

Business Gateway

Impact Report



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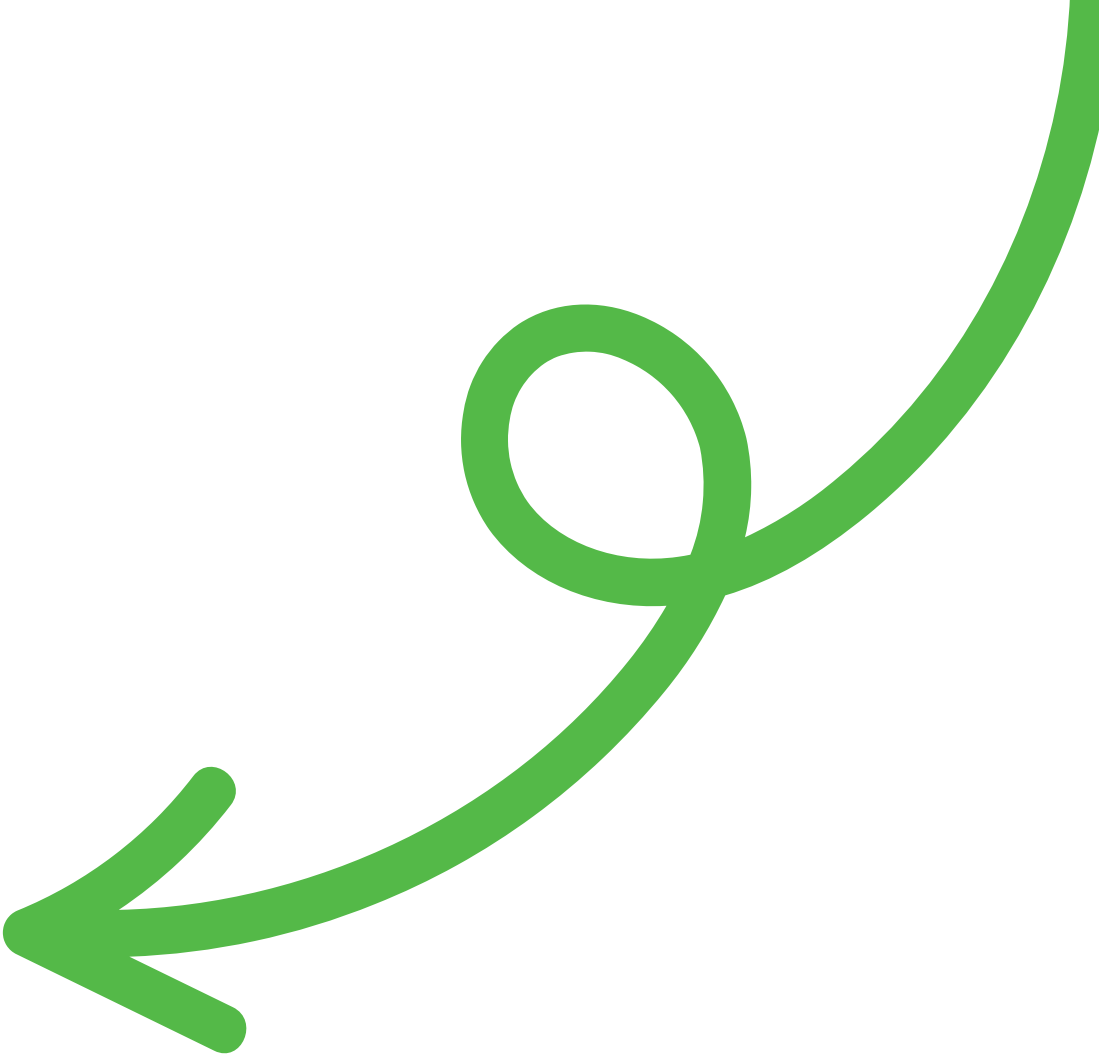
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About Business Gateway

Business Gateway provides free business support for anyone in Scotland. The role of the service is to provide one-to-one business advice and online resources to help business owners who need support to start-up and grow their businesses. In doing so, we strengthen the connection between organisations and the business community.



Business Gateway is run by local authorities across Scotland and plays a crucial role in supporting local economic development and community wealth building by helping businesses start and create jobs. It also serves as a key point of contact for business support, directing individuals to enterprise agencies and other partners.

Over the past five years, Business Gateway has helped over 200,000 businesses and individuals. It offers localised business support with over 350 staff across 32 local offices in every region of Scotland. Business Gateway's services are accessible to all, with multiple ways customers can access support including through its website (bgateway.com), livechat, telephone, email, social or by visiting a local office.



Key services



Business advice and support

1:1 advice from local business advisers for tailored guidance.



Networking and connections

Connecting businesses with peers and industry experts.



Funding and grants guidance

Supporting businesses to identify and apply for funding.



Market research and planning

Access to business intelligence, trends, and feasibility studies.



Legal and regulatory support

Advice on business structure, compliance and regulations.



Workshops and webinars

Providing free training covering core business skills.



Online resources

Articles, podcasts, video tutorials and guides available on bgateway.com.



Sector intelligence

Pre-prepared Market Packs containing essential information for 22 headline sectors.



Signposting and referring

Collaborating with partners* to signpost and refer businesses to relevant resources.

Supporting Scottish Government priorities

Business Gateway has a key role to play in supporting Scottish Government's ambitions through its national priorities. The Scottish Government's Programme for Government sets out the importance of "fair, green economic growth" in delivering across all four priorities, which include:

- **Growing the Economy**
- **Eradicating Child Poverty**
- **Tackling the Climate Emergency**
- **Delivering high quality and sustainable Public Services**

Relevant policy areas and strategies linked to economic growth and diversity include a refreshed National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET), which guides the services Business Gateway provides to help businesses start-up and create jobs.

Several sectors including renewable energy, technology, tourism and food & drink are experiencing notable growth, presenting opportunities for both new business start-ups and the expansion of existing enterprises. Business Gateway provides support to businesses across all sectors and, working with partners, highlights the opportunities within those areas.

2024 - 25 in numbers



Our year in numbers

In 2024-25, Business Gateway advised more than 51,000 customers, including over 26,000 existing businesses and over 25,000 pre-start individuals. 6,810 businesses started up in 2024-25 with help from Business Gateway.

Of those start-up businesses, over half (54%) are female-led, over a third (35%) come from rural areas and almost a fifth (18%) are based in disadvantaged areas.

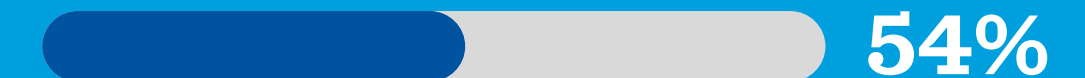
The service handled almost 31,000 enquiries, with an increase in the number of start-up enquiries, demonstrating that the work done across Scotland to support small businesses continues to be vital.

51,000+
customers supported

6,810
start-ups

almost
31,000
enquiries

Female led start-ups:



Start-ups from rural areas:



Start-ups from disadvantaged areas:



Events and webinars

Business Gateway ran 1,393 events with 25,311 attendees with a continued focus on virtual audiences as businesses continue to champion remote and agile ways of working.

The digital skills events were attended by over 11,000 people.

Website interactions

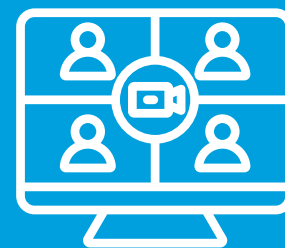
Many customers continue to enjoy the breadth of free support available at the touch of a button on the Business Gateway website – with 475,448 web visitors in total.



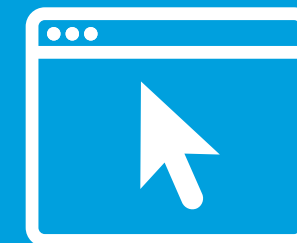
1,393
events



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Survival rate

Research shows that businesses in Scotland experience a reasonably strong survival rate, with 70%* of start-ups remaining open a year after launching, up 2% from 2023-24.

Business Gateway monitoring indicates that 62% of businesses trading for one year anticipate a positive outlook in the next 12 months.

**This survival rate applies to businesses who started-up with Business Gateway.*

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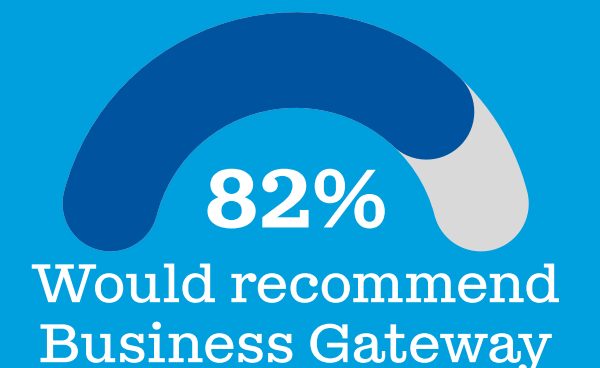
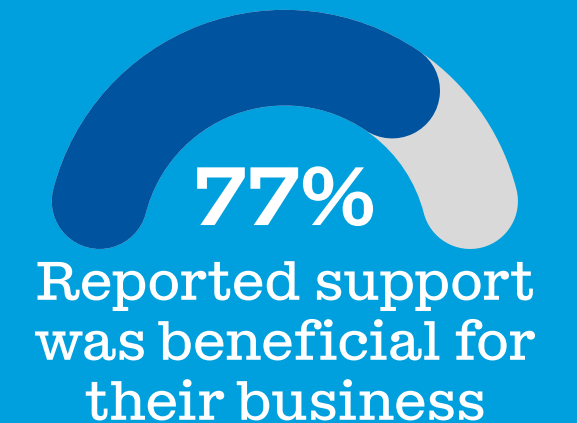
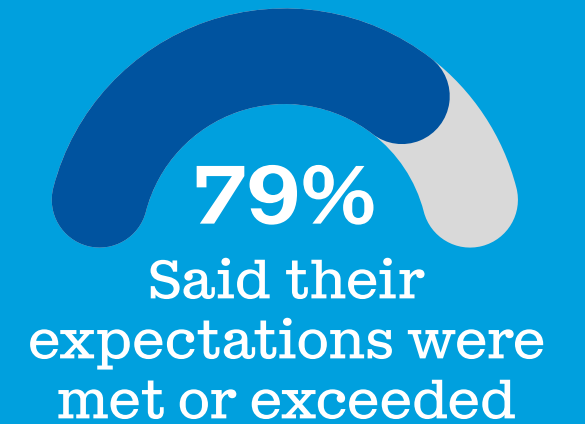
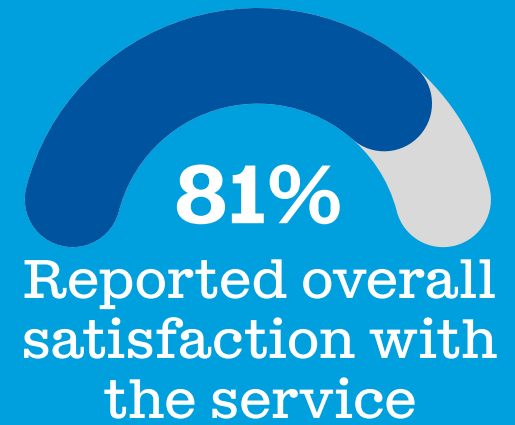


Quality assurance

Each year, Business Gateway carefully measures the quality of its services and the satisfaction and benefit that customers using the services receive.

The key findings from quality assurance reports from April 2024 to March 2025 were:

- Overall satisfaction was 81%
- 79% of respondents said their expectations had been met or exceeded
- 77% of respondents reported that the support they received would be beneficial for their business (excluding those reporting it was 'too early to say')
- 82% of respondents would recommend Business Gateway to other business people or those thinking of starting a new business.





Our support

Tailored support for start-ups

For individuals who have an idea or are thinking of starting a business, Business Gateway provides free guidance, resources, and training to help turn an idea into a viable business. This support is designed to help start-ups build a solid foundation and increase their chances of success in the early stages.

The first step for many is the Planning To Start Tool, which over 11,000 people used in 2024/25 to develop their plans - 1,000 more than the preceding year.



Support for existing businesses

For businesses that are already established, Business Gateway provides support to help them increase revenue, expand operations, reach new markets and improve efficiency. For businesses with high-growth potential, additional tailored support may be provided, including referrals to specialist advisers and industry-specific guidance via other organisations.

Individuals can access the resources they need via the Strengthen Your Business Tool. This saves time and helps individuals understand their next steps, based on the information they've provided about their objectives and priorities.



Webinars and online resources

Business Gateway has a selection of webinars and events designed to help individuals learn new skills - whatever stage their business is at, and wherever they are based. Topics covered include bookkeeping, AI, social media essentials, marketing, sales, and starting-up.

All Business Gateway webinars and workshops are free to attend and are available for booking at www.bgateway.com/events

There is a comprehensive suite of online resources including guides, podcasts and video tutorials available at www.bgateway.com/resources - a few of these are outlined overleaf. These resources are free to access and are split into what stage a business is at e.g. starting a business or running a business, or by topic area and are continually being added to and updated to ensure the advice is up-to-date and relevant.



Our online resources include:

Starting a business resources:



[Downloadable Business Plan Template](#)

[How to start a business: the basics](#)

[Planning your first business website video tutorial](#)

[Legal structures: the basics](#)

[Business bank accounts](#)

Running a business resources:



[Cyber resilience](#)

[Increase profitability](#)

[Improving cashflow](#)

[Improving social media skills](#)

[Designing & building a sustainable website](#)

[Taking on premises](#)

[Finding new markets](#)

Case studies

The case studies below demonstrate a few of the ways Business Gateway support helps businesses start-up and grow. Click on each to find out more.

The Rebel Baker

Local authority area: **Ayrshire**
Sector: **Food & Drink**



[Read more](#)

Crunchy Carrots

Local authority area: **Falkirk**
Sector: **Creative Industries**



[Read more](#)

Case studies

The Wee Cottage Kitchen

Local authority area: **Outer Hebrides**
Sector: **Hospitality**



[Read more](#)

Unbagged

Local authority area: **Glasgow**
Sector: **Tourism**



[Read more](#)

Next steps

Visit www.bgateway.com to find out more.

To request more information on the impact Business Gateway has on the communities it serves, contact Alyson Pearson, Marketing & PR Manager on alyson@cosla.gov.uk

