



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Plumbing

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Plumbing** 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 **February 2025**.

What do I need to know about the Plumbing 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:

- ◆ Over the five years through 2024-25, revenue is forecast to **climb at a compound annual rate of 2.8% to £24 billion**. Plumbing and HVAC contractors have faced rising material costs and energy prices, resulting in a hike in service prices, hindering sales prospects and profitability. Rising interest rates to combat inflationary pressures have also caused a slowdown in private residential and commercial construction. Nevertheless, repair and maintenance work has remained resilient due to the essential nature of plumbing and HVAC services in maintaining the functioning of utility systems in residential and commercial properties. (IBISWorld, *Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning Installation in the UK*, February 2025).
- ◆ As financial burdens ease, the construction sector is picking up in 2024, with ONS data revealing new orders increased by 34.3% in the first half of 2024. However, in the second half of 2024 new orders fell by 25.6% due to persistent uncertainty from ongoing inflationary pressures. The sluggish new construction market has prompted wholesalers to focus more on the robust repair and maintenance sector, boosting sales. As a result, **revenue in 2024-25 is forecast to edge up by 3.6%**. (IBISWorld, *Hardware, Plumbing & Heating Equipment Wholesaling in the UK*, February 2025).
- ◆ The residential plumbing market in the UK will grow from \$2,299.9 million in 2023 to \$2,703.2 million in 2028. The UK is forecast to generate growth in all the years of the forecast period between 2023 and 2028. The **year-on-year growth** during this period will vary between **3.1% and 3.5%**. (Technavio, *Global Residential Plumbing Market 2024-2028*, September 2024).
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is [Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation](#) (SNIPEF).
- ◆ Other industry bodies include [Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering](#) (CIPHE), [Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors Limited](#) (APHC) and the [National Association of Professional Inspectors and Testers](#) (NAPIT).



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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.

- ◆ **Technavio – Global Residential Plumbing Market 2024-2028 (September 2024).** One of the main factors shaping the residential plumbing market is the increasing emphasis on sustainability and environmental responsibility. Manufacturers and service providers are prioritising the development and integration of water-efficient fixtures, eco-friendly piping materials, and smart plumbing technologies to minimise water consumption, reduce waste, and promote resource-efficient plumbing solutions. This focus on sustainability has permeated all facets of the global residential plumbing market, influencing product development, installation practices, and renovation strategies to meet the growing demand for eco-conscious and energy-efficient plumbing solutions. Moreover, the integration of smart technologies has become a significant force driving innovation within the global residential plumbing market.
- ◆ **IBISWorld - Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning Installation in the UK (February 2025).** Over the five years through 2029-30, revenue is anticipated to climb at a compound annual rate of 3.8% to £28.8 billion. Supportive government policies will continue driving strong demand from the residential market. Public non-residential construction is expected to benefit from government support, while commercial construction will recover in line with economic conditions. Technological advancements in smart installations and renewable energy integration will present lucrative opportunities for plumbing and HVAC contractors, with those that embrace technological innovations well-positioned to capitalise on solid revenue prospects.
- ◆ **IBISWorld - Hardware, Plumbing & Heating Equipment Wholesaling in the UK (February 2025).** Ever-growing environmental awareness and government support will continue to propel demand for environmentally friendly heating systems. The government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme, which saw applications triple in September 2024 compared to the same month the previous year, has been extended until April 2028. This extension will continue to drive demand for the installation of energy-efficient heat pumps, boosting income opportunities for wholesalers.

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

- ◆ [CIPHE - Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering](#). Provides information on careers, training and courses. The website offers guidance on career pathways and information on different courses, including interactive 3D Learning.
- ◆ WaterSafe.org.uk offers a guide on How to Become a Plumber with downloadable fact sheets and links to training providers.

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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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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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