



# Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

## Cleaning Services

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Cleaning Services** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. **Cleaning Services includes domestic and industrial building cleaning services and window cleaning services.** You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the [Business Gateway Plan Guide \(May 2025\)](#), 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 Window Cleaning 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:

- ◆ In **2025**, there were **13,545 businesses** in the UK with the industry code for **general cleaning activities**. There were a further **5,275 businesses** with the UK SIC code for **other building and industrial cleaning activities**, which includes window cleaning as well as specialised cleaning services, chimney cleaning services and other industrial cleaning services. The majority of these (**81%**) were small businesses with **fewer than 9 employees** and **76% had turnover of less than £250,000** ([Office for National Statistics, UK business: activity, size and location, Sep 25](#)).
- ◆ Based on a **2025 survey**, an **estimated 10.1 million** people aged between **18-65 (or 27% of the total population)** had used household services in the previous year. This includes handyman, gardening or cleaning services. There has been an increase in the number of people using cleaning services in the last 5 years – rising from **21% in 2021** to **27% in 2025** ([Statista, Consumer insights: services, 2025](#)).
- ◆ The overall cleaning, hygiene and waste industry in the UK employs around **1.51 million people**, approximately **5% of the total UK workforce**, and making it a **top ten UK employment industry** ([British Cleaning council, The cleaning hygiene and waste industry research report 2026, February 2026](#)).
- ◆ Revenue from the UK window cleaning industry is only projected grow by **0.5% in 2025-26**. Businesses are struggling with cost pressures, particularly rising wage costs, which is making it difficult to offer competitively-priced contracts ([IBISWorld, Window cleaning services in the UK, April 26](#)).
- ◆ In 2025, UK households spent **£4,825 million** on domestic and household services. This was an increase of **2%** compared to the previous year ([Office for National Statistics, Consumer trends: current price, not seasonally adjusted, March 26](#)).
- ◆ There were an estimated **609,000 people employed in elementary cleaning occupations** in the United Kingdom in the 2nd quarter 2025, compared with **605,300** in the previous quarter ([Statista, Number of cleaners in the UK 2021-2025, October 2025](#)).
- ◆ There are a number of opportunities and threats impacting the cleaning industry. Increasing consumer demand for non-toxic and sustainable cleaning products may offer opportunities while technological solutions like robots or smart technologies may provide efficiencies. On the other hand with increasing cost pressures on both public and private sector organisations, it can be difficult for cleaning companies to offer affordable services ([British Cleaning Council, The cleaning, hygiene and waste industry: research report, April 2025](#)).

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## Where can I find more information on my market?

The following UK organisations represent businesses working in the window cleaning industry:

- ◆ [British Cleaning Council](#)
- ◆ [UK Housekeepers Association \(Scotland\)](#)
- ◆ [British Cleaners Association](#)
- ◆ [Cleaning and Support Services Association](#)
- ◆ [Cleaning and Hygiene Suppliers Association](#)
- ◆ [Federation of Window Cleaners](#)
- ◆ [British Window Cleaning Academy](#)
- ◆ [Window Cleaners Alliance](#)

The [National Library of Scotland](#) provides free access to a range of [eResources for Scottish businesses](#). These include IBISWorld reports such as **Window Cleaning Services in the UK (April 2026)**, **Industrial Cleaning Activities in the UK (August 2025)** and **Cleaning Services in the UK (June 2025)** and COBRA reports such as **Contract Cleaner (November 2025)** and **Domestic Cleaner (July 2025)**.

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

- ◆ **Cleaning Windows Safely and Risk Assessment** - one-day courses accredited by the IOSH (Institute of Occupational Safety and Health) and run by the Federation of Window Cleaners (FWC). The courses are held at various locations across the UK, including Scotland. Go to [FWC Training Courses](#) for more information and course dates.
- ◆ Under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, in **most parts of Scotland window cleaners must apply for a licence** from their local authority before starting to trade. Licences are usually issued for three years. See [Window cleaner's licence - Scotland \(Gov.uk\)](#) for more details.
- ◆ The [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) provides occupational health and safety advice for businesses working in the [cleaning industry](#). It also provides a guide on [Working at height whilst window cleaning](#), which helps to identify the risks involved and to choose the right equipment for the job.
- ◆ **National Records of Scotland (NRS)**, provides [housing projections for Scotland](#), which may be useful in understanding your potential client base. The figures are broken down by council area, household composition and age.

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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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**Updated by: Louise**

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