



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Alternative & Complementary Therapy

Cost of Doing Business Support

For information on **reducing the cost of running your business**, the [Find Business Support](#) website has links to advice, funding and regional support.

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Alternative & Complementary Therapy** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **August 2023**. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback [here](#); we will use your comments to help improve our service.

What do I need to know about the Alternative & Complementary Therapy market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ Over the five years through **2027-28, industry revenue is forecast to rise** at a compound annual rate of **3.6% to reach £5.9 billion**. Continued pressure on the NHS and lengthy waiting lists for underfunded NHS services will encourage a greater number of consumers to switch to private healthcare services, which could boost industry revenue and profitability. More people are visiting therapy and dietary practitioners to treat mental health disorders, such as eating disorders, anxiety or depression. (IBISWorld, *Allied Health-Care Services in the UK*, June 2023).
- ◆ The impact of stress caused by work or cost of living appears in symptoms such as headaches, muscle pain and deteriorating mental health, which may force consumers to assess their management of and relationship with their health. Consumers will be looking to manage their health in the long term and as a result will seek remedies that are suitable for long-term use. **Adoption of natural remedies and app-based therapies** reflect a turn towards complementary medicine. However, if affordable, app-based treatments take the place of appointments with complementary medicine practitioners or products, there will likely be a reduction in individual spend in the segment. (Mintel, *British Lifestyles, UK*, September 2022).
- ◆ A range of traditional and complementary medicine practices of acupuncture, ayurvedic medicine, chiropractic, herbal medicines, homeopathy, naturopathy, osteopathy, traditional Chinese medicine and Unani medicine are used by the population in the United Kingdom. An estimated **20–39% of the population uses herbal medicines**. T&CM providers practise in public and private clinics and hospitals. (WHO *Global report on traditional and complementary medicine 2019*. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2019). (tinyurl.com/4bvppsxs).
- ◆ Traditional & Complementary Medicine (pandemic loser, future winner): This market spans different holistic, indigenous, ancient therapies and products (acupuncture, Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, chiropractic, etc.). It grew from **\$376 billion in 2017 to \$432 billion 2019 but contracted to \$413 billion in 2020**. It will see healthy **7% annual growth from 2020-2025, reaching \$583 billion**. (Global Wellness Institute, *Traditional & Complementary Medicine-The Global Wellness Economy: Looking Beyond COVID*, December 2021).(tinyurl.com/bde6apfb).
- ◆ There are a number of industry bodies for this industry including [The General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies](#); [Complementary & Natural Healthcare Council](#); [National Council for Osteopathic Research](#); [British Homeopathic Association](#) and [The British Reflexology Association](#).

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Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ **Mintel – Technology and Wellness, UK (December 2022).** The cost-of-living crisis will mean personal health expenditure will be under increased scrutiny. However, in a post-pandemic world, consumers will look to prioritise their physical and mental health, and technology can play a role in helping meet health goals. 2024-2025 will see growth in the take-up of wearable technology can power the use of associated apps and health platforms and through 2026-2027 health and wellness technology will evolve to offer personalised holistic management of all areas of consumer health and wellbeing. Data will be better integrated from a range of sources, such as consumers' DNA, as well as mental and physical data, to help power even more personalised management of health.
- ◆ **Euromonitor Passport – Blurring Wellness Concepts (July 2023).** According to Euromonitor's Voice of the Consumer: Health and Nutrition Survey, consumers treat stress and anxiety in various ways that open pathways for consumer goods. These include traditional medical and consumer health options (seeing a doctor or therapist, taking vitamins or supplements, OTC medicines, or prescription medicines). But consumers are also increasingly looking to lifestyle-based treatments such as exercise/physical activity, rest, and alternative medicine/therapies, as well as product-aligned options such as natural/traditional solutions, cannabis, or special diets.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ **Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council** provides updated information on latest government announcements as well as research publications and guidance on registration. (tinyurl.com/3u6bxv59).
- ◆ **National Library of Scotland** – free registration for library eResources (www.nls.uk/business) gives access to a number of COBRA start-up guides which contain useful market summaries and links to further information. Some of the reports available are: **Acupuncturist; Aromatherapist; Herbalist; Homeopath; Nutritional Therapist; Reflexologist; Reiki Practitioner and Yoga Teacher.**
- ◆ **University of the Highlands and Islands** – Moray College UHI is offering a new **BSc (Hons) Integrative Healthcare** degree which includes a suite of 19 integrative healthcare continuous professional development modules. Many of the modules are recognised by the Federation of Professional Therapists and the reflexology packages are recognised by the Association of Reflexologists. (tinyurl.com/yc4pfr5).
- ◆ **NHS, Complementary and alternative medicine.** The NHS has produced a guide to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), including information on finding a practitioner, professional associations and accredited registers for CAMs and questions to ask before starting treatment. (tinyurl.com/y7tpwmbd)

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#), [Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these website, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing. Publications are also available at [Statistics and Research](#).
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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