



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Car Garage and Valet

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Car Garage and Valet** 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 Car Garage and Valet 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 revenue of the “maintenance and repair of motor vehicles” industry in the United Kingdom is projected to be approximately **US\$36.25 billion by 2025**. (Statista, *Automotive Industry in the UK*, 2024).
- ◆ With more than **183,000 people employed in manufacturing** and some **796,000 in total across the wider automotive industry**, the industry as a whole accounts for 13.4% of total UK export goods generating £108 billion of trade. The **automotive aftermarket contributes £17.1 billion** to the UK economy with over **25000 MOT, service and repair sites**, and **57,572 businesses** in the sector. (SMMT, [Automotive Facts 2026](#), February 2026).
- ◆ **Morrisons** was the brand with the highest percentage of petrol station sites with a car wash in the UK as of 2022, with **91% of petrol stations having a car wash**. At that same time, Sainsburys and CO-OP's sites with car wash were at 66% and 65% respectively. By comparison, Go had the lowest share of petrol station sites with a car wash, at 7%. (Statista, *Fuel & petrol stations in the UK*, 2022).
- ◆ According to the Car Wash Association, 204million cars are washed every year in the UK – 26.2m at automatic car washes and 57.8m at jet wash facilities. (CWA, [Facts and Figures](#)).
- ◆ In **2024/25**, about **31% of cars tested in the road vehicle testing scheme (MOT) were unsatisfactory**, as were 12% of motor cycles. About 11% of cars tested had unsatisfactory lamps, reflectors and electrical equipment, 9% had unsatisfactory suspension and 7% had unsatisfactory brakes. There were **3.17 million vehicles licensed for use on the roads in Scotland** in 2024 (the highest number on record), of which 82 per cent were cars. (Transport Scotland, *Scottish Transport Statistics 2025*, [Road Transport Vehicles](#)).
- ◆ The national organisations for this industry are the [Retail Motor Industry Federation](#), [Garage Equipment Association](#), [Professional Valeters & Detailers Association](#), [Car Wash Association](#) and the [Independent Garage Association](#).



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Where can I find more information on my market?

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.

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

- ◆ **SMMT (The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Limited) - Driving UK Automotive Innovation - Insights from Industry (October 2025)**. The UK automotive sector invested around £5 billion in R&D in 2024. Britain is home to 22 automotive research and development centres. Looking ahead, the sector sees next-generation battery technology (81%), artificial intelligence (68%), and circularity (64%) as key growth areas over the next decade. Other emerging priorities include lightweighting, self-driving vehicles, and automation – highlighting a forward-looking industry eager to embrace transformative technologies. www.smmt.co.uk/smmt-innovation-report/
- ◆ **National Library of Scotland** – free registration enables access to [eResources for Business](#), which includes access to Mintel consumer reports such as **UK Car Review 2026**, **UK Car Aftermarket Market Report 2025** and **Car Purchasing UK 2026**.
- ◆ **BMTA Trust (British Motor Trade Association Trust)** – Industry Insights - The independent garage sector plays a vital part of the UK's economy, contributing significantly to local communities and supporting a large portion of the workforce. A survey by Select Car Leasing shows that 70% of UK drivers prefer independent garages over main dealers for car servicing and repairs*, mainly to save costs and receive more personalised service. Additionally, Epyx data reveals a growing trend in Fleet SMR services, with independent garages increasing their market share as vehicles age, from 30% at 1-2 years old to 40% at 3-4 years old, while franchise dealers' dominance declines. bmtatrust.org.uk/insights/
- ◆ **You Gov** - Survey conducted August 2025. According to **YouGov Profiles**, independent mechanics are the leading choice for many Britons' car repair and maintenance needs. Half of Britons report visiting independents for oil change (49%) and tyre work (45%), placing them ahead of dealers (42% and 29%) and service centres (45% and 44%) in these categories. Mobile mechanics now account for over a third of brake repairs (36%) and three in ten engine repairs (29%). They are also used by 19% of Britons for battery inspections and 18% for interior cleaning. yougov.com/en-gb/articles/52968-where-britons-go-for-car-repairs .
- ◆ **COBRA Reports**, accessed from **National Library of Scotland** ([National Library of Scotland](#)) have produced Business Opportunity Profiles on the following topics **Car Valeting, Garage/MOT Test Station, Car Body Shop, Used Car Dealer and Motor Vehicle Sales, Maintenance and Repair**. These include key market issues and trends, trading, commercial and legal issues and legislation. Please register [here](#) for access.

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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 contact us on 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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