



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Fitness & Leisure

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Fitness and Leisure** 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 **May 2026**.

What do I need to know about the Fitness and Leisure 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:

- ◆ According to [Scottish Household Survey 2023 \(Scottish Government, December 2024\)](#), **79% of adults** had taken part in some form of physical activity or sport in the previous 4 weeks. The most common activity was **recreational walking (with 71% of adults reporting doing this)**. In terms of individual sports, the most popular was, **multigym use / weight training (16%), swimming (13%), keep fit / aerobics (12%) and cycling (11%)**. Participation rates decreased with age – **89% of those aged 16-34** reported physical activity while only **67% of those aged 60 and over** ([SHS Data Explorer](#))
- ◆ In their annual UK Fitness Report, PureGym reported that in 2025/2026, 19% of people in the UK are currently members of a gym (2% increase from previous year). **Among people who regularly exercise, the most popular fitness activities reported were: walking (90%); home workouts (68%); running or jogging (52%); weight training with either bodyweight or weightlifting (51% each); core training (49%); cycling (44%); gym classes (41%); cross trainer (34%); and circuit training (32%)**. (PureGym, [The UK Fitness Report 2025/2026 Gym Statistics](#), December 2025)
- ◆ LeisureDB's annual State of the UK Fitness Industry, published in 2025, reported that for the first time the UK fitness industry exceeded a value of £6 billion, having climbed to **36.5 billion in 2025**. This was noted alongside a **2.8% increase in the number of gyms, and a 5.4% increase in the number of gym members across the UK (from 10.7 to 11.3 million people)**. They report **342 gyms in Scotland,, with 377,000 members and an average monthly fee of £29.24**, the lowest average fee across all regions. (LeisureDB, [State of the UK Fitness Industry Report 2025](#))
- ◆ "... hybrid working patterns have further boosted demand for gyms near both home and office, and many operators now offer multi-location memberships to accommodate flexible lifestyles. The concept of "omni-fitness" – a blend of gym workouts, home exercise, outdoor activities, and competitive sport – has gained traction, reinforcing the appeal of affordable and accessible fitness options. Consumers increasingly enjoy a number of these activities, which is why we've seen significant growth in value-orientated gyms, as an alternative to more expensive venues where consumers might feel more compelled to do all of their exercise in order to justify the cost." (Savills, [The UK Health and Fitness Sector](#), March 2026)



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Where can I find more information on my market?

The following UK organisations represent businesses working in the **Fitness and Leisure** industry:

- ◆ [Sport Scotland](#) are the national body for sporting activities in Scotland.
- ◆ [UK Active](#) are the trade association for the UK's physical activity sector.
- ◆ [Sport Excel UK](#) are a national disability sports organisation who work with people with learning disability in performance and elite sport.
- ◆ The [Sports and Physical Education \(PE\) Association UK](#) are the trade association for the supply and manufacture of sports equipment to the education and leisure sectors.
- ◆ The [Federation of Sports and Play](#) represent manufacturers and wholesalers of sports and play equipment and clothing.

The [National Library of Scotland](#) provides free access to a range of [eResources for Scottish businesses](#).

The following resources may also be helpful when setting up your business:

- ◆ **The Health and Safety Executive – [Basics for leisure activities](#)**. This page provides an overview of health and safety considerations for leisure activities, such as gyms swimming pools, organised sports, and other activities.
- ◆ **UK Active - [Resources](#)**. UK active provide resources on a wide range of different subjects, including guidance, reports and toolkits designed to support businesses in the physical activity sector.

The Information Service provides a bespoke research service for all Scottish businesses. If you have a more detailed research enquiry that you would like to explore, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

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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 and Sales](#)

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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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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