



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Sustainable Fashion and Textiles

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 **Sustainable Fashion and Textiles** 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 **November 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 Sustainable Fashion and Textiles 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:

- ◆ The cost of living crisis has played its part in shifting attitudes towards the environment, with over half of all consumers saying that rising prices have made them more aware of the importance of sustainable fashion. Ongoing inflationary pressures during 2023 have increased awareness of sustainability when buying fashion, with a **4-percentage point rise** compared with 2022. (Intel, *Fashion and Sustainability – UK*, June 2022).
- ◆ The sustainability trend will continue to gain momentum. Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of waste, choosing to upcycle and repair products instead of buying new ones, and these trends will accelerate. Those that fail to adapt to consumer trends by emphasising sustainability and ethical sources risk not benefitting from a potentially lucrative market. This is especially true as Gen Z enter the workforce and bring new values to the market. The clothing store of the future needs to include experiences that excite, inspire and engage customers to increase brand favourability – simply having a rail of clothes isn't enough anymore. (IBISWorld, *Clothing Retailing in the UK*, August 2023).
- ◆ Expense is the main reason given by consumers in Great Britain for not purchasing sustainable fashion items, at **44%** of consumers. After that is a lack of clarity over which eco-friendly aspects are fulfilled, and they are not easy to find, at **32%** and **25%** respectively. (Statista, *Reasons consumers would not buy sustainable clothing items in selected European countries in 2023*, August 2023).
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is [Textiles Scotland](#). Other industry bodies include [UKFT - \(The UK Fashion and Textile Association\)](#), [the TSA \(Textile Services Association\)](#), [Zero Waste Scotland](#), the [Textile Recycling Association](#), and [Love Your Clothes](#).



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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 – Everyday Sustainability (September 2023).** While price has been, and still is, the most prominent purchase driver for many consumers over the past 18 months, sustainability is still high up on the agenda. 40% of consumers most want brands to prioritise sustainable practices while trying to keep prices low, and the majority say the environment has remained the same level of priority to them. Consumers will, though, particularly during this time, be looking for brands that can act sustainably on their behalf, and ideally at an affordable price point. Looking long term, sustainability will return to the forefront of consumer priorities, making it an ideal time for brands to get on the front foot and invest in genuine, innovative sustainable practices now.
- ◆ **IBISWorld – Clothing Manufacturing in the UK (August 2023).** Fashion and clothing are seen as self-expression and important to people, so looks can't be compromised. But people are becoming more conscious of the environmental impact of their lifestyles, including their wardrobes. Upstream manufacturers are investing and developing more sustainable products like clothing made from recycled or plant-derived materials to reduce the sheer volume of unworn clothing in landfills. Repair and maintenance services are more common as people become aware of the effects of fast fashion, hampering clothing retailing sales.

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

- ◆ Startups published an article in March 2023 (tinyurl.com/3fxkb5r4) covering trends in sustainable fashion in 2023, including ideas on how fashion brands might incorporate sustainable practices within their businesses. And key considerations when launching a sustainable fashion brand.
- ◆ Simply Business' knowledge article on the demand for sustainable fashion in the UK is another article that may be of interest (tinyurl.com/mwyhvjjr). They note that in addition to a general change in attitudes towards sustainable fashion from UK consumers, a move towards sustainable fashion can be seen in more tangible measures too. They note that the number of small independent fashion businesses, which are more likely to embrace sustainability, has increased by 23% over the past year. Additionally, online searches related to sustainable fashion have increased significantly in recent months.

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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.
- ◆ [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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