

Gardners
Ground Maintenance

5-Year Business Plan

2026–2031

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*Professional Garden and Ground Maintenance Services
Serving All of Cornwall*

Contents

1	Executive Summary	2
1.1	Business Overview	2
1.2	Financial Highlights	2
1.3	Competitive Advantages	3
1.4	Strategic Objectives	3
2	Market Analysis	4
2.1	Cornwall Garden Services Market	4
2.2	Competitive Landscape	4
3	Services & Pricing Strategy	6
3.1	Core Services Portfolio	6
3.1.1	Lawn Cutting	6
3.1.2	Hedge Trimming	6
3.1.3	Lawn Treatments	6
3.1.4	Garden Clearance	6
3.1.5	Power Washing	6
3.1.6	Scarifying & Renovation	6
3.2	Subscription Packages	7
3.3	Pricing Strategy	7
4	5-Year Revenue Projections	8
4.1	Revenue Growth Drivers	8
4.2	Year-by-Year Revenue Breakdown	8
4.3	Operational Capacity Growth	8
5	5-Year Cost Structure & Profitability	9
5.1	Cost Evolution	9
5.2	Profitability Analysis	9
6	Marketing & Customer Acquisition	10
6.1	Marketing Strategy Overview	10
6.2	Digital Marketing	10
6.2.1	Website & SEO	10
6.2.2	Social Media (Facebook)	10
6.2.3	Email Marketing	10
6.3	Local Marketing	11
6.4	Word-of-Mouth	11
6.5	Marketing Budget	11
7	Growth Strategy & Service Expansion	12
7.1	Service Expansion Timeline	12
7.2	Commercial Contract Strategy	12
7.3	Subscription Growth	12
8	Risk Assessment & Mitigation	14
8.1	Key Risks & Mitigation Strategies	14
8.2	Financial Buffers	14

9 Organizational Structure & Staffing	15
9.1 5-Year Team Evolution	15
9.2 Staffing Costs	15
9.3 Recruitment & Training	15
10 Technology & Systems	16
10.1 Current Technology Stack	16
10.2 Technology Evolution	16
11 Financial Management & Controls	17
11.1 Accounting Structure	17
11.2 Tax Planning	17
11.3 Cash Flow Management	18
11.4 Investment Schedule	18
12 Exit Strategy & Long-Term Vision	19
12.1 Year 5 Business Valuation	19
12.2 Exit Options	19
12.3 Value Maximization (Years 3–5)	20
12.4 Post-Sale Considerations	20
13 Implementation Timeline & Milestones	21
13.1 Year 1 (2026): Foundation	21
13.2 Year 2 (2027): Growth	21
13.3 Year 3 (2028): Expansion	21
13.4 Year 4 (2029): Consolidation	21
13.5 Year 5 (2031): Optimization	21
13.6 Critical Success Factors	21
14 Conclusion	23
14.1 Strategic Summary	23
14.2 Investment Return	23
14.3 Risk-Adjusted Outlook	23
14.4 Final Recommendations	23
14.5 Closing Statement	24

1 Executive Summary

This comprehensive 5-year business plan outlines the strategic growth of Gardners Ground Maintenance from a single-operator gardening business to an established Cornwall ground maintenance company with a team of 3+ employees and annual revenue exceeding £135,000.

1.1 Business Overview

Gardners Ground Maintenance is a professional garden and ground maintenance business based in Roche, Cornwall, providing residential and light commercial services across the entire Cornwall region.

Current Status (Year 1 - 2026):

- One-person sole-trader operation
- Fully automated online booking and payment system
- Professional equipment investment: £8,000 (completed)
- Services: lawn care, hedge management, garden clearances, power washing, treatments
- Revenue model: 65% one-off bookings, 20% subscriptions, 15% seasonal services

5-Year Vision (2031):

- Team of 3+ trained operators
- 50+ subscription clients providing stable recurring revenue
- 10–12 commercial contracts with holiday parks, care homes, and hospitality
- Limited company structure for tax efficiency
- Annual revenue: £120,000–£150,000
- Business valuation: £90,000–£120,000

1.2 Financial Highlights

Year	1	2	3	4	5
Revenue	£41,500	£58,000	£82,000	£108,000	£135,000
Operating Costs	£10,455	£14,141	£43,084	£70,596	£85,120
Net Profit	£31,045	£43,859	£38,916	£37,404	£49,880
Owner Take-Home	£25,979	£32,480	£31,522	£30,297	£40,403
Profit Margin	75%	76%	47%	35%	37%

Table 1: 5-Year Financial Summary

Key Financial Metrics:

- 5-year cumulative net profit: £169,765
- Total investment required: £24,600
- Return on investment: 590%+
- Break-even: Month 1 of operations
- Cash reserves (Year 5): £20,000+

1.3 Competitive Advantages

1. **Digital Leadership:** Professional website with 24/7 online booking—unavailable from 95% of local competitors
2. **Payment Innovation:** Stripe integration for instant payment—most competitors are cash/cheque only
3. **Transparency:** Interactive quote builder showing prices upfront
4. **Subscription Model:** Recurring packages providing customer convenience and business stability
5. **Systems Excellence:** Custom CRM tracking all customers, jobs, and payment history
6. **Low Overhead:** Exceptional margins (75%+ in early years) enabling competitive pricing and reinvestment

1.4 Strategic Objectives

Years 1–2: Foundation & Growth

- Establish local reputation through service excellence
- Build subscription base to 20 regular clients
- Achieve consistent profitability
- Refine operational processes
- Test part-time employee model

Years 2–3: Expansion

- Hire first full-time employee
- Acquire second van and equipment set
- Introduce new services (fencing, turfing, artificial grass)
- Secure first 2–3 commercial contracts
- Transition to limited company structure

Years 3–5: Maturation

- Build team to 3+ operators
- Establish 10+ commercial contracts
- Optimize profitability and operational efficiency
- Position business for potential sale or long-term ownership
- Achieve market leadership in local area

2 Market Analysis

2.1 Cornwall Garden Services Market

Market Size:

- Cornwall population: 570,000 (2025)
- Estimated households: 250,000+
- Homeowners (68%): 170,000 households
- Properties with gardens (80%): 136,000
- Target market penetration (Year 5): 0.8% (1,055 customers)

Market Characteristics:

- Highly fragmented market with 30–50 sole-trader gardeners
- Limited professional, tech-enabled competitors
- Growing demand driven by aging population and second-home owners
- Strong seasonal patterns (70–75% of revenue Apr–Oct)
- Mild Cornwall climate allows year-round operation

Customer Segments:

Segment	Needs	Size	Annual Value
Retirees (65+)	Regular maintenance, reliability	Large	£800–1,500
Working Families	Convenience, quality	Medium	£600–1,200
Second Homeowners	Remote booking, property care	Growing	£900–2,000
Landlords	Competitive pricing, reliability	Medium	£400–800/property
Commercial	Professional service, invoicing	Untapped	£2,000–5,000

Table 2: Target Customer Segments

2.2 Competitive Landscape

Direct Competitors:

- 30–50 sole-trader gardeners (phone-only booking, cash payments)
- 5–10 small firms with 2–5 employees (limited online presence)
- 2–3 larger landscape companies (focus on commercial, high minimums)

Gardners Competitive Position:

We occupy a unique sweet spot: sole-trader personalization and pricing combined with professional systems typically only found in larger firms. Our online booking, transparent pricing, and subscription model create significant differentiation in a traditional, low-tech market.

Market Opportunities:

1. **Digital Gap:** <20% of local gardeners have functional websites; virtually none offer online booking
2. **Subscription Demand:** Growing consumer preference for subscription services not yet adopted locally
3. **Commercial Market:** 1,000+ holiday accommodations, 200+ care homes, hundreds of hospitality venues largely underserved
4. **Quality Inconsistency:** Many competitors offer variable quality—opportunity for premium positioning

3 Services & Pricing Strategy

3.1 Core Services Portfolio

3.1.1 Lawn Cutting

Professional rotary mowing with edging, strimming, and optional striped finish.

Size	Base Price	Duration	Add-ons
Small (to 50m ²)	£30	1 hour	+£10 front & back
Medium (50–150m ²)	£40	1.5 hours	+£5 edging
Large (150–300m ²)	£55	2 hours	+£5 striped finish
XL (300m ² +)	£75	3 hours	+£8 grass collection

Table 3: Lawn Cutting Pricing

3.1.2 Hedge Trimming

Professional cutting and shaping using electric and petrol trimmers.

Size	Price	Multi-Hedge	Extras
Small (<10m)	£60	£55/hedge	+£20 shaping
Medium (10–20m)	£120	£110/hedge	+£40 height reduction
Large (20m+)	£200	£180/hedge	+£30 difficult access

Table 4: Hedge Trimming Pricing

3.1.3 Lawn Treatments

Professional fertilizer, weed control, moss treatment, and disease management.

Lawn Size	Single Treatment	4-Season Program
Small	£45	£160/year
Medium	£65	£240/year
Large	£90	£340/year
XL	£120	£460/year

Table 5: Lawn Treatment Programs

3.1.4 Garden Clearance

Comprehensive tidying, overgrowth removal, and property preparation.

3.1.5 Power Washing

High-pressure cleaning for patios, driveways, decking, paths, and walls.
Premium add-ons: Re-sanding +£40, Sealant +£60, Algae treatment +£25

3.1.6 Scarifying & Renovation

Specialized lawn care removing thatch and moss, with overseeding and treatment.

Type	Price	Extras
Light tidy	£100	+£80 van load removal
Medium clearance	£180	+£250 skip hire
Heavy clearance	£300	+£30/hr brush cutting
Full property	£450	–

Table 6: Garden Clearance Pricing

Surface	Small	Medium	Large
Patio	£60	£90	£120
Driveway	£80	£110	£180
Decking	£70	£100	£140
Paths	£50	£75	£100

Table 7: Power Washing Pricing

3.2 Subscription Packages

Recurring service packages for customer convenience and business revenue stability.

Premium Package Includes: Lawn cut with striped finish, hedge trimming (up to 3 medium), border weeding, seasonal treatments, general garden tidy, priority booking.

3.3 Pricing Strategy

Positioning:

- 10–15% above sole-trader average (justified by professional systems)
- 20–30% below larger landscape firms (competitive advantage)
- Transparent upfront pricing eliminates negotiation

Year-on-Year Increases:

- Year 2: +3% (inflation)
- Year 3: +3% (inflation)
- Year 4: +4% (premium positioning)
- Year 5: +3% (margin maintenance)

Size	Scarifying	+ Overseeding	Full Renovation
Small	£80	£110	£140
Medium	£120	£150	£210
Large	£180	£210	£290
XL	£250	£280	£385

Table 8: Scarifying Services

Package	Frequency	Price/Visit	Annual Value
Essential	Fortnightly	£35	£910 (26 visits)
Standard	Weekly	£25	£1,300 (52 visits)
Premium	Monthly	£120	£1,440 (12 visits)

Table 9: Subscription Pricing

4 5-Year Revenue Projections

4.1 Revenue Growth Drivers

1. **Client Acquisition:** Organic growth through SEO, word-of-mouth, local marketing
2. **Subscription Growth:** 10 to 50+ recurring clients over 5 years
3. **Service Expansion:** New services (fencing, turfing, commercial) in Years 2–3
4. **Commercial Contracts:** 10–12 recurring contracts by Year 5
5. **Team Expansion:** Adding employees increases service capacity

4.2 Year-by-Year Revenue Breakdown

Revenue Stream	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
One-off bookings	£32,620	£47,500	£66,700	£77,500	£89,500
Subscriptions	£6,025	£13,000	£18,800	£25,600	£32,000
Commercial contracts	£0	£0	£6,500	£15,000	£19,500
New services	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total Revenue	£41,500	£58,000	£82,000	£108,000	£135,000
YoY Growth	–	+40%	+41%	+32%	+25%

Table 10: 5-Year Revenue Summary

4.3 Operational Capacity Growth

Metric	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Operators	1	1.2	1.75	2.5	3
Working days/year	288	288	288	288	288
Jobs completed	575	720	1,025	1,350	1,688
Avg job value	£72	£81	£80	£80	£80
Subscription clients	10	20	30	40	50

Table 11: Operational Capacity Metrics

5 5-Year Cost Structure & Profitability

5.1 Cost Evolution

As the business grows, costs evolve from primarily variable (fuel, materials) to include significant fixed costs (employees, second van).

Cost Category	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Operating costs	£9,955	£10,245	£16,000	£18,500	£20,500
Employee wages	£0	£3,200	£18,000	£48,000	£60,000
Employer NI/pension	£0	£240	£2,880	£7,680	£9,600
Payment processing	£500	£696	£984	£1,296	£1,620
Capital depreciation	£0	£0	£2,100	£2,800	£3,000
Total Costs	£10,455	£14,141	£43,084	£70,596	£85,120
% of Revenue	25%	24%	53%	65%	63%

Table 12: 5-Year Cost Summary

5.2 Profitability Analysis

Metric	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Revenue	£41,500	£58,000	£82,000	£108,000	£135,000
Total Costs	£10,455	£14,141	£43,084	£70,596	£85,120
Net Profit	£31,045	£43,859	£38,916	£37,404	£49,880
Tax	£5,066	£11,379	£7,394	£7,107	£9,477
Owner Take-Home	£25,979	£32,480	£31,522	£30,297	£40,403
Monthly Income	£2,165	£2,707	£2,627	£2,525	£3,367
Gross Margin	75%	76%	47%	35%	37%
Net Margin (post-tax)	63%	56%	38%	28%	30%

Table 13: 5-Year Profitability Summary

Key Observations:

- Years 1–2: Exceptional margins (75–76%) typical of sole operations
- Year 3: Margin compression due to major investments (van, employee)
- Year 4: Further compression with second employee (investment phase)
- Year 5: Recovery through operational efficiency and commercial revenue
- Owner income temporarily dips in Years 3–4 but recovers strongly in Year 5

6 Marketing & Customer Acquisition

6.1 Marketing Strategy Overview

Digital-first approach combining SEO, online booking, and strategic local presence.

6.2 Digital Marketing

6.2.1 Website & SEO

Current Assets:

- Professional website with 24/7 online booking
- Interactive quote builder
- Stripe payment integration
- Mobile-responsive design
- Blog for content marketing

SEO Strategy:

- Target keywords: "gardener Cornwall", "lawn cutting [town]", "garden clearance Cornwall"
- Monthly blog posts (gardening tips, seasonal guides)
- Local SEO: Google Business Profile optimization
- Review generation automation

5-Year SEO Targets:

Metric	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Monthly visitors	100	400	800	1,200	1,800
Conversion rate	5%	6%	7%	8%	8%
Monthly bookings	5	24	56	96	144
Annual bookings	60	288	672	1,152	1,728

Table 14: SEO Performance Targets

6.2.2 Social Media (Facebook)

- 3–4 posts/week (before/after photos, seasonal tips)
- Local community group engagement
- Boosted posts: £50/month peak season
- Target: 500 followers Year 1, 2,000+ Year 2

6.2.3 Email Marketing

- Monthly newsletter to subscriber base
- Automated drip campaigns for new subscribers
- Seasonal promotions and early-bird booking
- Target: 100 subscribers Year 1, 2,000 by Year 5

6.3 Local Marketing

Flyer Campaigns:

- Quarterly distribution in target postcodes
- 2,000/quarter Year 1, scaling to 5,000/quarter Year 3
- Expected conversion: 0.5–1%
- Cost: £0.08/flyer

Van Signwriting:

- Professional vinyl wrap (completed: £400)
- Mobile billboard: 60,000–150,000 annual impressions
- Expected: 5–10 bookings/month from visibility alone

Referral Program:

- Customer referrals: £10 credit for both parties
- Trade referrals: 10% commission
- Expected referral rate: 15–20% of new customers

6.4 Word-of-Mouth

Service excellence driving organic growth:

- Professional appearance (branded clothing, clean equipment)
- Post-job follow-up and review requests
- Surprise delights (small extras beyond scope)
- Expected: 15–25% of customers refer others

6.5 Marketing Budget

Channel	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Facebook Ads	£300	£500	£800	£1,000	£1,200
Flyers/Print	£240	£400	£600	£800	£800
Google Ads	£0	£300	£800	£1,500	£2,000
Business cards/misc	£120	£150	£200	£250	£300
Total	£660	£1,350	£2,400	£3,550	£4,300
% of Revenue	1.6%	2.3%	2.9%	3.3%	3.2%

Table 15: Marketing Budget Allocation

Customer Acquisition Economics:

- Customer Acquisition Cost (paid): £4–6
- Average Customer Lifetime Value (Year 1): £296
- LTV:CAC Ratio: 50–70:1 (exceptionally high due to organic acquisition)

7 Growth Strategy & Service Expansion

7.1 Service Expansion Timeline

- Year 1 (2026):** Core services only (lawn, hedge, treatments, clearance, power washing, scarifying)
- Year 2 (2027):** Add fencing repairs, turfing, mulching/border work
- Year 3 (2028):** Commercial grounds maintenance, artificial turf installation, decking
- Year 4–5 (2029–2031):** Garden design, irrigation systems, minor tree surgery, garden lighting

7.2 Commercial Contract Strategy

Target Sectors:

- 1. Holiday accommodation (parks, glamping, caravan sites): £2,000–£8,000/year
- 2. Care homes & residential facilities: £1,500–£4,000/year
- 3. Hospitality (pubs, hotels, restaurants): £1,200–£3,000/year
- 4. Property management companies: £5,000–£15,000/year

Acquisition Timeline:

- Year 3: 2–3 pilot contracts
- Year 4: 6–8 active contracts
- Year 5: 10–12 stable contracts

Commercial Revenue Target:

- Year 3: £6,500 (8% of revenue)
- Year 4: £15,000 (14% of revenue)
- Year 5: £19,500 (14% of revenue)

7.3 Subscription Growth

Target Growth:

Package	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Essential	6	10	14	18	22
Standard	3	7	11	15	20
Premium	1	3	5	7	8
Total	10	20	30	40	50
Annual Revenue	£6,025	£13,000	£18,800	£25,600	£32,000
% of Total	15%	22%	23%	24%	24%

Table 16: Subscription Growth Plan

Retention Strategy:

- Automatic scheduling with reminders

- Consistent crew assignment
- Subscriber-only discounts on add-ons
- Priority booking during peak season
- Target retention: 85–90%

8 Risk Assessment & Mitigation

8.1 Key Risks & Mitigation Strategies

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Weather disruption	High	Medium	Budget 4 weeks losses; diversify to weather-resistant services
Equipment breakdown	Medium	High	Maintenance fund £500/yr; backup tools; professional servicing
Van failure	Low	Critical	Regular servicing; breakdown cover; cash reserve for repairs
Owner injury/illness	Low	Critical	Income protection insurance (Y2+); 3-month cash reserve
Seasonal cash flow	High	Medium	Build summer reserves; grow subscriptions; offer winter discounts
Employee turnover	Medium	Medium	Competitive wages; training; positive culture
Commercial contract loss	Medium	Medium	Diversify clients (max 20% from one); exceptional service
Economic recession	Medium	High	Essential service resilience; budget tiers; commercial stability

Table 17: Risk Assessment Matrix

8.2 Financial Buffers

Cash Reserve Targets:

- Year 1: £5,000
- Year 2: £10,000 (3 months operating costs)
- Year 3–5: Maintain 3–6 months operating costs

Insurance Coverage:

- Public liability: £5m (required)
- Employers' liability: £10m (when employing)
- Tools/equipment insurance: Year 2+
- Income protection: Consider from Year 2

9 Organizational Structure & Staffing

9.1 5-Year Team Evolution

Year 1: Solo operation (Chris Gardner)

Year 2: Owner + part-time employee (Sept–Dec)

Year 3: Owner + 1 full-time employee (from April)

Year 4: Owner + 2 full-time employees

Year 5: Owner + 2–3 employees (includes seasonal)

9.2 Staffing Costs

Cost Element	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Owner take-home	£25,979	£32,480	£31,522	£30,297	£40,403
Employee wages	£0	£3,200	£18,000	£48,000	£60,000
Employer NI/pension	£0	£240	£2,880	£7,680	£9,600
Total	£25,979	£35,920	£52,402	£85,977	£110,003

Table 18: 5-Year People Costs

9.3 Recruitment & Training

Recruitment:

- Local job boards, Facebook, word-of-mouth
- Essential: driving license, physically fit, reliable
- Desirable: gardening experience, customer service skills
- Trial process: interview, 1-day paid trial, 3-month probation

Training Program:

- 2-week onboarding (H&S, equipment, service standards)
- Monthly skills development sessions
- External certifications: pesticide application, first aid
- Career progression: Operative → Senior → Crew Leader

Retention:

- Pay above minimum wage (starting £11.50/hr)
- Annual reviews with 3–5% increases
- Quality equipment and branded workwear
- Flexible scheduling where possible
- Performance bonuses for exceptional work

10 Technology & Systems

10.1 Current Technology Stack

Zero-Cost Platform Providing Enterprise Functionality:

- **Website:** Static HTML/CSS/JS (self-hosted)
- **Backend:** Google Apps Script (serverless automation)
- **Database:** Google Sheets (relational structure)
- **Payment:** Stripe (1.4% + 20p/transaction)
- **CRM:** Custom Google Sheets system
- **Notifications:** Telegram bot for instant booking alerts
- **Email:** Automated booking confirmations, reminders, newsletters

Competitive Advantages:

- Total software cost: £0 (excluding Stripe fees)
- Enterprise capabilities at sole-trader cost
- 24/7 online booking unavailable from 95% of local competitors
- Full data ownership and control
- Infinitely scalable at no additional cost

10.2 Technology Evolution

Years 1–2: Optimization (A/B testing, review automation, abandoned cart recovery)

Year 3: Team collaboration (multi-user CRM, job assignment, mobile job sheets)

Years 4–5: Advanced features (commercial portal, route optimization, financial reporting)

11 Financial Management & Controls

11.1 Accounting Structure

Years 1–2 (Sole Trader):

- Manual bookkeeping via spreadsheets
- Monthly bank reconciliation
- Quarterly profit review
- Annual accounts by professional accountant
- Self-assessment tax return

Year 3+ (Limited Company):

- Dedicated business bank account
- Accounting software (Xero/QuickBooks)
- Monthly management accounts
- Quarterly VAT returns (if registered)
- Corporation tax return
- Payroll processing

11.2 Tax Planning

Sole Trader Tax (Years 1–2):

- Income tax on profits (basic rate 20%)
- Class 2 NI: £3.45/week
- Class 4 NI: 6% on profits £12,570–£50,270
- Payment on account system

Limited Company Tax (Years 3+):

- Corporation tax: 19% on profits
- Directors' salary: £12,570 (personal allowance)
- Dividend distribution: tax-efficient profit extraction
- Business Asset Disposal Relief on sale (10% CGT)

Formation Trigger: Limited company when profit exceeds £40,000 (Year 3)

11.3 Cash Flow Management

Revenue Collection:

- Residential: Immediate payment via Stripe (95%+)
- Commercial: Invoice with 30-day terms (50% deposit on large jobs)
- Subscriptions: Auto-charged via Stripe

Cash Forecasting:

- 12-week rolling forecast
- Seasonal variation planning
- Tax reserve account (30% of profit monthly)
- Target balance: 3 months operating costs

11.4 Investment Schedule

Year	Investment	Cost	Funding
1	Initial equipment (completed)	£8,000	Personal savings
2	Second tool set	£600	Cash flow
3	Second van + equipment	£10,500	Cash flow
4	Ride-on mower	£3,500	Cash flow
5	Trailer + specialty tools	£2,000	Cash flow
Total		£24,600	

Table 19: Capital Investment Plan

Preferred Strategy: Zero debt, self-funded growth through operating cash flow.

12 Exit Strategy & Long-Term Vision

12.1 Year 5 Business Valuation

Value Drivers:

- 50+ subscription clients (£32,000 recurring revenue)
- 10–12 commercial contracts (£19,500 recurring)
- Established brand and 5-year track record
- Automated systems and technology
- Trained team capable of independent operation
- Tangible assets (vans, equipment): ~£12,000

Estimated Valuation:

Method	Multiple	Value
Earnings Multiple	2–3× net profit	£100,000–£150,000
Revenue Multiple	0.75–1× revenue	£101,000–£135,000
Asset-Based	Book + goodwill	£70,000–£90,000
Realistic Market Value		£90,000–£120,000

Table 20: Year 5 Valuation Scenarios

12.2 Exit Options

Option 1: Lifestyle Business

- Continue ownership indefinitely
- Transition to primarily management role
- Ongoing income £40,000+ annually
- Potential for further growth to £200,000+ revenue

Option 2: Sale to Individual

- Local gardener or career-changer buyer
- Sale price: £90,000–£120,000
- Seller financing: 30–50% over 2–3 years
- 3–6 month transition period

Option 3: Management Buyout

- Senior employee purchase
- Discounted price: £80,000
- Down payment: £15,000–£20,000
- Seller note: £60,000–£65,000 over 5 years

Option 4: Merger/Acquisition

- Regional landscape company or franchise
- Higher valuation: 3–4× earnings
- All-cash transaction possible
- Quick exit (30–90 days)

12.3 Value Maximization (Years 3–5)**Building Sellable Value:**

1. Systematize operations (reduce owner dependency)
2. Strengthen recurring revenue (subscriptions + commercial)
3. Clean financial statements (3+ years)
4. Build brand equity (reviews, online presence)
5. Capable team (independent operation)

12.4 Post-Sale Considerations**Tax Efficiency:**

- Business Asset Disposal Relief (10% CGT on first £1m)
- Optimize timing for tax year
- Professional tax advice essential

Non-Compete:

- Typical: 2–3 years in Cornwall (25–30 mile radius)
- Allows new ventures outside garden services or region

13 Implementation Timeline & Milestones

13.1 Year 1 (2026): Foundation

- Q1:** Launch operations, 30 bookings, break-even, 2 subscriptions
- Q2:** Peak ramp-up, 100 jobs, 6 subscriptions, 10 reviews
- Q3:** Peak performance, 300 jobs, 10 subscriptions, 25 reviews
- Q4:** Winter transition, 575 jobs total, £41,500 revenue

13.2 Year 2 (2027): Growth

- Q1:** Service expansion (turfing, fencing), website optimization
- Q2:** First £5,000 month, 50+ reviews
- Q3:** Hire part-time employee, increased capacity
- Q4:** Evaluate performance, plan Year 3 expansion, £58,000 revenue

13.3 Year 3 (2028): Expansion

- Q1:** Limited company formation, commercial outreach
- Q2:** Hire full-time employee, acquire second van, first commercial contract
- Q3:** Two-crew operations, 20+ jobs/week, 2–3 commercial contracts
- Q4:** Year-end: £82,000 revenue, plan second employee

13.4 Year 4 (2029): Consolidation

- Q1:** Hire second employee, three-person team
- Q2:** Ride-on mower acquisition, irrigation service launch
- Q3:** Peak: 25+ jobs/week, 40 subscriptions, 5–6 commercial
- Q4:** £108,000 revenue, Year 5 optimization planning

13.5 Year 5 (2031): Optimization

- Q1:** Add seasonal employee, systematize for potential sale
- Q2:** Garden design launch, 50+ subscriptions, 10+ commercial
- Q3:** Peak: 30+ jobs/week, owner transitions to management
- Q4:** £135,000 revenue, business valuation, exit options evaluation

13.6 Critical Success Factors

Must-Haves:

1. Consistent service quality
2. Reliable communication
3. Effective marketing
4. Prudent financial management
5. Smart hiring and retention
6. Continuous improvement
7. Adaptability
8. Sustainable work-life balance

Red Flags:

- Revenue misses >15% below target
- Negative cash flow >2 months
- Declining reviews/complaints
- Employee turnover
- Owner working 7 days/week consistently

14 Conclusion

14.1 Strategic Summary

Gardners Ground Maintenance is positioned for sustainable, profitable growth from a one-person sole-trader to an established Cornwall garden services business with 3+ employees, 50+ subscription clients, and £135,000+ annual revenue by Year 5.

Core Strengths:

- Digital leadership in local market
- Service excellence commitment
- High margins and zero debt
- Underserved market opportunity
- Scalable business model

5-Year Targets:

Metric	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Revenue	£41,500	£58,000	£82,000	£108,000	£135,000
Net Profit	£31,045	£43,859	£38,916	£37,404	£49,880
Owner Income	£2,165/mo	£2,707/mo	£2,627/mo	£2,525/mo	£3,367/mo
Team Size	1	1.2	1.75	2.5	3

Table 21: 5-Year Summary

14.2 Investment Return

Total Investment: £24,600
Cumulative Profit: £169,765
Business Value (Y5): £90,000–£120,000
Total Return: £259,765–£289,765 (590%+ ROI)

14.3 Risk-Adjusted Outlook

Conservative (-20%): Year 5 revenue £108,000, still profitable and sustainable
Realistic (base): Year 5 revenue £135,000, achievable with disciplined execution
Optimistic (+20%): Year 5 revenue £162,000, requires exceptional growth

14.4 Final Recommendations

1. Focus on Year 1 execution and reputation building
2. Invest consistently in marketing (SEO compounds over time)
3. Manage cash conservatively (3–6 month reserves)
4. Hire strategically (test part-time first)
5. Systemize early (document from Year 1)
6. Maintain quality (growth worthless if standards decline)

7. Balance work-life (sustainable business needs sustainable owner)
8. Review quarterly (adjust based on performance)
9. Think long-term (every decision considers Year 5 exit)
10. Stay adaptable (market conditions change)

14.5 Closing Statement

This 5-year plan provides a comprehensive roadmap for transforming Gardners Ground Maintenance from startup to established business. With disciplined execution, quality service, smart financial management, and strategic growth, the business will achieve:

- **Financial success:** £135,000+ revenue, £40,000+ owner income
- **Market leadership:** Cornwall's most professional, tech-enabled service
- **Team development:** Trained team with independent operations
- **Business value:** £90,000–£120,000 sellable asset
- **Personal freedom:** Owner transition from operator to manager

The journey from zero to £135,000 is ambitious but achievable. Cornwall's garden services market is fragmented, under-digitized, and ready for professional operation. Gardners Ground Maintenance has the systems, strategy, and commitment to capture significant market share and build lasting value.

Success requires consistent execution, adaptability, and unwavering customer focus. With professional equipment, automated systems, zero debt, and clear vision, Gardners Ground Maintenance is positioned to become Cornwall's premier garden services provider.

*"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.
The second best time is now."*

– Chinese Proverb

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