



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Outdoor Activities

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Outdoor Activities** 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 **April 2026**.

What do I need to know about the Outdoor Activities 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 United Kingdom **fitness equipment market grew by 7.3% in 2025 to reach a value of \$721.8 million**. In 2030, the United Kingdom fitness equipment market is forecast to have a value of \$949.2 million, an increase of 31.5% since 2025. The market growth over the forecast period is expected to be supported by continued innovation in fitness technology. The increasing availability of smart fitness equipment, including treadmills, ellipticals, and stationary bikes equipped with interactive displays, performance tracking, and connectivity features, is anticipated to play a key role in sustaining demand. (GlobalData Explorer, *Fitness Equipment in the United Kingdom*, January 2026). This content is reproduced under license from GlobalData PLC, Copyright 2026.
- ◆ The **revenue for sports and outdoor industry in 2025 was USD 1.42 billion**, up from USD 1.3 billion in 2024; and forecast to rise to USD 1.77 billion in 2029. (Statista, *Market Insights on the Revenue of the sports & outdoor industry in the United Kingdom 2017-2029*, March 2026).
- ◆ According to a Statista Consumer Insights Survey 'Outdoor sports by type UK 2024', for **respondents who do outdoor sports - 53% do cycling occasionally, 43% hiking, and 16% horse-riding and mountain biking**. Another Consumer Insights Survey on 'Most popular organized outdoor sports UK 2004' noted that of **respondents who do outdoor sports stated that they participate in organized cycling clubs, leagues, or competitions, 24% participated in cycling, 13% participated in Hiking, and 7% participated in Climbing, Horse riding or Mountain biking**, 6% participated in Motor Sports or Shooting & Archery. (Statista, *Consumer Insights Sports & Fitness*, December 2024).
- ◆ **38% of outdoor & lifestyle sport athletes are Millennials**. 54% of outdoor & lifestyle sport athletes are male. Many outdoor & lifestyle sport athletes have a high annual household income. 12% of outdoor & lifestyle sport athletes live in a megacity with over 5 million inhabitants. Social media is widely used among outdoor & lifestyle sport athletes, especially the social network LinkedIn is popular. (Statista, *Consumer Insights: Target audience: Outdoor & lifestyle sport athletes in the UK*, September 2024)
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is the [Outdoor Industries Association](#). Other industry bodies include [Scottish Outdoor Education Centres](#), the [National Outdoor Events Association](#), [Wild Scotland](#), [Sport Scotland](#), [Association of Play Industries\(API\)](#) and [Institute for Outdoor Learning](#).

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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.

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

- ◆ **Visit Scotland** published information on [outdoor Activities](#) and recent reports on popular activities such as walking tourism, cycling, golf, and Astro-tourism, as well as useful links to other activity information. Their [Outdoor Activities Tourism Insights](#) report offers key outdoor activity participation statistics on hill walking, watching wildlife, and more. The report notes that 40% of all visitors took part in hill walking, mountaineering or hiking during their trip to Scotland – 51% of these were European visitors, 46% long haul visitors and 36% UK visitors.
- ◆ Scottish Government published the draft [National Performance Framework](#) in February 2026 setting out the wellbeing framework and vision for the country.
- ◆ Scottish Government has published environment statistics from the [Scottish Household Survey 2024](#) indicators such as adult access to green and blue space. The [Scottish Household Survey 2023](#) offers visit statistics to the outdoors, frequency of use and satisfaction with green or blue space.
- ◆ Scottish Government has published its outdoor play and learning [policy](#) prioritising high-quality outdoor learning, exercise and play for children for their physical and mental wellbeing and development.
- ◆ The Association of Play Industries published a report [The State of Outdoor Play in Primary Schools](#) reviewing the state of outdoor play in schools across England. 78% of Early Years settings use outdoor areas throughout the day which drops to 16% by Key Stage 2. Most schools spent under £10,000 in the last three years on outdoor play (65%). Playground markings and mud kitchens are the most common features found in school play areas, with 77% of schools reporting they have markings and 61% including mud kitchens or messy play zones
- ◆ **National Library of Scotland** – free registration offers access to [eResources for Business](#) and online access to various databases and their reports such as: **IBISWorld** report *Sporting and Outdoor Equipment Retailers in the UK, Recreational & Sports Goods Renting & Leasing in the UK, Sports Facilities in the UK* for insights on the sector; **COBRA Business Opportunity Profiles** on *Outdoor Activity Centre* and *Outdoor and Extreme Sports Instructor*; and in person access to **Mintel** reports which may cover leisure, sport, and more.

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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 websites, 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.



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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.

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