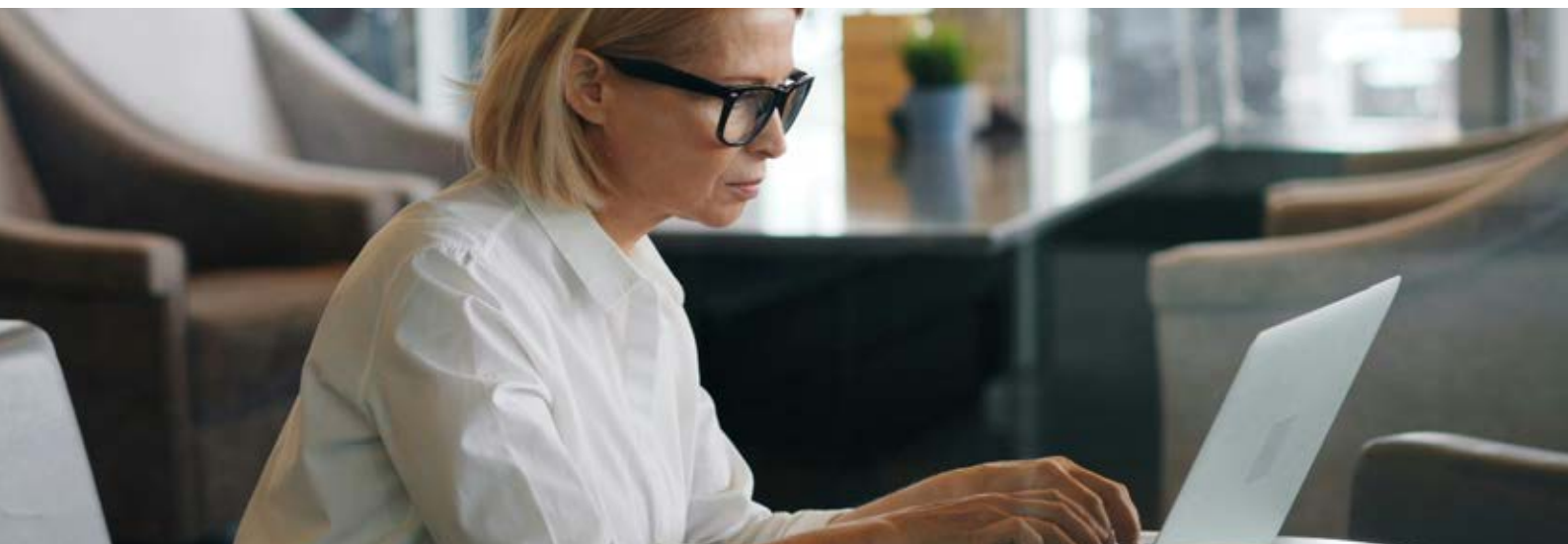
# THE EVOLUTION OF THE COMPANY SECRETARY ROLE

Historically, the UK Company Secretary focused on statutory compliance, Companies Act obligations, corporate records, and board administration. These responsibilities remain essential, but the scope of the role has expanded significantly.

### Today's UK Company Secretary is commonly:

- A trusted adviser to the Chair, board and committee leads
- A guardian of the organisation's governance culture
- Central to corporate reporting, listing rules compliance and shareholder engagement
- A key coordinator between legal, ESG, audit, risk, HR, IR and compliance
- Involved in risk governance, board evaluations and governance reform
- A driving force in implementing updates to the UK Corporate Governance Code and evolving FRC guidance

With the continued shift toward principles led governance, Company Secretaries increasingly contribute to board effectiveness, leadership succession planning, crisis oversight, disclosure readiness and stakeholder trust. As a result, the position demands greater judgement, strategic awareness, and political intelligence than ever before.





## 03.

# HIRING CHALLENGES IN THE UK MARKET

### 1. A limited and highly competitive talent pool

The number of Company Secretaries with significant listed company experience – especially FTSE 100/250 exposure – remains small. Those who combine governance expertise with modern ESG and investor relations fluency are even rarer.

### 2. Rising expectations (and often without a clear brief)

Many organisations now want a “strategic” Company Secretary but struggle to articulate the required level of authority and influence. Ambiguity around remit, budget and team structure can deter strong candidates.

### 3. Increasing overlap with Legal, Risk and ESG

As governance has broadened, Company Secretaries are expected to operate seamlessly alongside GC, CRO, Head of ESG and CFO functions. Blurred boundaries can make recruitment more complex if responsibility and scope lines is unclear.

### 4. Regulatory change accelerating

From reforms to the UK Corporate Governance Code, to climate related disclosures, to the UK’s evolving secondary capital raising and listing rules, governance requirements are becoming more demanding. Boards want Company Secretaries who can anticipate regulatory shifts rather than simply react to them.

### 5. Compensation is rising

Strong candidates, particularly those with PLC experience, are commanding higher salary and LTIP expectations. Organisations that benchmark against outdated compensation structures often struggle to compete.



## 04.

# TIPS FOR JOB SEEKERS AND HIRING MANAGERS

### 4.1. What employers are looking for

#### Board-level credibility

Boards expect a Company Secretary who can communicate confidently, manage sensitive issues discreetly, and provide governance advice with authority.

#### Cross functional leadership

The modern role sits at the crossroads of Legal, Compliance, Audit, HR, Finance, Investor Relations and ESG. Employers increasingly prioritise candidates who can unify these perspectives.

#### ESG competence

With ESG and sustainability reporting escalating (especially for groups falling under CSRD), many employers now treat ESG experience as a key differentiator, not a “nice to have”.

#### Resilience and calm decision-making

The role carries significant pressure during reporting cycles, crisis events, regulatory reviews or activist situations. Employers value individuals who remain composed and solutions focused.



## 4.2. What candidates are looking for

### A clearly defined mandate

Senior Company Secretaries want clarity: around influence, team structure and how success will be measured. Vague expectations are a common deal breaker.

### Strategic involvement

Candidates increasingly want roles where they are partners to the board, contributing to governance development, culture initiatives, and organisational transformation.

### Authentic leadership and culture

Given the sensitivity of the role, Company Secretaries place huge weight on leadership behaviour, board culture, and organisational values.

### Career growth and governance breadth

Many junior & mid-level candidates want opportunities to broaden their remit — for example into ESG, risk oversight or corporate affairs.

### Competitive and transparent remuneration

Candidates in 2026 are well informed and expect employers to benchmark pay fairly against market standards, especially for PLC exposure.





## 04.

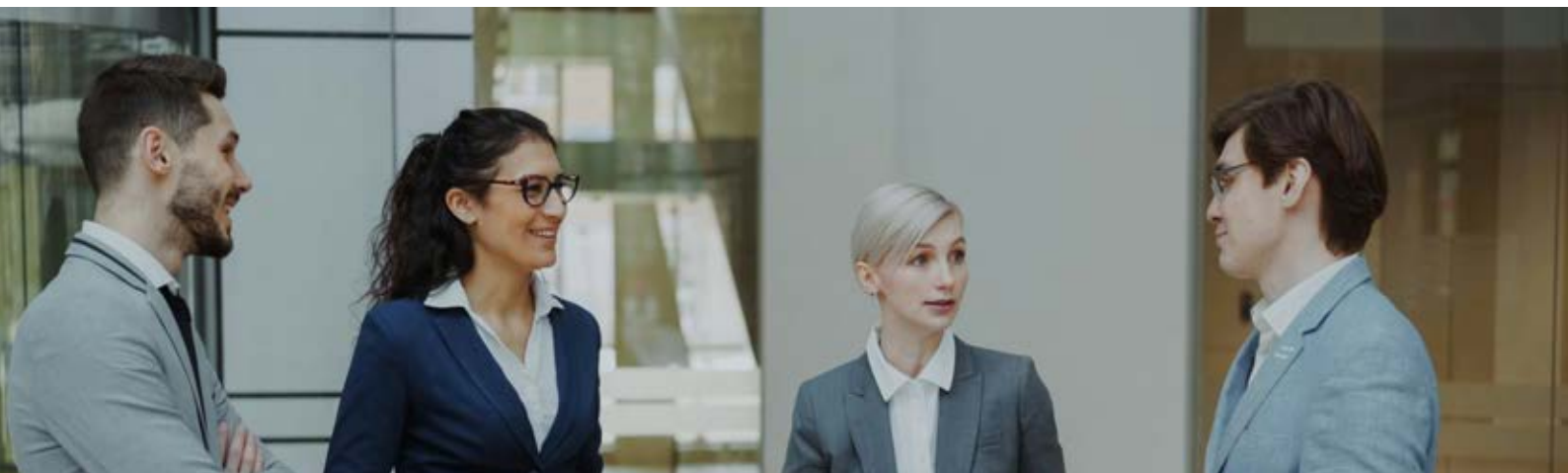
# SALARY GUIDES

### FTSE 100

JOB TITLE	SALARY RANGE (GBP)
COMPANY SECRETARY	£180,000 - £300,000+
DEPUTY COMPANY SECRETARY	£130,000 - £200,000
SENIOR ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£90,000 - £130,000
ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£68,000 - £100,000
COMPANY SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT	£48,000 - £70,000
TRAINEE COMPANY SECRETARY/PARALEGAL	£30,000 - £45,000

### FTSE 250

JOB TITLE	SALARY RANGE (GBP)
COMPANY SECRETARY	£150,000 - £200,000+
DEPUTY COMPANY SECRETARY	£115,000 - £150,000
SENIOR ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£80,000 - £120,000
ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£60,000 - £88,000
COMPANY SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT	£40,000 - £60,000
TRAINEE COMPANY SECRETARY/PARALEGAL	£28,000 - £35,000



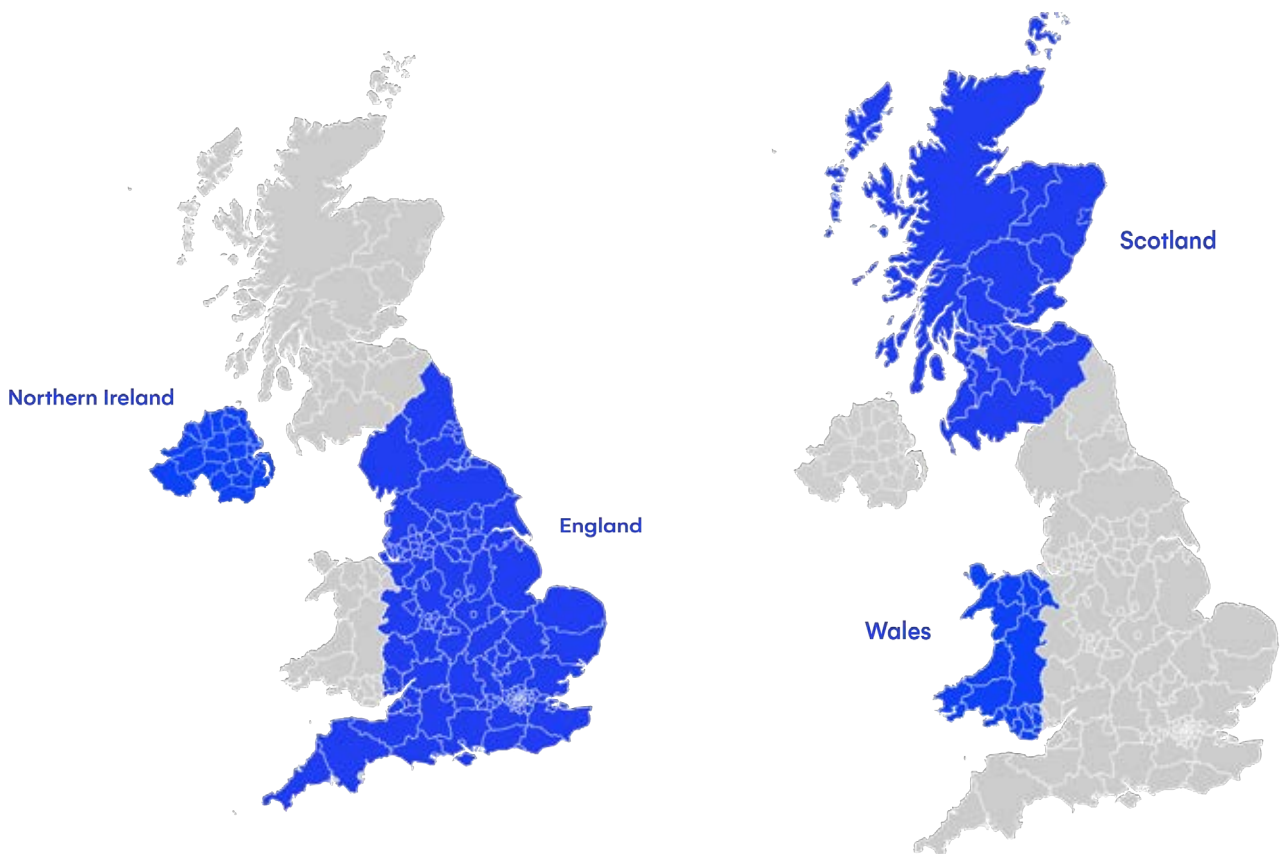


## AIM LISTED

JOB TITLE	SALARY RANGE (GBP)
COMPANY SECRETARY	£130,000 - £180,000+
DEPUTY COMPANY SECRETARY	£90,000 - £120,000
SENIOR ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£65,000 - £90,000
ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£50,000 - £85,000
COMPANY SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT	£35,000 - £55,000
TRAINEE COMPANY SECRETARY/PARALEGAL	£26,500 - £35,000

## PRIVATE COMPANY

JOB TITLE	SALARY RANGE (GBP)
COMPANY SECRETARY	£100,000 - £160,000+
DEPUTY COMPANY SECRETARY	£80,000 - £115,000
SENIOR ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£65,000 - £85,000
ASSISTANT COMPANY SECRETARY	£50,000 - £80,000
COMPANY SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT	£30,000 - £45,000
TRAINEE COMPANY SECRETARY/PARALEGAL	£26,500 - £33,000





## 05.

# CONCLUSION

Hiring a Company Secretary in the UK is now a strategically significant decision and one that directly influences board effectiveness, organisational culture, regulatory compliance and stakeholder trust.

Organisations that succeed in attracting top governance talent in 2026 will be those that:

- Define the remit and authority of the role clearly
- Understand the competitive nature of the UK governance market
- Benchmark compensation realistically
- Demonstrate the strategic importance of governance within their leadership culture

As governance expectations continue to intensify, the Company Secretary has become an essential, influential figure in shaping the future of UK corporate leadership.



At Leonid, we hire across all areas of corporate governance, including legal, privacy, compliance, ESG, risk & audit. All of our global hiring guides for these sectors can be found here on our website. [www.leonid-group.com/white-papers-reports](http://www.leonid-group.com/white-papers-reports)

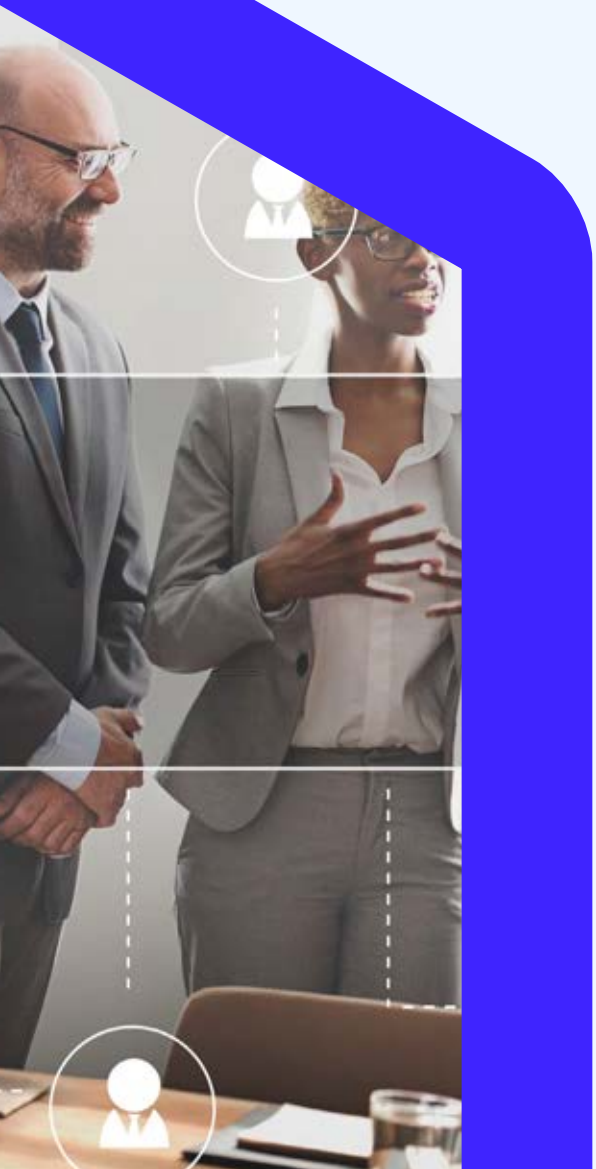
## **Talent Intelligence — your secret weapon in hiring, retaining and future-proofing your team**

As well as search-based hiring, Leonid Group is a talent advisory business with a consulting arm which can offer proprietary data and insights to help teams optimise their organisational design and help build a business case for change, such as unlocking budget for more hires.

**If you would like to find out more about our Talent Intelligence service and book a FREE 'lite' presentation on your firm's attrition vs competitors, talent flow and an overview of what candidates in your industry really want — please get in touch with [Philip Redhead](#) to book a no-obligation meeting**



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## Ready to get in touch with us?

You can reach out via the following methods:

**T** [+44 20 3958 7484](tel:+442039587484)

**E** [info@leonid-group.com](mailto:info@leonid-group.com)

**W** [www.leonid-group.com](http://www.leonid-group.com)

### LONDON

Tintagel House, 92 Albert Embankment, London  
SE1 7TY

### BARCELONA

Wojo - Poblenou, Carrer de Sancho de Ávila 65,  
Barcelona, 08018